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## Meeting the expectations of youth



The role of education  
and training in  
integrating young  
people into economic  
and social life

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As this Newsletter goes to press, the United Nations’ “International Year of Youth” (August 2010 to August 2011) – which highlighted the importance of integrating youth-related issues into development agendas – is coming to a close.

The issue of youth is indeed one of growing importance in our world. Young people between the ages of 15 and 24 account for

some 18% of the global population, or nearly 1.2 billion people. And 87% of them live in developing countries, and thus face challenges related to limited access to resources, healthcare, education, and employment and economic opportunities.

The economic crisis has exacerbated the difficulties faced by young job-seekers. According to the International Labour

Organization (ILO), the youth unemployment rate increased from 11.9% in 2007 to 13.0% in 2009. Increasingly, many young people must settle for intermittent work, taking jobs with longer hours, under informal and insecure working conditions, with low earnings and little social protection.

## Widespread persistent inequality

Difficulties in integrating youth into social and economic life often stem from inequalities of gender, class and ethnicity. Many groups remain disadvantaged in accessing education and employment opportunities. Girls in particular are too often left behind. Among the young people who are neither in school nor employed are many girls from poor and rural areas who have family responsibilities.

While the expansion of secondary education has been significant, challenges remain. Millions of students leave school without completing 12 years of education. Furthermore, expansion does not guarantee equal access and quality of provision.

The experience of many Latin American countries has shown how growth can falter when too few young people from poor backgrounds or rural areas manage to complete secondary education and get decent jobs. A range of “second chance” opportunities is needed for these groups, including further – or post-school – education, in which the private sector might play an important role.

The need to cater for the greatest possible number, and the search for more skills-oriented alternatives, have led to the development of a wide variety of institutions, providers and study programmes at post-secondary level.



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## Education and skills in development

The best jobs are increasingly available only to candidates possessing higher levels of education. For both young and old, the ranks of the unemployed (or those who must work in the informal sector) are made up predominantly of people lacking the necessary skills.

Indeed, the knowledge and skills acquired in school are just as important as the number of years spent or the paper qualifications obtained there. Too many young people today leave school without the skills and knowledge needed for the job market. In 2011, the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) revealed that students in developing countries lagged far behind those in OECD member countries. In particular, they often lacked the key transferable skills needed for any good job or even full participation in civil society.

And the problem is not confined to secondary education. A 2009 UNESCO study in Asia showed that, while university graduates generally felt that their education and the skills they developed were adequate, employers

complained that new graduates lacked the mainly “soft” interpersonal skills needed at work, as well as having unrealistic expectations.

Regarding transferable skills for both employment and everyday life, a key concern for education has been the expansion of ICT. The “One Laptop per Child” programme is an important initiative in many developing countries. Yet, while the project is laudable in its effort to achieve fairness and integration, studies have shown that having a computer in the home does not necessarily have a positive impact on educational outcomes. The challenge for schools and parents, therefore, is to promote its use as part of a learning strategy, including social networking.

As the mass protests for democracy in Arab countries have reminded us, young people are often the source of new solutions themselves. While education systems seek to adapt to these new challenges – of relevance, job skills, overcoming inequalities in access and quality of provision, and integration of ICT – we must ensure that the youth of the world have a full say in the transformation of education everywhere. ■

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## Educational planning for better engagement of youth

On 18 December 2009, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/RES/64/134) proclaiming the year commencing on 12 August 2010 as the International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding. Major events during the past nine months have in fact made 2010/2011 the year of youth.

First, the "Arab Spring" was sparked off in Tunisia last December and quickly spread to Egypt, in January, and to other countries soon after. Events in Arab countries, especially Libya, Syria and Yemen, still occupy headlines in the media.

Then the tragic massacre on the island of Utøya in Norway stunned the world last July. We all are still in shock about this heinous act and in solidarity with Norway as it mourns the victims. Recently, the violent riots in the UK erupted. They spread destruction and looting and aroused racial tensions.

All these had youth at their centre: as leaders, victims, or perpetrators.

The Arab youth rose against poverty, inequalities and marginalization and for freedom, human rights and participation in shaping their future.

The young activists who were shot dead on Utøya embraced multicultural tolerance and opposition to racism. During their conference on the island, they expressed concern about environmental issues and were vocal about the responsibility of rich countries like Norway to send aid to poor countries.

Many of the rioters in London and elsewhere in England were jobless and disillusioned young Britons who felt adrift in a stagnating economy.

The uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt prompted us to dedicate the present Newsletter to the topic of youth and how education should prepare them for employment, engagement in society and for a meaningful and fulfilling life.

The tragic events on Utøya reinforced our conviction to dedicate additional resources, starting in 2012, to the topic of youth in our research, training and policy advice and technical assistance.

The UK riots highlighted our position that our work related to poverty reduction and inequities should not be confined to developing countries. IIEP is an international institute and should make sure that it is relevant to developed countries, as well.

The relationship between education, employability and the labour market is not a new topic at IIEP. This is a continuously recurring theme since the Institute's establishment. The contributions of IIEP colleagues in this Newsletter provide only a glimpse of ongoing research projects, especially related to secondary and post-secondary education. We are presently consulting with our partners in order to define new research themes related to the engagement of youth and how this might be better reflected in educational planning.

We would like to dedicate this Newsletter to the memory of the Utøya victims and the ideals which they embraced. ■



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# Diversification of post-secondary education

Non-university provision expands in response to market needs

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Knowledge proliferation can be of two types: knowing as contemplation (the production of theoretical knowledge); or knowing as operation (that of practical knowledge). Universities play an important role in producing the former. Yet, they are criticized at times for their rigid and overly academic orientation and lack of focus on occupational preparation and the provision of specific skills.

Modern economies are market-based, which means they prefer “knowledge as operation” to “knowledge as contemplation”. “Operationalism” implies producing graduates as outputs to be used in the production process; skills learnt in post-secondary education (PSE) are expected to match skills needed in the market.

As such, the global higher education system needs to reshape its curricula to integrate the new market demands. Interaction between

higher education institutions and the labour market should provide the basis for this.

