



THE NEW ECONOMY

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
IN NORTH AFRICA, PORTUGAL
AND THE UNITED STATES

Putting Education to Work

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Ifrane, Morocco
November 8-10, 2006

LUSO-AMERICAN
FOUNDATION

جامعة الأنووين
AL AKHAWAYN
UNIVERSITY





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PREAMBLE

Taking account of the findings of the Meeting of the Ministers of Education from the G8 countries and the broader Middle East and North Africa in Jordan 23 May 2005 which advocated “through national and regional fora, bring together governments, private sector and civil society, to jointly address education quality and relevance, including learning outcomes to employment opportunities and citizen participation.”

The Luso-American Foundation and the Al Akhawayn University organized a major conference on “New Economy, Education and Employment in North Africa”, that took place in Ifrane, Morocco, gathering **North African, European and North American experts** on education systems and education reform.

This conference provided a **working forum** whose main goal was to discuss the main **obstacles and challenges facing North African education systems**, and **how education systems can become more relevant to the job market’s demands** for increased qualifications and professional skills.

From the North African side there were participants from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt.

This region faces a demographic growth that isn’t matched by a corresponding job creation and economic growth. Society perceives the State as the only provider for education, and the demand for universality of education still prevails over quality teaching and curricula adaptation. The solution demands the **creation of alliances between education institutions, civil society and entrepreneurs** at the local level, capable of rendering education sustainable. This means the redefinition of education priorities, namely the classical idea of university degrees as basic motors of development and the **introduction of alternative education models**, better fit to improve employability and the qualifications of students, such as **vocational training, life skills, entrepreneurship and citizenship education, training in enterprises, distance learning and e-learning**.

The innovating crosscutting projects and reforms presented at the Ifrane conference have demonstrated that **vocational and non-formal education can be a viable and valuable first choice**:

> The Portuguese experience of the **post-secondary school of Aveiro Norte**, offering

a broad range of technological specialization courses as result of a public-private partnership;

- > The example of the **Polytechnic Institute of Setúbal** that adapted vocational training to the local job market needs;

- > The **Bologna Process** that introduced effectiveness and adjustment of curricula to match qualifications with employment;

- > The **Education for Employment Foundation** in Morocco and Egypt, involved in skills training in enterprises, tailoring curricula according to each enterprises specific training needs, and the **Morocco Education and Employment Alliance**, a network of public institutions, civil society organizations and the business community, providing life skills training and social inclusion of youngsters that didn't have an education opportunity;

- > The **Miami Dade College** the biggest community college in the United States, connecting education and employment, through a broad offer of vocational courses, adapted to the reality and needs of Florida's local economies;

- > The **Al Akhawayn University**, that is a pioneer in entrepreneurship education in North Africa, and also acts as an incubator for entrepreneurship projects and micro-credit in Ifrane and in the Atlas region;

- > **International cooperation** was identified as a priority element to redress the education systems relative isolation in the region, foster the adoption of best practices and increase resources and training;

- > The Higher Education Program of the **Ford Foundation in Cairo**, aimed at strengthening higher education in the Arab world through faculty training and research in collaboration with European foundations, such as the **Madariaga Foundation** (Brussels) and the **Luso-American Foundation** (Lisbon), and engaged in cooperation programs with North African countries in the fields of education reform and intercultural dialogue.

This conference succeeded in “organizing diversity” and **the different points of view converged in the need of continuing discussion engaging other stakeholders** in the future. Work will proceed with the **publishing of proceedings**, the **creation of a virtual network for education reform policy** and the constitution of a **steering committee** charged with defining strategy and the next steps. Joint initiatives in areas of entrepreneurship education will be promoted beginning immediately.

FOREWORD

The Luso American Foundation joined the Al Akhawayn University, in Ifrane, Morocco on November 8 to 10, 2006 in the important meeting reported on in this book of proceedings. It was a significant meeting that had as its focus the most challenging issue facing the entire Mediterranean region: “making education systems relevant for the future to ensure opportunities for employment”. This single issue is the balancing point for most countries today seeking social stability, citizen well being and economic competitiveness.

This meeting also attempted to demonstrate a new approach to international cooperation that brought a Southern European foundation and a Moroccan university together for direct contact among education professionals to discuss, plan and promote collaboration and understanding. The outstanding speakers representing Portugal, Spain, the five North African countries and the United States all deserve highest praise for their thoughtful and candid observations reported in this book.

In specific terms, the Luso American Foundation had these concerns in mind in organizing this conference with Al Akhawayn University:

- The urgent need for civil institutions of all kinds in Southern Europe, particularly universities, to expand working relations with universities in North African countries;
- The particular need for European Union Foundations to test models for outreach and direct engagement with civil society institutions and networks in North Africa;
- The urgent need for foundations to share expert advice and best practices for education system reform to complement the official/government funded aid-type programs;
- The urgent need to involve political, social and education leaders/experts from North African institutions in education activities, policy research and conferences organized in Europe by Southern European foundations.

I extend our gratitude to the President of Al Akhawayn University, Professor Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah, for his vision and personal involvement in organizing this

conference. His outstanding staff, particularly Dr. Driss Ouaouicha, then Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Dr. John Shoup, Senior Fellow, among many others, deserve our praise for tireless support given to this conference. Dr. Rui Pereira deserves our thanks for his able assistance as consultant to the Foundation.

Charles Buchanan

Administrador, Luso-American Foundation

INTRODUCTION

The conference «New Economy, Education and Employment in North Africa» was co-organized by the Luso-American Foundation and the Al-Akhawayn University, Morocco. Held on November 8 to 10, 2006, in Ifrane, the conference brought together leaders and experts in education reform from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Europe and the United States.

The Arab World has one of the fastest-growing labor forces in the world. By 2025, 100 million new jobs will have to be created to absorb the number of unemployed university graduates in the region. Therefore, the region's development will be conditioned by its success in matching education to employment. This long-term challenge will require a broad-based attitudinal change, a clear policy commitment from national authorities, and common innovative projects spearheaded by educational institutions and the private sector alike.

This conference provided a working forum whose main goal was to meet the challenges facing education systems in the participating countries. With an eye to achieving this goal, the participants discussed how education can become more relevant to the job market's demands, particularly to the skill sets employers are seeking in graduates.

The successful partnership between FLAD and Al Akhawayn University, one of the leading universities in North Africa, has confirmed the positive impact of the trilateral approach to cooperation. Portugal, with its background and experience in transatlantic and Euro-Mediterranean relations, has a leading role to play in helping this approach take root.

