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Beyond Primary Education:
Challenges and Approaches to Expanding Learning Opportunities in Africa

Session 3
Presentations **on the Analytical Work** **on Post-Primary Education**

General Synthesis Report

Pulling the Pieces...Together

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Draft

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Chapter 1 – A conceptual framework for reviewing post-primary education

by Wim Hoppers

1.01   This chapter aims to explore the terrain of 'post-primary education' (PPE) and to develop a framework within which this part of education can be reviewed and its potential for growth assessed. It is divided into three parts. The first will look at the overall nature and extent of post-primary education as it has come to manifest itself in the African environment. The second will address the substance of education and training at this level, raising issues regarding learning and teaching, the new directions for PPE development in meeting learning needs and their underlying principles. Finally, the third section addresses the institutional landscape of post-primary education, the variations of organisational forms that have emerged over time and the issues that these raise for its future development.

We regard such conceptual framework to be important for three reasons:
(1)   It can assist towards stimulating debate and policy development that reaches beyond conventional boundaries and categories.
(2)   It can help open up new avenues for the planning of strategic interventions.
(3)   It may point to new policy directions that reflect African priorities and perspectives.

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1.   What is post-primary education?

1.02   The concept of post-primary education used to frame the analytical work for the Biennale is an integrated one. It focuses on learning opportunities made available to children and young people having completed primary schooling or equivalent. Thus it is in principle on all *education and training beyond primary education*. In this context PPE also includes higher education, involving both universities and higher professional training institutions, and is thus taken to be open-ended. As regards the beneficiary side, the target age group starts at 11-12 years; but in the perspective of the conceptual approach taken no restrictive upper limit to the age group focus is applicable.

Holistic perspective
1.03   The above means that PPE is approached from a *holistic and comprehensive* view of the *totality of learning opportunities* available after the ages of 11 and12. These include those generally ascribed to particular 'sub-sectors', such as lower and upper secondary education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), non-formal education, non-formal skills development, tertiary education, distance education. It also extends to opportunities beyond the confines of the conventional 'education system', such as faith-based education, informal sector apprenticeships, work-based training, life skills development and *E*-learning'.

1.04   Such holistic view is considered essential, not only because in current reality young people who have access to PPE find themselves learning through different programs, but also because it is unlikely that any time soon one type of post-primary institution can absorb the entire eligible age-group. Policy-making and planning must, therefore, take cognizance of a diversity of inter-related pathways that cater for learning needs at PPE level in a manner that suits prevailing circumstances of the intended beneficiaries.

Basic and post-basic education

1.05   Given the choice of sub-themes, the Biennale will effectively consider ways and means to enhance the two major components of PPE: (1) the extension of '*basic education*' from 6-7 years of primary education to *8-9 years of basic education for all* (thus combining 'lower basic education' with 'upper basic education' within one and the same program of learning) and (2) the further development of a coherent and integrated '*post-basic education and training system*'. The use of the term '*basic*' intends to denote an inclusive approach to learning opportunities and modes of delivery. It also refers to that part of education that is considered essential for everyone.

1.06   According to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 'basic education' encompasses primary and lower secondary grades (1-9). In this classification 'non-formal education' (NFE) is an entirely separate category. In Africa, however, in the majority of countries basic education consists of a cycle of less than nine years of schooling, while forms of NFE effectively contribute to the expansion of 'formal education'.

1.07   For the purpose of the Biennale it is recognized that the starting point for reflection and policy formation in PPE should lie with the *current realities of education and training* on the ground, and the *demands and needs* of children, young people and their communities for high-quality, relevant and responsive learning opportunities that provide equal opportunity in life for all. Other starting points include a shared vision associated with accepted common principles like *democracy, equity, human rights and non-discrimination*. Beyond these, there are also principles associated with relations between inputs and results: costs in relation to *affordability* and *fiscal sustainability*; learning outcomes in relation to *quality of inputs and process*; and *external efficiency*.

1.08   Figure 3.1 illustrates the current realities of progressive exclusion in education. It represents a cross sectional model by grade of participation which locates those who are losing or have lost access to conventional education systems. It indicates how typically enrolments decline steeply through the primary grades in low enrolment countries, and how those attending irregularly and achieving poor results fall into "at risk Zones" (CREATE, in Lewin, 2007).

Figure 3.1: CREATE Zones of exclusion by grade of participation
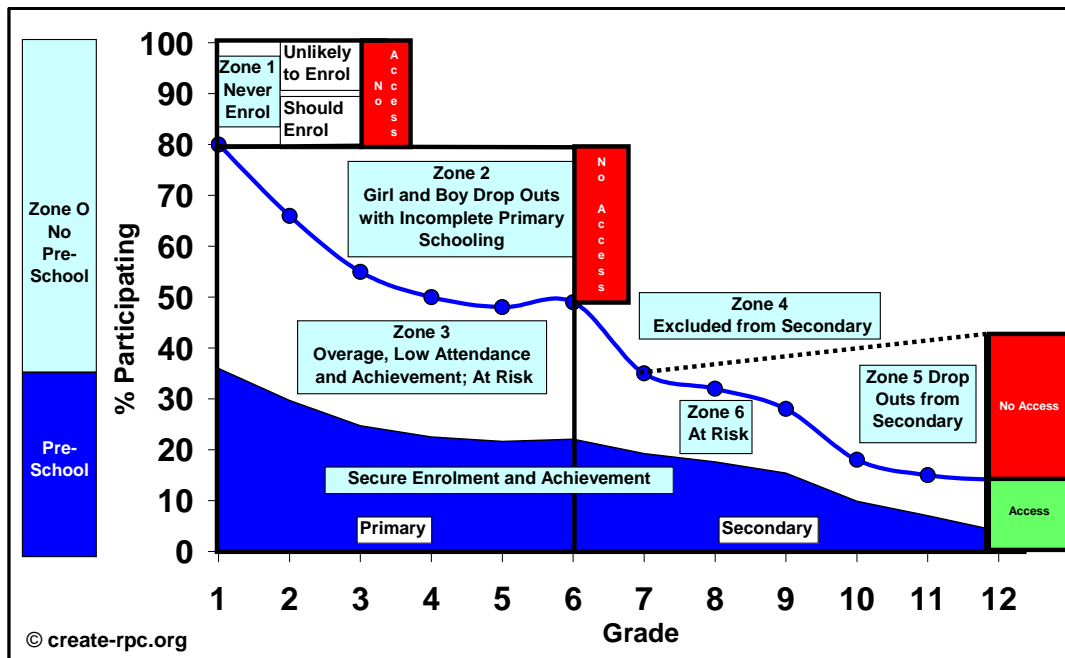
Source: CREATE Research Program, IDS Sussex, UK, 2008

1.09   While it is recognized that ideally all children should have access to nine years of 'formal' schooling following the current models of provision, the reality is that most young people have had to do with a wide variety of *other learning opportunities* (of informal and non-formal type) to receive basic education, much of which focuses more on skills training than on cognitive development. In spite of great efforts through EFA in many countries only a *minority* reaches the point that according to official regulations they can start benefiting from formal PPE opportunities. There is much *unfinished business of the current EFA agenda* that cannot be ignored in the effort to expand PPE. Thus the expansion of secondary education supply will have to go together with targeting specific groups that still lack access to primary education (SEIA, 2007; UNESCO, 2005).

1.10   This expansion will also have to acknowledge that large numbers of young people in their adolescent years who should be benefiting from 'upper basic education' (at secondary level) are actually still struggling to complete 'lower basic education' (primary school) or receive only a minimal amount of attention through incomplete skills development programs of one type or another.

The following needs to be underscored:
- In Africa on average only 65% of learners who enter first grade complete their primary education, and out of these only 60% enter LSE; thus only a minority of primary leavers enters formal secondary education.
- In many countries a majority of learners never complete primary education, especially girls, rural and disadvantaged children.
- Secondary GER is still relatively low, reaching 30% of the age group by 2004; inter-country differences remain significant.
- Secondary education remains largely inaccessible for rural youngsters, especially girls.
- Formal vocational training has remained largely a provision for boys only.
- 90% of young people receive their skills training in the informal sector.

(Sources: SEIA, 2007; Walther, 2008)

1.11   At a higher level, '*post-basic*' education and training starts with forms of 'upper secondary' education, referring to all types of education and training beyond lower secondary (or 'upper basic education'). This definition is problematic, as the notion of upper secondary tends to vary from country to country. Thus, it tends to be more convenient to speak of upper secondary being the final segment of secondary education before entry into employment, into higher-level technical or professional training, or into higher education.

1.12   It should also be acknowledged that, although upper secondary refers in the first instance to 'formal schooling', access to university and other institutions of higher education is not confined to students from formal education, as it is increasingly widening to include those with non-formal, technical and informal learning and experiences.

1.13   Higher education consists of all types of post-upper secondary school education and training offered by universities and non-university tertiary institutions such as polytechnics, professional training institutions and colleges of further education (Kinyanjui & Afeti, 2008). Like at secondary level, where a greater diversity of learning opportunities at the tertiary level has been achieved inter-linkages between these tend to be absent, thus emphasizing the need for a holistic approach with attention to efficiency and complementarity.

Diversity
1.14   There are two major *challenges of transition* in PPE. One concerns how the transition from a conventional primary cycle into a continued upper level of basic education can be managed in such way that all children can benefit from a high-quality and complete cycle of basic education. The other is about how opportunities for higher education can be shaped in such way that they can optimally respond to the cognitive and social profiles of graduates from upper secondary education and training, while remaining true to their own mission and the intellectual demands of their programs.

1.15   Consequently, there is the challenge of how other forms of delivery can assist in providing *multiple learning pathways* and *mixtures of general education and skills development* that offer cost-effective transitions from one level to the next. Ironically, as regards the transition from lower basic to upper basic education, a significant result of its improvement would be the very demise of the term 'post-primary education' and of its use as a policy category.

1.16   *Diversity* in basic and post-basic education is essential, partly in order to enable learners to have as complete an education as possible, partly in order to cater for the wide variation in children's and young people's life circumstances. It is recognized that for a long time to come conditions of cultural practices, widespread poverty, geographical distribution, ill health, and disability will prevent young men and women from attending conventional full-time schooling or further studies. They will thus depend on *flexible modes of delivery* as well as on adjustments in the total *mix of competencies* that constitute desirable outcomes for education that are relevant for their lives.

1.17   The notion of diversity is not only applicable to young people's circumstances and learning pathways, but also to the variation in PPE providers. The analytical framework used for the purpose of the Biennale recognizes that the state, while maintaining the ultimate responsibility for the education of all the nation's young people, can no longer be expected to carry this burden on its own. PPE provision already rests on the participation of multiple stakeholders in the development and implementation of programs, including civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and private education and training providers. In addition, partners at the national level increasingly work with education authorities at intermediate and at local levels, to which various public respon-

sibilities are being decentralized. This has already produced a variety of forms of *public-private partnerships*, defined as 'a form of agreement between public and private parties that contributes to achieving national educational goals' (Verspoor, 2008).

1.18   While in the past private schooling was rarely integrated into national education development strategies, presently this is increasingly the case. Also the boundaries between public and private are becoming blurred, as private institutions receive public subsidies and public institutions demand financial contributions; education services are often out-sourced. Often community schools are regarded as private institutions, as are NGO-run non-formal education programs. They may be subsidized from public funds or be recognized and fully integrated as distinct provisions for learning in the national system.

1.19   In the context of the challenge to manage a diversified system there are two major principles that can be regarded as giving critical significance: *equity* and *cost-effectiveness*. Equity as regards access to resources and access to the outcomes / benefits of an education cycle is vital, in order to adhere to the imperatives of democracy and human rights (World Development Report, 2007). Both aspects do not assume that institutions of all types and in all situations receive the same support; it points to the need to take all measures to ensure that learners, irrespective of background and circumstances, have the same chances to achieve a successful outcome (Scott & Yeld, 2008). This may imply providing compensatory support to categories of learners or institutions. It may also imply the need to establish funding norms per learner across different forms of education, adjusted to their real funding needs (Hoppers, 2008). Equity informs cost-effectiveness in the sense that it underlies the norms to be used as a basis for costing different types of education provision. Within this frame all provisions must be cost-effective, as costs must have a direct relation to the types of delivery required to achieve desired outcomes.

2.   The substance of education and training in PPE

Learning and teaching: the persistence of old patterns
1.20   It has often been argued that PPE in Africa has essentially remained an 'elitist' education, intended to select and prepare the best students for services in government administration and in the national economy. While many efforts are on record of post-independence governments trying to distribute quality opportunities for PPE more evenly across geographical and social/ ethnic divides, PPE up to the present has not become a 'mass education' system – save for more recent examples in secondary education, notably Zimbabwe in the 1980s and countries like South Africa, Botswana and Mauritius in the 1990s (WGESA, 2008; Chung, 2008).

1.21   Equally, the colonial heritage has continued to influence pedagogical regimes in PPE, with their teacher-centered learning organization, memory-based rote-learning, strong orientation towards examinations, externally-endorsed assessment practices, and their distance from national socio-economic priorities and from local and indigenous knowledge. This trend has prevailed in spite of the large numbers of extensive and high quality efforts made over the decades to adapt programs and teaching-learning styles in all curriculum areas, varying from science and technology, through history and social studies, to languages of instruction (Lolwane, 2008; WGESA, 2008; ERNESA, 2008).

1.22   A major divide that has remained is the one between *general academic education* and *technical and vocational education and training*. Many reform efforts in the past have not been able to improve much the image and status of the latter. Hence the enrolment percentages in formal TVET opportunities at post-primary level have remained very low. TVET has continued to be affected by

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a mixture of contextual and internal problems. The contextual ones are related to the poor economic and resource environment of the institutions, while the internal ones concern its capacity to adapt to economic changes, cater for diverse categories of learners (including women) and play a meaningful role in informal sector development (Atchoarena, 2007). Integration of academic and technical-vocational curricula is extremely difficult, in part because of associated high costs, in part because of the different dynamics of socio-economic demand.

1.23   At higher education level universities have come under fire for underestimating the intellectual and political processes of development and nation building that followed independence, and not querying the nature of the institutions and their link with European science traditions. It has been posited that the key to educational development lies in the social, cultural and contextual understanding of learning. Universities have a responsibility here as articulators of the African realities and as authentic knowledge producers, and thus help to create a pedagogy for assisting the African child on its cognitive journey and inspire active policy planning and implementation (Odora Hoppers, 2008; Mamdani, 1993).

