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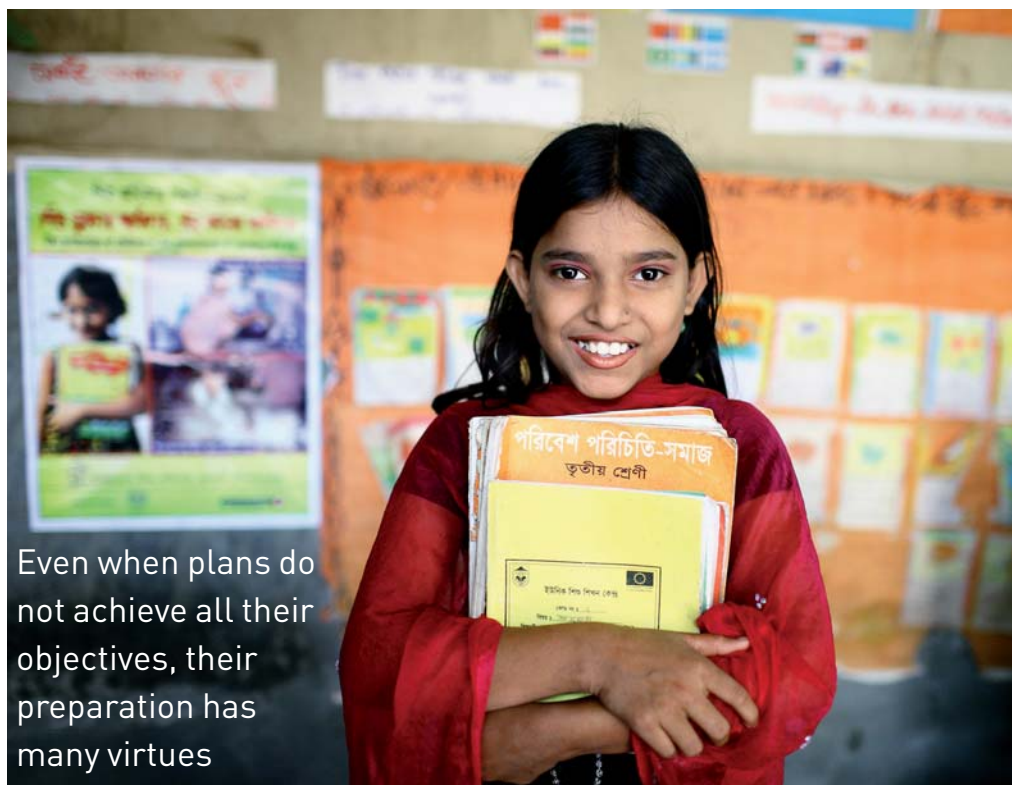
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# The uselessness and usefulness of plans



Even when plans do  
not achieve all their  
objectives, their  
preparation has  
many virtues

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In his bestselling book *The White Man's Burden*,<sup>1</sup> former World Bank economist William Easterly points to an 'unpopular conclusion' in the area of poverty reduction: 'Big Plans will always fail to reach the beautiful goal.' His argument is that development problems are too complex, too influenced by context, and that the future is too uncertain for global top-down plans to be effective.

The solution is to trust 'searchers', those who examine problems one by one, relying on creative solutions, tried out by local actors. He goes further by asserting that large development plans have been at the heart of the failure of development aid for half a century.

Many plans indeed have failed. Why then do research in this field, train planners

indefatigably, or support ministries of education in developing sector plans?

## Plans can be part of the solution ...

The failure of plans does not render the plan preparation process useless. IIEP's experience with ministries of education demonstrates that, depending on the approach used, plans can achieve various objectives that go beyond those set forth in plan documents.

First, the preparation of a strategic plan obliges decision-makers and experts to conceive a clear vision of their priorities and how to achieve them. Such a vision is valuable, because it brings together all staff around a common programme and so breaks up segmentation and rivalries. In addition, it helps mobilize national and international resources. Equally importantly, the plan formulation process can act as an instrument to (re)motivate staff.

The process also bridges the gap that often exists between political decision-makers and technicians. By doing so, a consensus between political ambitions and technical constraints can be achieved. At the policy and action design levels, planning can create a dynamic whereby ideas emerge from the front-line actors who actually discover hands-on solutions. Such strategies can then come all the way up to the decision-makers who control the resources.

### ... under certain conditions

How can planning be turned into a tool that can realize such symbiosis? First, a participatory approach needs to be adopted, whereby the bottom-up discovery of solutions is promoted, while recognizing the need for horizontal consultations – at local levels, with civil society, and at upper levels, across ministry departments and with development partners. Hence the importance of



setting up processes whereby ground actors can be involved throughout the planning cycle – from sector analysis to plan implementation and review.

Second, the plan formulation process needs to find the appropriate balance between giving due consideration to technical aspects of planning and respecting policy priorities, even if some priorities may seem like far-fetched dreams. If this balance is not maintained, other risks arise: on the one hand, a technocratic process without political support and unable to mobilize local actors; on the other, a refusal to make hard choices, leading to a collection of wish-lists to satisfy all political demands.

Finally, one consequence of the need for stakeholder involvement is the inescapable necessity to address their sometimes large capacity development needs. Addressing this challenge requires political commitment and turns the plan formulation into a medium-term process with long-term implications for skills development.