Diversity was a key element in this conference. As these proceedings show, innovative projects in vocational and non-formal education are being implemented in North Africa, Portugal and the USA. The promotion of bold, new educational initiatives has become a challenging field of cooperation, and one that FLAD and its partners will surely continue fostering with determination and enthusiasm.

Rui Nunes Pereira

Consultant, Luso-American Foundation

OPENING REMARKS

Prof. Rachid Benmokhtar

President of the Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane

I remember that one year ago we were discussing a possible topic for this conference and we came to the conclusion that the topic could be something linking education to employment and the economy.

Introducing the idea of the economy is obvious, since education, employment and economy have to go together. But if we add the *new* economy, then we can introduce the concept of change. It means that education now and over the centuries has been built on a model. And the model is still the same one we used to have: it's a classical model; it's a model of classrooms, a model of basic education schools, a model of high schools, a model of universities. Even if science and technology have changed and brought tremendous changes to our cultures, traditions and way of life, there has been little impact on education. We are still thinking and doing virtually the same things we used to. Basically we still have an educational system that is mainly based on memorization and on the use of traditional, generic sources of knowledge.

So, the question is: how to start thinking differently today, keeping in mind that education has to lead people forward into a world that probably will not be the same as the world we have today?. It means that in five or ten years our world will change dramatically.

The problem is how to train our children to be able to deal with this challenge, with the new world that is to come. This is the main issue we have to face when thinking about education. And if we want to be successful, it means that we have to change methods, pedagogy, and the tools we are using. It means that everything has to be charged with innovation. How do we introduce innovation in a field where conservatism is extremely prevalent among the actors in question? I'm sorry but I have to say that our teachers are among our strongest conservatives. Most of them don't want change. They want to do and repeat what they have been taught to do. And that is one of the main challenges: how to make teachers part of the

change, part of the dynamic, and not part of the group that stands in the way of dynamism and change.

In our region, the Middle East and North Africa, we have very serious challenges for the coming years. And one of them, of course, is employment. Some of you have probably heard about the number of young people who will be joining the job market in the coming years. In our country, Morocco, it's an average of 400 thousand per year from now to 2025. You can imagine what this means. For the time being, the number of jobs available each year is about 200 thousand. It means that we have to double the offer and that is not easy.

What kind of new employment? That is a very important question. Are we to train people for what we do today or should we to train them for something that will be a reality in the future? What would you imagine the new employment prospects to be? Do we start early and train people for the future or wait for the new economy to come and then train people for it? These are the kinds of issues we have to deal with.

The other aspect, when speaking about education and training, is the optimal balance between education, in its noblest sense, and training. When we speak about universities, for example, we are speaking about universality; we are speaking about knowledge *per se*. But when we speak about economy, we have to think about people who have to be trained and the cost of this training has to be supported by the state and by their parents. Businesses have to hire people who are effective as soon as they are employed. So, the question here is how to balance general knowledge, cultural knowledge and the very specific type of training that allows people to get a job as soon as they graduate from universities and other institutions. That also is one of the challenges and it's not easy to tackle.

How do we take advantage of new technology? We have been talking about e-learning, video conferencing and different technologies for a long time but what can we do with them? It's not only a problem of technology or a problem of methods; it's also a problem of culture. It means that we have to change our way of understanding education and training. But we also have to make people understand

what our objectives are in implementing the technology and how it can be put to use. And this implies a totally new view of educational organization. The entire system has to be thought out differently. For example, evaluation. How do you evaluate a system if you have to inject large doses of e-learning, for example?

In my country, a lot of effort is put into education. The percentage of our GDP spent on education in this country is perhaps among the highest in the world. But in the end, the system does not work efficiently and even on our budget, we have not been able to eradicate illiteracy. Why? Because of the *quality* of our education. The quality is not there. This means there are a lot of dropouts and there is a lot of misapprehension regarding the objectives of education. And when the only objective is a quantitative objective, as it is at the moment, the results will not be there. Qualitative objectives are also needed.

There are other issues as well such as how you match education systems to people. Of course, in the United States and in France, you don't have this problem. But we do, for one reason. We have different modern languages being used by the different peoples of our country. If we opt to choose only one in education, and choose badly, we will end up jeopardizing all those who don't speak the language as a mother tongue. It's a very serious problem and I believe it's not only a problem in Morocco but other countries in the region.

Should we be optimistic or pessimistic when speaking about these big, complex issues? Somehow, experience tells me we can be optimistic because there are always solutions. The problem is to talk frankly about the real problems. There is no time to hide the problems or to avoid discussing them because they are politically incorrect. We have to speak frankly about our problems, and language is one of them. The quality of teachers is another problem, so we have to speak frankly and say, "We haven't got good teachers", and then try to raise the quality of teaching.

This university, somehow, is a good example of what can be done when you have a good mission, objectives and goals. At the same time we have the possibility of applying our decisions. Ten years ago, we started here from scratch. Today we have a university that is a good university; we are in a system that is an international system. We are accepting benchmarking, comparing our students to others; we

have gone through auditing, quality assurance, accreditation processes, and we have done well. So that means that it's possible; and it's not a matter of money. Money is important but it's a question of will, a question of method and a question of continuity.

We have tried different experiments, and nowadays have a kind of management that is very similar to that of business companies: we have strategic planning, we have goals, we have objectives, evaluation, audits. People know exactly what they have to do but at the same time, they know that they are being evaluated, and if they do well it's o.k. but if they don't do well, they have to accept the consequences and that is very important.

But we also brought a vision to this university. We knew that the university had to change and adapt to its environment. We started with the local environment, and then the social environment of the university. That seemed very important to us because it is problematic when a university, like this one, is located in a remote part of the country, where the population's standard of living is low. At the beginning we were seen as something that was disproportionate. People saw the university as being a wealthy place, and said, "We are poor people, and they are rich...", It's not true; our students were not rich but the area is comparatively rich. So, we started thinking of what we could do for the local population. Then we came up with a special program that would integrate the university into its environment. The effort was successful because we took the time to listen to people; we took the time to send our teachers, our students out to talk with the people and come back with ideas that would put something into the community. And finally, it was a success. Now we have different projects, different actions, all oriented toward local development. I think it has been very important for this university. We have perhaps learned more than the people from it, and we have got a lot back from them as well. It was, in fact, a challenge for us: how to adapt so that we could be of service to the population of the region. It allowed us to carry out different kinds of programs, different topics, lectures, research. Being part of the community has indeed turned out to be very important.

Now we have come to the second step-and it's our last phase of strategic planning.