1.24   The burdens on PPE left by the past have been exacerbated by new challenges to education that stem from socio-economic and political developments that in different degrees affect young people in all countries. These include increased poverty and social inequalities, the greater likelihood to be directly or indirectly affected by HIV/AIDS, the perceived diminishing relevance of secondary education as preparation for work and life, and the increased cost burdens of (privately) acquired skills that offer a decent income. Moreover in quite a few countries young people find themselves drawn into conflicts, often with disastrous results for themselves and their communities (World Development Report, 2007).

1.25   It is very common for young people, including girls to have to work in one way or another, in order to survive. Under the onslaught of globalization, labor mobility and aspirations to consume beyond traditional levels, young people become increasingly more autonomous, and 'craft their lives outside the traditional structures that adults favor' (Gaidzanwa, 2008; World Development Report, 2007).

1.26   Education itself is often an alienating experience. Currently there is a major incongruity between what society expects from the basic education process and what lower secondary schools actually offer. Young people are alienated from their social and cultural contexts by an education that is mostly academic exam-oriented, in spite of the fact that less than 10% will eventually make it to university education. It is often argued that young people are neither adequately prepared for access to further education nor for entering the world of work or for their social integration and personal development (UNESCO, 2005; Bhuwanee *et al*, 2008).

The drive to change

1.27   Current thinking on teaching and learning is much influenced by general principles of democracy, the need for sustainable development and social equity, and the need for education to meet individual as well as societal and economic needs. There is increased awareness that as schooling becomes more widespread education systems also need to recognize that students are becoming more diverse and may require more options for learning in keeping with their different interests and abilities (Word Development Report, 2007: 31).

1.28   This leads to an emphasis on an integrated but diversified approach to curriculum development. Many countries have already started taking measures to respond to profound social and economic changes by better preparing young people for integration into the world of work and society

at large. These include measures to impart a judicious mix of fundamental knowledge, skills, attitudes and social values to ensure that the widest range of life and career options are available; and the introduction of new areas like life skills and civics/citizenship education, and in some countries entrepreneurship education. In addition, there is a preference to defer channeling into general and vocational streams as long as possible and ensure that once this takes place seamless transitions can be made between the two streams and to higher education (UNESCO, 2005).

Some Challenges Confronting Secondary-level Education Systems

1) Changes in society, the economy and the world of work place pressure on secondary schools to consider *new approaches to learning*.

2) *Preparing young people* for higher education is no longer an exclusive or adequate objective, especially with so many moving directly from secondary school to employment, to TVET or to unemployment.

3) Because traditional institutions such as the family and religious organizations are progressively less available as guarantors of support for younger generations, there is a need to encourage *transition from a culture of dependence* to a culture of autonomy, independence and interdependence.

4) The inclusion of many additional subjects areas has created an *overcrowded curriculum* that may have reinforced a prejudicial tradition of learning by rote and/or avoiding linkages across curricula

5) The need to impart in a holistic manner the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable young people to be effective in *life and work*, including being able to deal with paradox and conflict generated by change, being agents not just recipients of knowledge, skills and attitudes and being lifelong learners and members of a flexible workforce.

<u>Source</u>: UNESCO, 2005: 7-8.

Perspectives underlying new initiatives

1.29   Current developments in Africa and at the global level have suggested that major changes are required in the very nature, orientation, methodologies, and assessment of learning in PPE. The following have come to be regarded as essential:

❖   *A move from an elitist system to a mass/democratic system*
      This implies the removal of institutional, pedagogical, curricular and teaching barriers between early childhood, lower and upper basic education. Such *approach* opens the possibility to develop an *integrated* and *inclusive curriculum framework* for basic education as a whole, thus allowing for multiple pathways to learning (Bhuwanee, 2008; Kigali Call for Action, 2007).

❖   *A shift from teaching to learning*
      The key organisational principle in education is *learning*, as this is the purpose of all education and training. Good quality education ensures relevant and meaningful learning, motivation for learning, and competencies to continue learning. Rather than de-emphasising teaching it underscores the relationship between quality learning and quality teaching. Moreover, it acknowledges the *blurred boundaries and complementarities* between different forms of education (Torres, 2003).

❖   *From the maintenance of historical disciplinary areas and knowledge barriers to interdisciplinary approaches addressing real life problem situations*

Relevant education that is student-centred takes everyday situations as the starting point for constructing programs of learning. Such programs draw on different resources coming from various subject areas to construct *learning situations* in order to develop appropriate *competencies* as outcomes of the education process. Because it facilitates self-paced learning the *competency-based approach* is regarded as a valid instrument to reduce school dropout and contribute to the attainment of an *inclusive curriculum,* thus assisting towards effective democratization of education (Opertti, 2008).

❖ *From curriculum as product, i.e. knowledge to be acquired to curriculum as both process and product, i.e. the development of a range of skills, values and attitudes as well as knowledge*
This implies a significant broadening of the variety of learning areas and types of learning. It invites attention to, for example, life and health-related skills, work-related skills, entrepreneurship, use of ICTs and citizenship education (Bhuwanee *et al*, 2008). Approaches to this include in-school and out-of-school arrangements (Allemano & Nzioka, 2008; Diop *et al*, 2008).

❖ *From knowledge and skills to competencies as products of learning*
The notion of competencies has moved from vocational education into curriculum development in general. *Competencies* are defined as articulation of knowledge, skills values, attitudes, behaviors, routines, patterns of thinking which individuals or groups can mobilize efficiently and autonomously in order to solve problems, and face challenges and opportunities successfully. Competencies do not exist in the abstract, but are constructed within specific socio-political situations, reflecting a vision of humanity and society. Different organizations have produced their own categories, and identify *core competencies* that are essential as outcomes for al learners. *Transversal competencies* (those applying to all forms of learning or to an entire age-group) could be life, learning, and work-related skills (Stabback *et al*, 2008).

❖ *New perspectives on 'vocationalised' education*
While skepticism about vocational subjects in schools has remained, new perspectives have emerged based on a reconceptualization of vocationalization. This focuses on the need to overcome the general-vocational divide and move from occupation-related skills to building a range of basic skills and 'core competencies' (including thinking, practical, and communication skills) needed to produce flexible, adaptable, multi-skilled and trainable youth destined for employment in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy, and facilitate access to further and higher education and training (UNESCO, 2005; Wilson, in Lauglo & Maclean, 2005).

❖ *From formal TVET to a diversity of learning arrangements for skills development*
A distinction can be made between '*TVET*' as the formal component of vocational education, located in the formal education system at the post-basic level, on the one hand and the notion of vocational '*skills development*' as a more generic component of learning across all basic education. In the latter meaning, skills development at various levels can and does take place in a wide variety of arrangements and settings, including combinations with formal cognitive learning, work-based learning and enterprise-based training. In reality formal TVET tends to cover only a fraction of all skills development in African society (UNESCO, 2005).

❖ *From single mode to multiple modes of delivery, using different technologies including ICTs*

Learning can be done using different modes and technologies. Their development, usage and appreciation by different categories of learners is not only determined by costs in relation to benefits, but also by socio-historical factors influencing the 'image' of such variations. Much effort is made to experiment with alternative technologies and increase their visibility as equivalent pathways to learning (Mhlanga, 2008).

1.30   There is no doubt that the above principles for enhancing learning in PPE will constitute a major challenge for teacher development. They would also impact on the need to improve on the availability of learner support materials and *multi-media resources*, as well as on *appropriate design* of education buildings, their premises and their classrooms, and other facilities such as libraries and resource centers. In fact, within a context of severe resource constraints a major premium will be put on innovative and cost-effective mixtures of teacher deployment, media resources and physical facilities.

1.31   Enabling teachers, managers and support personnel to be up to these tasks requires good management and governance, including incentives for in-service training and higher performance, and participation in decision-making in professional matters. Above this would require an *integrated approach to teacher training and development* across the totality of basic education, along with an integrated teacher career and remuneration system, something that is thoroughly lacking at present (Webb, 2008).

3.   The evolving institutional landscape

1.32   The above focus on the substance of learning demonstrates that the application of a holistic and integrated approach to PPE development is not just supported by the needs for efficiency and equity in planning and financing but also by the imperative of ensuring coherence in learning and teaching across basic and post-basic education, as well as in the connections between the two, and between each one and the world of work.

1.33   Starting from the current institutional realities in education and training means recognizing that a significant diversity of forms of education and training is presently in existence and that this to a greater or lesser degree serves the needs and interests of a large variety of learners. While it must be acknowledged that often young people do not enroll in these forms out of free choice and that often such forms do not meet criteria of quality and relevance, this diversity cannot but serve as the starting point for meaningful institutional reconstruction.

1.34   A review of the current institutional landscape in PPE across Africa shows the following characteristics:

> The general picture of PPE systems is that they tend to be highly *fragmented*, because of a variety of *binaries* (such as formal vs. non-formal, education vs. training, public vs private, universities vs. poly-technics, institution-based vs. work-based) that throw up horizontal or vertical barriers to mobility.

> Systems are also highly fragmented in terms of governance and management arrangements. Often there is lack of coordination among different government ministries involved with PPE, and between government and private providers.

> Many countries have insufficient capacity to handle the challenges of systemic reforms in PPE. Major challenges lie not only at the level of implementation and operational competences, but also at the level of competence in policy coordination and evidence-based planning (Askvik, 2008).

> There is a core set of institutions at secondary, vocational and higher level that constitute the '*formal system of education*' in that they are recognized and supported by governments, receiving a disproportionate share of the national education budget.

> To a varying degree the formal system tends to be supplemented by a wide variety of learning opportunities run by private or voluntary organizations, or by communities. These forms of education are denoted as '*non-formal*', '*private / commercial*', '*community*', '*open / distance learning*', or '*religious schools*'.

> Non-formal forms of education targeting young people of school-going age tend to be of two types: they complement formal education by offering complementary and equivalent routes leading towards (re-) entry in the system, or they provide alternative programs oriented towards socio-economic or cultural-religious needs of communities (Ochse, 2008).

> There tend to be hierarchies of public *socio-cultural acceptance and preference* of different forms of education, which are not always linked to their actual quality and achievement (Jacinto, 2008; Hoppers, 2006).

> Supplementary systems generally fail to facilitate *horizontal transition* towards government or other private institutions, both at basic and at post-basic levels. It is rare for *mechanisms of validation* to be elaborated as a basis for *equivalency* and *credit transfers* (Ng'ethe at all, 2008; Hoppers, 2006).

> A bottleneck in systems has remained the '*primary school leaving examination*', pushing out large percentages of learners who manage to complete the end of primary school; alternative *assessment systems*, catering for an entire age-group irrespective of learning modes, are only in an infant stage (Diagne *et al*, 2008).

> While basic education systems cope with significant dropout and repeater rates there is a major lack of *remedial programs* of a non-formal nature for adolescents and over-age learners.

> There is a general absence of *alternative lifelong learning pathways* that take out-of-school youth through equivalent and inter-linked programs into higher education (Glassman *et al*, 2008).

> The general absence of horizontal transition routes at higher grades contributes to basic education systems being severely *segregated*, often along lines of socio-economic status, gender and geographical location.

> At higher education level mobility of students suffer from lack of *cooperation* and absence of *dialogue* between universities and other tertiary institutions. There is an absence of clearly defined transition routes, using credit transfer mechanisms (Ng'ethe, 2008).

1.35   The above characteristics of PPE in institutional terms indicate that much of the incoherence and fragmentation of the system is a result of long incremental growth as directed by political, professional and policy considerations at various points in time. As a result, any reconstruction needs to be subject of political will and of negotiation involving different stakeholders at local, national, regional and international levels.

1.36   New efforts at further institutional development in PPE can be based on three main perspectives associated with building a coherent PPE system: those of viewing the *totality of learning opportunities*, recognizing the *diversity of types and forms*, and addressing the *complexities of horizontal and vertical inter-relationships.* In addition several key processes will be useful. These are: 'differentiation', 'integration' and 'articulation'. The judicious application of these processes can facilitate moves towards a coherent, diverse and equitable PPE system.

1.37   *Differentiation* is a process whereby distinct types of education forms emerge, each with their own characteristics that may respond to particular needs and circumstances of learners, and/or philosophies of communities or organizations. Differentiation may occur '*horizontally*' as conventional forms at a particular education level are complemented by the appearance of new forms using different pedagogical approaches, mixtures of technologies, governance or financing models. It may also occur '*vertically*' when new types of education forms emerge that have divergent goals, for example in relation to the labor market or further education (adapted from Ng'ethe *et al*, 2008).

1.38   The term *integration* has a value at education system's level, where it denotes the extent to which a form of education, or an entire sub-system of education becomes part of the mainstream of education provision. It also has a value in curriculum / 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 program (UNESCO, 2005).

1.39   *Articulation* is a central issue in an education system in that it defines the nature of its internal horizontal and vertical linkages, and the degree and manner in which transitions can take place. Thus it determines the extent of learner or student mobility and the pathways through which they may flow through the entire system. Policies, and administrative and/or financial measures, can strongly influence which channels cater for what categories of learners and under what conditions.

1.40   Presently, as a result of many historical initiatives at the levels of policies and practices across countries, within the context of an extended basic education cycle at least *six different pathways* can be distinguished.

i)	a *general education* pathway – with its *formal and 'non-formal'* variants (including community schools and faith-based education);
ii)	a general education pathway through *open and distance learning* (ODL);
iii)	*non-formal general education with vocational skills* pathways, combining cognitive learning with skills development;
iv)	*vocationalised education* pathways – with components of skills / entrepreneurship development and/or work orientation;
v)	*non-formal (vocational) skills training* pathways – together with functional literacy, life and other personal skills;
vi)	*informal sector apprenticeship* pathways – now often with professionalization through 'dual training' modes.

1.41   The pathways cover a continuum between (only) general education and (only) vocational training, with various combinations of both in between. Together they reflect a de facto differentiated situation in basic education provision, both in horizontal and in vertical terms. In terms of relative volumes of participation there are major variations across Africa, ranging from countries where nearly all young people follow pathway 1 to those where effectively a majority receive their basic education predominantly through informal sector apprenticeship.

1.42   The strength, quality and effectiveness of the above pathways are influenced by the nature and orientation of public-private partnerships (PPPs). Whereas public provision has been extensive in pathways 1, 2 and 4, in many countries private providers (in particular faith organizations, for-profit organizations and entrepreneurs) have (re-) entered in force, often with public subsidies. On the other hand, whereas private providers (in particular NGO's, communities, charitable organizations) have often gone at great lengths to initiate and run establishments following pathways 1, 3, 5 and 6, increasingly the state is becoming involved, through subsidization, professional services and supervision, if not through outright integration into the public system. Increasingly the state has come to act as policy coordinator, subsidizer and quality controller of such range of provisions.