## Diversification of institutions and methods

Labour market demand has always been for readily employable higher education graduates – for a “finished product” that universities have not often produced. The search for alternatives has led to the development of many different institutions and a wide variety of providers and study programmes. What is called the non-university sector now competes with a formerly unitary structure (universities). Methods have also evolved: teaching and learning through distance education has become an important segment of the higher education system. The Open University in the UK and Anadolu University in Turkey are examples of large-scale open universities (which teach solely through distance learning).

## Diversification of ownership and clientele

PSE was traditionally dominated by the public sector. New trends show the expansion of the privatization of public institutions and the emergence of a private sector in PSE. Privatization has mainly taken the form of cost recovery for all services provided. As for private higher education institutions, they are of different types and mainly allow the control of provision. They can be elite or semi-elite, non-elite, religious and cultural, for-profit and not-for-profit, etc. Private universities are growing faster than public institutions and increasing their share of total enrolment. In terms of the diversification of clientele, higher education institutions tend to cater more for students from a middle-class background, rather than the elite. Increasingly, those at university are mature or part-time students. The influx of foreign students reflects another change in the make-up of the student population. But the major change is the numerical supremacy of women, who now outnumber men in many

universities, especially in developed countries.

These trends in the diversification of higher education can be attributed to the drift towards vocational courses or to the flexibility of promoting a change towards soft models and broad ranges of studies within institutions. Democratization is another argument for diversification. PSE is no longer perceived as an elitist privilege, but rather as a right. With the entry of students from different socio-economic backgrounds, it is becoming impossible to maintain the elitist nature of higher education institutions and their programmes.

Diversification helps accelerate the expansion of PSE. The non-university and private sectors play a major part in the process, which is very often reliant on non-state resources. ■

### Level of PSE courses

Post-secondary education has two distinctive components: tertiary education and non-tertiary education. Tertiary education refers to all programmes offered at ISCED\* level 5 and above. The non-tertiary level refers to all programmes offered at ISCED level 4. Many institutions offer courses below the tertiary level. For example, nearly 90% of further education colleges in the UK offer post-secondary courses at non-tertiary level. The Associate's degree in Cambodia, the Jun-gakushi in Japan, non-academic diplomas in countries such as Egypt, Germany, Ghana, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, the Russian Federation and South Africa, also belong to non-tertiary PSE. However, most PSE institutions offer courses at tertiary level, and this is true even in the case of institutions providing vocationally oriented programmes closely linked to the demands of the labour market. Most non-university tertiary institutions do not offer advanced courses at ISCED level 6.

\* *International Standard Classification of Education*

## Labour skills in general secondary education

### The example of Latin America

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In various countries in Latin America, general secondary education (GSE) has recently sought to develop both the general and specific job skills of young students. The aim is to prepare them better for entry into the world of work. In concrete terms, the new approach may include the following:

- Internships: almost all countries in the region offer internships or practical placements in technical secondary education (whether in private companies, public entities, non-governmental organizations or social services). Brazil and Colombia have also incorporated placements in GSE.
- Development of skills in entrepreneurship: students experience all stages of a real-life production or management assignment. In Colombia, a national law for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship Culture has established a project in entrepreneurship at all levels of education.
- Educational and job guidance and counselling: this would seek to provide young people with resources to guide their decisions concerning education and jobs. Chile has financed education and job guidance plans at schools.
- Linkages to vocational training: students would attend the general programme in one shift and then, in an extra-curricular shift, attend a vocational training centre. This approach has been promoted in Brazil and Colombia and is the focus of experiments in Argentina and Mexico.

In general, these strategies are not concerned with a "slight dose of vocationalization" but with an approach to both transversal and certified knowledge of life at the workplace. However, experience in this area is still limited, and the impact of such an approach on the career paths and learning of young people remains to be determined.

*A recent IIEP publication, New Trends in Technical Education in Latin America (Jacinto, Claudia, 2010, 206 pp.), discusses trends such as the incorporation of job skills in general secondary education.*



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# Young people in Latin America

The ongoing challenge of providing access to secondary education

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New knowledge, new skills and increasing interaction with others: these are what societies are currently requiring of their citizens in order to expand. How can new generations be brought into active life without knowing how society changes? And how can governments achieve such aims without reviewing their policies for education?

Access to school and the graduation of young people must be the priorities of educational policies. However, Latin America has far to go in meeting them. As shown in the table on the next page, 44% of 20-year-olds did not complete upper secondary education<sup>1</sup> and only 8% of young people are enrolled at this level. Thus even where they completed it, there was no significant variation in the (school) graduation rate. In addition, the variability in the data reveals several trends whose coexistence reflects the heterogeneous situation in Latin America.

In Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras (countries with a higher poverty rate and only recently expanded education systems), just 16–27% of young people managed to complete upper secondary education. At the other end of the scale were countries in which 71–78% of 20-year-olds managed to graduate after 12 years of schooling (Chile and Peru). At least a quarter of the population in any of the countries concerned cannot access the resources needed for effective involvement in society. Achieving universal graduation from upper secondary school in Latin America is still a huge challenge.

The *Report on Social and Educational Trends in Latin America* published by SITEAL in 2011 states that educational expansion in the region has ceased, which makes the current situation there even more complex. The rate of increase in levels of schooling has fallen significantly and is in many cases close to zero. Of even greater concern is that stagnation has occurred while much further progress is still needed. This observation leads to several questions: What means or strategies should be used to achieve mass enrolment of the potential school intake? What are the barriers to doing so in each area? And how can they be overcome?

Progress towards guaranteeing all young people access to quality education would involve enormous effort for all the countries concerned. Extensive economic and social inequalities underlie their low school graduation rates. Poverty and exclusion are huge barriers, so efforts to achieve universal access to knowledge prompt a reappraisal of the region's current development models.

Yet inequality is not the only reason for this underachievement. The increasing diversity of our societies has also led to recasting of their education systems. There has been an evolution from a tradition which denied students any sense of individual identity, towards educational practices based on recognition and the inclusion of everyone. ■

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<sup>1</sup> Equivalent to approximately 12 years of schooling.