We are thinking about how to make the university an entrepreneurial university; how to make this university productive within this region. We have a number of faculty, international faculty, talented people, talented students but what is the impact on the region? What kind of wealth are they creating? It appears to us that now the university has to invest, take risks and be instrumental in helping this region change. And that is the new phase we are launching: being entrepreneurial. And being entrepreneurial means not being universal. We stay within the university but we organize ourselves. The idea is for as many students as possible to stay here after graduating and create new job opportunities for the people by coming up with new ideas and looking around for specific business opportunities built on the wealth we have in this region.

I'm pleased to report that since we started thinking like this, our research program has increased dramatically. The number of research projects has significantly increased and, at the same time, money has started coming in from different places because we have good ideas, innovation and, most of all, students who are talented and able to produce and contribute to the success of their university and the region. This is a very modest example but it is very important. It shows that there are solutions that can be innovative.

We can't stay within the framework of what is traditional because tradition would not have allowed us to be efficient. We could have remained the same as other universities, with one mission, not trying to look around and find new opportunities for the development of our university.

During these next few days, you will have an opportunity to see some of our achievements, such as the new start-ups we have in the incubator. For example, you will be able to see the development of a small but important bio-tech centre, with different companies in bio-technology now starting out. A year ago there weren't any but now there are four. Our new vision for this university has made these things happen.

But more is coming, as we have been successful in attracting national projects to Al Akhawayn University. Among them, I'll quote two that I believe to be very important. Morocco is now part of the Galileo Project. So we have been successful

in making this place the National Centre for the Development of Applications using Satellite Navigation. This is important in a remote place, not Casablanca, not Rabat; it is in Ifrane that the centre is established. Second, we are launching a huge investment project called MAVRIT – Middle Atlas Valley Research and Innovation Technology. This is a 50 million dollar investment project over the next five years, just to launch research into hi-tech, information technology, nano-technology, bio-technology and the environment.

We have also launched a new project called “Technology for Development”, which is aimed at using new technologies for development, education, health and water supply. This lab started from scratch and nowadays the budget we have for these activities is about 6 million dollars for the next two years. In other words, there are opportunities and possibilities there when you have the will to do something.

Before finishing, I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Buchanan and to the Luso- American Foundation for the excellent cooperation we have had in working together. I certainly hope we will continue in the future.

OPENING REMARKS

Charles Buchanan

Administrador, Luso-American Foundation

First, I must apologize for the President of the Luso-American Foundation, Dr. Rui Machete, not being able to be with us today. He sends his deepest regrets and his wishes for a successful conference. He definitely believes in what we are doing and the focus that we have selected for this meeting.

The Luso-American Foundation is proud to associate with the Al Akhawayn University, on this conference entitled “New Economy, Employment and Education” that has brought together such renowned thinkers and scholars on education reform.

We are honored to have as a partner one of the leading universities in the region, renowned for the quality of its teaching, its dialogue with the Moroccan private sector and its leadership in international cooperation.

I am accompanied here by some of Portugal’s most outstanding leaders and specialists in educational policy. Some are spearheading new models of teaching and are achieving excellent results. I hope that they will extend invitations to our other colleagues to visit Portugal and continue this dialogue.

Education systems reform is the point of this meeting, because education systems are the motor of development and of social equality. But they must be tuned into the needs of the student and the job market. Education systems must evolve to include much larger numbers of youth, and that must happen fast.

We are here to discuss this challenge, hear about the alternative models at work and discover new concepts to engage business and civil society with academia, so that we are able to keep up with this huge challenge. This is the social and political challenge of the coming decades and we cannot stand by passively while youth fall totally outside the education system and graduates fall outside the employment markets. Dignified livelihoods are desperately needed; youth will not wait. And education system reform is equally important to North African, European and North American societies, perhaps all nations in the world.

With 65% of North Africa's population under the age of 25, North Africa and the Middle East have the fastest growing labor force of any part of the world. Fifty percent of the unemployed are between the ages of 15 and 24. Over 50 million young people will enter the labor market by 2010. One hundred million will enter by 2020. A minimum of six million new jobs needs to be created each year to absorb these new entrants.

By and large, experts consider North Africa, during the last two decades, to have recorded impressive expansion in education, including relatively high rates of human capital accumulation, as measured by average schooling per adult population. Nevertheless, there seems to be a mismatch between the skill sets private companies are seeking and what most secondary schools and colleges are producing. The gap between education and the labor market seriously compromises the region's future growth and stability.

In Portugal, we are actively planning new programs for secondary school levels in areas of entrepreneurship and business innovation and this is one area we must focus on. The Portuguese government has also established protocols with some of the leading research universities to foster research and prevent a brain drain of Portugal's most promising researchers. Only a few weeks ago, the Portuguese government signed an agreement of up to 65 million euros with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology that will encourage the teaching of engineering and management in Portuguese universities. Two weeks ago, a similar agreement was signed with the Carnegie Mellon University, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: a 40 million euro program in digital and computer technologies. These are examples of how working together and how reaching out for other examples in leadership will help us all.

Let's go to the point of what we are doing here. We are coming together, and we need to develop a critical mass among the university bases, the world of foundations, civil society and the business community to make this happen. There is still a long way to go in order to adapt the Portuguese education system to the reality of an independent global economy. We still have a rate of student drop outs of 40% before the 12th grade and around 500 thousand workers have not completed the 12th grade. We are searching for new training solutions, complementary to

formal education, and aiming at recognition, certification and validation of our laborers' skills.

This conference itself is a new model for interaction. I would like to see this as a process, experimental in nature, to see how we can discover new policy options and put them in motion for follow-up meetings and dialogue with policy makers in all the countries participating here today.

I propose creating an online think tank on education reform policies, in which researchers from all our participating countries would take part. This opens opportunities for them, in their personal professions, but, beyond that, it will be an ongoing source of new and innovative advice for the policy level, that we hope will engage in this action with us. We will also have further meetings in which participants are actually present but the online dialogue should be helpful if it's properly managed and focused. We are here to build trust and confidence, in search of the same common goals, to ensure better opportunities for all.

I wish us all a good meeting and I'm very happy to be part of it. I compliment the participants who, by coming from such long distances to take part, have signaled their interest and commitment to this cause, which, as I said, is central to social change and prosperity in our countries.

KEY NOTE ADDRESS*

José Luis Cardoso

Dean of the Scientific Council, ISEG – School of Economics
and Management, Technical University of Lisbon

It is a great pleasure to be here with you and I would like to thank both the Luso-American Foundation and Al-Akhawayn University for this invitation and for having organized this event.

Unfortunately, the Secretary of State for Science, Technology and Higher Education, Prof. Manuel Heitor, is unable to be with us today. When he told me two days ago that he could not come, he asked me if I would be willing, not to replace him, not to speak on his behalf, but to give you a keynote address dealing with the general topic of this conference.

