

**IAU Experts' Seminar
Higher Education and Education For All: The Case of Two
Solitudes?**

Maputo, Mozambique, January 25-26, 2007

Seminar Final Report

Foreword

The International Association of Universities (IAU) convened a two-day Experts' Seminar on the role of higher education in the pursuit of Education For All (EFA) goals. It was held on January 25-26, in Maputo, Mozambique. On an invitation-only basis, the Seminar brought together several experts - 5 coming from higher education institutions located in developing countries (Ghana, Mexico, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia) and 4 from higher education institutions in industrialised countries (Canada, Netherlands, UK). An invited and renowned expert in this field from the USA had planned to attend but was unable to come at the last minute. As well, invited representatives from international cooperation and donor agencies - UNESCO Harare Cluster Office, the Association of African Universities (AAU), the Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE) of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) took an active part in the discussions. SAREC of the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), and the Netherlands International Cooperation Agency (Nuffic) were also among the development agencies that had been invited. Conveying their regrets for not being able to attend, both organizations reiterated their on-going support and interest in the outcome and future developments.

The Experts' Seminar was conceived within the context of a larger pilot project, *Higher Education and Research contribution to meeting EFA goals*, which was launched in 2005 and continues to be undertaken by IAU. This pilot project, which has enjoyed partial financial support from Sida, aims to identify current practices and activities engaged by higher education and research institutions in the pursuit of EFA goals, and to examine, if needed, the ways to strengthen their role in this field. The pilot project focuses uniquely on North-South inter-university partnerships in order to limit the scope of the activity, at least in this initial stage. As part of the project, two questionnaires were developed to gather data from:

- 1) Development donor agencies and organizations managing inter-institutional programs;
- 2) Project leaders in both lead and partner HEIs

The Seminar was organized around the results of these two separate, yet complementary questionnaires. The Seminar participants had been identified and selected from among the list of project leaders and cooperation agencies who had completed a questionnaire and expressed interest in the project. *IAU has been asked to highlight that agencies and experts alike found these questionnaires to have had a direct impact on their own reflections and stimulated new thinking about the work they had been undertaking in EFA related areas.*

The Seminar was organised in collaboration with, and hosted by the Eduardo Mondlane University (EMU) of Maputo, Mozambique. This location was chosen for a variety of reasons, including the university's involvement in inter-university partnerships in EFA and related fields; the fact that it is an IAU Member of long standing, and in recognition of the fact that Mozambique is one of the countries targeted by the EFA Fast Track Initiative.

The Seminar was designed to be highly interactive, limiting the time of project presentations to provide more opportunity for discussions and reflection on steps forward. Project descriptions were included and circulated to all participants as part of the Working Documents.

Seminar Opening

- Opening address by Brazao Mazula, Rector of Eduardo Mondlane University
- Goolam Mohamedbhai, President, IAU
- Juma Shabani, Director, UNESCO Harare Cluster Office
- Special address by Vernâncio Massingue, the Honourable Minister of Science and Technology, Mozambique

The Rector Mazula's opening address set the tone for the Seminar, stressing the need to strengthen international cooperation in education development. By focusing on the current state of education in Mozambique, he both illustrated the challenges that still lie ahead to deliver quality universal education as well as the achievements that have already been made. Launching an appeal to deepen international cooperation to overcome obstacles facing EFA, he evoked the success of EMU has enjoyed due to such international linkages and the high level of regional cooperation EMU has consequently cultivated. The Rector then went on to introduce the Vice Rectors, Deans, Directors and top Administrative officers from EMU who all were present for the Seminar Opening.

Reminding participants and attendees alike that higher education does have a critical contribution to make in resolving major issues facing humanity, including providing universal education, the President of IAU, Goolam Mohamedbhai presented the background and rationale for the development of this project to be among priority activities for IAU. Situating the work on EFA within the broader thematic cluster IAU has adopted under the heading 'Higher Education and Society', the president expressed a sincere hope that the Seminar will assist in the development of a large activity to engage IAU membership in this area. Intending to stimulate further reflection by the Seminar participants, he identified three main obstacles, which, in his view, prevent the achievement of the EFA goals: insufficient availability and use of ICTs, the ravages of HIV/AIDS, and conflicts and disasters.

Taking up the theme of ICTs, Juma Shabani of UNESCO cited examples of both the opportunities and ongoing challenges posed by new technologies specifically in Africa, and abroad. He also pointed out the importance that UNESCO attached to EFA in its role as the coordinating UN agency in the pursuit of the Dakar goals.

In his address, the Honourable Minister set the stakes high for the Seminar, conveying the wishes of both the Ministries of Science and of Education, to see that concrete recommendations come out of the Seminar on how best to facilitate the interaction between

higher education and primary education, but also other levels including secondary education. Repeatedly using the metaphor of walls, he emphasised the necessity to go beyond one's physical and mental walls in order to capture a real and holistic understanding of the current state of education, to develop practical solutions to real situations, and to build solid local, regional and international partnerships. This metaphor was frequently alluded to later during the ensuing presentations, discussions, and recommendations.