	Young people who have completed the upper secondary level from among the 20-year olds (%)	Young people who attend the upper secondary level from among the 20-year olds (%)	Adolescents and young people who neither study nor work (%)	
			12–17 year olds	18–23 year olds
Argentina	57.6	7.8	5.2	15.8
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	62.8	11.1	3.1	12.9
Brazil	53.7	11.8	4.4	14.4
Chile	77.6	5.5	n/d	19.9
Colombia	63.2	5.0	n/d	16.8
Costa Rica	42.2	16.8	7.9	14.4
Dominican Republic	43.2	20.8	6.6	23.5
Ecuador	52.4	13.6	6.3	13.5
El Salvador	40.4	9.0	10.7	26.0
Guatemala	15.8	11.1	13.2	26.2
Honduras	26.7	10.8	16.3	25.5
Mexico	46.6	4.4	8.7	19.9
Nicaragua	26.4	13.1	13.8	24.6
Panama	54.1	5.0	5.2	16.9
Paraguay	51.6	7.6	6.0	12.6
Peru	71.4	6.8	3.3	15.0
Uruguay	39.8	16.5	n/d	11.6
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	55.4	14.2	n/d	20.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>8.1</b>		

Source: SITEAL, based on household surveys in the above countries (Circa 2009).

## Dangerous or in danger?

### Adolescents and young people who neither study nor work

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In Latin America there are 5.5 million adolescents and 13.5 million young people who neither study nor work (SITEAL, 2010). A growing feeling of public insecurity has led to an unavoidable association between de-institutionalization and exclusion, which in turn is associated with crime and violence. Meanwhile and notwithstanding the steady increase in school enrolment ratios, adolescents and young people are often regarded as apathetic. How do they spend their time if they are neither studying nor working? This classification encompasses different situations in which young people become permanently or temporarily absent from where they are expected to be. Many of them are indeed trapped in highly marginal forms of existence that fuel crime and violence. But the classification also includes adolescents and young people who gave up studying or the chance to work in order to recreate the gender roles they learned in their childhood. Mostly poor and from rural areas, this group have returned home to act as family carers<sup>1</sup> upon completion of their basic education.

The one thing all these young people have in common is that they neither study nor work. The majority lead more or less active lives, in one way or another. For some, their right to education has been undermined. As for those young people who have indeed become apathetic or even dangerous, it must be remembered that they are also highly vulnerable themselves.

<sup>1</sup> For further discussion of this topic, visit: [www.siteal.iipe-oei.org](http://www.siteal.iipe-oei.org)



# Africa & informal apprenticeship

Strengthening informal training to improve pathways to decent work

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As a result of low levels of education and skills, only a small proportion of the potential workforce in the least developed countries (LDCs) can benefit from opportunities for highly skilled productive work. Training in the informal economy is the main way in which young people can acquire technical and occupational know-how.<sup>1</sup>

Informal apprenticeship (IA) is a written or oral training agreement under which a master craftsman provides an apprentice with training in all skills relevant to a trade. The former offers training to the apprentice in a workshop, who in turn contributes productively to the business activity concerned. The agreement is embedded in social norms and tradition reinforced by reputation, social sanctions or reciprocity. Costs and benefits are shared.

IA may result in an undue emphasis on traditional technologies, as well as in training of variable quality, the exploitation of

apprentices, and a bias towards male-dominated trades. But its strengths and potential value outweigh its weaknesses. Apprentices learn skills relevant to local market demand and are involved in real production processes. They are also introduced to a business culture and networks, which makes it easier for them to find jobs or start businesses when they graduate.

Apprenticeship systems predominate in many African countries. In Senegal, some 400,000 young people occupy apprenticeships annually, compared to around 7,000 graduates from formal vocational training centres. IA accounts for almost 90% of all training for trades in Benin, Senegal and Cameroon.<sup>2</sup> West African countries such as Benin, Ghana, Togo, Senegal and Mali are restructuring Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems to incorporate traditional apprenticeships, including certification mechanisms. They are introducing complementary training courses, setting standards and starting to recognize assessments by business associations.

## Moving forward and improving the system

Efforts are under way in some countries to improve the system by supplementing workplace learning with more structured institutional learning, and by upgrading the skills of master craftspeople. Among other measures to consolidate the system are the involvement of business associations (e.g. through the introduction of standardized assessment), the development of standardized contracts, the inclusion of literacy/numeracy training and “livelihood skills”, and the strengthening of community involvement.

Upgrading informal apprenticeship can boost the skills base of a country and improve its growth and development potential. In comparison with training in the centre-based formal TVET system, training in an enterprise-based apprenticeship system is more cost-effective, since it is an integral part of the production process. The investment in it is shared between master craftsman and apprentice, so that even poor young people can access it. ■

<sup>1</sup> Africa Commission. 2009. Realising the Potential of Africa's Youth: Report of the Africa Commission 2009, available at: [www.um.dk](http://www.um.dk)

<sup>2</sup> OECD. 2008. Africa Economic Outlook 2008.

# The waste of talent in South Africa

A need to focus more on post-school investment

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In 2007 in South Africa, 2.8 million 18–24-year-olds (out of a total population of 48 million) were classified as being “not in education, employment or training” (or, NEET).<sup>1</sup> Almost 1 million pupils needed multiple second-chance opportunities to complete school, while 800,000 who had obtained a final school leaving certificate required further education and training, and 1 million sought various employment, training and youth service opportunities. And the situation is not improving, since the latest survey suggests that the NEET figure now stands at 3.5 million!

This situation not only reflects a critical waste of talent but the possibility of serious social disruption. Indeed a high proportion of young people were involved in the service delivery protests that hit the country in 2010.

## Lack of educational opportunities

Almost 1 million students leave school on completing grade 10 rather than grade 12. They represent an enormous waste of educational resources and also seem to be those most vulnerable to unemployment. They are clearly in need of a wide variety of “second chance” school opportunities, which should definitely include expansion of the further, or post-school education sector.

Arguably even more alarming is the plight of the 750 000 students who complete grade 12 but are then unable to enhance their

education any further. In terms of educational efficiency, they represent both a shocking “wastage of educational investment” and a missed opportunity, given that the South African Labour and Development Research Unit noted a marked increase in the rate of return on any form of post-school investment.