As a faculty member and a civil servant, I believe one always has to be ready to combine modesty with a sense of duty; and so here I am, trying not to replace Prof. Heitor, but to share with you some thoughts concerning the relevance of the theme of this conference.

The reason Mr. Heitor is not here is that at this very moment he is in the Portuguese Parliament discussing the budget for next year. As you may know, in several European countries, and especially in Portugal, we are experiencing severe cuts in public expenditure and the goal of reducing public finance deficits is quite important. In Portugal, we are at around 6% of budget deficit to GDP and we are aiming to come down to 4.8% next year. This explains why we are reducing public expenditure in a very strict way. The bad news is that in all the Portuguese ministries there have been reductions in public expenses of around 5 to 10%, with one exception. The exception is the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education. It is also an exception because the budget for the same Ministry will undergo an increase of 64% next year.

This may give you an idea of the direction the Portuguese government is trying to take as regards the important issue of the relationship among science, technology

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* Tape transcription revised by the author.

and economic development. I hope this also gives you a glimpse of the reasons Mr. Heitor is not able to be here with us today. He has to explain to his colleagues in government and to the deputies in Parliament why science, technology and higher education deserve an increase of 64% in the national budget. So this is good news indeed.

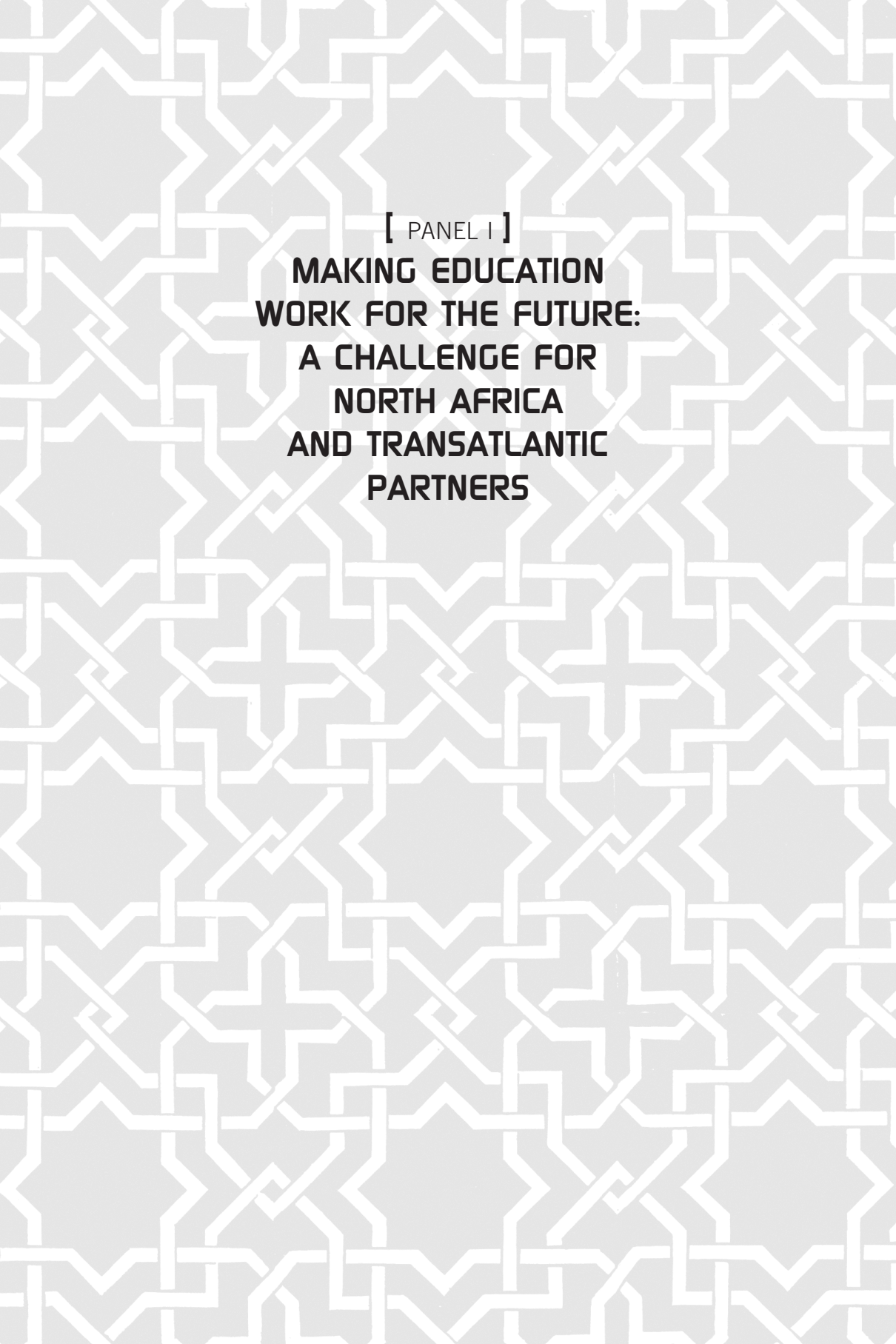
The second item of good news I would like to bring to you – and Mr. Charles Buchanan referred to it a while ago – is that the Portuguese government recently signed two extremely important partnership agreements with two of the most important American universities: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Carnegie Mellon University. The agreements that the Portuguese universities and the Portuguese Minister of Science have signed with these universities explain, in part, the increase of 64% in the budget for science and technology.

We in Portugal are also proud to contribute to the funding and development of these very important American universities! Obviously, this joke is simply to stress the relevance of these agreements for all the partners involved. Of course we will learn a lot from cooperation with these universities but it is also important for both Carnegie Mellon and MIT to have an opportunity to dialogue and cooperate with Portuguese scholars. These agreements are quite relevant in different areas of scientific research and development: in engineering systems, computer science, sustainable energy systems, transports, bio-engineering, bio-technology, management, technical change, innovation and programs leading to the development of entrepreneurship. A huge amount of research and numerous teaching programs will be in place in the years to come in Portugal, due to the implementation of these agreements with MIT and CMU.

My purpose in bringing this news to you at the very beginning of the conference is to offer a few examples of how to face the challenge of having better education for better jobs and the how to bolster a knowledge-based economy. In sharing these examples, I would also like to give you my feelings about the aims that should motivate our participation at this conference in Ifrane. We are not here to give recipes for what should be done, either in North Africa, Europe or the United States. Rather, we are here to share experiences and learn from each

other. And I do believe that through this cooperation, we can learn a lot from each other.

