

The UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge is a global initiative with the aim of widening the understanding of systems and structures of higher education, research and knowledge, and focussing particularly on developing countries. The objective is to identify, gather, analyse, disseminate and promote research. The Forum provides a platform for researchers, policy-makers and experts to engage critically with research issues and findings.

EDITORIAL REMARKS

2008 is already several months old and we hope that this year is proving to be a successful and productive year for all the many friends, colleagues and partners of the UNESCO Forum.

The Forum Secretariat is very pleased to announce that a special extension to the current phase of the project has been decided by the donor after discussions with UNESCO during the 34th session of the UNESCO General Conference (October 2007). The main activities of this period are outlined in the present Newsletter and we look forward to your continued support and involvement.

At the General Conference, member states adopted the Medium Term Strategy for 2008-13 (the 34C/4) which gives priority to areas such as the development challenges facing Africa, renewed emphasis on science, technology and innovation for sustainable development and the crucial role of higher education in assuring the generation and dissemination of knowledge. Renewed emphasis was placed on UNESCO's role as a laboratory of ideas and as a catalyst for

international cooperation so as to share and adapt best practices. A return to the Organization's traditional role in policy advice was also advocated. All these points resonate strongly with the objectives and activities of the UNESCO Forum for Higher Education, Research and Knowledge

*During UNESCO's activities for 2008-9 (the 34C/5), the review of the works of the Science and Social and Human Science Sectors will continue and a series of intersectoral platforms focusing on key issues, inter alia Strengthening National Research Systems, will be launched as an innovative programming approach. Last but not least, this biennium will mark the tenth anniversary of the **World Conference on Higher Education** (Paris, July 2009), and of the **World Conference on Science** (Budapest, November 2009). The UNESCO Forum, through its promotion of knowledge and research, will make an important contribution to all these initiatives.*

The UNESCO Forum Secretariat

Editorial Remarks

Activity Update

Asia/Pacific Regional Research Seminar (Hangzhou, China, September 2007)

Special Initiative:
National Research Systems (Symposium, Paris, January 2008)

High-level Expert Working Group on Technology and Development (Manchester Institute of Innovative Research, United Kingdom, February 2008)

International Experts' Workshop on Trends and Issues in Post-Graduate Education (Dublin, Ireland 5-7 March 2008)

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Trends and Issues in Post-Graduate Education,
UNESCO/Dublin City University Experts' Workshop, 5-7 March 2008

This workshop was hosted by DCU with support from the Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE), an important Forum partner, as well as from key Irish bodies including the Irish Research Council for Humanities and the Social Sciences (IRCHSS) and the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET).

The workshop examined major issues related to advanced graduate qualifications: university research capacities in developing countries, in-demand graduate degrees, the potential of e-learning modalities, innovative networking strategies and branding for excellence amongst research universities.

Guest speakers included: Sir Peter Scott, Vice Chancellor of Kingston University UK, Jamil Salmi, Tertiary Education Coordinator for, the World Bank, Soumitra Dutta, Dean of Graduate Studies, INSEAD Business School, France, Bridgid Heywood, Pro VC for Research and Enterprise, The Open University, UK, Jaime Arturo Ramirez, Dean of Postgraduate Studies at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil, and Chris Tremewan, Pro VC for International Affairs, Auckland University, New Zealand.

Sessions were chaired by Pamela Denicolo (The Society for Research into Higher Education, SRHE), Antoine Zahlan (an international consultant in higher education in Europe and the Middle East), Alpha Tejan Wurie (former Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Sierra Leone), Mammo Muchie (Globalics Network and Aalborg University, Denmark), and Conor O'Carroll (Irish Universities Association). Ulrich Teichler, Director, INCHER, Kassel University, Germany was the rapporteur general.

This workshop looked at three specific aspects of graduate education: the role of research in graduate degrees, successful innovative practices and their potential for adaptation to other socio-economic contexts. This focus related directly to the human resources component of national research systems and to the training of expertise for the global labour market.

ASIA/PACIFIC REGIONAL RESEARCH SEMINAR

Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China, 17-18 September 2007

The Asia Pacific Regional Scientific Committee and invited international and national experts were welcomed by Professor Yan Wei, president of Zhejiang University to the 2007 seminar on the theme of Competition, Cooperation and Change in the Academic Profession: Shaping Higher Education's Contribution to Knowledge and Research.

In his special opening address on the Internationalization of Research, Professor Yan explained the recent motors of higher education development in China, the role of international research and the future prospects for his own institution which is profiled as a top research university within the national system and thus the recipient of increasing financial support from the state. Higher education enrolments have leapt from 9.8% in 1999 to 21% in 2006, thus attesting to the importance of tertiary level education and training. Professor Yan also evoked the dramatic rise in doctoral studies where 160,000 students are currently enrolled and the increasing government incentives to pursue academic qualifications at this advanced level.