1.43   In recent years much effort has been made by a variety of stakeholders, both in the public and in the private spheres to develop, pilot and advocate for new institutional forms so as to provide access and meaningful participation in appropriate learning experiences for adolescents and youth. Innovations have focused on organizational aspects (flexibility), new pedagogical styles (learner-friendly approaches, open learning), school-work linkages (work orientation), and use of new technologies (ICTs and distance education). They are often intended to provide greater access, quality and/or relevance in basic education for specific target groups, and to improve completion rates.

1.44   In many countries the state is only beginning to come to terms with such developments; trying to establish frames within which such innovations can be supervised, supported and channeled. Ministries of education are increasingly grappling with the design of policy strategies that can harness such innovations as (cost-effective) ways to better serve the goals of equity and socio-economic development. Thus complementary forms of education are called upon to help address significant gaps and deficiencies in the system, such as the development of fast-track options for dropouts and over-aged learners.

1.45   Major policy questions are what a comprehensive (substance) and complete (duration) basic education should look like in terms of processes and outcomes, and what essential features a diversified basic education system should have? What lessons can be learned here from NFE experiences? How, with such reference, can existing pathways and their institutional formats be enhanced, widened, replicated, complemented (through co-operation) or replaced in order to provide a complete basic education cycle? How can learners move easily between different pathways according to changing personal circumstances? How could other forms of education be funded, such that principles of equity and cost-effectiveness can be adhered to? How can PPPs be enhanced so as to combine private participation in enhancing quality and effectiveness with effective government oversight and equitable access to state funds for those who need it?

1.46   A crucial question concerns the degree to which a diversity of institutional arrangements must be accepted in order to provide quality basic education of equal standards to young people who cannot be reached due to legitimate socio-economic, cultural, health or political circumstances, or those who drop out due to insufficient quality and relevance of the formal school. This question seeks the boundaries of differentiation and the extent to which learning opportunities can be recognized as integral parts of formal education. Coupled to this is the question how legitimate are diverging unit costs of selected provisions and what are their implications for public financing?

1.47   This is a much bigger agenda than merely expanding formal lower secondary education. It would involve a redefinition of the notion of '*formal education*': as a collection of learning pathways that are all 'formal' in that they are publicly approved, lead to a common set of essential outcomes and have equitable access to state resources. It also involves development of a national systemic framework, within which parameters and criteria can be set, recognition extended, supportive

services be provided, teachers be trained and deployed, and financial support made available – all in a manner that is democratic, equitable and relevant for learners and society.

1.48   At the level of post-basic education the diversity of learning pathways will even be greater than those at basic education levels, as a greater array of non-formal and informal programs tend to be on offer by a wider set of public and private providers. Moreover, they cater for a much greater diversity of circumstances and needs in relation to life and work goals. The policy agenda in this regard is less about harmonization and standardization of core features, but more about equity of access and of outcomes within an ever-increasing diversity; improved interaction with society and quality assurance; and promotion of inter-linkages within a context of lifelong learning (Scott & Yeld, 2008; Munavu and Kithuka, 2008).

1.49   Clearly, the key to such institutional development agenda is improved and extended articulation, in terms of creating horizontal and vertical linkages that facilitate effective transition. This is where the most immediate challenges lie for governments and institutions. They involve addressing mechanisms by which transitions can take place, their management and the wider institutional capacity required to effectuate these. They also involve the quality and extent of information systems that can track learner and student flows across the system (Ng'ethe *et al*, 2008).

1.50   Not in the least the challenge includes attending to major '*articulation gaps*' that are often evident between the realities of a 'lower' provision (such as primary NFE equivalent or public secondary schools) and the demands of a 'higher' provision, in terms of academic knowledge or pedagogical regime. Such gaps undermine the transition chances of learners from disadvantaged background (Scott and Yeld, 2008).

1.51   In PPE articulation can be examined at three different levels: (1) in the transition from conventional primary education to PPE ('upper basic education'), in the sense of *de-emphasizing 'the primary school leaving' bottleneck,* and the systemic integration of a variety of learning pathways (formal and non-formal) within an extended basic education cycle; (2) in the transition from basic education to post-basic education (at grade 9 level), in the sense of appropriate methods for *assessing, validation, certification and selection of learners* across basic education moving into further and tertiary forms of education and training, or into the labour market; and (3) in the transition from senior secondary education to tertiary programs, by dovetailing a *variety of shorter and longer pathways* towards building high level competencies.

1.52   This is where the overall umbrella of national qualifications frameworks has become important, as they provide the basis for validation and articulation across systems. NQFs are *enabling frameworks* that classify and map qualifications according to a set of nationally agreed standards and criteria for levels of learning obtained, and that provide a reference of equivalence that allow for progression and mobility (Singh, 2008).

1.53   Most NQFs are established to address *validation, credit transfer, and building bridges* across different modalities for vocational/technical skills acquisition. This is essential in improving efficiency in skills development and effectiveness in meeting demands in the world of work. However, there are also more limited mechanisms that help *validate* learning outcomes related to *essential competencies* in basic and post-basic education. Forms of such '*system's assessment*' practices need to be examined. Validation and equivalencies of outcomes are essential measures to promote coherence, articulation, and thus equitable access.

Chapter 2 –Themes and Issues within Post-Primary Education

by Steven Obeegadoo

2.01   The purpose of the present chapter is to introduce the three sub-themes of the Biennale and in so doing, to briefly highlight some of the key concerns in the development of post-primary education (PPE) in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The first section defines the present context in African education, exploring the rationale for prioritizing post-primary education and present day dynamics of PPE expansion. Section 2 introduces the sub-themes and cross-cutting issues and attempts to outline the questions confronting policy makers within governments and African ministries of education as well as decision makers at all levels of the educational system. The final section then goes on to highlight some additional dimensions of the debate on PPE in the African context.

1.   Introduction

2.02   The expansion of post-primary education cannot be conceived of as a policy option for African ministries of education for it is already unfolding across the region although the pace and precise pattern may vary according to specific country realities. Average Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for sub-Saharan Africa in secondary education as a whole rose from 24% in 1999 to 32% (38% in lower secondary education) in 2005 (UNESCO, 2008). The 'spillover' effects of the drive for Universal Primary Education (UPE) since the late 1990s are plain to see. Of the total number of children completing primary schooling, an average of 80% entered secondary education as compared to only 60% in 1990 (UNESCO/BREDA, 2007).
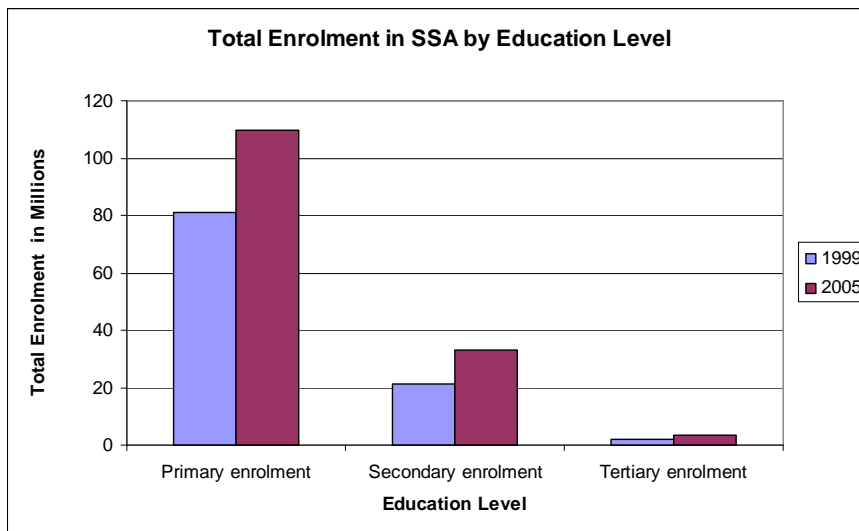
Source: UIS (2007)

2.03   Against this backdrop and within a context marked by socio-political instability, runaway population growth, financial constraints and limited technical and managerial expertise in ministries, the actual choice for decision makers is one between making educational history or being subjected to history in the making. In other words, the expansion of post-primary education especially at lower and upper secondary levels cannot be stopped but it can be better planned and regulated to ensure equitable access to relevant and effective learning opportunities in a sustainable manner. In selecting post-primary education (PPE) as the theme for both the 2008 ADEA Biennale and the

2008 Conference of francophone education ministers (CONFEMEN), African ministers of education have clearly indicated where their immediate policy concerns lie, next only to UPE.

Why Post-Primary Education?
2.04   Since the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education for All and more so since the 2000 Dakar World education Forum, a considerable body of educational research on Africa has produced empirical data testifying to the added value of post-primary education, both in terms of its economic and social incidence (Amelewonou & Brossard 2005; Hanushek & Wobmann 2007; SEIA 2007; UNESCO/BREDA 2007).

Demand and Supply factors in PPE expansion.
2.05   There are two forces at play in the accelerated development of African post-primary education in recent years. On the one hand, there has been a vast increase in the social demand for access to secondary and tertiary learning opportunities. On the other hand, governments have sought to expand public provision of PPE to promote economic and social development. As and when demand has outstripped public supply of educational services, local communities have taken things into their own hands, with or without initial government support, to open community schools or profit and non profit private providers have intervened to launch new schools, universities and training institutions.

(1)   <u>Social aspirations and expectations boost the demand for PPE</u>. Education and increasingly, extended education, is considered by parents and youth alike to be the prime determinant of life chances and the great social equalizer**.** In particular, the perception of returns (in terms of projected earnings) to continuing education beyond primary school has evolved significantly as a result of the spread of information and means of communication over the last decade (World Development Report, 2007).

(2)   <u>Economic rationale and social development requirements dictate an expansion of supply of public provision of PPE</u>. Global competition for investment, access to technology and a share in commodity markets and international trade is making governments throughout Africa painfully aware of the crucial importance of human capital as a driver of economic growth. The key challenge is therefore to explore ways and means of aligning national educational systems with the economy, especially at post-primary level where the necessary higher order skills are acquired.

2.06   Governments also increasingly consider that to battle poverty and promote social development there is no more effective weapon than education, especially in conjunction with economic growth. Extending the school life expectancy of young Africans beyond primary education impacts directly upon the permanency of literacy, HIV/AIDS awareness, fertility rates and childbearing patterns, childcare and the school attendance of future generations (UNESCO/BREDA 2005, Rakotomalala 2008).

2.07   Convinced of the significant added value of post-primary and especially lower secondary education, some African governments, have been committing a significant volume of resources to expansion of access to learning opportunities beyond 5 or 6 years. Public expenditure on education in Africa is on average 4.5% of Gross Domestic Product as compared to 3.2% in Central, East Asia and the Pacific and 5.6% in North America and Europe (UIS 2007). In 2005, 27% of public spending on education in Africa went to secondary education on average, ranging from 10% in Burkina Faso to 41% in Botswana, the Congo and Mauritius (UNESCO, 2007).

Table: 4.1 - Progress towards Universal Primary Education (UPE) & the unfinished business of UPE

Participation in education by level in SSA	1999	2005
Primary		
• Total Primary Enrolment (million)	80.8	109.6
• Primary GER (%)	80	96.5
• Primary NER (%)	57	70
Transition Rate to Secondary (%)	53	63.2
Secondary		
• Total Secondary Enrolment (million)	21.4	33.2
• Lower Secondary GER (%)	28.3	38.4
• Upper Secondary GER (%)	19	24.2
Tertiary		
• Total Tertiary Enrolment (million)	2.1	3.5
• Tertiary GER (%)	4	5

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2007)

2.08   The above table establishes unequivocally that SSA has realized a great leap forward in terms of primary schooling coverage but according to latest data, 33 million children still have no schooling. Repetition continues to plague the system whereas less than two thirds of children complete their schooling at that level. Overall quality appears to have declined as a direct result of rapid expansion and regional assessments (PASEC and SACMEQ) suggest that the level of competencies of primary students in math and languages are inadequate (World Development Report, 2007).

2.09   As a direct consequence of rapid expansion, secondary education enrolments have increased by 55% within 6 years. Table 4.2 indicates that between 1999 and 2005, GER increased from 15% to 31% in Ethiopia, from 5% to 13% in Mozambique and from 14% to 31% in Guinea. Yet inter country variations in secondary GER are very wide extending from 10% in Niger to 105% in the Seychelles. Moreover a lower secondary GER of 38% still compares very unfavorably with South and West Asia's 66% and the Arab states' 51% (UIS).

Table 4.2 SSA Secondary Gross and Net Enrolment Rates[1]

Country	GER Lower secondary		GER Upper secondary		GER Total Secondary		NER Total Secondary	
	1999	2005	1999	2005	1999	2005	1999	2005
Angola	16	...	8	...	13	...	...	...
Benin	26	41	9	20	19	32	16	...
Botswana	88	89	52	54	74	75	60	61
Burkina Faso	13	18	5	7	10	14	9	11
Burundi	...	17	...	8	...	13	...	...
Cameroon	23	46	28	35	25	41	...	...
Cape Verde	82	90	...	45	...	68	...	58
Chad	12	19	6	10	10	15	7	...
Comoros	32	41	14	27	25	35	...	...
Congo	34	57	...	...	...	...	...	...
Côte d'Ivoire	27	...	14	...	22	...	18	...
Equatorial Guinea	50	...	8	...	33	...	...	...
Eritrea	36	44	14	20	21	30	17	24
Ethiopia	21	44	9	16	15	31	14	28
Gabon	62	...	30	...	49	...	...	...
Gambia	42	...	20	...	32	...	25	...
Ghana	55	63	18	22	37	43	32	37
Guinea	19	38	8	21	14	31	12	25
Kenya	64	90	24	28	38	48	...	42
Lesotho	38	46	18	24	31	37	17	24
Liberia	34	...	24	...	29	...	...	...
Madagascar	19	28	7	...	14	...	11	...
Malawi	49	39	23	15	36	28	29	23
Mali	21	38	12	15	16	27	...	...
Mauritius	90	99	65	80	76	88	67	82
Mozambique	7	19	2	4	5	13	3	7
Namibia	70	74	29	28	55	56	32	39
Niger	9	13	4	4	7	10	6	9
Nigeria	25	35	21	30	23	32	18	26
Rwanda	11	18	8	10	9	13	...	...
Sao Tome and Principe	...	70	...	28	...	45	...	33
Senegal	18	29	11	13	15	22	...	17
Seychelles	119	101	103	112	113	105	98	97
South Africa	101	...	80	...	89	...	62	...
Swaziland	54	53	32	32	45	45	33	33
Togo	38	54	13	20	28	40	19	...
Uganda	11	22	7	10	10	18	8	15
Tanzania	8	...	3	...	6	...	...	...
Zambia	26	47	16	18	20	30	16	28
Zimbabwe	66		31		43	...	40	

Source: UIS

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[1] Central African Republic, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Somalia are omitted from the table due to lack of data.