The general concern of this conference is the relationships among education, employment and the new economy. I am sure that if the Secretary of State Manuel Heitor were here today, he would close his keynote address with a political message. I am not aiming to do it as well as he certainly would. I would simply like to stress that a strong political commitment is needed to put education to work and to open up new pathways for creating better jobs in a modern economy and society. That is the reason we are here and I am sure we all look forward to the results and follow-up of this conference.



[PANEL I]

**MAKING EDUCATION
WORK FOR THE FUTURE:
A CHALLENGE FOR
NORTH AFRICA
AND TRANSATLANTIC
PARTNERS**

CONTAINING THE ARAB “YOUTHQUAKE”: A NEED FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM

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While the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region lurches from crisis to crisis, its greatest long-term challenge is creating jobs for its young population. With a third of the region’s population below the age of 15, MENA has one of the fastest-growing labor forces in the world.¹ This youth bulge is surging onto the labor market like a massive demographic tsunami. According to a World Bank report published in 2003, just to keep pace with population growth, the Middle East must create 80 million new jobs over the next 15 years. And if it hopes to put a dent in its already high unemployment rate of 15 percent, it must create 100 million new jobs by 2020 – a near doubling of today’s total employment.² To put this into perspective, the Middle East and North Africa must create jobs at twice the pace of the United States during the robust 1990s, in an increasingly competitive international environment that is already accommodating the rise of India and China.

High levels of unemployment in the Middle East and North Africa raise concerns not only about standard of living and economic development in the region, but also about possible negative political implications. In a region where there is great political and social unrest, it is dangerous to have such high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth. Over fifty percent of those unemployed are between the ages of 15 and 24.³ Without making deep structural reforms, Middle Eastern and North African governments will never be able to meet the employment needs of its increasingly disaffected youth – a stark fact that, left unaddressed, leaves an entire generation ripe for radicalization. Former Vice Chairman of the CIA, Graham Fuller, argues in his analysis on youth in the Middle East and North Africa, that “[in] high fertility states, where unemployment is high and radical political movements

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¹ UNFPA “Arab States Overview”. <http://www.unfpa.org/arabstates/overview.cfm>. 2006.

² Tarik Yousef, “Unlocking the Employment Potential in the Middle East and North Africa: Toward a New Social Contract”. World Bank, MENA Development Report. 2004, pg 1.

³ MENA Development Report, pg 4.

exist, large cohorts of youth from 18-24 will be the most directly affected by unemployment and will turn to radical political remedies”.⁴

The Need for Educational Reform

The main issue, of course, is how to ease unemployment? Changes in economic regulations and labor-market practices in the region, as well as attempts to promote greater market integration, would in many ways alleviate the crisis. However, it is also critical to strengthen the weak education systems in the MENA region, which are failing to produce a productive labor force that can handle the growing demands of expanding markets. Reforming the system is not simply a matter of increasing the number of schools.⁵ In fact, many of these governments have dramatically increased their funding for education over the past forty years. However, as research has shown, it is often poor quality education in the MENA region, as opposed to a lack of formal schooling, which is most clearly aggravating the current unemployment situation.⁶ Unemployment is highest among those with some formal education. As Fuller explains, “illiterate or barely educated individuals find more productive labor opportunities than those with secondary education usually do”.⁷ In other words, despite efforts to expand education in these countries, the return on these investments is quite low.

In the past, graduates could expect employment in the public sector, but as formal education has significantly expanded over the past generation and government coffers have come under increasing pressure, the public sector can no longer absorb what public school systems produce. Nor is the private sector picking up the slack. Education across the region has been geared more to turning out paper-pushing

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⁴ Graham Fuller. “The Youth Factor: The New Demographics of the Middle East and the Implications for U.S. Policy.” Brookings Institute: Saban Center for Middle East Policy. June 2003, pg 18.

⁵ It should be noted, however, that illiteracy is still a major problem in the region. This point will be discussed in greater detail later in the paper.

⁶ Yousef 92.

⁷ Fuller 16.

bureaucrats than meeting the needs of private industry. There is a dire mismatch between the skill sets companies are seeking and what most regional high schools and colleges are producing. The result is an explosive combination of millions of young people with high expectations and little hope of fulfilling their dreams.

Reform on Both Ends of the Educational Spectrum

Clearly, educational reform is imperative, and the challenge is at both ends of the educational spectrum: getting and keeping kids in school at the primary level, but also reforming higher education to produce graduates with more marketable skill sets. As the U.N.'s *Arab Human Development Report 2002* made abundantly clear, the Arab world's track record on education, particularly girls' education, is shameful. Illiteracy rates are higher in many Middle Eastern countries than those in much poorer states elsewhere in the world.⁸ According to the UNICEF report, *The State of the Arab Child*, "Net primary school enrollment in the Arab countries, at 78 percent for boys and 69 percent for girls, lags behind... the developing countries average of 82 percent and 78 percent".⁹ Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of those not attending schools come from Egypt, Morocco and Yemen. An important step for these North Africa countries in particular is to provide more primary schools to increase net enrollment.

At the same time, however, these countries cannot simply wash their hands of the education crisis by doubling or tripling the number of schools. The quality of the primary schools must also be addressed. Across the region, there are high dropout rates among primary school-aged children, perhaps because even as the number of teachers continues to grow, the quality has not kept pace. Many of the teachers are not required to take licensing exams and few have received formal training to become teachers. Standardized tests are not widely used for students in many of these countries, making it difficult to assess their needs.

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⁸ UNDP Arab Human Development Report 2002 (AHDR), New York, 2002, pg 51.

⁹ UNICEF, "The State of the Arab Child," reported by Amr Group, Amman, 2002, pg 13.

Some governments have begun initiatives to reform primary education. Over the past decade, the Egyptian government has encouraged several reform programs that mobilize community involvement to improve education. Egypt's innovative community schools differ in almost every way from its formal primary educational system. The curriculum is student-centered and interactive, with an emphasis on creativity, problem-solving and teamwork. These initiatives are already showing some positive results. In the community schools, enrollment and completion rates, particularly for girls, are significantly higher than in government schools. Teacher absenteeism, endemic throughout Egypt's educational system, is down, and test results indicate that students are achieving higher levels of literacy and analytic competency. But these reforms have yet to be rolled out to the whole country.