### IIEP's approach

The main principle at the heart of IIEP's approach in supporting ministries of education is that whatever we do

needs to encourage national technical autonomy and leadership. To achieve this, a first priority is the development of sustainable capacities. This entails regular training programmes, and therefore IIEP advocates that national and regional training institutions be set up to train future generations of educational planners and managers. Second, IIEP puts solid technical expertise and practical tools (such as simulation models) at the disposal of ministries, while offering advice on the relevance of international trends and fashions to specific contexts. Third, our role is also to provide moral support and brokering in plan formulation.

IIEP hopes that, through its support, countries will succeed in preparing credible plans that align development partners around nationally agreed priorities. Strengthening ministry autonomy and promoting participatory decision-making processes also promotes a more balanced relationship within international aid, which continues to be characterized by unequal power relations. ■

<sup>1</sup> W. Easterly, 2006, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's efforts to help the rest have done so much ill and so little good*, Penguin Press, USA.

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## Capacity development through the plan formulation process

As we approach the 100th issue of the popular series 'Fundamentals of Educational Planning', which we will celebrate soon, we remember the first volume in the series – *What is Educational Planning?*, by Philip Coombs, Founding Director of IIEP. Coombs' remarks on educational planning are still relevant. Indeed, the volume, published in 1970, is today one of the most downloaded publications from IIEP's website.

In the preface to his booklet, Coombs wrote that the methodologies of educational planning 'are sufficiently flexible and adaptable to fit situations that differ widely in ideology, level of development, and governmental form.' He cautioned against conceiving 'of educational planning as offering a rigid, monolithic formula that must be imposed uniformly on all situations'. Coombs' words are confirmed by both recent and current IIEP experience. The country cases included in this issue are quite diversified and can be characterized as: conflict or post-conflict (Afghanistan and Iraq), decentralized or moving towards decentralization (Angola and Egypt), federal states (Ethiopia), and small island states (Seychelles). They also vary widely in terms of political stability, levels of education, and availability of educational statistics.

IIEP's experience has demonstrated that a country's having a high percentage of university graduates or a long-established public administration system are not necessarily an indication that its ministry of education possesses sufficient skills for educational planning. These have to be developed through a learning-by-doing process of sector plan formulation, preferably initially with regular technical coaching or accompaniment by external institutions committed to capacity development. Furthermore, for the sustainability of these skills, adequate and functioning institutional, system-wide structures and arrangements (that include stakeholders and partners) have to be set up for sector plan formulation, implementation, and monitoring, and for the further training of planners and managers at central and decentralized (including school) levels.

Coombs also wrote in his preface: 'It is equally wrong to conceive of educational planning as being exclusively concerned with the quantitative expansion of education.' This misconception, he observed, partially arises 'because planning makes extensive use of statistics (when they are available)'. Yet, planning can be, and indeed often is, done without statistics. This was the case, for example, during the formulation of Afghanistan's first education sector plan five years ago. The Afghanistan experience shows that the participatory approach and learning-by-doing process – independent of the finished plan document – lead to the development of planning capacity in a country. ■

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# Turning challenges into opportunities

Challenges in Ethiopia's strategic plan preparation were sources of inspiration

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The preparation process of a strategic plan is nearly always characterized by challenges, even more so in a federal country. Yet, as IIEP's recent experience in Ethiopia demonstrates, rather than barriers to progress, such challenges can be sources of inspiration.

Over the past 15 years, Ethiopia has developed three medium-term plans – its Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP). In discussions with IIEP and the UNESCO Addis Ababa Office, it was agreed that IIEP would support the Ministry with the preparation of a fourth plan, ESDP IV. Since July 2009, the Institute has undertaken a series of missions, workshops, training sessions, and discussions, during which we worked closely with the Ministry and under its leadership. During the work, tensions rose to the surface, some inherent to the preparation of a strategic plan in a federal context, others linked to IIEP's approach to capacity development.

## Planning in a federal context

A first challenge arose when deciding between adopting a 'top-down' or a 'bottom-up' planning process. With the former, the Federal Ministry would first prepare a plan for the whole country before each region developed its own plan, adapting the federal one to its specific context, while respecting its main objectives, targets, and strategic options. In the latter option, the process would start at the local level, on the basis of which the regions would prepare their plans. The Federal Ministry would then integrate the various regional plans into a federal one, offering a common vision but also reflecting regional diversity.

The Ethiopian Federal Ministry opted for an intermediate formula: The federal and 11 regional plans would be developed in parallel. It therefore asked IIEP to help prepare the federal as well as the regional plans. This, however, presented two constraints. First, a practical one for IIEP: Assisting 12 simultaneous planning processes was more than what our financial and (especially) human resources would allow. The second constraint was more complex: How to harmonize such parallel processes? Who takes the leadership and whose vision governs?

We decided to proceed as follows: During the early stages of the plan preparation, workshops brought together federal and regional staff. Once common priorities were identified, the federal ministry continued working with IIEP, while federal experts were expected to support the regional plan preparation. This offered both the regional and federal staff an opportunity to discuss past achievements, and to present challenges and future priorities, while it allowed each region to develop a plan relevant to its specific situation. What this formula may not have foreseen was the difficulties experienced by the Ministry in providing consistent support and guidance to the regions.

## The twain shall meet

A second challenge was the classical one of finding common ground between policy-makers and technical experts. The mandate and role of both groups is clearly distinct. The role of the experts is to offer the best possible technical advice, with different alternatives, while that of the policy-makers is to support the policy that has the best chances of successful implementation and which respects their public commitments. These differences can be healthy as they allow for the preparation of a plan that is technically sound as well as politically supported. The Ethiopian experience demonstrates the importance of regular discussions between the two groups, the

need for the political vision to be clear to the experts, and for policy-makers to be open to technical arguments. When a barrier exists between the policy and the technical spheres, the whole process tends to suffer, leading to frustration.