The seminar was organized in four thematic sessions: I) The Complementarity of Competition and Collaboration in Shaping Higher Education's Contribution to Research and Knowledge; II) Community engagement and Higher Education's Contribution to Regional Development; III) The Changing Academic Profession: Implications for

Asia Pacific Region; and IV) The Teaching/Learning and Research Nexus in Higher Education.

Keynote addresses were given by Professors Charas Suwanvela (Thailand), Sunwoong Kim (USA), Heather Eggins (United Kingdom) and Nga Nguyen Phuong (Vietnam).

Country reports on the themes were tabled from Japan, Australia, the Pacific Islands, Iran, India, Malaysia, the Philippines and Mongolia.

The conclusions of the seminar emphasized the recurring themes, issues and concerns which manifest themselves in Asia and the Pacific, which is characterized by dynamism and diversity and is one of the most forward-looking regions of the world. In this context, flexibility and the need to promote linkages via networking are essential to meet the frequently changing academic context. Several strategies were recommended to ensure the harmonization of converging and diverging forces: shaping an academic culture rooted in norms and values, balancing personal goals with the university mission and academic freedom with institutional aims, fostering mutual respect between the university and society, promoting different research agendas for different types of institutions and redefining and broadening research itself.

The proceedings of the seminar have been published with generous support from De La Salle University, The Philippines.

SYMPOSIUM ON THE SPECIAL INITIATIVE: NATIONAL RESEARCH SYSTEMS

UNESCO, Paris 16-18 January 2008

Some 100 experts from over forty countries, along with representatives of UN Agencies (WHO, FAO), IGOs (OECD, NEPAD) and NGOs (AAU, IAU, ICSU, ICSS, IFUW and SRHE) and the private sector attended this symposium held to table the results of the Special Initiative and to collect comments and suggestions to finalize the project.

The Special Initiative, launched at the Invitational Workshop (6-7 April 2006), has involved a large scale mapping exercise led by Dr Johann Mouton of the Centre for Research on Science and Technology, (CREST) of the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa and Dr Roland Waast, of the Institut pour la Recherche sur le

Développement, IRD/France. Support is being provided by the Centre for Higher Education in Europe (CEPES/Bucharest) and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics. The material gathered comprises a Global Meta Review including a Country Template, regional reports and 52 studies of middle and low income countries.

Expert commentators and discussants were: Rigas Arvantis (France) Jacques Gaillard (France), Frank Teng Zeng (Ghana), Sari Hanafi (Lebanon), Wail Benjelloun (Morocco), Venni Venkata Krishna (India) Tony Marjoram (UNESCO and Australia), Daniel Villavicencio (Mexico) and Pablo Kreimer (Argentina). UN and IGO experts included Philippe

Mawoko and Claus Brundesius (NEPAD) Zhang Gang (OECD), Isabel Alvarez Fernandez (FAO), Ania Grobicki of the 2008 Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health, Ritu Sadana and Issa Sanou (WHO) Mary Anne Burke (Global Forum for Health Research) and Andrew Kennedy (The Council for Health Research for Development).

At the 2006 Global Colloquium, Professor Mouton and Waast gave an update on the progress and methodology of the project as well as a preview of the expected outcomes which include providing critical data on research systems in developing countries, promoting effective country-owned development policies, contributing international expertise to national and regional knowledge management, sharing expertise across borders via international debate and recommendations, proposing suitable solutions to strengthen research systems based on the adaptation of good practice, facilitating south/south cooperation in knowledge management and innovation, convening strategic international and regional debate on the status of national research systems and forging partnerships

for enhanced capacities in the area of innovation. The centrepiece of the project is the Country Template which covers:

- ▶ the national history of higher education,
- ▶ science and social development,
- ▶ current policies in these areas,
- ▶ human resources in science and technology,
- ▶ investment in research strategies to promote innovation,
- ▶ the status of researchers and their career development,
- ▶ informal structures related to knowledge production,
- ▶ the instance of scientific cooperation and agreements amongst research and development actors,
- ▶ research output.

The Symposium proposed the addition of a tenth indicator (Tensions, Dynamics and Challenges) to deal with specific issues related to the research system within a particular context. Discussions are ongoing with regard to possible piloting of the template by the UNESCO Forum and its availability to member states of UNESCO for their own applications later in 2008.

HIGH-LEVEL EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Manchester Institute of Innovative Research, University of Manchester, United Kingdom, 28-29 February 2008

Some 30 international experts gathered in Manchester for this workshop which aims to define a research agenda for technology and development. Examples of successful innovation was discussed alongside evidence to highlight the key priorities for future research in this often neglected field.

Topics included, inter alia the innovation process in relation to development, skills and human capital in

this process, innovation systems in developing economies and the role of universities in this regard, indigenous and external knowledge generation processes and policies to foster innovation.

The outcome was a communiqué highlighting priorities for research in this crucial field. Influencing opinion through media outlets will also be an important result of the workshop.