Reform on Both Ends: Secondary and Higher Education

The poor quality of intermediate and higher education across the region poses an equally large challenge. Rigid, centrally mandated educational policies have created disaffected students and parents, contributing to high dropout rates. In some countries, curriculum control by Islamists has resulted in an inordinate emphasis on rote memorization of religious texts and insufficient development of marketable, practical skills. Students are not encouraged to become critical thinkers in any of the subjects being taught, but especially in their religion and history classes. Additionally, within the fields of science and mathematics, researchers have found that “problem-solving” is generally missing from most exams.¹⁰ Instead, students are being taught to memorize theorems and various definitions, which can discourage the development of new scientific and technological innovations. As the U.N. Arab Human Development Report in 2002 reiterates, a “low level of knowledge attainment and poor and deteriorating analytical and innovative capacity” is the biggest problem in the education systems of the Arab world.¹¹

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¹⁰ Sue Berryman. “Priorities for Educational Reform in the Middle East and North Africa Region.” Mediterranean Development Forum I. World Bank Group. 1997, pg 1 <http://www.worldbank.org/mdf/mdf1/priomena.htm>.

¹¹ AHDR 54.

Another noticeable gap in the system is the lack of pioneering vocational and technological training that keeps students up to date with changing trends in the global market. Students in the Arab world are often encouraged to follow more “academic-oriented” studies that hold greater prestige in their societies, such as law or medicine, rather than vocational training such as nursing or web design, which can lead to specific private sector jobs. In some countries, unemployed, educated youth are willing to wait years for employment in the public sector or in academia, which hold a greater status in their society, than to take a job outside of their field. In Egypt, the waiting period for a government job has now increased to 13 years.¹² Unfortunately, these desired fields are not growing as the population of young people competing for them increases.

Ultimately, without having developed their problem-solving skills and critical thinking, and having little or no vocational skills, the youth in the Arab world are at a tremendous disadvantage in the competitive global labor market.

Gender, Education and Employment

While unemployment and poor quality education affect the youth of the MENA region as a whole, it is also important to note that young women are significantly more susceptible to the growing unemployment crisis than their male counterparts. Unemployment rates are 50 percent higher for women than they are for men throughout the MENA region.¹³ There are a number of underlying causes for this gender gap, including strong-held traditional values in these societies, which discourage women from working outside the home. There are also discriminatory laws and business practices in these countries that codify many of the cultural biases against women. Among women that do work, many leave after getting married or having children due to strong social pressures.

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¹² Yousef 35.

¹³ Yousef 5.

Extensive research demonstrates the importance of educating and employing women, especially in developing countries. Women contribute more of their income to the care of their family, and often help bring their families out of debilitating cycles of poverty and debt. As the World Bank report *Gender and Development in the Middle East and North Africa* states, “Gender inequality holds back a country’s economic performance. Barriers that reduce open competition impede a country’s ability to draw on its best talents, and ultimately undermine economic growth and productivity”.¹⁴

Research has shown that educating women actually has a higher return in terms of employment after graduation. According to a World Bank report, “Rates of return to schooling in the private sector appear to be higher for women than for men [in the MENA region]. Moroccan and Jordanian women, in particular, seem to reap significant benefits from schooling in the private sector”.¹⁵ Furthermore, women often work in different industries than men. Their employment facilitates economic growth, leading to job creation for men. Although more women are joining the workforce in the MENA region, they still face significant obstacles. As a result, these societies continue to miss out on the benefits of having higher levels of female employment.

Steps in the Right Direction

So what can be done in terms of reforming the current education system? For years, scholars and leaders in the region have been struggling to reform their systems, and yet little has improved over the years. Nearly ten years ago, Rachid Benmokhtar, the former Minister of Education in Morocco and the current President of Al-Akhawayn University, argued that the solution to the problem of poor quality schools was to create more competition among schools. Schools, he claimed, should be treated more as “enterprises [that] should be managed...and evaluated by parents and communities on the basis of their outputs”.¹⁶ Others have focused more on curriculum

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¹⁴ World Bank. “Gender and Development in the Middle East and North Africa: Women in the Public Sphere.” 2004, pg 2.

¹⁵ Yousef 117.

reform, teacher training and changes in textbooks. Jordan, for example, has been developing a new state-wide curriculum that encourages more debate, and which puts greater emphasis on subjects such as chemistry and political science.¹⁷ This type of reform, however, must be implemented very gradually in state curricula and textbooks, as sudden change can generate significant political and social backlash – especially if these reforms are seen as anti-religious or pro-Western. Even Jordan has had to proceed cautiously in its curriculum reform. In Saudi Arabia, where there is significant resistance to changing the conservative, Wahhabi dominated curriculum, there has been a push to allow greater access to private education as a means of creating alternatives to the state schools. There are plans to open some 4,000 private primary and secondary schools which will have more flexibility in terms of curriculum and teaching styles. However, privatization has its own problems. For the most part, only the wealthy can afford to send their children to private schools, which in oil-rich Saudi Arabia may be less of a concern than in countries such as Egypt, Morocco, and Algeria. In these countries, reform in the education system must be driven by the government. The community schools that are being developed in Egypt are a positive model that can be emulated; however, they are still not widespread. There needs to be greater investment in these alternative models of education.

Another step governments can take to reform education systems, which may not have as many political risks associated with it, is to fund more vocational training programs in the region. Vocational training mostly has a bad reputation across the MENA region due to poorly implemented programs which have only generated higher levels of unemployment among its graduates. This should mean the end of vocational training, but rather create renewed commitment to providing more effective programs with clearly measured outcomes (jobs) rather than measuring inputs. There are non-profit organizations such as the Education for Employment Foundation (EFE) which aims to “create job opportunities for young people through career training in vocational, technical and managerial skills, helping Muslim countries address the growing problem

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¹⁶ Rachid Ben Mokhtar. “Challenges for Morocco’s Education System.” Mediterranean Development Forum I. World Bank Group. 1997, pg 1 <http://www.worldbank.org/mdf/mdf1/morroced.htm>.

¹⁷ Hassan Fattah. “Jordan is Preparing to Tone Down the Islamic Bombast”. The New York Times. June 12, 2005, pg 2.

of youth unemployment”.¹⁸ EFE follows a unique educational model that is designed to prepare students for specific careers. First, they identify industries and sectors of the economy that show growth potential, and then approach universities to host training programs that will prepare students to work in these growing fields. EFE works with industry leaders to provide internships and employment opportunities for the trained graduates. Currently, they work in five countries, including Egypt and Morocco. In Egypt, they have an “International Nursing Career Program” which aims to tackle the major nursing shortage in Egypt and other countries in the MENA region, both by training young people to become nurses and also by improving the image of this critical profession. They have a similar training program in Morocco for sales representatives.

Save the Children has begun two programs in Jordan called *Injaz* and *Najah*, which both focus on skills training, career counseling, and other programming that will “bridge the gap between the output of a traditional education system and the human resource needs of a modernizing private sector”.¹⁹ As these two programs continue to grow and expand, they can act as successful models for North Africa and the greater Middle East.