## Process vs. product

A third challenge is inherent to IIEP's approach to capacity development – the need to pay attention to both process and product. IIEP's main interest is in the success of a collaborative process, which strengthens the capacities of national experts and the Ministry's autonomy. However, the assessment of the quality of IIEP's work may centre on the product less than the process, on the quality of

the final product, the Plan. Of course, the Ministry, and its development partners, are also interested in the plan's quality. The temptation of a shortcut – bypassing the capacity development work to expend more efforts on the plan – is always present but should be resisted as such shortcuts weaken the Ministry's autonomy and ownership. The intimate collaboration between the Ministry and IIEP was therefore focused on developing a collegial collaboration between IIEP's technical expertise and the Ministry's political and technical staff. ■

## Learning by doing in Afghanistan

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### Despite continuing challenges, national planning capacity has increased from one strategic plan to another

In late 2008, the Afghan Ministry of Education (MoE) began developing a second National Education Strategic Plan, for 2010–2014 (NESP-2). The Department of Planning (DoP) led and coordinated the process, with limited support from development partners. Consultative meetings with representatives from the Ministry and from each of the country's provinces, as well as with development partners, ensured their input on how to move the education system forward over the next five years.

IIEP and the MoE have developed a strong partnership since they began working together in 2002. This long-term relationship has helped develop capacity within the Ministry through a 'learning-by-doing' approach. During the NESP-2 formulation

process, the MoE requested only specific assistance from IIEP, which included the development of a projection model to produce various planning scenarios. The Ministry was better able to lead and design a participatory process for the second NESP as a result of their experiences with the first NESP.

The new plan is more closely aligned with the organizational structure of the Ministry and with the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) 2008–2013. Similar to the processes followed for the ANDS and both NESPs, the DoP is now intensifying provincial-level strategic planning processes. NESP-2 is presently being reviewed for possible EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI) endorsement. In addition, the new National Higher Education Strategic

Plan (2010–2014)<sup>1</sup> was recently launched.

Education in Afghanistan has made tremendous progress since 2003. More than 6 million children are now enrolled in school, of whom nearly 40% are girls – an increase of more than 5 million in the past six years. These gains have been accomplished despite the fact that the country continues to face critical challenges related to security and to overcoming the effects of decades of conflict. The way forward for education in Afghanistan will surely evolve during the plan implementation period, but the planning process led by the Ministry is a critical part of developing ownership of the long-term vision of achieving quality education for all Afghan children. ■

<sup>1</sup> [http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Afghanistan/Afghanistan\\_HESP\\_2010-2014.pdf](http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Afghanistan/Afghanistan_HESP_2010-2014.pdf)



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# Angola: planning at the provincial level

Eight provinces  
take part in  
the development  
of a strategic  
education plan

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Educational development requires strategic plans that reflect a vision of the future – a vision based on detailed knowledge of the present, evaluation of requirements, setting of priorities, and estimation of the resources required.

Such planning exercises are generally carried out at the central government level, which controls the purse-strings and holds the decision-making power. In Angola, the Ministry of Education elected to conduct a pilot experiment using a participatory approach that places provinces at the heart of the planning system. In adopting this approach, introduced gradually in eight provinces, the authorities were banking on the advantages of proximity, the goal being to give more consideration to local concerns while at the same time encouraging genuine involvement of local stakeholders. Such

closeness to the local level gives education plans a more realistic dimension, which is often lacking in national plans, because in the local context it is easier to set priorities and assess resources. Moreover, the need for more rational management of education in a very large country with a highly diverse population calls for a decentralized approach to the planning process.

Although this ‘bottom-up’ approach is highly suitable for educational planning, its success depends nonetheless on the skills, responsibilities, and powers of provincial education departments. In order to obtain capacity development for provincial-level planners, the Ministry of Education approached IIEP, in the context of Angola’s partnership with the European Union. The aim is to train provincial educational planners and managers in Angola in planning tools and methods and to support them in designing credible provincial strategies for educational development.

IIEP’s support is part of a wider framework in which the national planning department (GEPE) and the primary education support project (PAEP)<sup>1</sup> play a very active role. This synergy reinforces the impact of the capacity-development process, helps to ensure that the available resources are used to the full, and promotes the sustainability of what is accomplished. It is also aimed at promoting the emergence of a critical mass of skills at the local level and a leadership capable of supporting the government’s education policy effectively.

Formulating plans without sufficient and accurate statistical data is a perilous exercise, however, and may detract from the credibility of the strategic choices made. Proper data are needed not only to assess the current state of the education system but also for projections and simulations, which are essential to forward planning. Unfortunately, data quality in the municipalities of the pilot provinces was generally poor, although there was some variation from one municipality to the next. The efforts currently being made by the national authorities, with support from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, should

improve the Ministry's information system and the quality of the data produced.

### Lessons learned from experience

Although the process now under way will not be completed until late 2010 or 2011, it has already given rise to two noteworthy observations. The first is the remarkable mobilization of the provincial education departments and the positive emulation generated by interaction within and between them.

The training sessions held at each stage of the process were valuable occasions for sharing ideas and experiences. They also revealed the steady progression in the participants' capacities, both individually and collectively.

