

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

*2007 is passing fast with a very busy Forum programme advancing on schedule in close cooperation with the Forum Committees and our many partners.*

*In April 2007 at the 176<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board, the Member States expressed views on the priorities for the forthcoming Medium-Term Strategy (2008-13) and the programme and budget for 2008-9 (the Draft 34C/5). Priority orientations retained were: contribution to sustainable development through the mobilization of science; tackling emerging social and ethical challenges in UNESCO's domains; fostering cultural diversity, dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, and a culture of peace; building inclusive knowledge societies through media and information and communications technologies (ICTs).*

*UNESCO is currently taking part in system-wide deliberations on the reform*

*of the United Nations, led by the new Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon. UNESCO is committed to ensuring a higher degree of coherence in order to optimize the impact of action, notably at country level. This is encapsulated in the concept of "One UN" and will involve a review of the interagency architecture in the coming years. One expected result will be enhanced delivery of action which will help attain the Millennium Development Goals before 2020.*

*Underpinning these major changes is the role of evidence-based policy making, grounded in relevant and high-calibre research. In this regard, the UNESCO forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge is receiving increased attention as an arena for global, regional and national debate on knowledge systems and their crucial contribution to the development process.*

The UNESCO Forum Secretariat

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**Europe 5-6 March 2007, UNESCO Paris**  
*Globalizing Knowledge: European and North American Regions and Policies addressing the priority issues of other UNESCO Regions*

The UNESCO Forum ENA Committee met in Paris to discuss the main transformations, challenges and emerging patterns in Higher Education systems today. The very comprehensive programme resulted from a proposal made by a preparatory Steering Committee led by Professors Ivar Bleiklie and Sverker Sorlin. The programme was designed to provide an overview of the main issues faced by the sector in ENA and OECD countries for consideration in other regions. Papers were tabled on the following subjects: massification and diversification, integration and public steering, funding, the social mission of higher education, international student mobility, universities and globalization, institutional organization and governance, and accreditation trends. It is expected that these papers will contribute to the ongoing policy dialogue amongst other Forum Committees.

**Africa 22-24 March 2007, Accra, Ghana**  
*The Contribution of Higher Education to the Education System*

The African Regional Scientific Committee has chosen *"The Contribution of Higher Education to National Education Systems: Current Challenges for Africa"* as the theme of its second research seminar which was organized in March, in Accra, Ghana, in cooperation with the Association of African Universities (AAU), and the UNESCO Office in Accra.

The programme was elaborated under the guidance of the African Committee headed by Professor Goolam Mohammedbhai and aimed at emphasizing the important linkages between Higher Education and UNESCO's action in the area of Education for All (EFA). The call for papers resulted in the choice of some 18 presenters from 17 countries of the region. The researchers addressed the programme's selected sub-themes, namely Teacher Education, Non-Formal Education, Technical and Vocational Education, Research in Education and Open and Distance Learning and Continuing Education. Special guest speakers included Lucio Sia and Andrea Valentini, of the Teacher Education Section in UNESCO's Division of Higher Education, Dr Nuri Yakubu of the National Board of Technical Education, (Nigeria), and Eva Egron-Polak, Secretary-General of the International Association of Universities (IAU).

The African Regional Committee is currently finalizing the proceedings of the Seminar and will select some papers with view to a possible publication later this year.

## THE UNESCO FORUM GLOBAL COLLOQUIUM *Universities as Centres of Research and Knowledge Creation. An Endangered Species?*

Paris, 29 November - 1 December 2006

### **Final Report and Policy Briefs for Decision - Makers**

*At this major conference, the debates involved international academics from over 40 countries and focused on three sub-themes: research productivity, research capacity and the relevance of research. The Final Report was presented by Professor Hans Weiler (Germany), assisted by Professors Sarah Guri-Rosenblit (Israel) and Akilagpa Sawyerr (Ghana). This highlighted a number of key outcomes notably the precarious nature of research worldwide, the major cleavages and inequalities which exist in relation to research capacities, agendas, contexts and their political climates, criteria, and partnerships, a checklist of future priorities to develop and improve knowledge generation, and the role of the UNESCO forum in helping to bring scholars together, to support their interaction and to act as a catalyst for research training.*

*The Final Report is available on line and in hard copy in English and French. This includes a power point summary of the major aspects covered.*

### **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.*

*Reactions to this innovative tool will be gathered at the Meeting of the MOST Scientific Council (Paris, July 2007) with a view to the wider dissemination of the assembled data.*

## THE UNESCO FORUM AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

***The World Bank Global Forum: Building Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction (Washington, 13-15 February 2007)***

*Over 300 experts attended this event to discuss strategies, programmes and policies which are proven to effectively support STI capacity-building in developing countries. The case studies that were tabled facilitated analysis of successful lessons of experience, which could have possible applications in other socio-economic and cultural contexts.*