Intel has also been interested in youth education reform, particularly in Egypt. The influential semi-conductor company has been working closely with the Egyptian government to train thousands of teachers across the country in computer technology. They are supplementing this training by providing the necessary infrastructure to make technology more accessible to the Egyptian public. Most recently, Intel launched its “Teach Essentials Online” (TEO) program in Egypt, in which they combine face-to-face computer training for Egyptian youth with an online course. This type of “hands-on” training is exactly what needs to be replicated across the region if the unemployment issue is going improve. For women in particular, online training courses may be part of the solution to their problems. Through such programs, women can receive job-related training from home. After the training, some may even be able to work from home if their work can be done over the internet.

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¹⁸ Education for Employment Foundation “EFE Mission.” 2006. <http://www.efefoundation.org/vision/?pag=mission>.

¹⁹ Save the Children, Jordan. “‘Injaz’ and ‘Najah’ Youth Development Programs.” 2006 http://www.savethechildren.org/countries/middle_east_eurasia/jordan.asp

What Can Transatlantic Partners Do?

Although the countries of the MENA region are aware of the need for educational reform, they lack the resources to handle such massive changes on their own. It is important for institutions and countries around the world to play a supportive role. All of the successful programs and projects mentioned above have had support from various transatlantic partners. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), for example, has helped fund many of the Save the Children programs in the MENA region, and continues to work with governments directly on their education reforms. The Education for Employment Foundation, on the other hand, works with various universities in the United States to develop innovative curricula for their training programs. More recently, multinational companies such as Intel and Microsoft have taken on a more active role in educating the population in high-level technology. As the "Intel model" has shown, teacher training is an area where the private sector can make significant contributions.

It is important that a partnership be forged between governments in the MENA region and their allies across the world. Through the trade of ideas, personnel, and technology, countries outside of the Middle East and North Africa can help in the restructuring of the education systems in these countries. The MENA countries themselves need to take on the issue of educational reform more seriously as their population continues to expand, and unemployment continues to increase. Building more schools throughout the region and collecting data on the conditions of current schools should be a top priority, as should improving the quality of education across all levels and age groups. Women, in particular, need to attend schools, and given greater opportunities to join the labor force.

Over the next several decades, the Middle East will enjoy the lowest dependency ratio (its economically active population ages 15 to 64 vs. its economically dependent population) of any region in the world. This should be a demographic gift allowing governments to expand their tax base while not having to make relatively huge investments in children and the elderly. Yet if employment opportunities cannot be created, then the gift becomes a time bomb.

While reforming educational policies could potentially be economically and politically threatening to the region's authoritarian governments – by placing increased demands on national budgets and promoting more critical thinking among the youth – it will be more destabilizing to have millions of unemployed and dissatisfied youths.

At this stage, only deep reforms will avert disaster.

THE BOLOGNA PROCESS AND INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION

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Introduction

This paper presents the Bologna Process and the potential it represents as a cooperation framework among European countries in higher education. Understanding the goals, the paradigms, the action lines and the instruments, as well as the procedures and approaches being used to develop the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), may serve as a case study for other regions of the world.

Furthermore, in May 2005, the ministers responsible for higher education of the countries participating in the Bologna Process have decided to develop a strategy for the relations with other regions, the so called “external dimension”. This strategy will be discussed at the next ministerial conference, to be held in London in May 2007, and may open new lines and reinforce the cooperation of the EHEA with other regions of the world.

A] The Bologna Process

The Bologna Process was triggered by a political declaration, the Bologna Declaration of 1999, signed by the ministers of 29 countries, including those of the European Union, of the European Economic Area and of the associated countries. It was a political initiative, motivated by a common understanding of the problems and the challenges that the European higher education was facing. The number of the signatory countries has grown to 45 in 2005, including all the countries of the Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe, with the exception of Belarus.

The European higher education was a puzzle of degrees, the various countries having different degree systems, with diverse aims, durations and approaches.

Quality assurance had different goals and procedures and in some countries was inexistent. A significant number of institutions and programmes paid little attention to the employability of their graduates.

All this hindered the mobility of students and staff and the recognition of degrees, either for further studies or employment, in spite of the Lisbon Recognition Convention¹ signed in 1997. Europe was not viewed, with reason, as a coherent whole, but a set of nations, each with its higher education system.

Diversity is considered and has been often reaffirmed as a European value. However, if taken to the extreme, leads to confusion. The goal of establishing the EHEA may be stated as one of “organized diversity”, sufficiently organized for the EHEA to be viewed as a coherent whole, but without doing away with the richness that is European diversity. The balance between organization and diversity is being built as the Process develops.

A.1] The goals

The goals that are usually identified with the Bologna Process are competitiveness, mobility and employability. These are imbedded in the declaration and stem from the concerns of the ministers that signed it.

Competitiveness has been the object of considerable discussion, often misunderstood as competition. The goal is not to promote competition among European higher education institutions, or between these and those of other regions, but rather to ensure the quality and relevance of European higher education. If quality and relevance are high, then the EHEA will be attractive for both European students and those from other regions. In fact, attractiveness has been stated in the Communiqués as being a goal.

Mobility is to be understood as the conditions to facilitate mobility of students, as well as teaching, research and other staff. There is no Bologna Process budget to fund mobility and, therefore, funding must come from EU or national programmes.

Employability is not a consensual term, being interpreted in different ways,

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¹ “Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region”, Council of Europe and UNESCO – Europe Region, April 1997.

depending on the stand point of whoever uses it. A possible definition that is in line with the Bologna Declaration is *“a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations”*.²

The trend of graduates entering employment in areas different from that of their degree and having different occupations during their working life puts the emphasis of employability on competences and skills that are transferable and essential to their capacity to learn autonomously and to adapt to different labour situations. This is not the same as professionally oriented education, although, for access to regulated professions, a specific education and training is required.

A.2] The action lines

To achieve the goals, the work in the Bologna Process has been structured in action lines. There are, at present, ten action lines, which were introduced by the Bologna Declaration and by the Communiqués of Prague (2001) and Berlin (2003):

- > Bologna.
  - [Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees;
  - [Adoption of a system essentially based on two (three) cycles³;
  - [Establishment of a system of credits;
  - [Promotion of mobility;
  - [Promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance;
  - [Promotion of the European dimension in higher education;
- > Prague:
  - [Lifelong learning;
  - [Higher Education institutions and students;
  - [Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area;
- > Berlin.
  - [Doctoral studies and the synergy between the EHEA and ERA⁴.

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² “Learning to Work”, Scottish Funding Council.