Prospects for a holistic vision of PPE expansion: Diversity and multiplicity of pathways
2.10   Apart from some notable exceptions, non-formal education (learning activities organized outside the formal education system) is generally afforded scant attention by ministries of education and often reduced to adult literacy campaigns. Yet, no discussion of learning opportunities, especially in relation to socially disadvantaged adolescent learners, can afford to ignore the promises of a 'non-formal' but equivalent approach to reach the hitherto unreachable as well as providing a second chance for school dropouts. Public perception of non-formal alternatives to traditional formal schooling and their cost effectiveness continue to fuel a debate amongst academics and practitioners (Glassman et al. 2008; GTZ 2008). Although data is often unavailable and initiatives diffuse, women, adults and rural people in particular appear to have benefited from structured learning opportunities outside formal education as in Niger and Burundi (UNESCO, 2007).

2.   Three Themes in PPE

2.11   ADEA has identified three sub-themes as being central to current thinking and policy making on PPE (i) the extension of education for all to 9/10 years, that is, moving the goal posts from universal primary to universal basic education (UBE), (ii) the socio-economic integration of Africa's youth, i.e the challenges for Education and Training of promoting skills development for the world of work, and (iii) the articulation of upper secondary education and higher education to sustain Africa's development efforts in the context of a globalized knowledge-driven economy. For analytical purposes, these three sub-themes have been explored in the different contributions to the Biennale from the perspective of six cross-cutting issues: Governance and policy making, Financing in terms of resources/needs/sustainability, Access and Equity, Teachers and Trainers, Curriculum and Skills Development, and Assessment and Articulation.

Sub-theme 1. : Towards 9-10 years Education For All : Promising Practices and Strategies.

*From Universal Primary to Universal Basic Education***:**
2.12   Universal primary education, as referred to in the Millennium Development Goals refers to completion by all children of a full course of primary schooling which, according to the Dakar education forum framework for action, should be free, compulsory and of good quality. Primary schooling typically describes the first 6 or 7 years of systematic education. Basic education or 'fundamental education' describes educational activities that aim to meet basic learning needs and according to the International Standard Classification of Education comprises both primary (first stage of basic education) and lower secondary education (final stage). Basic education therefore extends over a period of 9 to 10 years with a common curriculum ensuring a seamless transition from primary to secondary education.

Why a shift from UPE to UBE?
2.13   The perceived need to expand and diversify secondary education stems from the realization that primary education alone can no longer suffice to foster the forms of knowledge and levels of skills to produce the productivity and competitiveness that can sustain the present spurt of growth of African economies. Hence, the generally acknowledged need to progress from UPE as the objective of educational policy to UBE of 9 to 10 years duration. According to UNESCO, only 12 countries of SSA do not consider lower secondary as part of basic education (UNESCO, 2007). Extending UPE however raises a number of difficult issues for governance and policy making:

- **Basic and Post Basic Education**. The need, as evidenced by the historical experience from other parts of the world, is to draw a clear demarcation line between lower secondary (defined as the final phase of basic education and therefore offering a core curriculum that seeks to impart the general knowledge and skills all children should possess) on the one hand and post-basic education and training (understood to include a diversity of pathways whether pre-university upper secondary education or technical upper secondary education or vocational training) on the other.

- **Diversified provision of Basic Education.** To be effective in reaching all children and young persons, such provision can only rest on diversified modes and different but equivalent pathways as a response to learners' varied but specific needs and circumstances (cf. paragraph 4.10, supra.).

- **Massification & democratization**: More of the same? One clear implication of generalized access to lower secondary education is to bring into question the traditional elitist structure of educational systems that selected children out of schools and the conception of lower secondary education as mere academic preparation for upper secondary and eventually university. To realize the promise of extended basic education for all requires that massification be not merely more of the same education but a profound democratization of educational processes and outcomes (TRANSE, 2008). This implies, as an example, the need for a redefinition of the knowledge and skills to found the basic education curriculum.

- **Transitions from primary to lower secondary education.** The conception of basic education for all as including lower secondary education has several implications. For instance, it presupposes a seamless transition to lower secondary for all children on the basis of an integrated basic curriculum. Most importantly, it suggests the urgent necessity of introducing a plurality of bridges, vertically and horizontally ('informal' to 'formal' and vice versa) to take account of the multiplicity of learning pathways as described above.

- **Institutional development and capacity building**. Another urgent issue in relation to governance is the imperative of institutional capacity building at national level to oversee and manage the expansion of PPE. Establishment of strong and effective education management and information systems (EMIS) is an imperative. As was the case at the initial stages of the UPE offensive, in PPE today data and capacity (alongside quality and finance) are fundamental but lacking ingredients of a successful strategy.

- **Decentralization and Accountability**. The issue of decentralization has also figured prominently in current debates on national governance of education, especially in the context of secondary expansion. At school level, empowering competent principals and community stakeholders by entrusting them with decision making powers to adapt and respond to local needs and realities was identified by the 2006 ADEA Biennale as a powerful factor to sustain the drive for quality enhancement, for instance having regard to teacher management. The general view is that provided local autonomy in resource allocation is matched by close monitoring of quality, financial and technical support, and clearly defined objectives by the authorities at central or district level, decentralization should have a positive impact on school effectiveness (SEIA Synthesis Report, 2007)

How to make the transition: International experience of the "bottom up" approach. 2.14 The historical experience of other regions from Europe to Asia and Latin America raises the question of whether there should be a sequencing of reforms (a 'bottom up approach') in sub-Saharan Africa to

generalize access to Primary and then Lower Secondary and technical/vocational education (Briseid & Caillods 2004, di Gropello 2006, Frederiksen & Tan 2008, SEIA Synthesis Report). The debate in the literature is also linked to the access/quality dilemma that continues to dog ministries of education throughout the continent and beyond. Does access come first, to be followed by a focus on quality of inputs or should the quality imperative determine the pace of secondary expansion? Further, it is often forgotten that Africa's own historical experience may be very instructive having regard to attempts to generalize access to education in the immediate post independence years (Bahlalya & Samoff, 2008). The debate on the so called 'bottom up' approach is evidently linked to regulation of student flows, as discussed below.

Financial sustainability of PPE

2.15   Generating the financial resources to sustain the expansion of post-primary learning opportunities remains the major stumbling block for governments. Student unit costs at all levels of post-primary learning in sub-Saharan Africa are significantly above that of other regions even allowing for differences in levels of economic development and the affordability of broadening access at such costs is difficult. In such circumstances, the cost efficiency of public spending on education becomes a prime concern for any serious strategy to broaden access to post-primary education (SEIA Synthesis Report, 2007).

2.16   The policy prescription of redistributing resources from post-basic to basic (primary and lower secondary levels) is always politically perilous in that it will almost entail strong resistance and may adversely impact on quality. Increasingly, the need is felt to mobilize both public and private resources. It would appear that African governments one after the other are coming to terms with the fact that provision like financing of education cannot be a state monopoly and that local communities on the one hand, private operators on the other, are and will continue to respond to a demand that is by far outstripping supply by public authorities. Here again, the choice for ministries is not one as between accepting private initiatives or not, but rather that between inaction leading to anarchy or facing up to reality and creatively structuring a public-private partnership for African education (SEIA Synthesis Report, 2007).

2.17   The extent to which external funding can be accessed (including obtaining Education For All-Fast Track Initiative funding for Universal Basic Education as opposed to Universal Primary Education) and how to use it is yet another focus of increasing attention in educational debates. The challenge for Africa is to evolve strategies that may bridge the fiscal gap to reconcile needs and resources in a sustainable manner.

Equity: A needs driven approach to PPE? Gender, the poor, the rural, the disabled

2.18   Despite the efforts of governments, access to secondary education remains inequitable hampered by a host of factors ranging from poverty and physical remoteness of schools in rural areas to perceived irrelevance of schooling and cultural barriers to girls' education. The poor, the girls and the rural remain the social categories most at risk of school exclusion.

2.19   It is estimated that 44% of SSA's secondary enrolment is female but the goal of gender parity has actually grown more distant between 1999 and 2005 (UIS,2007).In many countries, progress towards primary education for all has in effect amplified the urban/rural divide as in Burkina Faso where only 33% of children in schools are rural. However, the urban poor often have not benefited from expansion of education, as in Tanzania and Zambia. Overall, it is estimated that only 25% of rural girls complete primary schooling and no more than 10-30% of the poorest 40 children join secondary schools. Further, children suffering from disabilities are 2 to 3 times less likely to be

schooled in Malawi for instance. (UNESCO 2007, SEIA Synthesis Report, 2007). Here again, acknowledging the inclusive potential of non formal education is important.

Teachers and Principals in Extended Basic Education.

2.20   The dramatic surge in student numbers in secondary education over the past decade has not been matched by the increase in teacher recruitment, as a result of which Sub-Saharan Africa today has the highest pupil/teacher ratio than any other region. On average, there was in 2005 one teacher to twenty eight pupils as opposed to twenty two to one in 1990. It is projected that an additional 3 million teachers will be required by 2015, which is in itself a powerful argument for the expansion of post-primary education in order to provide tomorrow's teachers (UIS, 2007). In turn this raises a host of issues for policy makers: the cost effectiveness of teacher provision, the challenge of recruiting, retaining and retraining.

2.21   Faced with a shortage of trained teachers on the one hand, and high teacher salary costs on the other, educational providers (ministries, local communities or other private providers) are increasingly having recourse to contract teachers. In many francophone African countries such as Senegal and Togo, they represent the majority of the teaching force. Unless accompanied by in service training, this trend may have a negative incidence in the quality of teaching.

2.22   Managing secondary schools is emerging as an important consideration especially in the light of the momentum towards enhanced decentralization of decision-making and empowerment of school level administrators. However, in striking contrast to the practice in developed countries, in most countries of Africa, school principals continue to be appointed on the basis of seniority without any assessment of leadership skills or training in school management. Yet, as underlined at the ADEA 2006 Biennale, accountability is the natural corollary of transfer of decision making to the school level.

Curriculum and the changing profile of the student body

2.23   Transitioning from the colonial elitist model of secondary education as a stepping stone to further studies and university, to mass extended basic education has proved a formidable challenge to curriculum developers and educationists. This is especially true of francophone Africa but also of some Anglophone countries in east Africa. It is increasingly acknowledged within African ministries of education that secondary education for the many implies an added dimension of preparation for the world of work and lifelong learning on the one hand and for individual development and citizenship on the other. Hence, the dilemma of incorporating within a core basic education curriculum academic content and competencies to provide for both knowledge development and skill acquisition (UNESCO 2005).

2.24   Health education and civics are integrating the curriculum. The very topical debate about the competency-based approach is to be located within this wider search for appropriate responses to the changing student body profile in lower secondary education. The goal of ensuring the acquisition by all of basic skills and the desirability of an open-ended education empowering students as autonomous and questioning learners also brings into question the appropriateness of traditional pedagogy. The necessary profiling of basic education graduates on the basis of an approach rooted in African reality is increasingly discussed.

2.25   The language of instruction is perhaps the oldest unresolved dilemma of African education. Numerous studies indicate the positive impact of recourse to mother tongue learning during early years of education on quality. However, most governments are not prepared to adopt the language of the child's environment in formal education due to the strength of public feeling on the issue.

Revisiting Assessment

2.26   Increasingly, the examination system relying on teaching to the test and memorization of a syllabus-defined body of knowledge is being called into question and redefined in line with the curricular reforms referred to earlier. The key concern here is to eschew the traditional notion of examinations as a mere filtering process for access to higher levels in favor of a modern competency-based assessment recognizing and certifying positive achievement of *all* as a foundation for entry into the world of work and lifelong learning. Although still in its infancy, the debate is rapidly emerging as a key issue to make African education functional and effective.

Sub-theme 2.: Skills Development and the World of Work: Challenges for Education and Training

Aligning the skills of youth with the economic reality

2.27   A pervasive if not ubiquitous feature of African economies remains their dual nature with a large informal sector, comprising both farming and non-farming alongside an often much smaller formal or modern sector. Whereas agriculture continues to employ some two thirds of the working-age population of sub-Saharan Africa, its relative share of employment has predictably continued to decline but not in favor of the modern sector of the economy. In actual fact, available data for the period up to 2004 would suggest that the spurt of renewed economic growth has not, on average, been significantly employment generating in the modern private sector and has resulted in a rise in unemployment rates both among the educated and the uneducated. The rural exodus that has accelerated in recent years has, as a result, led ever larger numbers to take up informal activities in or around urban centers to scrape out a living which only serves to redistribute poverty (Van Adams 2005; Rakotomalala, 2008).

2.28   The *massification* of lower secondary education of necessity raises the issue of preparing the majority of students, who will not in any case proceed to the upper secondary level, for entry onto the labor market or into the world of work. Yet only 6% of secondary enrolments in SSA is in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as compared to 10% in the Arab states and in Latin America. Technical and vocational education, which fell into disfavor as from the 1980s as irrelevant, ineffective, costly and inefficient is nonetheless once again generating tremendous interest, resuscitating in the process of the old debates on the vocationalisation of secondary education (Atchoarena, 2007; Lauglo & Maclean, 2005; UIS, 2007). In reality, skills tend to be informally acquired and public-private partnerships to enhance the quality and effectiveness of training in the informal sector is a new and important policy concern.

Defining the structure and pathways of PPE

2.29   How should the pathways into and out of vocational training be defined? Should there be one single stream accommodating all in the final stage of basic education or would it be more effective, for employability, to have two or more parallel streams of general and technical/pre-vocational or vocational education? Or should the general secondary curriculum be 'vocationalised'? Is the diversification of pathways within formal education that usually follows primary education called into question by the provision of extended basic education for all and should it therefore be postponed wherever and whenever possible to after 9/10 years of schooling as is the case in developed countries? These are some of the key questions confronting African policy makers in almost every single country across the continent as ministries strive to define a policy framework (cf. the discussion of multiple pathways in chapter 1).