The morning session was chaired by the IAU Secretary General, Eva Egron-Polak.

The first presentation of the Seminar, by Isabelle Turmaine, Director of the IAU Information Centre and Services, began with an overview of the IAU pilot project, the methodology employed and some preliminary findings from the surveys. (To access the IAU presentation, *IAU Project Methodology and Results*, and all presentations made during the Seminar, please visit the IAU website at: <http://www.unesco.org/iau/>). In anticipation of the ensuing discussions, and to better anchor them, Isabelle Turmaine recalled the Seminar's three key expected outcomes:

- Learn more about why and how higher education and research should contribute more to achieving EFA goals
- Suggest what can be done to strengthen their involvement
- Identify what effective tools are required to allow this to happen

In the discussion that followed, it was generally agreed that generally, there is limited awareness in the higher education sector about EFA. Several participants, coming from both development agencies and institutions, revealed their unfamiliarity with the EFA terminology and it was only thanks to and as a direct result of having received the questionnaire that they examined and considered their own involvement in EFA-related activities.

This generated several urgent calls for the development of an awareness raising strategy in order to address this lack within both the donor community and universities.

It was also felt that a second survey should be conducted because the first survey was limited in scope – only looking at inter-university linkage projects, and had raised even more questions. It also demonstrated that little is known or understood about what is currently taking place at the intersection of HE and Research and EFA-related work. To complete the existing data, the second survey would need to widen its scope, perhaps even being undertaken in a decentralised manner to solicit the use of established networks, incorporate a more qualitative approach, and to allow for more comprehensive responses. Participants were called upon to provide feedback on the questionnaire so as to better formulate the second questionnaire.

The morning session then continued with an informal and brief introduction of participants. For further details on participants and their projects, please see Working Documents.

Reiterating one of the participants' call for 'unpacking' EFA, the Chair ended the morning plenary session by inviting participants to break down the EFA program and activities into its different components, such as teacher training, ICT, non-formal education, literacy, etc. It was suggested that perhaps only when the current terminology used in EFA is 'translated' into the language of education and development experts and researchers, would it be well understood. This in turn will make it easier for the higher education sector to find ways in which to be more fully engaged in EFA.

Workshop 1

State of the art: Experience in Supporting EFA: Opportunities and Challenges

The first Workshop was chaired by Alice Sena Lamptey Coordinator of the ADEA Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE). Focusing on the challenges and opportunities experienced in working on EFA-related projects, the afternoon series of presentations was organised into two sections. In the first series four development agencies presented their perspective, working at international, regional and national levels.

Juma Shabani, UNESCO Harare Cluster Office, briefly described the *UNESCO Teacher Training in sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA Programme)*. The goal of this relatively new programme is to address the chronic shortage of quality teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa. The programme is country-driven and helps countries to integrate teacher education fully, and in a lasting manner, into national education plans.

Thierry Karsenti, President of the Réseau international francophone des établissements de formation de formateurs (RIFEFF) established by the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) spoke about this international network. The work of this network addresses principally Goals 2 and 3 as defined in the Dakar Framework. The AUF felt that it could have the greatest impact by focusing on teacher communities and quality education delivery by training teacher trainers rather than attempting to increase directly the number of teachers. The network also offers certification for teacher trainers.

John Ssebuwufu, Director of Research and Programmes at the African Association of Universities (AAU) noted that even though AAU has not developed a specific programme directly geared to supporting EFA, indirectly, it has been involved nonetheless. The Association too addresses Goals 2 and 3, and more broadly the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), primarily by promoting dialogue and cooperation within the African HE community, financing, collecting and disseminating research, and focusing on capacity building.

Margaux Béland, Director, Partnership Programmes, Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), spoke mostly about the *University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development Program Overview and Basic Education Study*. The AUCC employs an institution-driven partnership approach, supporting projects in three principal areas: education and training, action-orientated research, and community outreach. It recently conducted a study to assess the projects' overall contribution to basic education. The study found that the majority of projects made indirect or cross-sectoral contributions to skills and capacity development while directly addressing Goals 2, 3 and 6 in the Dakar Framework.

The second series of presentations was devoted to institutional experiences by four project leaders – two experts coming from HEIs in industrialized countries and two from Southern HEIs. Each was asked to share their experiences in the setting-up and implementation of their projects, as well as to discuss how various institutions provided or did not provide support to their endeavours.