The second observation is the change in the attitudes of participants, who have become increasingly scientific in their approach to educational issues. It is now commonplace for them to demand proof or supporting information, a sign that they are better aware of the need to have high-quality data in the future. ■

<sup>1</sup> The PAEP's experts are already doing fieldwork in the pilot provinces.

## Seychelles: plan for education, plan for development

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### Bernard Shamlaye, Seychelles' Minister of Education, discusses how the country's Education Reform Action Plan combines consultation and capacity development

Although it may be small in size, in a globalizing world, the Republic of Seychelles faces the same challenges and aspires to similar socio-economic achievements as other nations. Doubling the gross domestic product (GDP) over ten years is an overarching objective of the national development strategy. All sectors are called upon to contribute to this goal. Education is a key sector in the development of human resources; if it is to respond successfully to this challenge, its continued transformation will be necessary.

#### Education Reform Action Plan 2009–2010

A 2008 independent report on the education system, requested by the President of the Republic, provided a starting point for the elaboration of the current Education Reform Action Plan (ERAP) 2009–2010.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent to this situation

analysis, the President formed the National Education and Training Strategy Committee, whose work led to the identification of five priority areas for reform that form the basis of the ERAP.

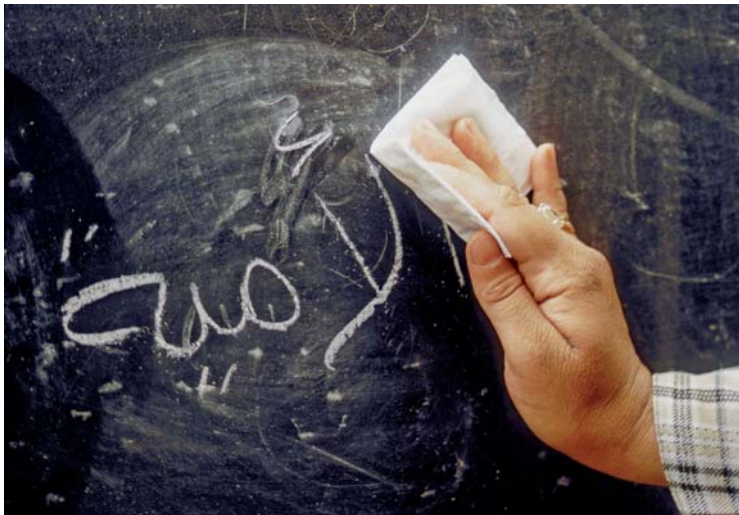
To respond as rapidly as possible to the reform challenge, a two-year plan (2009–2010) was to be formulated by an Education Reform Oversight Committee. Consultation and capacity development were key dimensions of the plan. A Taskforce with multi-stakeholder representation was established for each of the five priority areas, to provide guidance and support to the working groups in charge of the plan preparation. At various stages of its development, stakeholders and the general public were kept informed of progress via the media. We also consulted with international partners. UNESCO (Dar es Salaam

Office and IIEP) was among the organizations that supported the process, notably through a workshop on strategic planning for Ministry of Education (MoE) staff members (for many of whom this was a new experience) taking part in the ERAP elaboration.

#### Towards a longer-term strategy

The ERAP 2009–2010 was endorsed in August 2009 and it is guiding the current reform of the education system. Much was accomplished in a short time, and the process provided many valuable lessons for the MoE to address the next challenge – a longer-term education strategic plan which will mirror the national development strategy. ■

<sup>1</sup> [http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Seychelles/Seychelles\\_Education\\_Reform\\_Action\\_Plan\\_2009-2010.pdf](http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Seychelles/Seychelles_Education_Reform_Action_Plan_2009-2010.pdf)



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# A paradigm shift

Egyptian education reform: National Strategic Plan takes a collective approach

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Egypt was among the first countries in the Arab region to work with IIEP in producing a National Strategic Plan for Pre-University Education Reform (2007/08 – 2011/12). What makes the Plan stand out from comparable planned educational change internationally is its all-encompassing scale and ambition.

The Strategic Plan (which has the subtitle ‘Towards an educational paradigm shift’) mirrors Egypt’s commitment to a comprehensive, sustainable, and collective approach towards ensuring an education of quality for all and developing a knowledge society. Its key elements are: access and participation; teachers; pedagogy; curriculum and learning assessment; textbooks and learning materials; management and governance; and a quality improvement strategy.

Twelve priority areas, classified into three groups, have been identified: *quality programmes* (curriculum and instructional technology, school-based reform, and HR

and professional development); *management programmes* (decentralization, ICT, monitoring and evaluation, and construction); and delivery and quality of *access programmes* (early childhood, basic, secondary, community-based, and special needs education). The Plan considers school-based reform to be at the core of global education reform.

## Significant progress made and lessons learned

UNESCO Cairo undertook a review of the reform for 2003–2008 at the request of the Ministry of Education, with support from the World Bank. The review confirmed the extent to which the strategic reform has begun to have an effect at different levels of implementation (central, governorate, district, and school) and the popular movement it has engineered through the active participation of major stakeholders (the actors, frontline implementers, and, most importantly, the targeted beneficiaries – learners, teachers and parents).

The report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the first year (2007–2008) shows significant progress in the implementation of most of the targeted programmes and activities. Achievements include: establishing the Professional Academy of Teachers; piloting decentralization in three governorates, and implementing decentralization in printing and distribution of textbooks; preparing schools for accreditation, with respect to school-based reform; establishing quality assurance units and technical support units; setting up national education indicators; achieving progress in gross enrolment rate (GER) for early childhood; and completing ICT infrastructure.