## Exploring possible solutions

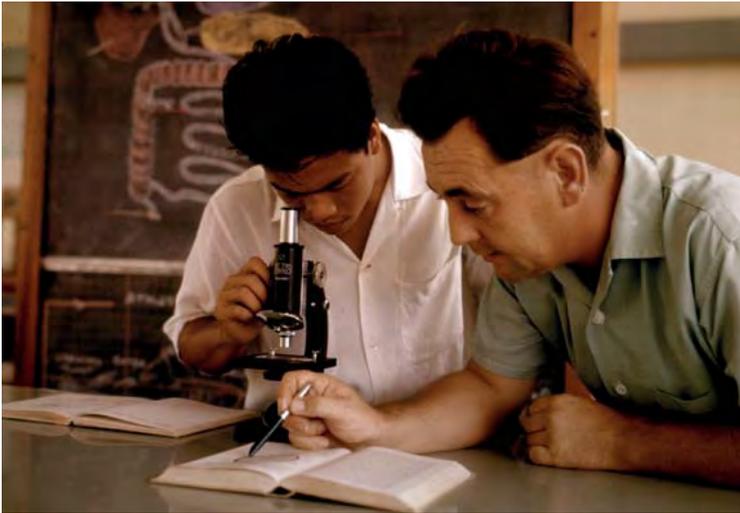
South Africa, like most other sub-Saharan African countries, has no significant post-school college sector linked to training schemes and employment opportunities. Although this kind of sector would potentially cater for “post-secondary” students, the present public higher education system (with some 800,000 enrolments) would have to be doubled in size to accommodate them. Such a sector could not therefore serve as a college system for university access, as the universities would not have the physical and human resources to cope with the influx.

The government will also have to seriously consider the development of a post-school private sector, because – here as elsewhere in Africa – the state simply lacks the resources for an exclusively public system which meets the entire demand.

Neither, finally, should one overlook the 1 million young people who require an extensive range of opportunities including short-term training, internships, public works programmes and youth service. Here too the state will have to devise a coordinated response on the part of all government departments involved. ■

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<sup>1</sup> Household survey by Statistics South Africa that led to the publication: *Responding to the Educational Needs of Post-School Youth*, 2009, CHET ([www.chet.org.za](http://www.chet.org.za)).



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# Making youth employable

Keeping pace with a changing world by strengthening ties with the labour market

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Universities are seen as repositories of valuable human capital, and higher education as a key sector for promoting social and economic development. The accelerating shift to a high-technology and information economy further pressurizes the higher education system into preparing a competent workforce to meet changing demands for labour.

While tertiary education enrolment increased fivefold from 28.6 million in 1970 to 152.2 million in 2007,<sup>1</sup> global unemployment soared by 34 million from 2007 to 2009,<sup>2</sup> thus creating a highly competitive environment for young people. In 2009, there were 80.7 million young people looking for work, an increase of 7.8 million since 2007.<sup>3</sup> A reduction in the number of jobs is certainly an issue, but supply-side factors are not the only dynamic in play.

“We’re living in a time of rapid technology and labour market change. Employers and

industries need people with creative and higher-order thinking skills. Young people, especially those who enter the job market for the first time, have to keep pace with these changes,” noted Gwang-Jo Kim, Director of the UNESCO Asia and the Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, in Bangkok, Thailand.

But how do they keep pace with the changes and remain competitive in a knowledge-based, globalized economy? These questions are critical as countries continue to address rising youth unemployment.

## Distortion of perspectives

Supported by the Japanese Funds-in-Trust, UNESCO Bangkok initiated a study to examine the employability of university graduates in China, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines in 2009. The results demonstrated a distortion of perspectives among graduates, universities and employers.

Graduates generally believed their education and skills were sufficient. The universities declared their students to be well prepared for the transition to the workplace. Unfortunately, the employers concluded that new graduates lacked vital skills for employment, citing unrealistic expectations and demands for higher salaries as examples.

The oversupply of graduates in some fields was not properly addressed. Students enrolled in over-subscribed programmes, leading to a glut of graduates unable to find jobs in their areas of specialization, such as nursing and information technology in the Philippines. The lack of work experience, particularly in the cutting-edge industries of the IT sector, was another factor tending to limit graduate employment prospects. Faced with these difficulties, many ended up underemployed or employed in areas for which they were not trained.

## Ways to reduce the gap

It is crucial for job-seekers to cultivate those qualities most sought after by employers, in addition to knowledge and work experience. These are what the researchers classified as

<sup>1</sup> UNESCO-UIS. 2009. *Global Education Digest 2009. Comparing Education Statistics Across the World*. UIS, Montreal.

<sup>2</sup> ILO. 2010. *Global Employment Trends*. January 2010. ILO, Geneva.

<sup>3</sup> ILO. 2010. *Global Employment Trends for Youth*. August 2010. ILO, Geneva.

“++ factors”: they included motivation, an ability to think “outside the box”, problem-solving and communication skills, and an ability to work both as part of a team and independently. It was also vital that graduates liable to work in many different jobs and industries throughout their entire career should constantly improve and update their skills, and be willing to learn new technologies. Any sign that they possessed some of these qualities might persuade employers to offer them jobs.

In economies with limited job opportunities, entrepreneurship is seen as a viable option for new graduates to chart their own future by setting up their own businesses. To overcome barriers such as the shortage of start-up funds, insufficient knowledge of business practices and lack of motivation, it is necessary to design courses for entrepreneurship, organize

extracurricular activities, and provide government support and funding as further encouragement.

Linkages between universities and industries offering work-based projects and internships can also help universities to acquire valuable information to update their curricula, and students to gain practical work experience. Employers need to facilitate on-the-job training, particularly for specific skills or new applications and technologies.

Finally, the onus is not just on governments, educational institutions and employers to provide employment. Young people also have a responsibility to prepare themselves for a changing world by improving their knowledge and skills to meet the demands of employers and the realities of the workplace. ■

## The case of graduate employability in Malaysia

In 2007, a total of 168,880 students graduated from Malaysian universities. In 2008, 86,434 graduated with a bachelor's degree. A large proportion of them remain unemployed. The percentage of new graduates looking for jobs fell from 31% in 2006 to 24% in 2008.