Ian G. Macfarlane, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands, spoke about *VUA: Its role in supporting education for all*. Starting with an overview of how VUA has been involved in development cooperation in the past and describing some of the current trends at the institutional level, Prof. Macfarlane expressed his concern with a gap that needed to be bridged between HEIs and Ministries of Education in most countries. He presented a successful example of how this obstacle could be overcome and turned into a positive working relationship through the creation of a Joint Advisory Group, bringing together representatives from both sectors at the national or even more local level.

Jim Greenlaw, St Francis Xavier University, Canada, presented findings and experiences from the *Education for all in Bhutan* project. It was revealed that this project, linking St. Francis Xavier University and the Royal University of Bhutan, has enjoyed considerable success due in part to the fact that all administrative levels of education in Bhutan were involved. He also underlined the benefits of an ongoing, two way exchange, of faculty members and students of both partner institutions.

Ruth Mwale Mubanga, from Nkrumah College of Education in Zambia, spoke about the project entitled *Management, financing and administration: Nkrumah College of Education's contribution to meeting education for all goals*. With the integration of EFA goals into the national education plan in Zambia, the College has witnessed considerable changes, both positive and negative, including an evolution of its own function within the education system.

Alejandro Chao Barona, from the Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Morelos, in Mexico presented a community development project entitled *UAEM-UNICEDES: Ten years community work experience*. Abiding by the principal that universities have a very real social responsibility, in this university-community outreach centre, the university strives to work with local communities to validate and recognize indigenous knowledge through research and the integration of traditional practices into the HE curriculum.

These presentations, stimulated lively discussions, largely dominated by four themes:

- ICTs - opportunities in delivering education at all levels and the ongoing obstacles
- Teachers: their recruitment, retention and overall status
- Gap/distance between Ministries of Education and HEIs and research institutes – the real case of two solitudes?
- Inadequate collection, dissemination and management of research and information

In the discussion about ICTs, success stories highlighted how technology could increase opportunities for improved Universal Primary Education (UPE) delivery and for reaching an ever-growing student population in higher education.

The participants stressed the critical importance of supporting teachers and the chronic and crippling problem of teacher retention due to poor working conditions and teachers' salaries. It was further discussed that cooperation programmes seldom treat this fundamental issue and end up dealing with the symptoms, while the problem is far more systemic – teachers being trained on the one hand but not staying in the profession due to other work opportunities or because of HIV/Aids on the other hand.

The idea that the Ministries of Education did not see HEIs as actors in EFA related activities was underlined throughout the seminar. Participants felt that by working together more closely, HEIs should be more actively involved in finding solutions to these systemic problems. Furthermore, even when research is being done by HEIs it seems little known by the Ministries or done outside the framework of policy needs. This was found to be an unfortunate failure to bring efforts and resources to bear on this important and critical area. The walls that separate Ministries of Education and HEIs need to break down by both sides in order to establish better working relations of mutual support.

The emergence of a Knowledge Society, it was stressed, makes it imperative for a research culture to be strengthened and reinforced in developing countries in general, but as it pertains to examining EFA- related issues.

In summarizing the day's deliberations, Eva Egron Polak presented a list of topics that had been addressed and urged participants to consider the need to make recommendations for

moving forward and for finding innovative ways to strengthen higher education and research engagement in EFA.

Workshop 2

Held on the second day of the seminar and focusing on **The Way Forward: Towards a greater implication in EFA: Perspectives and Priorities**, Workshop 2 was chaired by Juma Shabani, of the UNESCO Harare Cluster Office. It was organized in two parts: first looking more specifically at the area of Research and EFA, with presentations and discussion on research needs and obstacles. The second part was devoted to setting out recommendations and paths for moving forward.

There were three presentations that discussed various aspects of research related and/or in support of the EFA effort.

Alice Sena Lamptey, from the ADEA Working group on Higher Education, Accra (Ghana), based on a specific project case study from South Africa, highlighted the missing areas of research such as: pre-, in service- and post-teacher training; assessment and evaluation of EFA; community participation; policy and planning; donor contribution and impact; etc.

Terry Russell, from the University of Liverpool (UK), explained the research and work done to enhance pupils' comprehension of educational material and parents' involvement in education by focusing on appropriate instructional material. He underlined the problems linked to poor dissemination of research results and the difficulty of logistics in the field. He concluded by evoking the possibility of using ICTs to deal with many of these problems.

Inocente Mutimucuo, from Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo (Mozambique), noted the need for collaborative research in order to achieve such monumental goals as those of EFA by 2015. He called for much more networking to share resources and expertise and to coordinate and develop collective actions. He proposed to select countries to serve as research laboratories to better reach the EFA goals.

The discussion that followed was very animated and engaged, clearly underlining the fact that research is a unique feature of universities and an important and yet unexploited contribution that HEIs can make to the EFA efforts.