Lessons learned from the plan’s implementation in the first year suggested the amendment of several priorities with regard to community education, secondary education, and institutionalizing decentralization.

The annual reporting on the progress of the Strategic Plan increases transparency and shows the way forward. I personally believe that this is an excellent model to be replicated in the Arab region, and in the world at large. Thanks to IIEP for their invaluable support. ■



# Iraq's Joint Sector Plan

Capacity development for completion of a national education strategy

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Prior to the 1990s, Iraq's educational system was considered one of the best in the region, with its constitution ensuring free education throughout primary, secondary, and university levels, and a commitment to the eradication of illiteracy.

Today, it is one of the weakest. In 2006, the net enrolment rate (NER) in primary schools declined to 86% from 90.8% in 1990, while, for the same period, the literacy rate among 15–24 year olds fell to 70% from 78.6%. In 2003, the NER in secondary schools was 42% and in tertiary 15.4%, both well below regional averages. The system faces several capacity constraints: inadequate infrastructure, wide disparities among governorates, declining public expenditure, and low participation in pre-schools and by the private sector.

## Two sectors, four ministries, three partners

Recognizing the vital importance of building the human and technical capacities needed for the reconstruction and reform of its education system, the Iraqi Government is moving towards elaborating a national education strategy for the development of two crucial sectors – education and higher education.

Within the framework of assisting the Government, three development partners – UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank – are providing capacity development for the

completion of the national education strategy via a series of workshops. The collaboration aims to develop the technical capacities of four ministries (the Ministries of Education and Higher Education in Iraq and in the Kurdistan Autonomous Region) based on the principles of cooperation, communication, accountability, and commitment.

## Practical training workshops

A fourth partner in the efforts is IIEP, which is providing technical support and training activities. A comprehensive training and technical assistance programme has been designed for the ministries, with a focus on developing planning skills for the formulation of one national education strategic plan. Five training workshops were held: on education sector diagnosis, policy strategy frameworks, and projection models and simulation. Further training will focus on target setting and implementation of monitoring systems, scenario setting and costing, and strategic drafting and coordination. All training sessions are designed and delivered by IIEP.

In between training workshops, technical support and follow-up will be provided to concerned ministries, either by IIEP at a distance or by partner organizations in Iraq.

On the Iraqi side, a technical group participates in the workshops and is responsible for developing the strategy, in accordance with

tasks assigned by IIEP. The implementation mechanism has been identified to ensure the timely development of a national education strategy and to enable effective coordination among each of the development partners and ministries. ■



## Support to decision-making and policy dialogue

By linking educational levels to the relevant variables – the number of pupils at each level, teachers and other staff, classes, classrooms, equipment, textbooks, and funding – simulation models make it easier to produce projections and to ensure that they are coherent. For example, such models can be used to measure and incorporate the effects on higher educational levels of a variation in a primary-level enrolment parameter.

Since models automate the computations involved, they make it possible to test various hypotheses by varying the objectives and projection parameters. This makes them useful tools in support of decision-making. A policy objective can be analysed quickly from the standpoint of its possible consequences for other educational levels and its implications for material and financial resources. In addition to supporting decision-making on objectives and strategies, models can be useful in policy dialogue, providing an objective basis for discussion and consensus-building.

## Financial realism

By comparing the cost estimates for the plan to budget projections based on the economic outlook, simulation models also help ensure that educational development plans are financially realistic. Medium-term expenditure frameworks can be integrated into such models as long as cost projections are produced in accordance with the budget classification system.

By revealing gaps between projected costs and potential budgets, simulation models can identify funding requirements that are not covered by domestic resources and thus prove helpful in discussions with financial partners. This is particularly important for countries whose development assistance is conditional on their partners' agreement to the strategies adopted.

# Simulation models: a powerful tool for education

A quantitative scenario and cost estimates are a must for today's educational development plans

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The formulation of an educational development plan used to entail performing a diagnostic analysis of the education system, identifying the problems, and setting objectives and developing strategies to solve them. Today, this is no longer sufficient: one must also identify the resources required to pursue these objectives and strategies and ensure that they can indeed be financed. Such a quantitative scenario makes it possible to track and project change in the number of students, to assess the resulting staffing, infrastructure and equipment requirements, and to translate all these parameters into funding requirements.

## Country capacity development

IIEP provides support for the development of simulation tools in countries that request its assistance. Its approach gives priority to building national capacity, by developing tools suited to the specific features of each country and to the country's vision of the future of its education system.

For the past three years, IIEP has also been offering a two-week specialized training course (open to participants who

are not attending other IIEP courses) on the technical foundations of simulation model development.

When its technical assistance is requested, IIEP encourages the development of national capacity by involving officials in model development and/or by providing training. IIEP is currently working on simulation models with Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia, and Iraq.

IIEP contributes to the joint effort by UNESCO and aid agencies to facilitate access to simulation tools. The models

developed by UNESCO (EPSSim, AnPro, the Pôle de Dakar's financial simulation model, and IIEP's models), as well as other models, can be accessed at <http://inesm.education.unesco.org>. ■

For information on IIEP's course on simulation models, visit the training section of our web site: [www.iiep.unesco.org](http://www.iiep.unesco.org)

## Planning reform within a training programme

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### Angolan reform incorporates policy planning with training



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Ask a policy-maker how to reform a given state of affairs, and 'Train people!' is likely to be high up on the to-do list. While no transformation can be achieved without due attention to human resource development, volumes have been written on the limited effectiveness for institutional change of training. In order for training to be a pillar of reform, it must address – and be coherent with – participants' real-life work environments and how these might themselves be reformed. IIEP's current experience in Angola allows us to reflect on this point.