Meeting the costs of TVET expansion

2.30   As in the case of lower secondary education, it is all too evident that expanding TVET will require greater resource mobilization and more efficient resource allocation and use. Training funds are the preferred instrument for allocation of resources in at least 21 countries of sub-Saharan Africa and sometimes are tied to a grant levy system. Demand side financing by means of vouchers may be effective but are often difficult to implement.

2.31   It is estimated that student unit costs in TVET are up to fourteen times that of general secondary education. Hence, the widespread argument that the state cannot be the sole provider; although the relative underdevelopment of a structured private sector in many African countries is a serious obstacle to effective public-private partnerships involving employers. However, NGOs and for profit trainers are assuming an increasingly prominent role which entails the need for the state to balance the need for regulation for quality and the risk of overregulation. In the last instance, the basic concern is what the state can do to promote cost effective skills development (Van Adams, 2004)

Ensuring access to training for the world of work

2.32   The inaccessibility of formal vocational training to most young school leavers or dropouts raises again and again the issue of official acknowledgement and support for a multiplicity of learning pathways in the African context. The reality is that for most effecting the transition from school to the world of work, the informal sector is the obvious stepping-stone, if not the final destination. In such a context of widespread informality, the value of traditional apprenticeships rests on their practical orientation, self-regulation and self-financing dimensions (World Development Report, 2007). Reforming traditional apprenticeship and promoting skills development in the informal sector will remain of crucial importance to raise productivity and reduce poverty.

2.33   As in all other sectors of the educational system, inequity of access is a major issue for TVET with gender, poverty and rural location as the prime factors. Technical colleges and vocational training centers in Chad or Mali are exclusively to be found in the urban centers and TVET enrolments in Eritrea, Malawi or Namibia do not include more than 15% of women.

Teachers & Trainers for skills development

2.34   In the developed countries, trainers are usually recruited from industry with considerable hands on experience. By contrast, in SSA, well-qualified instructors, especially in industrial subjects are a scarce commodity that can hardly be induced to join or to remain in the teaching force on the basis of current salary levels. Even in technical colleges, teachers are more often than not inexperienced former students. As a result, teaching or training is essentially theoretical, disconnected with the world of work and of poor quality generally. These difficulties are compounded by chronic under funding since many years which has resulted in unmotivated staff using outdated and badly maintained equipment (when available) in overcrowded classrooms or workshops ineffectively delivering training.

Redefining the scope of curriculum to include skills development

2.35   As the notion of basic education for all expands to include what is traditionally referred to as lower secondary education , secondary education assumes a role other than its usual role of preparing and then selecting students for higher education, that of making young people ready for the world of work. Consequently, the curriculum at lower secondary education is being reconsidered to build bridges with work. The prevalent body of opinion in recent years favors offering pre-vocational options (as distinct from occupationally specific vocational education which is viewed as expensive and not necessarily effective) within general education at that level. Thereafter, whether

within formal upper secondary education or vocational training institutions, the priority would be to provide a variety of occupation specific training or more technical education leading on to advanced training at tertiary level.

2.36   Such a perspective should not however blind policy makers to the reality of the multitude of school drop outs at primary or lower secondary levels and for whom it is crucial to provide further formal or non formal learning opportunities (Lauglo & Maclean, 2005, World Bank 2008). It is essential to distinguish between TVE and non formal training, including enterprise-based training.

TVET and lifelong learning
2.37   The concept of articulation is crucial to the effectiveness of TVET. The essential foundation for equitable access to skills development throughout a person's lifetime rests in a basic education of good quality. Further, the consensus within the literature is that vocational education should never be a dead end but must be introduced within an 'open entry, open exit system', with clear bridges with upper secondary and tertiary systems. The Singaporean approach is most instructive in this regard, with its simple yet effective pathways and bridges making for a fluid articulation between the secondary, post secondary TVE (upper secondary level polytechnics) and tertiary systems.

Sub-theme 3.: Preparing Knowledge Workers for Africa's Development: Articulating Upper Secondary with Higher Education

Secondary education as preparation for both higher education and the world of work
2.38   Secondary education must not only prepare the majority who will leave school to enter the world of work but also the more academically inclined who will proceed to higher studies and become Africa's 'knowledge workers' of tomorrow. Tertiary education, for its part, has the crucial task of producing the higher order skills for competitiveness and growth in the increasingly knowledge driven world economy. To the extent that secondary education teachers are trained in higher education institutions, it also is pivotal for the realization of the goal of quality basic education for all.

Managing student flow
2.39   Although the tertiary gross enrolment ratio is low by global standards at 5%, enrolments in higher education across Africa have experienced an average annual growth rate of 15.6% between 1991 and 2004.

2.40   The case has been repeatedly made in recent years that, given the limited absorptive capacity of the modern sector within Africa's dual economy and manifestly high unemployment rates amongst educated young Africans, there is an overall 'overproduction' of graduates at higher as well as technical and even upper secondary levels, a phenomenon compounded, it is claimed, by high cost and dysfunctional because of supply driven vocational education. This raises the fundamental but very sensitive issue of student flow regulation beyond extended basic education.

How? The lower Secondary/Upper Secondary Education articulation & the Upper Secondary/Higher Education articulation.
2.41   At the transition points between primary to lower secondary level as well as between lower secondary and upper secondary level, drop-outs (whether or not induced by selective examinations) represent an objective if unavowed systemic self-regulation of student flows (Amelewonou and Brossard, 2005). Yet, while generalized access to lower secondary is desirable, the transitions from

lower secondary to academic upper secondary and from upper secondary to higher education may well call for explicit policies for student flow management, as justified by labor market constraints and low social returns. The problem is particularly acute in francophone countries where the end of secondary *Baccalaureate* as of right entitles one to university admission with significant levels of repetition, drop outs at university level.

2.42   Likewise, a powerful argument is made across the literature for public resources to be reoriented from tertiary and even upper secondary education in favor of basic education. It is posited on the fact that at the former level, and in striking contrast to basic learning, private returns by far exceed social returns. In a context of limited public resources to fund expansion and extension of basic education, prioritizing lower rather than higher levels of education emerges as a key policy issue for Africa's educational future. Yet, both on grounds of guaranteeing meritocratic access and of ensuring the necessary skills for competitiveness and growth, a counter argument is put forward for a significant public involvement in educational provision and financing at that level (SEIA Synthesis Report, 2007).

The link between governance, quality and accountability
2.43   Unmet demand and declining public spending has predictably led on the one hand, to overcrowded campuses in public universities and, on the other, to a proliferation of private providers. Hence the growing concerns about quality and accountability. Ministries responsible for higher education are increasingly challenged to evolve new patterns of governance that offer greater autonomy and flexibility to institutional players while supporting private initiatives and ensuring overall planning and supervision.

Funding higher education expansion: public and private providers
2.44   As a result of the explosion in student numbers, a funding dilemma of major proportions confronts policy makers. Fortunately, as is the case at other levels of African educational systems, private providers have promptly to respond to the numbers of student applications, the number of sub-Saharan African private universities having increased from 14 to an estimated 107 between 1990 and 2005. This suggests the need for an effective public-private partnership rather than blind competition between the public and private institutions. Within the public sector, traditional universities have often been criticized for diverting from their original mission as *development universities* to become supply-driven spendthrift bodies. Reengineering public financing of tertiary institutions to ensure cost efficient management, equitable access, sustainability and relevance to economic needs remains the key question. Recent studies suggest that it cannot be divorced from the vexed issue of student flow regulation.

Broadening access to higher education
2.45   The same pattern of inequitable access as in secondary is apparent but in an even more acute form in higher education. Whereas at global level, there are more women than men students, SSA has moved in the opposite direction with a mere 40% of the tertiary student body being female. Yet the regional pattern is far from uniform with for instance, progress for women in Ethiopia but regression in the Congo. Women represent 28% of faculty in higher education (close to the 29% in secondary) which reinforces barriers to gender parity in enrolments.(UNESCO 2007)

Teaching personnel in tertiary institutions
2.46   The growing number of unfilled positions in African universities testifies to an emerging staffing crisis linked to a multiplicity of factors that include low pay and emigration, non replacement of ageing and retiring faculty members because of the unavailability of suitably qualified can-

didates, HIV/AIDS attrition. As a direct consequence, the quality of teaching is a growing cause for concern.

Relevance of higher education

2.47   Recognition of the importance of higher education in building the human capital for development has in recent years raised, as in the case of secondary education the issue of the quality of output, both in terms of graduate profile and research, relative to labor market and economic requirements. Discussion of graduate unemployment point not only to the 'quantitative dimension' (high population growth and little job creation) but also to a skills mismatch. A fundamental issue in higher education reform will therefore be the necessity of making program design and courses on offer more responsive to the requirements of the productive sector. Hence the interest generated by the trend towards differentiation over recent years.

2.48   Another issue of major concern is the limited ability of African higher education institutions to realize the full potential of ICTs. Internet connectivity and access remains a major problem and even where that hurdle has been overcome, ICT application in the teaching and learning process is rare.

Managing differentiation and articulation

2.49   The unsatisfied social demand for access to university education is compelling governments in several countries to ascribe university status to previously non-degree awarding institutions leading to concerns as to systemic responsiveness to the variety of skill level requirements. This new trend is symptomatic of the absence of appropriate articulation between different types of tertiary programs and institutions.

3   Other key issues in PPE development

A demographic time bomb?

2.50   The challenge of providing access to an extended basic education for all is compounded by the demographics of African development. Sub-Saharan Africa faces nothing less than a time bomb with its population set to double over the next 30 years. (752 million in 2005 to 1148 million in 2025 to 1729 million in 2050). Representing one-eighth of the world population today, the region should account for one-fifth thereof by 2035. All of the 10 countries with the highest birth rates are African, save for Afghanistan. Uganda, for instance, will double its population from 28 m today to 56m by 2025! According to latest available data, numbers of young people aged 12 to 18 will rise from 143m in 2005 to 169m in 2015 and then to 184m in 2020. As a result, secondary enrolments need to double by 2015 for enrolment growth rates to be maintained, and triple by 2015 if primary to secondary transition rates are to be kept constant (SEIA Synthesis Report, 2007)!

2.51   The population dynamics of Africa clearly testify to the fact that the continent is still far from the 'demographic transition' that has historically accompanied the generalized access to education across the globe, including Africa. Mauritius, which achieved universal primary education in the 1960s and enjoys today a gross enrolment rate of 99% in the 12-15 age group was clearly enjoyed the advantage of its small size but a crucial factor was the generalization of birth control in the 1960s and early 1970s (UNESCO, 2007).

Sub Saharan Africa Population (1950-2050)
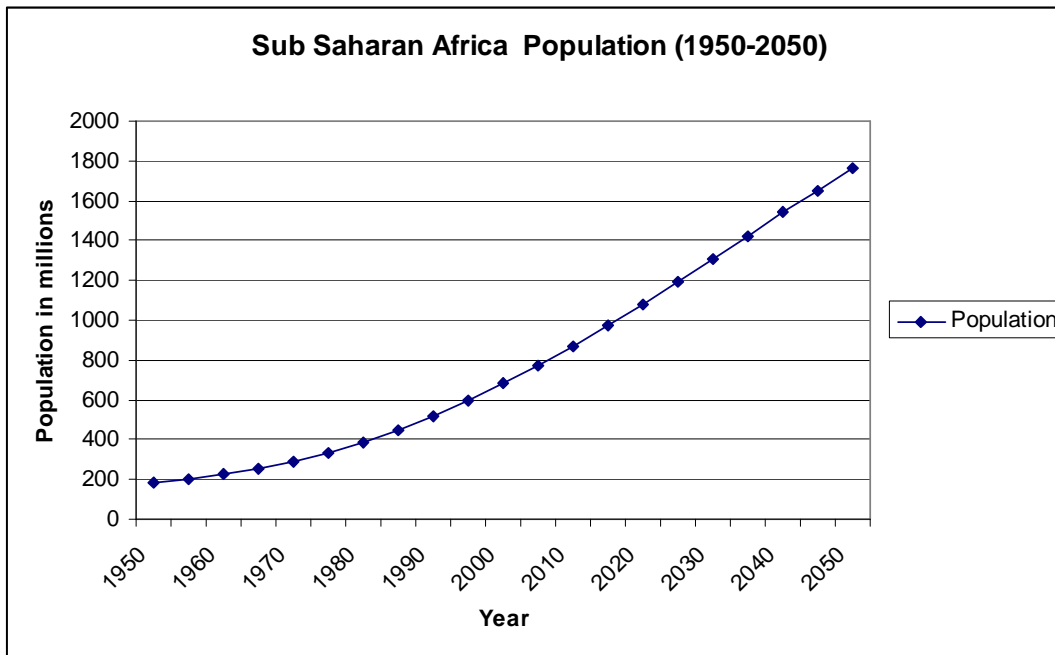
Source: UN Population Division, 2006

The impact of HIV/AIDS

2.52   Over the last two decades the AIDS pandemic has wrecked havoc in African societies, depleting the continent's scarce human capital and impacting adversely on productivity and economic growth while causing untold human suffering. 63% of HIV positive persons reside in SSA. Within education, it continues to fuel teacher absenteeism through illness, compounding education personnel shortages and puts girl students at risk of contamination. As such, it is a scourge for educational expansion. Yet, it is precisely the spread of educational enlightenment that represents the only known antidote to the killer disease. Although the evidence as to the impact of school based education on sexual behavior is not clear (Bennell et al, 2002) and sex education is very culturally sensitive, post-primary education must rise to the challenge of inducing its adolescent and young adult students to translate knowledge into behavior change (Smith et al, 2007).

Quality in PPE: Processes and Outcomes

2.53   One of the major challenges for ministries overseeing the rapid expansion of secondary enrolments is the quality exigency. Whereas many countries have witnessed a dramatic surge in student numbers within a short period of time, the manifold inputs relating to quality in education, even when present, are invariably characterized by an implementation time lag (TRANSE, 2008). It is however generally argued that although a trade-off between access and quality may hold true at upper secondary level, it is not a fatality, as the experience of Latin America and East Asia seem to suggest (di Gropello 2008).

2.54   Addressing the internal efficiency of the system will have a definite incidence on secondary education expansion. For instance, precisely because the poorer countries have the largest differential between Gross and Net enrolment rates, reducing repetition rates would free more places in these countries (Binder, M 2007). Moreover, non respect of the school calendar, teacher absenteeism, lack of textbooks, poor infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms are some of the factors impacting adversely on the quality of teaching and learning in the region.