*Dr Tony Marjoram of UNESCO's engineering programme and focal point for the UNESCO Forum in the Sector for Natural Sciences took part in the World Bank STI Forum. Discussions are now underway to establish linkages with the UNESCO Forum's Special Initiative to map research capacity at country level.*

***60 Minutes: Trends and Issues in Knowledge Production - The UNESCO Forum (UNESCO, 6 March 2007)***

*The aims and outcomes of UNESCO Forum were the subject of a one-hour discussion open to Permanent Delegations, UNESCO staff and the public at large and arranged by the Bureau of Public Information.*

*Presentations were made by Mary-Louise Kearney (Secretariat of the UNESCO Forum), Tony Marjoram (Natural Sciences), and Vincent Maugis (Social and Human Sciences) with special remarks provided by Professor Ivar Bleiklie, Bergen University, Norway and member of the ENA Scientific Committee.*

*A Q/A session with 80 participants focused, inter alia, on the North/South knowledge divide and its links to the MDGs, efforts to stimulate innovation on a world wide basis, ways to*

ensure systemic support for research, and effective channels for sharing knowledge amongst national decision-makers.

**G8/UNESCO World Forum on Education, Research and Innovation: New Partnership for Sustainable Development (Trieste, Italy, 10-12 May 2007)**

In partnership with the Italian government, UNESCO hosted this Forum which resulted from the decisions of the G8 Summit held in St Petersburg in 2006. On that occasion, the emphasis was on the link between education, research and innovation in the context of a global knowledge economy. The G8 nations aim to act as a catalyst for sustained attention by various bodies, both public and private, in sectors where effectiveness must be assessed on a medium and long term basis.

The plenary sessions centered on the relationship between academia and industry, the role of governments in research and innovation, the impact of research on the education/innovation nexus and the contribution of knowledge to development. Special attention was paid to higher education, energy, environment and health. Some 500 participants from the government, business and academic sectors took part in the programme.

The UNESCO Forum was invited to assume the chairing and reporting functions for the event. Experts in attendance were: Hans Weiler, Hebe Vessuri, Lynn Meek, Goolam Mohamedbhai, Sverker Sorlin, Nouria Lakhdar-Ghazal, Elaine El-Khawas, Miguel Nussbaum Voehl, and Teboho Moja.

**The Global Ministerial Summit on Research for Health ( Bamako, Mali, November 2008)**

The UNESCO Forum has been invited to take part in this major activity designed to promote the broad concept of research for health. WHO, the World Bank, UNESCO, the Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED) and the Global Forum for Health Research are the key partners charged with planning and managing this conference which aims to bring together both Ministers of Health and of Science and Technology from all regions.

This initiative, building on earlier WHO conferences in Bangkok and Mexico, recognizes the current need to consider "research for health" more broadly. The term "research for health" puts the focus on the research system

and research processes, and encompasses many different kinds of research which may not always be thought of as health research, including social and economic aspects of health, environmental aspects, urbanisation, water supply, sanitation and hygiene. New areas of research such as the health impacts of climate change, globalisation and migration should also be considered. Hence the Bamako 2008 process, through its five key partners, needs to scope and make links with key ongoing processes and the relevant actors. Four main objectives have been identified: research for innovation in health, research for more effective and equitable decision-making and problem-solving in health, knowledge translation by harvesting both the formal and tacit knowledge for health, and strengthening capacity for research and partnerships

The Global Ministerial Forum will bring together key players to enable dialogue, and to raise important issues of equity and accountability among stakeholders. It promises to be a timely contribution to the process of shaping national research policy and governance in areas relating to health, through the involvement of ministers and top decision-makers from government departments of health and S&T (science and technology). Other key actors from the complex and fragmented landscape of research for health will also be invited to enter into dialogue on key themes. Specific commitments and a plan of action for improved communication, knowledge management, harmonisation and co-ordination among stakeholders are needed.

UNESCO has assembled a Task Force composed of relevant programme areas, *inter alia*: the UNESCO forum for Higher Education, Research and Knowledge, Education for Aids prevention, Bio-ethics, Bio-technology and the Life Sciences, UNESCO Chairs in Science and the UNISOL network for community health. These units are ensuring that UNESCO's work in the domains of education and science and the social sciences which is dedicated to health will contribute to the Summit's deliberations.

The UNESCO Forum's specific input will focus on helping to map national research capacities in the fields of health and science, thus linking to the work underway in the Special Initiative project led by Stellenbosch University and the Institute pour la Recherche sur le Developpement (IRD). A joint meeting to provide insights for the Bamako Forum is scheduled for late 2007.