Angola has been implementing an Education Reform plan since 2002. While significant progress

has been achieved, the school inspection system had remained a pending issue on the agenda. So, the Angolan Ministry of Education invited IIEP to cooperate in the development of a training programme for school inspectors, in the framework of a larger cooperation project funded by the European Union.

In 2009, IIEP facilitated the proceedings of a Working Group on the School Inspection Policy in Angola, chaired by the Deputy Minister for Educational Reform, which gathered some 30 high-ranking officials from different departments at both national and provincial levels. The Working Group enabled a thorough policy dialogue on the purposes of the school inspection system, its current state, the need for reform, and the development of guidelines to assist these professionals in their quest

for educational quality.

The group reached agreement on a wider policy agenda, including the revision of the normative framework, recruitment of new inspectors, delivery of other services at school level and, of course, training. In other words, it allowed for a policy planning exercise aimed at strengthening the inspection system.

IIEP will contribute by coordinating a training programme involving eight provincial inspection teams, throughout 2010, implemented jointly with national experts and based on a reflection-in-action approach. This pedagogical strategy will engage inspectors in the debate on the emerging inspection model and the development of new working tools. While receiving training, they will also be in the position of planners themselves, and thus may play a leading role in the reform. ■



# Educational planning on a fast track

FTI strategies to achieve Education for All

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Deepa Srikantaiah ▲ Consultant, Fast Track Initiative

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The Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI) is a global partnership among developing countries, donor countries, civil society organizations (CSOs), and multilateral organizations such as the World Bank, UNICEF, and UNESCO, to accelerate progress towards the goal of universal completion of quality primary education by 2015.

The FTI works to address the MDGs related to education and is the largest actor in many of its developing partner countries. It provides financial and technical resources to ensure countries develop and implement sound education sector policies; monitors and evaluates progress towards Education for All (EFA); and provides strategic information and policies on good practice in education.

To date, 41 low-income countries<sup>1</sup> have submitted education sector plans for

endorsement by the FTI partnership. The Local Education Group (LEG) in each country assesses a strategy's strengths and weaknesses and conducts an ongoing policy dialogue throughout programme implementation.

Once a country has an endorsed education strategy, the FTI partnership provides it with financial and technical support. Partner countries can request funds from donors/agencies or directly from FTI's own trust funds to support development of the education plan or interim education strategy and for the implementation of basic education components of a plan or interim strategy. The bulk of technical support is provided through the LEG; specialists in the FTI Secretariat guide countries through FTI processes.

## Involving all stakeholders

Over the past few years, the FTI partnership has evolved and is increasing its capacity to better meet the needs of partner countries and address the challenges faced in educating all children.

First, partner countries will have a greater voice in their overall educational planning and decision-making. In the future, overall funding decisions will be taken by the FTI Board, rather than by donors alone. Second, the FTI partnership is focusing on increasing the quality of education and learning and will track reading outcomes in all partner countries and report initiatives to improve quality indicators. Third, the FTI is developing a results framework for mutual accountability. Thus, in addition to the commitments developing countries make, donors and other partners will be clear in their own commitments. Finally, the partnership's monitoring and evaluation programmes will be enhanced to keep account of programmes locally.

As the FTI evolves, we will continue to address the issues of educating all children. Please keep up with us at: [www.educationfasttrack.org](http://www.educationfasttrack.org) ■

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<sup>1</sup> Currently, the FTI has 41 developing country partners, 24 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa. In the 2006/07 academic year, these partner countries decreased the number of out-of-school children from 17.8 million to 16.1 million. In addition, over the last decade the partner countries have increased primary completion rates from 58% to 68%.

# Overcoming challenges, achieving success

*IIEP seminar in Uganda addressed role of district education offices in decentralizing education*

Candy Lugaz ▲ IIEP  
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'Overcoming challenges, achieving success': That was the can-do title of the policy seminar on Decentralization in Education, organized by IIEP from 10 to 12 February 2010, in Entebbe, Uganda, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Sports. With reference to a 2009 study carried out in Kenya, Lesotho, and Uganda, participants discussed the role of district education offices (DEOs), and the challenges they face, in different decentralized contexts.

The seminar was attended by some 45 participants, representing 12 countries, 3 national research institutions, and 9 agencies. In addition to decision-makers and experts on decentralization from the region, and representatives of international agencies and NGOs, the seminar benefited from the participation of high-level officials from the ministries of education of several countries, including the Ugandan Minister of State for Primary Education; the Assistant Minister for Education, Science and Technology of Kenya; and the Permanent and Deputy Permanent Secretaries of Botswana, Zambia, Zanzibar, and Zimbabwe.

Discussions tackled key issues including: quality monitoring, financial and staff management at DEO level, and relationships with central and district authorities. Participants agreed on policy suggestions to improve DEO effectiveness in a context of decentralization.