The role of Science & Technology

2.55   'In a world powered by technology, fuelled by information and driven by knowledge, science and technology are vitally important for increasing Africa's competitiveness'. Yet, according to estimates, the volume of scientific publications from Africa actually declined between 1998 and 2003 and sub-Saharan Africa represents only 0.6% of R&D on a world scale. It is thought that part of the problem rests with the missing linkages between higher education and science and technology, compounded as it is by the apparent disconnect with economic production (AfDB 2007, World Bank 2008c).

Open and Distance Learning & Lifelong learning
2.56   In recent years there has been growing interest in the potential of open and distance learning (ODL) to assist countries of SSA meet the challenges of access and equity in a context of considerable unmet demand for learning opportunities and second chance education especially at post-primary level.

2.57   The African experience suggests that ODL in post-primary education attracts the 15-25 age group, tends to offer academic rather than vocational subjects but due to under funding and poor organization and ensuing low quality often suffers from a low status. It nonetheless is effective in reaching marginalized sections of society such as out-of-school youth. Three critical factors identified for the successful and effective recourse to ODL in Africa: clarity in policy, appropriate institutional prerequisites and cost evaluation. With respect to the latter, it has been found that if appropriate quality course material and significant institutional support to learners are to be provided, only large scale operations can be cost effective (ADEA, 2005).

2.58   Key questions for ministries of education include the role ascribed to ODL in the national context and the resources available to sustain the ODL program: is it to be an alternative or a support to formal education? which social groups are to be targeted? Will it be founded on low-end or high-end (ICTs) technology? What are the financial means earmarked over time? As in formal schooling, quality assurance processes are of fundamental importance in determining the effectiveness of ODL as a pathway to expanding access to education (Commonwealth of Learning, 2008).

Chapter 3 – Overall conclusions on cross-cutting issues

by Steven Obeegadoo and Wim Hoppers

3.01   This chapter will put together the main observations, findings and conclusions of the three thematic review papers in a comparative perspective. To this end it will categorise the conclusions under the headings of the six 'cross-cutting issues' identified as the main focal areas in the three themes of the Biennale.

3.02   These six cross-cutting issues are: (1) Policy and governance; (2) Financing: needs and sustainability; (3) Access and equity; (4) Education and training personnel; (5) Curriculum and skills development; and (6) Articulation and assessment.

3.03   Guiding questions that will be used in this summary are the following:

> ➢ What are the principle findings and conclusions at the level of policy and system's development?
> ➢ How do these speak to the overall conceptual framework adopted for the Biennale (Chapter 1)?
> ➢ How do these respond to the key issues and questions relevant for policy-makers (Chapter 2)?
> ➢ What seem to be the overall messages and lessons to be learned?

1.   **Policy making and Governance**

3.04   It makes sense for African governments to invest in post-primary education having regard to its economic and social impact. However, considering the social dimension specifically, as one progresses from primary to lower secondary and then, from lower to upper secondary education, there are slightly diminishing returns to schooling and girls' education yields a higher benefit-cost ratio than that of boys (Rakotomalala et al., 2008).

3.05   Against the backdrop of strongly dualistic national economies, job creation occurs mostly in sectors and occupations with low educational requirements. As a result, unemployment disproportionately affects the young and especially upper secondary and higher education graduates. This situation testifies to the close connection between economic development and educational expansion and raises at least two policy issues:(i) the advisability of a rapid expansion of the modern sector of the economy to generate of qualified jobs, and (ii) the risks attendant to an accelerated broadening of access to traditional upper secondary and higher education without regard to labor markets (Rakotomalala et al.,2008).

3.06   The attempts at rapid expansion of basic education in several African countries in the early post independence era are pregnant with numerous lessons for present day policy makers. In particular, they point to the crucial importance of strong, visionary and stable political support for education and social consensus building for educational reforms through political dialogue as well as the technical know how for sustainability (ADEA-WGESA,2008). The East Asian experience tellingly points to the same ingredients for successful educational development (Fredriksen & Tan, 2008).

3.07   Adherence to the policy objective of entitling each and every child to extended basic education brings in its wake the necessity of recognition, accreditation and establishment of equivalence in respect of a variety of learning modes and pathways. This may include religious schooling as in West Africa (Sey, 2008) or community schools. In particular, 'non formal education', where effective, should no longer be shunned by governments (GTZ, 2008) while NFE may have to assume a new role offering a different but equivalent route to 'formal education' and providing second chance learning opportunities for school drop-outs (Glassman et al.,2008). ODL, in this regard, is particularly promising for older learners (SAIDE 2008). In the absence of state support, quality and cost effectiveness becomes a major issue in NFE (Mukene, 2008).

3.08   Expansion without transformation of secondary education is fruitless. Government policy must reflect the shift from the all pervasive elitist principle of selecting children out of schools to the inclusive principle of recruiting and retaining *all* children (ADEA-WGESA,2008,TRANSE-SEIA,WB 2008). In that respect, Francophone and Anglophone Africa present instructive contrasts that are fundamental to policy making (Caillods, 2008).

3.09   From the governance perspective, just as the economy and education cannot be viewed in isolation from one another, so must general education and TVET not be disconnected in terms of strategic planning and governance structures at national level. Further, the fragmentation both within education and within TVET as reflected in a multiplicity of supervising ministries must be overcome as has been the case in developed countries (Eilor 2008).

3.10   Development of secondary education also implies the validation of TVET since, in any circumstances, the vast majority of young persons in SSA accessing lower secondary education will not proceed to upper secondary and less still higher education but instead join the world of work, hopefully after completing basic education. The objectives of preparation for work, citizenship and further studies make it necessary to strike a balance between vocational and traditional subjects across the basic education curriculum while not repeating the mistake of expensive supply driven vocational training within general lower secondary education (Fredriksen & Tan, 2008, Ramanantoanina, 2007, see also thematic synthesis report sub-theme 2).

3.11   TVET in SSA needs to address the skills requirements of both the formal and informal sectors of the economy (AFD 2007). Partnering private providers to support extra curricular vocational training for the formal sector and quality enhancement of skills development through traditional apprenticeships in the informal sector represent promising strategies (Walther 2007, Walther & Filipiak 2007).

3.12   The rapid increase in student enrolments in secondary as in higher education has invariably had a negative incidence on quality as reflected in drop out rates and low cognitive skills mastery (Soumare, & Thiam, 2008a). Priority initiatives to promote learning achievement target provision of textbooks, training and management of staff. Yet, high repetition and failure rates in higher education in francophone Africa remain a constant (Avo Bile Ehui, 2008). More generally, there is a significant mismatch between university graduate profiles and skills requirements of the economies of SSA (see thematic synthesis report sub-theme 3). Hence the growing trend towards diversification and vocationalization of higher education programs (Soumare & Thiam, 2008b).

3.13   Having regard to the limitations of a market driven higher education system, governments, while fostering a close partnership with private providers, must intervene to promote non profitable but critical activities both in teaching and research and monitor quality (Varghese, 2008). The low

enrolments in science and technology in post secondary education across SSA remains cause for concern (Chilundo et al., 2008; Munavu and Kithuka, 2008; Scott & Yeld, 2008).

2.   **Financing: Needs, Resources and Sustainability**

3.14   'Expansion of PPE without due attention paid to financial realities will jeopardize quality and achievement'. High unit costs of secondary education, associated with inefficiency and wastage in public spending on education, imply that unless cost cutting and efficiency gains are combined with mobilization of additional financial resources, expansion of post-primary - even if only to provide extended basic education for all - will prove unaffordable or unsustainable (See thematic synthesis report sub-theme 2).

3.15   In order to ensure the financial sustainability of PPE expansion in SSA, it has been possible to devise an indicative framework for policy making as was done to support the EFA-FTI drive earlier. The framework establishes tentative guidelines that relate, inter alia, to fiscal resources, public spending on education and post-primary education in particular, gratuity of extended basic education, share of private sector funding, teachers' salaries, class size, expenses beyond teachers' salaries (Ledoux & Mingat, 2008; Lewin, 2008).

3.16   Measures experimented to enhance cost effectiveness in expansion of educational provision include lengthening of primary or lower secondary cycles, training of bilingual or polyvalent teachers, increasing the teacher/pupil ratio, providing a common basic curriculum with limited or no subject options, strengthening school based management, regrouping of small schools and provision of regional resource centers, low cost construction (Caillods, 2008; Soumane & Thiam, 2008a).

3.17   Public-private Partnerships in secondary education may well represent the way forward to ensure affordability of PPE as witnessed by developments, almost by default across SSA. The share of the private sector in secondary education provision is constantly increasing with community schools playing a major role. Governments need to engage the multiplicity of private providers, both for profit and non-profit, in a constructive dialogue to provide incentives and ensure quality (Chung, 2007; Diagne & Sanwidi; 2007; Verspoor, 2008; Mohadeb & Kulpoo, 2008; Houtondji et al, 2008; Mukene et al., 2008).

3.18   The changing role of governments from that of sole provider to that of regulator and co-provider is as true of secondary education as it is of higher education and TVET. Hence, the importance of building partnerships with private providers extending to policy formulation and planning (thematic synthesis report sub-theme 2).

3.19   To be effective and equitable, pre-employment vocational training should be funded by government rather than by the private enterprises or trainees and cannot be restricted to formal TVET systems. The share of TVET within global educational spending should be revised upwards and applied selectively, efficiently and not limited to 'formal' TVET. (Walther 2007). Further, training funds should be reengineered to be demand- rather supply-driven and funding mechanisms developed to respond to the needs of small and medium enterprises (Walther & Filipiak, 2007; Walther & Gauron, 2006).

3.20   Since the 1990s, given their inability to respond to a surge in demand for access to higher education, governments have sought to diversify funding sources by allowing two trends to develop: the privatization of public institutions and the emergence of a private sector in higher educa-

tion. As a result, governments may choose to target public resources on priority areas not addressed by private operators, research and bursaries for deserving but disadvantaged groups (Varghese 2008). In parallel, decision making in higher education may be decentralized but accountability strengthened and unit cost approaches adopted (ADEA-WGFE, 2008).

3.21   Expansion of educational provision in the latter part of the 21st century has more often than not been accompanied by the development of private supplementary tutoring. While it is not as yet a generalized phenomenon in SSA, it is likely to gain in importance as a corollary of massification and because of the implications for equity, quality and access, policy makers need to heed the need for early regulation (Bray, 2007)

3.   **Access and Equity**

3.22   On the basis of historical experience and ongoing initiatives, both in Africa and beyond, considering what works, it is now possible to construct frameworks for policy making that address measures to equitably broaden access to extended basic education for the excluded: the poor, the female and the rural (Ramanantoanina, 2007). These include sustainable public provision, encouragement to private providers, adapting supply to demand, stimulating demand, promoting equitable access and achieving equality of treatment (Caillods, 2008; SEIA, 2008).

3.23   As countries progress towards UBE, expanding educational access must increasingly focus on the unschooled, especially in rural areas, which presents numerous challenges. To stimulate demand within rural communities, schools needs to be flexible and free while being close to the villages and therefore smaller. Rural provision hence becomes costlier but this may be outweighed by its economic and social impact (Mingat & Ndem, 2007).

3.24   Many countries have successfully experimented varied initiatives to promote enrolment of girls in post-primary education and training including 'schools of proximity', school transport, bursaries, single sex boarding houses (Sey, 2008; Soumare & Thiam, 2008a).Yet the demonstration effect crucially also requires recruitment and appointment of women teachers and principals (Diop et al, 2008). Codes of conduct in schools to combat violence and sexual harassment are of critical importance to overcome cultural resistance. In secondary education the challenge is to retain girls and several countries now have post pregnancy re-entry policies. Ghana's designation of a minister in charge, inter alia, of 'girl-child education' is instructive (Sutherland-Addy, 2008).

3.25   Reaching out to the urban poor often requires a package of measures including cost-effective construction, double shift systems, fee exemption for the poorest, and other forms of targeted affirmative action (Caillods, 2008).

3.26   In TVET, providing access to all suggests flexibility to address the varied learning needs and levels of preparedness of prospective trainees (Durango 2008). Second chance initiatives are more effective when combined with general skills and literacy programs (Jacinto, 2007). TVET for the informal agricultural sector is an acknowledged priority (Hathie & Touzard, 2007;Otu-Boateng et al, 2008; Venot 2007).

3.27   Admission to higher education is overall very skewed socially, which may justify the adoption of affirmative action in favor of deprived and/or female students as well as disadvantaged upper secondary schools or regions (Effah et al, 2007). However, increased demand for limited places in universities has led to higher entry requirements, which again tends to go against poorer students,

and to more emphasis on science courses, which disadvantages women. As a result, remedial programs and other compensatory measures have been tried, but it may be too early to assess the impact thereof (Chilundo et al, 2008; Munavu et al, 2008; Senkaaba et al, 2008).

3.28   Commoditization of higher education has predictably bred inequalities that place an obligation on governments to intervene to guarantee access to qualified impecunious students (Varghese 2008).

4.   **Education and training personnel**

3.29   The recruitment, training, deployment and management of education personnel stand out as a central concern in any expansion of basic and post-basic education and training. While this foremost addresses the position of teaching personnel at all levels, serious attention must also be given to professional support and supervisory personnel, education managers and administrative personnel at national, local and institutional levels (Webb, 2008).

3.30   The recruitment, remuneration and retention of teachers must be considered within the wider socio-economic context of individual countries, notably the trends and fluctuations of the labor market, overall conditions of poverty and inequality, and the impact of HIV and AIDS on staffing and staff utilization (Webb, 2008).

3.31   In most countries the demand for qualified teachers already far exceeds the level of supply through conventional teacher training programs. Large numbers of unqualified teachers are being recruited, seriously affecting the quality of education provided. Significant expansion of JSE or upper basic education will worsen this situation and it is reported to draw qualified staff away from lower basic education (Schuh-Moore et al, 2007).

3.32   Innovative strategies to increase teacher supply include incentive packages, local recruitment of contract teachers and the training of polyvalent teachers. It is becoming more common that accelerated teacher education programs and in-service training on the job, using distance education combined with residential training and face-to-face support, supplement such measures (Webb, 2008; Glassman et al, 2008).

3.33   Teacher supply, mobility and career prospects are seriously affected by differentiated practices in teacher training for specific levels and forms of education, as well as different training locations, leading to hierarchies in status, qualifications and salaries. Integrated national approaches to teacher training, qualifications and career structure are highly desirable (Webb, 2008).