**Arab States 24-25 May 2007, Rabat, Morocco - The Impact of Globalization on Higher Education and Research in the Arab States**

Over 40 participants from more than 18 countries of the region took part in this seminar which was opened by the Dean of the Science Faculty of the Université Mohammed V, Professor Wail Benjalloun and Dr Philippe Ouéau, Director of UNESCO's Rabat office. A global keynote address was delivered by Professor Albert Sasson, a founding member of the Moroccan Royal Academy of Sciences. Special thematic papers focused on Globalization and Education (Professor Darim Albassam, UNDP), Higher Education, R and D, Economic Development; the regional and global interface (Professor Antoine Zahlan, Lebanon) and the Funding of Higher Education and Scientific Research (Professor Iman El-Kaffass, the American University, Cairo, Egypt). Three special sessions then focused respectively on these themes. Special presentations were given by Dr Abdalla Bibtana of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and consultant to UNESCO on the implications of GATS negotiations for higher education and research issues and by Professor Tahani Mohammed who presented a case study on scientific research in Sudan.

**Latin America and the Caribbean 19-20 July 2007, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago - Research and Higher Education Policies for transforming societies: Perspectives from Latin America and the Caribbean**

This activity took place in Port of Spain with support from the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, from the National Commission for UNESCO in this country and from the University of the West Indies. Session themes focused on Building Research Capacity, Enhancing Research Productivity and The Social Relevance and Utility of Research. Participants were welcomed by Senator the Honorable Hazel Manning, Minister of Education, and Senator the Honorable Mustapha Abdul-Hamid, Minister of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education. Papers were contributed by experts from Venezuela, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Mexico, Chile, Cuba and Nicaragua and Peru. The agenda included special keynote presentation from Professor Errol Miller, Professor of Education at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. In addition, Dr Ana Lucia Gazzola, the Director of UNESCO/ISEALC, spoke on the results and potential academic networks in the LAC region. The seminar provided an opportunity for the Forum's regional scientific committee to focus on research currently conducted in the Caribbean region.

## Recent Publications

### Higher Education in the New Century

Editor: Phillip Altbach, Boston College, USA

Papers of the Fulbright New Century Scholars Programme in Higher Education (SENSE Publishers, the Netherlands 2007)

### Key Challenges to the Academic Profession

Editors: Maurice Kogan and Ulrich Teichler

(International Centre for Higher Education Research (INCHER), University of Kassel, Germany, 2007)

## Forthcoming Publications

### Regional Research Seminar Proceedings

Accra, Rabat, Trinidad and Tobago, Paris, China

### Research Universities: An Endangered Species?

Editors: Hebe Vessuri and Ulrich Teichler

Papers from the Forum Global Colloquium, Paris 2006 (SENSE Publishers, the Netherlands, to appear in 2008)

## Commissioned Papers on Special Issues

- ▶ Dr Wallace Baker, Senior Partner Emeritus, Baker and McKenzie, Paris  
*The Global Compact, Social Engagement and Business Ethics: Challenges for the University*
- ▶ Dr Roger Benjamin, The Council for Aid for Education CAE  
*Assessment versus Accountability in Higher Education*
- ▶ Dr Nazli Choucri, Professor of Political Science, MIT and Chair, Scientific Council of the UNESCO/MOST Programme  
*The Politics of Knowledge Management in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*
- ▶ Dr Diem Ho, Director, Academy of Technology, IBM Europe  
*Innovation, Knowledge Management, Research: The ICT factor*
- ▶ Professor Bruce Johnstone, and Professor Pamela Marcucci, State University of New York at Buffalo, USA  
*Current Trends in Higher Education Financing and Their Associated Implications for Developing Competitive National Research Systems*
- ▶ Professor Clara Ikekeonwu, Dr Shirley Randell and Dr Anne Touwen of the International Federation of University Women  
*Civil Society Partnerships and Development Policies: Emerging Trends*
- ▶ Dr Jane Knight, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada  
*The General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) and Higher Education: A Global View*
- ▶ Professor Heather Eggins, Visiting Professor, Strathclyde University, United Kingdom  
*Post-graduate Research: A Global Review of Trends and Issues*
- ▶ Dr Bikas Sanyal, Consultant, International Institute for Educational Planning, UNESCO  
*The Role of Higher Education in Obtaining EFA Goals with Particular Focus on Developing Countries*
- ▶ Dr Traugott Schoefthaler, Executive Director, Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, Alexandria, Egypt  
*The Dialogue of Civilizations: Fostering University Research on Intercultural Understanding*
- ▶ Professor A.H. Zakri, Director, Institute of Advanced Studies, United Nations University, UNU/IAS  
*The United Nations Millennium Development Goals and Poverty Reduction: The Role of Academic Research*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Regional Research Seminars

#### Asia/Pacific

**September 2007**, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China

*Competition, Cooperation and Change in the Academic Profession in shaping Higher Education's Contribution to Knowledge and Research*

#### Other events:

**November 2007**, with the University, of Manchester, United Kingdom

*Expert workshop on Science Policy and Innovation*

**January 2008**, Experts' Workshop to examine the outcomes of this project and their application for research policy in Member States

*Special Forum Initiative: Strengthening National Research Systems*

**February 2008**, with Dublin City University, Ireland, and the Society for Research into Higher Education

*Trends and Issues in Postgraduate Research and Training*

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