The main conclusion was that, for decentralization to be successfully implemented, DEOs need to become more proactive and think more strategically. Their autonomy in certain decisions (concerning, for instance, the use of funds or staff development) may need to be strengthened, and their involvement in local and national policy-making needs to be promoted. ■

## Challenges of financing basic education – IIEP Policy Forum 2010

*The 2010 Policy Forum will take place 9–10 September in Paris*

Ilona Genevois ▲ IIEP  
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How much should families pay for education? What can be done about economic barriers to education? Can and should private education be supported by the government? What types of public-private partnerships can assist the quantitative and qualitative development of basic education?

Questions such as these recognize that improved equity in education cannot be achieved without suitable financing policies. The role of household expenditures, fee-free policies, and public-private partnerships are currently

being studied at IIEP, and these issues will form the basis of the upcoming IIEP Policy Forum, 'Challenges of financing basic education: revisiting solutions involving the private sector'.

Participants from a wide range of countries representing different voices in their education systems, well-known researchers, members of think tanks, and policy-makers will attend the event. In the tradition of previous Policy Forums, the two-day event will provide policy-makers and planners from the

ministerial and institutional levels with an opportunity to exchange information and have a voice in the debate.

Plenary sessions will address the following four topics:

- household expenditures and economic barriers to education;
- fee-free policies for primary education;
- private provision of education at the basic level; and
- public-private partnerships for basic education.

These, as well as focus sessions, will provide participants with ample opportunities for discussion. ■

# A new, flexible training offer

IIEP's integrated distance and residential programmes



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## News of former IIEP trainees

### Career changes

**Simao PINDA**, Angola (1995), was appointed Minister of Education of Angola.

**Lerato Matlisetso Ruth MOLEKO**, Lesotho (2008–2009), was appointed Monitoring and Evaluation Senior Officer at the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA).

**Anibal BAR**, Argentina (IIEP-BA 2004), was appointed Director of Educational Planning and Research at the Ministry of Culture and Education of the Province of Corrientes.

**Francis Kablan BOUAH**, Côte d'Ivoire (2008–2009), was appointed Director of the Department of Information Technology, Planning, Evaluation and Statistics of the Ministry of National Education, Côte d'Ivoire.

## For more information

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

Dominique Altner ▲ IIEP  
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IIEP is scaling up its training offer, with a new modularized approach. Distance and blended learning programmes combine internet-based learning with interactive residential training and work-place applications for education practitioners in ministries and aid agencies. The credit and certification system to earn a diploma or master's degree is being reviewed to create links between IIEP's distance programmes, residential programmes in Paris (IIEP Advanced Training Programme and Specialized Course Programme) and Buenos Aires (Regional Training Course), and accrediting universities.

The ATP is seeing its first trainees taking advantage of the new modularized approach. They have chosen to complete the programme in two to four years, accumulating credits. Others joined the Specialization Phase of the ATP after completing IIEP's one-year distance programme 'Education Sector Planning' and are now working towards their master's.

A new option is available for Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. From 2010, trainees can take the IIEP common core programme in Spanish or Portuguese at IIEP Buenos Aires, and move on to IIEP Paris if they wish to earn a diploma or master's.

The expansion of IIEP's distance offer is expected to widely increase access to the Institute's capacity development programmes in 2010 and 2011. 'Education Sector Planning' is offered in partnership with national training institutions in several Anglophone countries in Africa. In 2010 and 2011, eleven certified short courses will be delivered through distance or blended modes.

The modular, distance-residential modes provide more flexible opportunities for those wishing to upgrade themselves professionally while working. Institutions including ministries of education, planning, and finance, NGOs, aid agencies, local training institutes, and universities all see the advantage in training larger numbers of staff in-country to address pressing institutional capacity development issues. The programmes' direct relevance and applicability in institutional contexts, combined with the possibility of continuing studies at IIEP or accrediting universities, are important incentives for participants to enrol in, and complete, this rather comprehensive training programme. ■

### Japan: a major donor

In 2009–2010, the Japanese Government emerged as the most important donor for the IIEP Advanced Training Programme. The Japanese Government offered six scholarships for IIEP training to ministry of education officials from developing countries in Africa and Asia.

# Upcoming activities

## May

10–20 May 2010

**ATP study visit to the Republic of Korea**

Thirty-one education professionals from developing countries participating in the Advanced Training Programme, accompanied by three IIEP staff members, will be studying the education system and recent reforms in South Korea. Sponsored by the Government of the Republic of Korea.

**Contact:** n.frederic@iiep.unesco.org

## June

28 June – 9 July 2010

**IIEP Summer School on Quantitative Methods for Monitoring and Evaluating the Quality of Education**

Paris, France.

**Contact:** m.saito@iiep.unesco.org

## July

July 2010

**Launch of IIEP Buenos Aires three-month Regional Training Programme (RTC)**, which is now open for candidates from Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Latin America and Africa.

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

19–23 July 2010

**Regional Workshop on Institutional Restructuring in Higher Education in Asia.** Bali, Indonesia.

Organized by IIEP in collaboration with UNESCO Bangkok and SEAMEO RIHED.

**Contact:** nv.varghese@iiep.unesco.org

## September

9–10 September 2010

**IIEP Policy Forum on Challenges of Financing Basic Education: Revisiting solutions involving the private sector**

Paris, France.

**Contact:** i.genevois@iiep.unesco.org

6 September – 30 October 2010

**Distance course on Statistics for educational planning**

Aimed at national teams with at least five planners or statisticians working on Basic Education, the course will cover statistical measures and basic indicators on coverage, internal efficiency, and financing used for educational planning.