3.34   While many countries have developed networks of teacher resource centers, these tend to focus on primary school teachers, offering training for untrained teachers and for upgrading qualified teachers. Much more can be done to increase continuous professional development for purposes of quality improvement, linked to pre-service training and career structures (Webb, 2008; WGMSE, 2008).

3.35   In spite of their increasingly recognized importance for national economic development adequate training, development and support services for teachers in skills development and TVET programs are generally lacking. Initiatives for collaboration in this area with the business sector, for training support or dual training initiatives, are rare. Also the increased importance of pre-

vocational and work-related skills in general (upper) basic education makes such collaboration essential (Webb, 2008).

3.36   Gender issues and rural-urban disparities are still significantly undervalued in teacher supply, mobility and careers prospects. Very few disaggregated data appear to be available. The imbalance between male and female teachers in secondary education and TVET (and its impact on girl participation) may be hard to address in the absence of measures to improve access to advanced training, employment conditions, and career incentives for female personnel (Comments Jackie Kirk on Webb, 2008).

3.37   The shortages and relative high costs of teachers also put a premium on improving the creative use of ICTs in education, especially at upper basic education and in types of post-basic education. More investigation can be undertaken to identify cost-effective mixtures of teacher utilization and multi-media resources, leading to efficient deployment of teachers and technologies. In addition, using ICT for continuous teacher support can ensure significant gains in quality improvement in teaching and learning (Greenop and Busa, 2008; Mhlanga, 2008; World Bank, 2006).

3.38   As learning deficits at upper secondary level constitute a serious barrier for school leavers to meet the intellectual demands of higher education universities can assist in reducing the articulation gap between the two levels by prioritizing the grooming of teachers in upper secondary core subjects. Much attention also needs to be given to teachers' competencies in managing learning situations and in the monitoring and assessment of students' progress (Scott & Yeld, 2008).

3.39   Advanced training and development opportunities for school heads, education managers and senior professional and administrative personnel tend to be absent or highly inadequate. This results in serious lack of relevant competencies at all levels - from school support and teacher training to policy analysis and quality assurance - needed to manage major expansions of basic and post-basic education. Institutionalized and continuous programs for human and organisational capacity building in all fields need to be designed and supported (Charron, 2008; Mulkeen et al, 2008; Webb, 2008; Askvik, 2008).

5.   Curriculum and skills development

3.40   For a long time since independence African countries have continued to maintain a privileged form of academic secondary education in expensive public institutions that educated a small percentage of the relevant age group more or less in relation to the needs of the public administration and the modern formal sector of the economy. This has only begun to change fairly recently, following public demand for expansion in the wake of EFA (Clegg et al, 2008; Bhuwanee et al, 2008.

3.41   In terms of curricular orientation and pedagogy this education has been highly academic, aimed at ultimately producing a small number of graduates to fill available places in higher education. With an extended theoretical curriculum, an emphasis on rote learning and teaching in accordance with prescribed syllabi, the system aimed at selection rather than achievement, with outcomes measured by centrally set and marked examinations (Bhuwanee et al, 2008; ERNESA, 2008).

3.42   While this academic curriculum was largely retained as the core, over the years countries attempted to add 'practical' or 'pre-vocational' subjects to increase relevance, or developed parallel but lower-ranked vocational programs, whether as TVET at upper secondary level, as vocational

schools at post-primary level, or as 'non-formal' skills training for out-of-school youth, all for the purpose of channeling the non-selected towards different segments of the labor market. Inter-linkages between these forms of education have generally been absent (Lauglo and Maclean, 2005).

3.43   Over the years much reform has taken place in terms of curriculum restructuring and altering content and pedagogical approaches related to many subject and skills areas. Major progress has particularly been made in the areas of science and technology, African languages, health education, life skills and entrepreneurship development (ERNESA, 2008; Smith et al, 2005). In several of these areas promising practices are available, which can be sustainable if at least leadership, policy and funding are available. Moreover, institutionalization appears to be dependent on a further cluster of factors including an integrated curriculum, appropriate teacher education, relevant materials, structural support, ongoing evaluation, and peer education (Smith et al, 2005).

3.44   In spite of these efforts, however, there is also evidence that traditional practices have remained very strong, even in systems where significant reform has taken place in teacher training programs and assessment practices. Also the sharp divisions between 'academic' and 'vocational' education have remained, and the integration of age-appropriate core competencies related to the world of work within a globalized environment has thus far rarely been actively pursued (ERNESA, 2008).

3.45   In TVET institutions the dovetailing between skills development and the continuously changing needs of the labor market has remained a major challenge, not in the least as regards securing viable openings for female trainees. Progress in understanding and addressing learning needs in rural areas has been uneven, as there tends to be little space for curriculum adaptation, for linking 'school' knowledge with local and indigenous knowledge, and combining education with skills development for the rural economy. On the other hand there are successful pilots with decentralized curriculum development both in education and training (Atchoarena, 2008; Gaidzanwa, 2008).

3.46   The difficulties here, in part, reflect continued strong socio-cultural anchoring of conceptions about 'proper' and 'desirable' education, often in spite of changing economic realities. In part, they may also be a consequence of problems that governments and external partners have had in arriving at bold decisions in implementing far-reaching educational reform.

3.47   It is widely acknowledged across Africa that PPE systems have to change from an 'elite' system to a 'mass democratic' system; that curricula need to be more demand-driven and transformed in terms of their relationships with evolving socio-economic realities and current needs of young people; and that teaching and learning need to be outcomes-based and oriented towards real life problems and themes rather than towards traditional disciplines. Thus far, there has been insufficient clarity as to how best to achieve this, given persistent traditional policy approaches, employment practices and public attitudes (Bhuwanee et al, 2008; Opertti, 2008; Stabback, 2008).

3.48   Also the need for an integrated curricular approach to basic education, in consideration of the essential learning needs of all children in the school-going age group, in accordance with the tenets of inclusive education and human rights declarations and the demands of the changing world of work, is widely recognized (UNESCO, 2005; Bhuwanee et al, 2008). Yet, the institutional fragmentation of basic education systems into different types (formal – non-formal, public – private, secular – faith-based, school-based – work-based, face-to-face – distance), with corresponding regimes of recognition, administrating, financing, and supporting, has made the introduction of an overall but flexible curricular framework with common criteria for assessing processes and outcomes much more difficult (Glassman et al, 2008).

3.49   The recently agreed upon 'Kigali Call for Action' (September 2007) has offered a strong impetus to revisit issues of curricular reform and the review of assessment practices in the context of an extended basic education cycle in a integrated manner. This is much in line with the holistic and integrated approach that has been proposed for the Biennale (Kigali Call for Action, 2007; Bhuwanee et al, 2008).

3.50   Also at tertiary education level curriculum development does not yet take place in an integrated manner, with due consideration for complementarity across vertical and horizontal differentiations in such systems. Much progress has been made in institutions responding to personal and socio-cultural learning needs of young people – such as in the area of HIV and AIDS, life and work-related skills. However, far-reaching decentralization, institutional autonomy, and poor coordination across tertiary sub-systems make systematic attention to developing generic competencies across the age group and improving coherence between de two levels a major challenge (Ng'ethe et al, 2008; Allemano and Nzioka, 2008).

6.   **Articulation and assessment**

3.51   It has been acknowledged that at secondary level current assessment and examination systems have generally not been subjected to much innovation, and have tended to remain oriented to their metropolitan prototypes. As a result such systems are often not in line with curriculum and pedagogical reform. Capacity for school-based assessment tends to be highly undeveloped. Among others, this hinders effective use of remedial instruction and thus permits higher levels of dropouts (Lolwane, 2008).

3.52   A major drawback is that they do not provide adequate information and pointers to enable graduates to reflect on alternative learning options to the extent these are available, both at the level of completing upper basic education and that of completing upper secondary education. As real opportunities in the context of further education or lifelong learning pathways are expanded assessment and certification, backed up by career information, need to become more functional in promoting actual learning and in meaningful placement of graduates (Lolwane, 2008; ERNESA, 2008).

3.53   Significant is that some countries are showing the way forward in how to validate learning outcomes in non-conventional settings, such as non-formal education, informal learning, or informal sector skills development programs. Increasingly such practices are being linked to wider efforts to ensure portability of credits, linked to benchmarks and standards within a national qualifications framework. By thus providing a 'formal' umbrella for validation and recognition, such NQFs present an essential basis for equivalency of certificates, greater mobility of learners, and efficiency in the utilisation of existing learning pathways (Farstad, 2008; Lolwane, 2008; Singh, 2008).

3.54   While such practices have often been initiated in the context of ensuring standards in the acquisition of vocational competencies, increasingly the principles are being used to promote and safeguard linkages between different formal and non-formal general education opportunities, both horizontally and vertically. They are thus promoting articulation in different directions. As poor articulation has been one of the great contributors to the fragmentation of education and training systems, enhanced articulation contributes to system's integration while maintaining diversity of education forms associated with learners' divergent needs and circumstances (Glassman et al, 2008).

3.55   Articulation has been identified as particularly problematic in the transition from primary to post-primary education, i.e. lower basic to upper basic education; in the transition from 'non-formal' education or training to their 'formal' equivalents; in the linkages between education and training sub-systems; and in the transition from upper secondary education to diverse forms of tertiary education (Glassman et al, 2008; Sey, 2008; Scott & Yeld, 2008).

3.56   While a number of countries have established centralized admission systems into higher education, this tends to apply only to public universities. Private universities generally have their own selection mechanisms, which may benefit candidates who have prepared themselves through non-formal or informal learning channels. Harmonisation across providers is badly required, allowing for recognition of prior learning (RPL), credit transfers, and comparability and recognition of qualifications across various types of higher education, and across national boundaries (Munavu and Kithuka, 2008).

Chapter 4 – Strategic Questions for PPE development

4.01   In this last chapter we wish to look at the questions of strategic importance that need to be addressed by policymakers in government and/or decision makers at all levels of the educational and training system. We shall consider these both against the backdrop of the earlier presentation of conceptual parameters (Chapter 3) and of key issues in PPE development (Chapter 4) as well as using knowledge and insights gathered from the studies and papers prepared for the Maputo Biennale (Chapters 5-8). The objective is to stimulate reflection and debate at the Biennale.

4.02   This chapter is divided into four sections. It will start by considering relevant generic issues as starting points for initiating debates on PPE. Thereafter, we shall move in turn to what seem to be major policy questions that relate to each of the sub themes of the Biennale.

1.   Generic questions in PPE Development

4.03   For this Biennale on post-primary education it has been possible to take a broad perspective, looking as much as possible at the totality of provisions, approaches, connections, issues that characterize this field in relation to the three main sub-themes selected. The actual contributions demonstrate that across the African continent this field is extremely diverse and complex indeed. Nonetheless there are certain broad common identifiable patterns in PPE development across the world and in SSA. The contributions to the Biennale illustrate a wide variety of developments and experiences, which throw up wide-ranging questions and challenges.

4.04   Reconciling economists and educationists. One of the most critical questions appears to relate to the umbilical relationship between educational expansion and economic development. Without sustained economic growth to generate financial resources as well as jobs, African countries would be quite incapable of sustaining the drive to increase access and promote quality in education. On the other hand, in the absence of a coherent and consistent effort to broaden the skills base and shore up the levels of human capital, economic growth in Sub Saharan Africa would be severely constrained. The challenge, as suggested by several Biennale contributions is to make this link explicit by placing education and training at the heart of economic development strategies. This would make it possible to prioritize educational spending while placing educational systems in a permanent reform mode, enabling them to dynamically respond to labor market signals in both rural and urban settings and service the economy. The papers produced for the Biennale suggest the need for a productive dialogue between economic ministries and education policy makers and the necessity of considering Education and Training ministries as economic ministries in their own right.

► **What are the mechanisms in the African context to ensure that the provision of expanded learning opportunities, curriculum development, modes of assessment and certification and more generally graduate profiles at all levels of the educational and training system are functional with respect to the process of national economic development?**

4.05   *Bottom-up versus top-down approaches to reform.* A lesson in PPE development is that a bottom-up approach to reform is unavoidable as there is much unfinished business in achieving universal primary education. However, it is also argued that improvement of quality and relevance in education depends on the quality of teachers and that of education managers and support personnel. Hence the proposition that effective interventions at the top of the pyramid may be required and the critical role of tertiary education in promoting quality and effectiveness acknowledged.

► In the circumstances, how can the strategic focus shift to extended basic education for all and due attention given to TVET and Higher education without compromising the priority ascribed to universal primary education?

4.06   *The essential conditions for PPE development.* The historical studies commissioned for the biennale underline the need for the elites to become reconciled with the process of massification and democratization of education. After a decade of closely targeted efforts on providing universal primary education, the very success of such efforts, as apparent from latest EFA monitoring, require a broader but as sustained a drive in favor of post primary education. There is a need to offer an extended basic education to all, promoting the socio-economic integration of Africa's youth and ensuring the preparation, in a cost effective manner of a high level cadre for tomorrow's knowledge economy.

►How can African countries respond to the wider societal and political requirements attendant to such an ambition: a far sighted vision of and detailed planning for educational development, the political will sustained over time to carry through the associated fundamental reforms, the forging of a broad consensus among varied interest groups to ensure stability and continuity in educational progress?

4.07   *Sub-sectoral policies versus integrated policy frames*

There is a practice of formulation policies for different sub-sectors in education and training on a 'one-by-one' basis. This is often associated with the existence in SSA countries of several ministries involved with policy coordination, administration, support services, funding and monitoring in Education and Training. The disadvantage is that policies often remain fragmented and that the interlinkages receive insufficient attention. Worse, there may be gaps remaining, which affect the lives and futures of many young people. Numerous contributions for the Biennale underline the urgent necessity of bridging the very damaging separation of Education as knowledge acquisition on the one hand and skills development associated with Training on the other.

►Is it possible to work towards the adoption of a wider education policy frame that sets out the parameters for the entire sector including Training and that in particular addresses the coherence and integration of the system with specific attention to the place and role of various provisions in meeting educational as well as societal goals ?

4.08   *Capacity development for PPE.* Adequate institutional, organizational and human capacity for leadership, for policy and planning, and for implementation are widely acknowledged, not in the least by ministries of education, as being not only an essential requirement for the successful management of educational reform, but very often also highly deficient. Their quality and the mutual strengthening among the three levels is needed to ensure that the system of public administration is in a position to perform both its routine tasks and meet the extra challenges emanating from a complex reform agenda (Askvik, 2008).