Job-seekers cited the shortage of jobs as one reason for being unemployed. This was disputed by employers who attributed graduate unemployment to a lack of generic skills and serious inadequacy in terms of work-related competences.

In revisiting the role of the university as a centre for developing intellectual, creative and other higher-level skills, as opposed to supplying workers for industry, universities have been accused of producing unemployable graduates.

To tackle this issue, the Ministry of Higher Education has moved to introduce entrepreneurship into conventional subject courses by revising the curriculum to include small business management, analytical skills, team work and proficiency in English. This will reportedly be an uphill struggle. Graduates and academics alike believe that, while universities can organize extracurricular programmes and activities to help students improve their social and interpersonal skills, such skills cannot be easily taught at university.

However, while there is broad agreement on the need for changes in “curriculum alignment”, the emphasis and priorities differ. Employers want universities to move away from “irrelevant” subjects and focus instead on training students for the demands of the workplace. Academics partly agree with this, but also warn against the danger of neglecting the key contribution of universities to political, social, cultural and community development and transformation.

Furthermore, responsibility for nurturing qualities identified with “employability” lies with the entire education system, from pre-school to tertiary levels. This calls for better planning and coordination among all education providers in preparing and motivating young people to become responsible and productive citizens.



# The “Arab spring”: a youth revolution

Seeking paths to  
better days for  
future generations

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The protest movements (in Egypt, Syrian Arab Republic, Bahrain, Yemen and Saudi Arabia) and unrest (in Algeria, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco and Tunisia) that have recently shaken the Maghrib and Middle East should be seen as part of a universal current, not an exceptional phenomenon. They may be best understood within the context of a world struggling towards the universally shared needs of freedom, law and welfare. Indeed, these events should be viewed as the logical extension of the changes that European countries have experienced in recent decades, first of all with the end of the fascist dictatorships, then the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet bloc.

Upheaval in the Middle East persists after several months of unrest and violence. Many are already wondering what kind of democratic future the young people who have been the mainspring of the “Arab” uprising will offer their societies. This question arises

just as some European countries (notably Greece and Spain) are, in turn, experiencing a revolt of “the indignant” which is assuming international proportions.

## The young protagonists of change

The rebellious movements witnessed in the region are the outcome both of the anachronism of political systems and the demand for more democratic and egalitarian societies. They are driven by young people who have made the street their battleground. Indeed, the baby boom has given young people numerical supremacy, while school and university have empowered them to protest. Combined with the progress achieved in school education and the training of university graduates, which have done much to fuel the hopes and expectations of young people, the discontent and unemployment affecting the majority of them have led them to challenge those in power and transform rebellions for “bread” into rebellions for welfare.

Access to fresh visions of the future, through globalization of the media and computer networks, has nurtured among societies and particularly young people hopes associated with needs that are becoming increasingly universal. Fascinated by developed societies, young people are constantly seeking improved welfare not just in material terms but intellectually and culturally.

However, the confidence deficit is strong among Arab youth. They believe neither in the political establishment, which has proved ineffectual, nor in opposition parties, which are considered impotent. Discredited information has led to a lack of trust in official media outlets which are accused of disinformation and manipulation. Instead, young people have reclaimed new forms of expression in politics and in dissidence and have substituted traditional sources of communication with their own alternative social networks. This confidence deficit has also resulted in traditional values being called into question with a stark alternative for young people – exile or revolt.

## Youth in search of a model for the future

Like Arab nationalism faced with the hard truth of pluralistic interests, Islamism appears incapable of delivering what young people are expecting in their plans for the future, however prominently it may sometimes feature in slogans. From their universalistic perspective, young people are attracted by three models vying for supremacy in the future of these regions. First, the Western model, which has infected the imagination of youth but which is still viewed contradictorily as both attractive and repugnant. Indeed, for young people who seek social and economic progress, Western values can conflict with their identity, creating uncertainty and unease. Second, the Turkish model, which by combining the secularism inherited from the Kemalist era and “moderate” Islamic opinion, has for now managed to reconcile the political system with its society. However this model, which is concerned about its European future and whose economic success is acknowledged, lacks visibility in Arabic Islamic societies. Third, the Iranian model, which, though for some an iconic expression of confrontation with the West, no longer appears to represent for youth a social and cultural system consistent with their view of freedom. This model falls short of the expectations of young people who have opted for a society free from prohibition (a recent symbolic example is that of Saudi women demonstrating against the driving ban imposed on them).

Any model intended to offer approaches geared to current real-life circumstances and to safeguard the future must inevitably take into account the needs and hopes of a generation of young people who have already pointed the way towards a new political vision. The reforms that they agree to go



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along with will be those that give them greater freedom, ensuring that states act constitutionally and that societies are egalitarian. These are general but fundamental principles. ■



# Empowerment in the Arab World

How Arab youth will change societies

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Faeqa Saeed ALSaleh ▲ Advisor to the Secretary General of League of Arab States, Director of Education and Scientific Research and Former IIEP Trainee (2001)

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The quality of education in the Arab World has greatly improved in recent years, and a large proportion of Arab young people have benefited from opportunities to acquire new skills. With these opportunities have come individual development and a determination to make personal choices.

The recent revolutions in Arab countries expressed the social and political aspirations of young people. They were echoed in Amre Moussa's speech at the Youth Forum held on 18 January 2011 in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt: "70% of our societies are youth under 30 years old. This holds within it a possibility of a positive transfer in the Arab world, if it is invested in the right way through the right economic and social policies, and through youth participation in all fields of life. I consider this a smart investment in the future," said the then Secretary General of the League of Arab States, several weeks after the beginning of the Tunisian revolution.

## Politics for a new society

Arab young people represent a great "demographic opportunity", but educating them brings many challenges: numbers enrolled at all levels of education are still low; women and the poor in rural areas are disadvantaged; the gap between marginalized groups and those accessing education is continuously widening; and equal opportunities are far from being achieved. Current educational policies need to be assessed and changed to comply with the principles of social justice, the rights of citizenship and investment in the resources of youth as demanded by the protestors.