THE UNESCO FORUM AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

60 Minutes: Knowledge Sharing, UNESCO, 19 February 2008

The UNESCO Forum acted as rapporteur at a session of a special cycle of discussions on Knowledge Sharing (February 2008). This cycle was open to Permanent Delegations, UNESCO staff and the public at large and was arranged by the Bureau of Public Information. It covered UNESCO's Clearing House functions as clearing house, capacity-builder, laboratory of ideas and knowledge-broker.

The session on UNESCO as a laboratory of ideas featured the role of the institutes,

notably the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP, Paris) and the International Bureau for Education (IBE, Geneva).

Presentations were made by Mark Bray, Director IIEP, and Renato Opertti (IBE). These offered definitions of information vs knowledge, examples of good practice in particular knowledge communities and evidence of UNESCO impact as a laboratory.

Policy Briefs for National Decision-makers

In line with UNESCO's aim to make the outcomes of such conferences rapidly available to decision-makers in Member States, a series of Policy Briefs has been prepared in cooperation with the MOST (Management of Social Transformation) Programme in the Sector for Social and Human Sciences. MOST attributes top priority to ensuring that knowledge generated through research is communicated to policy-makers in efficient and user-friendly format. To this end, a special computerized tool has been developed to channel innovative research findings into policy deliberations at national level.

Rubrics that can be searched for data include: research capacity, cooperation, partnership and networking, knowledge development and management, research productivity and delivery, research impact and development, policies and agreements related to knowledge management, and special emerging issues arising from the globalization of knowledge such as its ethical and political dimensions.

To date some 100 Briefs are available online. These summarize papers from major Forum activities such as the 2006 Global Colloquium on Research Universities, the 2007 series of regional research seminars and the special set of Commissioned Papers on current topics of interest in the Knowledge Society.

Mary-Louise Kearney (Secretariat of the UNESCO Forum) was the rapporteur for the session.

This special cycle follows from the 2007 report of the UN Joint Inspection Unit on Knowledge Management in the UN System which proposed ways and means to streamline and optimise this common objective for the benefit of member states.

Special Extension of the UNESCO Forum for Higher Education, Research and Knowledge 2008-9

A special one-year extension of the current phase of the project has been approved by the donor, Sida/Sweden for the period March 2008- March 2009. The proposed schedule of activities will include finalization of the Special Initiative 's Country Template for mapping research systems, a global research seminar convened for researchers worldwide who are working on knowledge systems, and a special Research Report which will be the Forum's input to the *World Conferences on Higher Education +10 and Science +10* to be held respectively in July and November 2009. Another feature of the programme will be a redesigned Communications Strategy which will operate predominantly on-line through the Forum's website and via teleconferences for meetings. AS UNESCO commences planning for its programme in 2010-11 (the Draft 335C/5), the donor will consider a longer term commitment to the project.

Recent and Forthcoming Publications

- ▶ *Research Universities: An Endangered Species?*
 Editors: Hebe Vessuri and Ulrich Teichler
 Papers from the Forum Global Colloquium, Paris 2006
 (SENSE Publishers, The Netherlands, March 2008)
- ▶ *The Special Initiative: Mapping and Analysing Research Systems
 A Global Meta Review, Regional Reviews, 52 Country Studies*
 Editors: Johann Mouton and Roland Waast
 UNESCO Forum website: February 2008
- ▶ *Summary Reports of the 2007 UNESCO Forum Regional Research Seminars:
 Main Findings and Conclusions*
 (Research Seminars in Paris, Ghana, Morocco, Trinidad and Tobago, China)
 UNESCO Forum, 2008
- ▶ *The UNESCO Forum Research Report (1st Edition)
 Research and Social Development*
 Editors: Lynn Meek, Thandika Mkandawire and Ulrich Teichler
 April 2009

UPCOMING EVENTS

Activities April 2008 - March 2009

Meeting of the UNESCO Forum Coordinating Committee Sectors of Education, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics UIS, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE), the International Association of Universities IAU, the International Council for Science ICSU, the International Council for Social Sciences ICSS.

April 2008, UNESCO, Paris

Meeting of the UNESCO Forum Interim Scientific Advisory Board

June 2008, UNESCO, Paris

Global Experts' Meetings (on Higher Education, Science and the Social and Human Sciences)

Dates to be announced on the Forum website

Interagency Meeting on cooperation with the UNESCO Forum

July 2008, UNESCO, Paris

Donors' Meeting on the UNESCO Forum

October 2008, UNESCO, Paris

Global Research Seminar

December 2008, UNESCO, Paris

Further information:

The Secretariat,
 The UNESCO Forum on Higher Education,
 Research and Knowledge,
 Division of Higher Education,
 UNESCO
 7 place de Fontenoy, 75007 Paris
 Tel + 33 1 45 68 11 26 Fax + 33 1 45 68 56 26
 Email: researchforum@unesco.org
www.unesco.org/education/researchforum