Language: English

**Registration deadline: 7 June 2010**

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

27 September – 19 November 2010

**Distance course on Cost Analysis in Education**

The course will examine the basic concepts and techniques to develop analyses in the field of educational finance, such as financial implications of a development plan, budget programming, etc.

Language: English

**Registration deadline: 14 July 2010**

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

## Meeting of the International Working Group on Education (IWGE)

7–8 June 2010, Stockholm, Sweden

**N.V. Varghese** ▲ *On behalf of the IWGE Secretariat*  
nv.varghese@iiep.unesco.org

The International Working Group on Education (IWGE), formed in 1972, is one of the oldest inter-agency networks with the objective of enabling development partners to exchange information and work closely together on education issues. The Group has a Planning Committee and a Secretariat. Members of the Committee include: the Aga Khan Foundation, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD or World Bank), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), UNICEF, UNESCO, and USAID. IIEP is the Group's Secretariat.

The IWGE meets, on average, once every 18 months. Participants discuss issues of common interest relating to international cooperation in the field of education. The Group's next meeting will be held 7–8 June 2010, in Stockholm, and be hosted by Sida. It will take place at a

time when poor countries are struggling to reach the MDG goals, while the developed countries are struggling to cope with the global financial crisis and to continue to extend the same level of external support. To reflect these concerns, the focus of discussions at the June meeting will be on strategies for financing of education, taking into account the implications of the success of Education for All (EFA) for post-primary levels, as well as the impact of the financial crisis on public funding of education.

The presentations by invited speakers will focus on the global picture as well as regional scenarios, with particular emphasis on Africa and Asia. Other presentations will be given by the participating development partners. Also envisaged are special sessions on: aid dependency in education in developing countries; the World Bank's education strategy for the coming decade; a presentation on stage transitions in education, by the Aga Khan Foundation; and one on innovative financing, by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. ■

# IIEP Publications

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

## New IIEP series: 'Rethinking capacity development'

A wide range of IIEP studies analysing the record of capacity development and proposing innovative and relevant policies and strategies. These include country analyses, reports, thematic papers, and case studies.



### Without capacity, there is no development

by Anton De Grauwe, 2009, 155 pp.

This synthesis paper summarizes the conclusions of studies undertaken by IIEP/UNESCO. It reveals that capacity development is a complex endeavour, as the constraints are not only related to lack of skills but to a wider and intricate web of factors. There is a need to address organization development and change and to strengthen individual skills. An overview is provided of strategies which international organizations can implement and a set of principles to guide all actors. Price: 12€

### Capacity development in educational planning and management: Learning from successes and failures

by Steven J. Hite & Anton De Grauwe, 2009, 69 pp.

This book comments on opinions expressed during an international debate, highlights strategies and proposes recommendations. Price: 12€

### Learning purposefully in capacity development: Why, what and when to measure?

An opinion paper prepared for IIEP by Alfredo Ortiz & Peter Taylor Institute of Development Studies, UK, 2009, 50 pp.

This paper seeks to explore new approaches to assess the impact of capacity development. **e-publication**

### Capacity development in education planning and management in fragile states

by Lynne Bethke, 2009, 34 pp.

This report considers the challenges facing different types of fragile states, presents a few common dilemmas for practitioners, and suggests ways in which they can be overcome, such as working with state or non-governmental actors. **e-publication**

See IIEP's website for additional studies and information on 'capacity development strategies': [www.iiep.unesco.org](http://www.iiep.unesco.org)

## Management reform for EFA

### Schooling and decentralization: Patterns and policy implications in Francophone West Africa

by Candy Lugaz & Anton De Grauwe, 2010, 153 pp. Also published in French (2006)

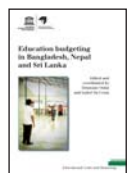


This study is based on extensive field research in four West African countries (Benin, Guinea, Mali, and Senegal). It demonstrates the challenges encountered at the local level as well as innovative initiatives being undertaken which help identify principles of good practice. One central principle is that decentralization does not imply that the state is abandoning control but should give more support with a stronger focus on equity. Price: 12€

## Educational costs and financing

### Education budgeting in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka

edited and coordinated by Dramane Oulai & Isabel Da Costa, 2009, 278 pp.



Education constitutes a significant part of a country's national budget. In the context of limited public funding, the effective management of financial resources and the process of implementation of budgets by ministries of education allows them to focus on objectives, and to further develop education systems. This publication presents experiences in three South Asian countries – Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka – and provides recommendations to improve budgetary procedures. Price: 12€

## New trends in higher education

### Equity and quality assurance: A marriage of two minds

edited by Michaela Martin, 2010, 220 pp.



Policy-makers need to formulate coherent and effective overall policies for higher education. Equity and quality are two long-standing yet separate issues in higher education policy agendas. This publication explores whether there is scope for equity and quality to come together and the conditions under which this can be achieved. Authors from countries as diverse as Australia, Brazil, India, and South Africa discuss the relationships between equity policies and the quality assurance systems. Price: 12€

## IIEP Buenos Aires [www.iipe-buenosaires.org.ar](http://www.iipe-buenosaires.org.ar)

### Políticas educativas y territorios. Modelos de articulación entre niveles de gobierno

IIEP Buenos Aires, 2010, 264 pp.



This publication examines the issue of education policies and models of coordination between different levels of the government in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, and Mexico. It considers three main themes: the governance of education systems and its implications; the teaching profession; and the allocation of financial resources.

To order IIEP publications: [info@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:info@iiep.unesco.org)