Accordingly, the question of how to educate young people should be at the top of the policy agenda of Arab countries in the period ahead. Besides being a humanitarian or social concern, the empowerment of youth may also be seen as an issue with economic, political and developmental implications for the advancement and civilization of Arab societies. Failure to address young people's demands or to implement sustainable educational policies would have serious repercussions for the future of the Arab community. Indeed the current situation could deteriorate still further.

Empowering youth through education is a goal intrinsically linked to reform processes and to the economic and social development of which education is one aspect and to which it contributes. Empowerment is only possible with clear educational aims, such as the provision of primary education for all, as well as opportunities for secondary and tertiary education. But it also calls for a new vision of society, which should be shaped by political organizations and civic communities whose members are actively involved in providing Arab societies with adequate living conditions and a meaningful political and economic dimension.

This new vision should be based on values of self-reliance, social justice and civic participation, along with the principles of freedom and true democracy. ■



# Let children connect to shape their future

Looking beyond traditional learning processes

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The international community is seeking to achieve universal basic education for children at the very least and, ultimately, for adults too. Yet the feasibility of this goal remains open to question. Do education and literacy require a radical and fundamental rethink? Are the right goals being targeted? Are we certain about our commitments?

Education is supposed to enhance employability. Are we educated merely to be employable or is there more to it? The principle that education exists to serve employability is linked to the notion of its usefulness, in that educated adults have acquired the ability to earn a living and thereby satisfy their needs. From this angle, one might conclude that it is pointless pursuing the seemingly unachievable goals of universal basic education and

literacy for young people, because the school curriculum is of little practical use in getting a job and earning a living. It is reasonable to ask whether conventional educational content as embodied in the “three Rs” of reading, writing and arithmetic is relevant to the daily lives and experience of many children. They face basic barriers to learning concepts and constructs as presented in books.

## Going beyond literacy

The world is becoming increasingly interconnected with the distribution of computers to children, as in the “One Laptop per Child” programme which enables them to see, hear, talk and even play with their foreign counterparts in different countries. One basic aim of education should be to help those with little sense of their social identity to evolve into adults in which this sense is much stronger. This might be viewed as a modern version of an aboriginal “initiation ritual”, transformed into a public educational process of contextualization. “Text” is the key element of “con-text”, which is to say that text is the tool for contextualization. Text can now include digital symbols in Internet spaces that allow people to connect with each other.

Education in the digital era will go beyond the acquisition of literacy to encompass individual connections throughout the world. These can create a new world with the process of collective intelligence. At present, the conventional view of education is too narrowly focused on books and complicated texts. The time has come for everyone, including those with a lack of connections and communication skills as well as policy-makers and philosophers, to work together and create a new future with all kinds of tools that mobilize all the senses and sensibilities of human beings, rather than just logical, deductive or text-based connections. The resources of education should not be limited solely to school buildings, teachers and textbooks. ■



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## Analysing the experience of Romania

In 2004, the Romanian Ministry of Education launched a subsidy programme for the purchase of home computers. To date, the programme has awarded over 200,000 vouchers worth € 200 (some US\$ 300) to low-income students enrolled in Romania's public-sector schools.

A 2008 follow-up survey of programme applicants revealed that home computer use has both positive and negative effects on children's attainment. Indeed, those in households who won a voucher had significantly lower school grades. By contrast, the same children had significantly higher scores in a test of computer skills and in self-reported measures of computer fluency. There is also some evidence that winning a voucher increased cognitive ability, as measured by a Raven's Progressive Matrices test. These results may not be so surprising, given that few parents or children reported having educational software installed on their computer, and few children said they used the computer for homework or other educational purposes. Instead, most computers had games installed and children reported that they spent most of their computer time playing them. Indeed, winning a computer voucher meant less time spent on homework, watching TV and reading.

The survey also highlights the key part played by parents in determining the impact of home computer use on the attainment of children and adolescents. Where parents insisted that they did their homework properly the effects of winning a computer voucher were less negative. Since computers represent such a versatile technology, their potential risks and benefits are likely to depend on the availability of different types of software and how they are used in practice. Parents can play an active role in selecting software, supervising their children, and setting rules on computer use and homework. Such findings also raise questions about the implementation of recent extensive efforts to increase the access of disadvantaged children to computers worldwide, without paying sufficient attention to this critical issue of parental oversight. ■

# The impact of home computers

How they are affecting children's attainment and what parents should be doing about it

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Ofer Malamud ▲ Assistant Professor - Harris School of Public Policy - University of Chicago

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With significant differences in access to home computers both within and between countries, many government and non-governmental organizations are trying to narrow the "digital divide". For example, the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) programme has received substantial publicity in its efforts to develop a cheap laptop computer suitable for children in developing countries. Uruguay has recently completed its Plan Ceibal by providing a free OLPC laptop to every primary school child, while other countries such as Peru have also distributed hundreds of thousands of computers. Even in cases in which these computers are provided for school use, they are often intended also to serve as home computers.

Yet, these efforts to increase children's access to computers are being pursued in the absence of conclusive evidence regarding their precise effect on educational attainment.

*A forthcoming paper on "Home Computer Use and the Development of Human Capital", including the example of the Romanian programme discussed in this article, is being published jointly by the author and Cristian Pop-Eleches of Columbia University (NYC) in The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 126:2, 2011.*

# IIEP helps to build the future of South Sudan

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The new Republic of South Sudan set ambitious goals for the political and economic development of the state. Education is regarded as a factor contributing to its consolidation.

The country currently faces high illiteracy levels, low (though rising) school enrolments, and mass youth unemployment. For example, 92% of women cannot read and write and only 27% of girls are in school. However, the enrolment of primary school age children doubled from 0.7 to 1.4 million between 2005 (the date of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement) and 2009.

Since the beginning of 2011, IIEP – with UNICEF funding – has been supporting the Ministry of Education (MoE) of the Government of South Sudan in drafting a 2011–15 Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) that reflects the goals set in the national outline, the South Sudan Development Plan.