4.09   It has also become evident that no reform process can be effectively designed and implemented if it cannot benefit from inputs provided by a well-functioning EMIS system, preferably complemented by relevant policy-related research work. While the contributions to this Biennale are evidence of an increasing body of knowledge about different aspects of PPE, there are still many information gaps that prevent satisfactory assessment of current state-of-practice and promising points for intervention across the totality of PPE. Enhancing EMIS activities and their effective

institutional embedding in policy development and implementation processes to allow for close monitoring and analysis of access, quality and efficiency emerges as a major challenge.

►**How can governments move to establish coherent strategies and plans for integrated capacity development to support PPE expansion and what should be the role of development partners in this effort in view of the inconclusive capacity building programs up until the present time**?

4.10 Totality, diversity and complexity of the PPE landscape: Formal and non-formal education and training. The various studies and papers for the Biennale often make the point that UPE and less still UBE cannot be reached for a very long time in Africa should governments rely on formal schooling only. Many children live in socio-economic conditions that simply do not permit them to participate in full-time schooling. In addition, for the very many who fall by the wayside of formal education and are compelled, in their millions to enter ill equipped adult life and the world, a 'second chance' to attain equivalent basic education is essential. Hence, for reasons of equity and efficiency an integrated planning for educational development, spanning both formal and non-formal learning pathways would appear to be required.

►**Do governments consider that non-formal pathways that effectively function as complementary opportunities for completing basic education deserve to be 'formalized' through recognition and provision of professional and financial support, while being allowed to retain their special 'non-formal' features if these serve the needs of designated target groups**?

4.11   Ensuring that PPE expansion be sustainably financed.
For most countries PPE expansion at all levels will be prohibitive. In part this is due to high investment costs, especially where general education is mixed with (pre-) vocational skills training, and public TVET and tertiary education systems are small. In part, this is also due to relative high recurrent unit-costs, largely because of teachers' salaries. While donors may assist with the former, the latter will squarely rest on the public budget. Studies indicate that the options are not many: addressing present unsustainable cost structures to attain more cost-efficient service delivery; generating additional resources for education internally (including budgetary reallocation and Public Private Partnerships) ; a higher level of external assistance from the development partners.

►**Are governments prepared to commit 5-8% of GNP and 20-26% of public resources to education, within which some 45% would go to PPE and is it realistic to move towards free lower secondary as part of extended basic education**?

4.12   The vexed issue of student flow regulation. Some of the studies for the Biennale suggest the inevitability of student flow regulation as a precondition for affordability. It is argued that, save for countries still very far from the goal of UPE, all children finishing primary schooling (lower basic) should be encouraged to join lower secondary (upper basic) without the need for end-of primary selection examinations. However, as a function of public resources available and of labor market absorptive capacity, the flow of learners from lower secondary into pre-university academic public upper secondary education and, even more so, from the latter level to government funded university education should be subject to some form of control. As an alternative, governments, would need to formalize short vocational training programs in partnership with economic operators, communities and traditional artisans;

► **Can governments substitute an explicit articulation policy to steer leaner flows into particular directions on the basis of aptitudes and merit through incentives and other mecha-**

nisms rather than leaving it to the market to regulate access to further education and often thereby excluding the economically disadvantaged?

4.13   *Cost-effectiveness in PPE?* The effort to reduce unit costs and curtail wastage in public spending in post primary education and in secondary education in particular may, according to various background papers and country case studies submitted to the biennale, rest on a number of policy options:

- integration of lower secondary with primary education;
- reduction of salary and non-salary costs per pupil in secondary education;
- recourse to contractual or less qualified teachers;
- introduction of double shifting and/or year long operation of schools;
- reconsideration of high cost specialized as opposed to general secondary education;
- reviewing school financing modes;
- improvement of teacher deployment and management generally;
- improvement of school management including school finance;
- reduction of repetition rates larger class sizes;
- optimal expansion of physical capacity;
- gainful use of school assets;
- targeting of school benefits and subsidies;
- review of input pricing;
- recourse to open and distance learning and to non-formal alternatives to formal schooling where these can be more cost efficient?

► **What is the political advisability, social acceptability and technical feasibility of such measures, in the light of experience at country level**?

4.14   The re-configuring of educational funding and Public Private Partnerships.
Many studies for the Biennale document the growing importance of the non-governmental providers of PPE and the implications thereof in terms of supplementing public funding and broadening access to PPE. One paper recommends to indicatively target private sector enrolment shares of 10% in lower secondary and 40% in upper secondary, TVET and higher education whereas others point to the inequities generated by market driven fee paying educational provision. Yet another suggests the need for the poorest households and communities be relieved from the disproportionate educational financial burden that often befalls them.

►**Are ministries of education prepared to accept private providers, whether for-profit or non-profit community, NGO or faith schooling as fully fledged partners and should the state support and /or regulate such schools**?

4.15   *Flexible and dependable participation by international technical and funding agencies.*
Donor support for EFA, often through SWAp arrangements, has been crucial for rapid progress towards EFA in many countries. Progress has been made in the harmonisation of procedures and conditions, as well as in the moving towards joint basket funding. Yet the latest indications are that the overall amount of external financial support for education is already well below estimated requirements to achieve the EFA goals and that it actually declined between 2004 and 2005.Recent figures released by the OECD confirm a drop of 8% in overall official development assistance in 2007. Integrated PPE development will constitute a new challenge for the development partners, not in the

least because the nature and range of partners in this area will be quite different from those involved with EFA.

►Are the development partners able to rise to the challenge and commit increased financial resources in the medium to long term to support the drive for PPE expansion and is it necessary to envisage a new type of SWAP to support integrated PPE development?

4.16   Balancing quality and equality; reconciling quantity and quality.
Indications from SSA are that both the rapid progress towards UPE and the expansion of enrolments across PPE from LSE to HE has occurred at the expense of quality. Studies suggest that data on quantitative educational attainment may conceal a catastrophic reality in terms of qualitative achievement of basic cognitive skills and literacy in particular. Yet few countries of SSA subscribe to international benchmarking as represented by the PISA or TIMMS assessments

►Is it inevitable that there be a time lag before quality improvements catch up with democratization of access to PPE and how can governments promote the main determinants of educational quality: effective teachers, textbook availability, incentives at school level?

2. Managing the transition to 9/10 years of extended basic education for all.

4.17   The challenges of democratization.
The critical challenge for countries of SSA is to achieve over a short span of time what took Europe over a century: the transition from an elitist tradition in education to a full blown massification and democratization of post primary education. Elitism is strongly entrenched and educational transformation requires the vision and political ability to confront vested interests, to think creatively about innovative strategies(such as extending primary schooling), and to generate support for far reaching reforms over time. One of the Biennale papers underlines the fact it is precisely in secondary education that social inequality is reproduced (Caillods 2008). Some studies suggest that end-of-primary selection be done away with and replaced by other means of assessing learning achievement whereas others suggest improving the alignment between meaningful pedagogical processes and desired learning outcomes.

►Are governments willing to make a clear distinction in policy making as between lower secondary education ('upper basic' accessible to all and based on a common core curriculum) and upper secondary education (diversified curriculum with different tracks and access to which is not automatic) and what are suitable strategies to adapt educational policies to the changing student profile?

4.18   *Defining and implementing an integrated basic education curriculum.*
One of the most difficult tasks facing policy makers is that of comprehensive curriculum reform to align curriculum content, pedagogy and assessment to the redefined objectives of lower secondary education and changing profile of the student body. Instead of equipping a narrowly selected elite for further academic education, the role ascribed to lower secondary learning in the context of extended basic education becomes that of preparing a whole age group for integration into adult society (life skills, key competencies and citizenship education), into the world of work (core generic skills) and for further studies as applicable (general education) in a general perspective of lifelong learning (learnability). The challenges are manifestly daunting: taking on board problem solving skills and teamwork, shoring up international language mastery as well as math and science skills, introducing ICT as well as civics and education for healthy living, training of teachers, textbook preparation, guarding against curriculum overload and enlisting teacher support.

►How can development partners assist in developing a broad indicative model of basic education combining education and skills development?

4.19 *What donor support for extended basic education?*
It would appear that there is widespread acknowledgement among development partners that, with ever increasing numbers completing primary schooling, SSA has no option but to open up, subject to national circumstances, access to lower secondary education for all.

4.20 The crucial question for many African governments faced with the daunting prospect of having to dramatically scale up both capital and recurrent spending on PPE and in particular lower secondary is to what extent and when donor countries and agencies are willing to usher in a new partnership for extended basic education.

► Is it conceivable to extend the present EFA-FTI mechanism to promote extended basic education with additional resources so as not to jeopardize the UPE drive and can the proposals for PPE indicative financial guidelines, as drafted for the Biennale (Ledoux & Mingat 2008, Lewin 2008), find acceptance both with governments and among development partners?

4.21 Reaching out to the excluded. The task of making lower secondary learning available to children excluded by virtue of poverty, geography and gender becomes the focus of attention as countries progress towards higher levels of enrolment nationally. Clearly, this agenda cannot start at the point of leaving primary school, as exclusionary mechanisms already have had dramatic impact on wastage at primary level in the move towards UPE. It is bound to dovetail its plans with those to improve quality and reduce wastage at lower levels of basic education.

4.22 In the light of the country case studies and background papers for the Biennale addressing issues of equitable access, there is need to consider the most promising strategies to (a) reduce wastage while children are still in primary schools (or lower basic education) and (b) provide in-school or out-of-school remedial programs of a non-formal nature to assist as many learners as possible to re-enter schooling or receive basic education by non-formal means so as to make the transition to LSE or upper basic education?

►How can governments and development partners collaborate in designing and implementing in-school and out-of-school remedial programs on a large scale so as to significantly reduce wastage and increase the throughput of learners into lower secondary education?

3.   Equipping all of Africa's youth for the world of work

4.23 Challenging perspectives for TVET.
If TVET's mission is defined as ensuring that all of Africa's children are prepared to enter the world of work as young persons capable of earning their living, the Biennale studies indicate that the daunting challenges ahead require a comprehensive revamping of policies. Most importantly, given the high cost of public provision of TVET, analysing and understanding the causes of youth unemployment in any given national context is an essential precondition to planning and investing in TVET. Many of the Biennale papers suggest that for children not having benefited from any significant schooling, general basic education and 'restructuring of traditional apprenticeship' be optimally combined to promote employability and that TVET must be more demand driven and adapted to the rural context in particular.

►How can relevant ministries develop global policies to target (i) the unschooled;(ii)the drop outs from primary or lower secondary education; and (iii)the lower secondary graduates with inadequate skills to join the labor market?

4.24   Recognizing plurality as the order of the day and the financing of TVET
A striking conclusion arising out of the papers for the Biennale is the imperative of a holistic perspective of TVET that acknowledges the new context made up of a variety of providers and of modes of delivery (formal, non formal and informal). The meager share of TVET in national education expenditures severely constrains the ability of the relevant ministry to launch new programs and points to the importance of PPPs. Policy makers are thereby confronted by a number of difficult questions.

►How can a holistic perspective of TVET best be operationalized in the skills development domain so as to ensure that all young people receive relevant skills enabling them to benefit from opportunities in the world of work and how can ministries measure the cost effectiveness of existing programs in terms of employment promotion and economic development?

4.25   Training young entrepreneurs.
Africa's dualistic economies and the continued prominence of the informal sector ascribe a particular importance to entrepreneurial education and training. Best practices emerging from the experience of several southern African countries in entrepreneurial education in formal schooling should be of use to the rest of Africa since entrepreneurial education and training has by and large not aroused much interest so far.

4.26   Diversity and flexibility.
Recognition of the intrinsic value of a diversity of learning pathways and a multiplicity of training modes is essential, the studies indicate, to ensure successful skills development having regard to the specifics of various needs and contexts in SSA. Studies suggest there is an emerging consensus in favor of validation of informal and non-formal skills development and the experience of the select few countries of SSA which have developed functional Qualification Frameworks deserves to be shared with other African countries. Several biennale papers point to the critical importance of identifying the training modes that are best adapted to the needs of those often excluded from formal TVET: the unschooled and early drop-outs; the rural youth and girls; former child or adolescent soldiers…

►Where National Qualifications Frameworks do not exist at national level, how do countries develop such a mechanism combining standard setting, validation, certification and quality assurance, in an affordable manner?

4.   Critical choices for higher education

4.27   Accessing higher education and addressing the skills mismatch.

On the one hand, the enrolment rate in higher education for SSA is far below that of the rest of the world and there is a dearth of skills in certain areas. On the other hand, however, unemployment rates among young university graduated is on the rise almost everywhere across SSA. The perennial issue of the mismatch between university supply of, and labour market demand for, skills requires urgent attention in the light of the foregoing

► **How can upper secondary graduates be encouraged to opt for training courses that would produce para-professionals and middle level cadre with more relevant skills and employability and what can governments do to set up higher education institutions offering alternative courses more attuned to labor market requirements and to the aptitudes and level of preparedness of the student body**?

4.28   Given the almost exclusive focus on preparation for university that characterizes upper secondary schooling, the biennale papers underline the need to diversify the educational programs on offer at that level by promoting technical and vocational streams leading on to the world of work or corresponding programs at higher levels and for universities to be transformed into demand driven institutions responsive to economic needs.

4.29   Alternative funding mechanisms.

In the absence of adequate and relevant differentiation of institutions and courses on offer at higher education level, demand for university entrance is widely expected to continuously grow. In the context of severely constrained public resources and prioritization of basic education, all country studies point to an ongoing process of diversification of providers with a vast increase in the number of private HE institutions and a corresponding shift in funding profile as households increasingly assume the responsibility for funding. The Biennale papers raise a number of critical issues including accreditation and quality assurance in respect of both public and private institutions; loan schemes for cost sharing; revenue generation by public universities as well as partnerships with business corporations.

►**What models of legal frameworks exist to found a productive public private partnership in higher education and which incentives are governments willing to offer private universities and polytechnics including foreign universities setting up offshore campuses?**

4.30   Confronting the class and gender divides.

The Biennale studies are unanimous in pointing out how the inequalities created or reproduced at secondary level are amplified at the entry point into higher or tertiary education. They describe various targeted instruments and affirmative action in favour of poor students and girls but suggest that merit based scholarships not in fact disproportionately benefit the relatively well off. A major challenge for African education ministries remains that of data collection and analysis systems being put in place to monitor the equity dimension of higher education expansion.

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