The two main obstacles standing in the way of more effective mobilization of research capacities were identified by the participants. Both were directly or indirectly linked to information. The first major issue area was linked to problem identification, the second to questions of implementation, as follows:

- Problem Identification:
 - o What topics should be on the research agenda; who defines it; where are the gaps?
 - o For whom should research be undertaken: only Ministries, or schools, NGOs and others?
 - o Who should undertake research on EFA: researchers in Faculties of Education, in departments of Sociology, Economics, Psychology, elsewhere?

- Implementation:
 - o What type of research should be made available and disseminated to whom?
 - o Lack of dialogue/coordination between the various stakeholders
 - o Lack of research culture, little value/recognition of certain kind of research
 - o Poor dissemination of research results

- Major divide between researchers and implementers.

Overwhelmingly, there was consensus that to overcome these and related problems would require better management of existing information and more dialogue and networking for sharing knowledge.

To end the second Workshop, the Chair invited Eva Egron-Polak to summarize the main conclusions of these discussions. She noted the following points:

- Higher education has a major role to play in EFA;
- There are many possible areas of research which could be developed in relation to EFA and its implementation;
- There is a need for more dissemination of research results; good practices, etc...
- The research agenda should be set in dialogue with all the stakeholders
- Donors should be mobilized around existing and identified research gaps;
- Ways should be developed to better disseminate; inform and mobilize;
- EFA should be made more understandable in the academic research community.

Recalling the Expected Outcomes outlined by IAU at the beginning of the Seminar (working document pg. 12), the Chair invited participants to focus their comments and suggestions accordingly.

Most of the discussions addressed the need for an information tool, its possible format and desirable content. It was noted that despite the vast amount of information made available by UNESCO, regular assessment reports of the EFA programme achievements (website; BREDA Assessment report in 2004; Annual Global Monitoring Reports, etc) and many others, information more specifically designed for HE and especially documenting the HE and R and EFA intersection was needed. All agreed that such information would have to be concise and most specifically relevant to the academic and research community allowing or facilitating coordination and networking among various efforts.

Others possible ways forward included: raising awareness through all possible channels, within and outside the higher education community; encouraging and providing incentives for students to undertake research related to EFA; using students in related community outreach programmes and to increase involvement with the community in EFA; increasing south-south and triangular cooperation; creating a network/consortium with regional nodes on the topic; preparing a leaflet on the topic; working with specialized groups to identify one or two issues of importance on which to undertake a major initiative in collaborative research; capacity building in the production of local materials; enhancing community involvement.

In order to ensure that the final list of recommendations could be discussed by all participants, the Chair invited the IAU Secretary General to prepare a first draft for approval prior to the end of the Seminar.

Closing Session

The closing session was chaired by John Ssebuwufu, Director of Research of the Association of African Universities (AAU). Participants were asked to review and comment upon the draft recommendations presented by Eva Egron Polak. In general, they were endorsed by all with requests that they be regrouped, re-organized, and if possible, prioritized. Several additional topics were mentioned with the suggestion that these should be integrated into the recommendations. Such topics included HIV/AIDS; ICTs and distance education; science and innovation; adult education; languages. Participants wished to see a stronger mention of UNESCO and, for Africa, the African Union as key stakeholders. It was also suggested that linking the HE and EFA to sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals

might also be useful. Finally, a more forceful way of pressing for the enhancement of a research culture in developing country HEIs was also suggested.

It was agreed that IAU would complete and finalize the Seminar report, circulate a draft to all participants for specific input and translate the final version into French. No 'task distribution' was done at this stage, though each participant was encouraged to undertake whatever activity they could pursue. IAU expressed its commitment to elaborate a proposal for a second phase of this project and the development of the framework for an information resource tool. The final list of recommendations would also highlight those to which IAU would devote its efforts.

Participants accepted to serve as an electronic reference group for the project. They would be invited to comment on IAU documents and asked to send to IAU any additional information they may have on EFA-related projects, theirs or those of others, so that such information can be featured in the future information tool.

Finally, participants were informed that IAU was to present the results of the survey and the outcome of this Seminar at the upcoming UNESCO-AAU Workshop to be held in Accra (Ghana) on March 24-26, 2007.

The Seminar ended with IAU's President, Dr. Goolam Mohamedbhai thanking Eduardo Mondlane University for the warm welcome and efficient and professional support the Rector and university staff had provided IAU. He also thanked the participants, expressing his appreciation for their expertise and interest and commended IAU's Secretariat staff for their work. The last comments were presented by the Vice-Rector of Eduardo Mondlane University, Dr. Orlando Quilambo, who closed the Seminar congratulating all for the overall success of the proceedings, thanking IAU for choosing to partner with EMU in this project and was looking forward for the variety of follow-up activities to which it will give rise.

Background documents, conclusions and revised recommendations, have been circulated to all participants and form an integral part of this report. All such supporting documents are attached in the following annexes:

IAU, Paris, February 2007