## Designing an Education Sector Plan for 2011–15

Four of the ESSP priority programmes are:

- ▶ enhancing education quality,
- ▶ increasing access and improving efficiency of the educational system,
- ▶ enhancing literacy and alternative education,
- ▶ enhancing institutional and human capacity.

A fifth priority programme, expanding access to quality higher education, will be developed at a later stage with the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology.

IIEP collaboration with the MoE also includes the development of tools to conduct a capacity and strategy assessment at state level.

IIEP will continue to support the development and finalization of the post-Independence ESSP, including the development of a medium-term financial framework and capacity development strategy. ■

# Ethics and corruption in education programme: ongoing initiatives

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**ETHICS:** IIEP is committed to the promotion of dialogue between public authorities and teacher unions on codes of conduct for teachers. In May 2011, in partnership with the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Education and Education International (EI), IIEP organized a regional workshop on the topic in Seoul. This initiative follows other IIEP activities already conducted in this area: an international survey, the publication of guidelines (soon to be available in French) and the launch of a new website (<http://teachercodes.iiep.unesco.org>). An online forum on codes of conduct is shortly to be included on the IIEP website (see how to register on p. 19 of this *Newsletter*).

**CORRUPTION:** IIEP recently initiated seven case studies on the risks of corruption in the management of incentives schemes, such as conditional cash transfers, which aim to

encourage poor families to send their children to school. Comparative analysis of studies conducted in the Americas, Africa and Asia will generate useful lessons on how to minimize such risks. A first summary of results will be available by the end of 2011.

In July 2011, the Network of Education Policy Centers invited IIEP to participate in its Summer School (held in Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia) on “transparency in school management”. IIEP presented various tools for monitoring school expenditure (such as report cards) to the civil society participants.

IIEP continues to support the efforts of Member States in their fight against corruption, notably by setting up Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS). For further information on these topics, visit: [www.iiep.unesco.org/etico](http://www.iiep.unesco.org/etico) ■

# ATP Study Visit to the Republic of Korea



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## News of former IIEP trainees

### Career changes

**Luis Francisco Bonilla-Molina** (Venezuela), TCA 2001, was appointed Vice-Minister for Strategic Planning at the Ministry of the People's Power for Higher Education in Venezuela.

**Pamoussa Ferdinand Compaore** (Burkina Faso), ATP 2003/04, was appointed Director of the Studies and Planning Department of Secondary and Higher Education.

**Abdulu Ngongo** (Democratic Republic of Congo), ATP 2005/06, was appointed Head of the Planning and Studies Division at the Department of Educational Planning and Statistics.

**Arnaldo Valente Nhavoto** (Mozambique), ATP 1981/82, was appointed Director of IICBA (UNESCO International Institute for Capacity-Building in Africa).

**Margarita Luaces** (Uruguay), TCA 2001, assumed duties as Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies (IPES) in Montevideo, Uruguay.

**Yasmina Rauseo Rojas** (Venezuela), TCA 2000, was appointed Director-General of the Autonomous National Service for Comprehensive Attention to Childhood and the Family (SENIFA) in Caracas, Venezuela.

## For further information

on former IIEP trainees, subscribe to the IIEP Alumni Network by writing to: [alumni-anciens@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:alumni-anciens@iiep.unesco.org)

Thanks to its rapid economic development and democratization, the Republic of Korea successfully evolved from a poor recipient country to an industrialized donor nation with a sound well-developed education system. Indeed, according to the last OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), its education system is today one of the most advanced and successful in the developed countries.

It was thus a great opportunity for the 22 participants enrolled in the 46th ATP session to be invited by the Korean Government to learn more about its education system. Hosted and financed by the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), and implemented in cooperation with the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI), the study visit took place from 17 April to 1 May 2011.<sup>1</sup>

The three themes central to the programme were teacher policy, the universalization of tertiary education and ICT in education. Participants heard lectures by education experts and authorities from Korean national institutions, and were able to visit different institutions to gain a greater understanding of how the Korean education system functioned. The programme also included the preparation of three group reports by participants, which summarized what they learned during the visit

and suggested possible projects for cooperation between Korea and their own countries.

At the end of the study visit, participants were highly satisfied with their experience, which they found both instructive and motivating. Inspired by the “miracle on the Han River”, they returned home with many hopes and ideas for the implementation of reforms to improve their own national education systems. ■

Further information on the study visit, including the views of participants, is available at: [www.iiep.unesco.org](http://www.iiep.unesco.org)

<sup>1</sup> The Republic of Korea also hosted and financed the study visit of the previous ATP session in 2010.

# Upcoming activities

## September

### 14-15 September

**International Forum** on Secondary Education for All: purposes, learning and policies.

Buenos Aires, Argentina

**Contact:** emilio@iipe-buenosaires.org.ar

### 19 September – 11 November

**Distance course** on Micro-planning and school mapping (In French)

**Contact:** microplanification@iiep.unesco.org

### 28-30 September

**Sub-regional Seminar** on Household Expenditure for Education and Fee-Free Policies

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Contact:** seminar.addis@iiep.unesco.org

## October

### 3-4 October

**Policy Forum** on Gender Equality in Education: Looking beyond parity

IIEP, Paris, France

**Contact:** policyforum2011@iiep.unesco.org

### 3 October – 2 December

**Distance course** on Using indicators in the planning of higher education (in French)

**Contact:** indicatorsup@iiep.unesco.org

### 19-21 October

**ANTRIEP Policy Seminar** on Public education and the role of private and non-governmental actors (hosted by NUEPA, organized by ANTRIEP)

New Delhi, India

**Contact:** a.de-grauwe@iiep.unesco.org

### 22-23 October

Thirteenth Session of the **SACMEQ Managing Committee** and Eighth session of the SACMEQ Assembly of Ministers.

IIEP, Paris, France

**Contact:** d.makuwa@iiep.unesco.org

## November

### 21 November – 2 December

**Online Forum** on Teacher Codes of Conduct (in English)

**Contact:** eforum@iiep.unesco.org

## January 2012

**Policy Seminar** on Improving School Financing: The use and usefulness of school grants

Venue to be confirmed

**Contact:** c.lugaz@iiep.unesco.org

## IIEP Policy Forum on Gender Equality in Education (3-4 October, Paris)

According to the *UNESCO Global Monitoring Report (GMR)*, three-fifths of the world's poorest people are women and girls, while two-thirds of illiterate adults are women. The gender equality issue in education has been a major concern in many countries for several reasons. Despite commitments to gender-related international goals, the GMR confirms that girls continue to represent the majority of out-of-school children (UNESCO, 2011).

With this in mind, IIEP is organizing a Policy Forum in Paris that will focus on ways of promoting gender equality in education at:

- **School and classroom levels:** this will include an analysis of gender differences in student achievement. The forum will consider possible explanations of gender inequality in learning achievement and discuss strategies related to classroom practice, pedagogy, the school environment, and family support which improve the learning achievement of both boys and girls.

- **Institutional level:** this will include an analysis of gender equality in leadership. The Forum will discuss the enabling factors and obstacles which face women in several countries and affect their ability to achieve senior leadership positions in the public sector, especially in education.

Besides UNESCO's Gender Equality Division, several organizations deeply involved in gender equality are partners of the project, including Africa-Asia University Dialogue for Educational Development, the Aga Khan Foundation, the Confemen, FAWE, JICA, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OECD, SACMEQ, UNGEI and UNICEF.

Further information is available online at:  
<http://genderpolicyforum.wordpress.com>

# IIEP Publications

All IIEP publications can be downloaded free of charge at:  
[www.iiep.unesco.org/publications](http://www.iiep.unesco.org/publications)

## Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction

### On the Road to Resilience: Capacity development with the Ministry of Education in Afghanistan

Morten Sigsgaard (Ed.)  
2011, 206 pp. ISBN 978-92-803-1355-0



This book investigates the challenges that war-torn Afghanistan faces in rebuilding its education sector. Case studies of capacity development partnerships between Afghanistan's Ministry of Education and two UN agencies, an NGO consortium, and an education donor, explore efforts to strengthen the country's education system. Key lessons highlighted, include: the importance of high-level political backing; building trusting partnerships; focusing on institutional development, and, sustaining education aid in order to achieve national development objectives. Price: €12

## Ethics and Corruption in Education

### Patterns of Development and Use of Codes of Conduct for Teachers in 24 Countries

Pippa McKelvie-Sebileau; Project coordinated by Muriel Poisson  
2011, 44 pp. e-publication



This study presents the results of an international survey on codes of conduct for teachers across 24 countries in five continents with a view to provide assistance to countries interested in designing and implementing codes of conduct for educational personnel. The major findings include: perspectives on the purpose of a code; its intended users; its content, design, implementation, and distribution (and problems encountered during these different phases); and its overall impact.

## Management Reform for EFA

### Strengthening Local Actors: The path to decentralizing education Kenya, Lesotho, Uganda

Anton De Grauwe & Candy Lugaz; with Tiberius Barasa, Pulane J. Lefoka, Mathabo Tsepa, Samuel Kayabwe & Wilson Asimwe  
2011, 164 pp. ISBN 978-92-803-1356-7

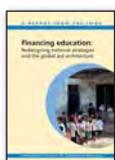


Many countries have taken the path of decentralization, for different motives but with the common objective of a more effective education system and improved quality. In order to better understand the challenges and identify strategies for successful implementation of this policy at local level, IIEP has undertaken a research project in three countries of Eastern and Southern Africa. This book analyzes the main lessons learnt, with specific attention given to the commonalities and differences observed. Price: €12

## International Cooperation

### Financing Education: Redesigning national strategies and the global aid architecture

A Report from the IWGE (International Working Group on Education)  
2011, 212 pp. ISBN 978-92-803-1357-4



This report provides an overview of the presentations, discussions, and recommendations of the IWGE meeting held in June 2010. Among the issues discussed were: trends in the financing of education; intra-sectoral re-allocation of resources; the role of education aid in financing education; the implications of the financial crisis on educational development; national strategies; and, the global aid architecture. Price: €12

## IIEP Policy Forum Report

### Tertiary Education in Small States: Planning in the context of globalization

Michaela Martin & Mark Bray (Eds)  
2011, 287 pp. ISBN 978-92-803-1358-1

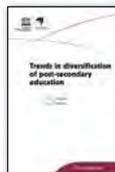


This publication takes stock of recent changes and reforms in the tertiary education sector in small states, including rapidly growing enrolments, a diversification of the institutional fabric, the use of technology-based and networked models and the emergence of cross-border providers. It presents selected regional and national experiences from different development contexts and concludes with a discussion of crucial policy issues to overcome the constraints and turn them into advantages. Price: €12

## IIEP Research Paper

### Trends in Diversification of Post-secondary Education

N. V. Varghese & Vitus Püttmann  
2011, 33 pp. e-publication



A growing demand for higher education has led to its diversification and the rapid expansion of the non-university sector. Post-secondary education (PSE) includes a varied system of institutions, providers and study programmes. Based on a review of PSE in several countries, this paper advocates the need to diversify PSE and cater to immediate skills requirements, but also to reinforce and protect the contribution of higher education to the long-term goals of economic development and social equity.

## IIEP Series on Indicators

### Constructing an Indicator System or Scorecard for Higher Education: A practical guide

Michaela Martin & Claude Sauvageot; Project coordinated by Bertrand Tchatchoua  
2011, 87 pp. ISBN 978-92-803-1329-1



Higher education systems are undergoing reforms and institutions are required to develop their own policies, engage in strategic planning and demonstrate the results achieved. They therefore need to strengthen their management capacity, information systems and monitoring tools. An indicator system is becoming an indispensable management and communication tool. This publication represents a useful methodological guide to help education planners realize an indicator project. Price: €10

## IIEP Education Policy Series

### Gender and Social Exclusion

by Marlaine Lockheed  
Education Policy Series No. 12  
2010, 28 pp. ISBN 978-92-803-1343-7



This booklet is about the combined effects of gender and social exclusion on student participation and performance in basic education. It addresses a number of questions in order to help countries to adopt education policies and practices targeted at girls from socially excluded groups.