³ The Bologna Declaration refers to two cycles, undergraduate and post-graduate, but the Berlin Communiqué (2003) refers to three cycles (“Bachelor”, “Master” and “Ph.D.”).

⁴ European Research Area.

In addition, the “social dimension of higher education” is seen as an overarching or transversal action line.

A.3] What is not in the Bologna Process

Higher education systems are structured in different ways, some are binary and others are unitary systems, as there are public and private providers of higher education. The Bologna Process does not imply an option for any specific structure.

The funding of higher education institutions, as the support for students, for instance in terms of grants and loans, vary from country to country. These are country options that are not the object of the Bologna Process.

The Bologna Process is concerned with the results of education, the learning outcomes and the quality of graduates, rather than with the way the higher education systems are organized or financed. If these topics were to be included, an agreement would probably be impossible to reach and other achievements could be jeopardized.

A.4] Procedures and approaches

The ministers of the Bologna Process have been meeting every other year to acknowledge the developments of the previous period and to decide on the steps for the following two year period. The decisions are included in the Communiqués, issued at the end of each conference.

A group was established to steer the process between ministerial conferences, the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG). This group includes, as full members, representatives of the 45 countries⁵ and of the European Union (EU) and, as consultative members, those of international organizations and of organizations⁶ representing stakeholders⁷.

In each two year period, working groups are established to develop specific

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⁵ The Republic of Montenegro, recently separated from Serbia, has the status of observer until the London Conference, when it will become the 46th signatory of the Bologna Declaration.

⁶ The Council of Europe and UNESCO-CEPES.

⁷ Institutions (EUA and EURASHE), students (ESIB), quality assurance agencies (ENQA), teaching staff unions (EI), business (UNICE).

topics related to the actions lines and their reports are presented to the ministers, as a basis for further developments of the process.

A.5] Achievements

Two of the most relevant, and structuring, achievements of the Bologna Process are the adoption of a framework of qualifications and of European quality assurance standards and guidelines. The approach followed was, in both cases and in broad terms, the same: the topics were discussed at various official seminars of the Bologna Process which produced recommendations and a fair degree of consensus; a working group was established to produce a report; and both the framework and the standards were adopted at the Bergen ministerial conference in 2005.

The Framework of Qualifications⁸ defines the learning outcomes and the number of ECTS credits associated with the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle programmes. The use of learning outcomes and credits implies a unification of the way higher education programmes are specified, a common “language”, making it easier for the programmes and degrees to be compared.

The learning outcomes are expressed in five categories⁹:

- > Knowledge and understanding;
- > Applying knowledge and understanding;
- > Making judgements;
- > Communication skills;
- > Learning skills.

The number of ECTS credits is directly related to the number of hours an average student has to work to be able to complete successfully a given programme or course. The definition of a common workload for a given degree (cycle), as a basis for the comparability of programmes in the whole EHEA, assumes that the starting point (secondary education or equivalent in the case of 1st cycles) and education efficiency are of similar standards.

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⁸ See the report “A Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area”, Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Denmark, February 2005.

⁹ The Dublin Descriptors.

The European Quality Assurance Standards¹⁰ include three levels:

- > Internal quality assurance within higher education institutions;
- > External quality assurance of higher education;
- > External quality assurance agencies.

A register of agencies is being developed, so that the agencies that comply with the adopted standards may be identified. If a given programme or institution has been evaluated or accredited by such an agency, then there is a basis for trust and for easier recognition of qualifications.

Except for the cases where the similarity of programmes is such that straight equivalence is possible, fair recognition procedures are essential to achieve the goals of the Bologna Process. This led the ministers to call for the Lisbon Recognition Convention to be ratified by all signatories of the Bologna Declaration¹¹.

These achievements form the structure of the EHEA. By applying them consistently, common approaches and a common European higher education culture should develop: a culture of quality, outcomes oriented education and of fair recognition. But this is a more progressive and slower process than that of defining the structure.

B] External dimension

In the Bergen Communiqué (2005), under the heading “The attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world”, the ministers stated:

“The European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. Our contribution to achieving education for all should be based on the principle of sustainable development and be in accordance with the ongoing international work on developing guidelines for quality provision

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¹⁰ See the report “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area”, European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), Helsinki, Finland, February 2005.

¹¹ In October 2006, 39 of the 45 signatories had already ratified the Lisbon Convention.

of cross-border higher education. We reiterate that in international academic cooperation, academic values should prevail.

We see the European Higher Education Area as a partner of higher education systems in other regions of the world, stimulating balanced student and staff exchange and cooperation between higher education institutions. We underline the importance of intercultural understanding and respect. We look forward to enhancing the understanding of the Bologna Process in other continents by sharing our experiences of reform processes with neighbouring regions. We stress the need for dialogue on issues of mutual interest. We see the need to identify partner regions and intensify the exchange of ideas and experiences with those regions. We ask the Follow-up Group to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension.”

A working group was established with the mandate to draft a strategy that is to be presented to the ministers for decision at the London Conference (2007). Work on the strategy continues, but on the basis of the discussions, some guiding principles and policy areas may be identified.

Among the guiding principles are the European heritage and values, such as institutional autonomy and academic freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, tolerance and mutual respect of all creeds and international cooperation. Participation of stakeholders, such as institutions and associations, students and staff, as well as international organizations and institutions, has been an essential element in the Bologna Process and should also be present in the relations with other regions of the world. Furthermore, no region or country should be excluded and the thematic scope of the relations must depend on the partner region or country. A number of European countries have special relations with certain world regions and the strategy must take advantage of this fact.

Five policy areas are emerging: information on the EHEA for non-European audiences; promotion of European Higher Education attractiveness and competi-

tiveness; cooperation based on partnerships of mutual benefits; policy dialogue; and recognition of qualifications.

Conclusion

The EHEA is still being built. The date of 2010, included in the Bologna Declaration, is a landmark, although one may expect that developments will continue after that date. The adhesion of European countries to the Bologna Process is obvious. The momentum gained after Bologna surprised most observers, if not all.

In the seven years since Bologna, a considerable *acquis* was built, specially in terms of common principles and values, a framework of qualifications, standards for quality assurance and recognition principles and procedures. The interest shown by countries around the world is a sign that the type questions that the Bologna Process addresses are of more general concern. This certainly makes the Bologna Process an interesting case study for other regions, namely in terms of procedures and approaches, and, eventually, the development of common platforms for cooperation.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN TUNISIA

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On behalf of Professor Lazhar Bououni, our Minister of Higher Education, I would like to thank you for the invitation to attend the symposium on “New Economy, Employment and Higher Education.”

Professor Bououni sends his personal greetings to you and thanks you for affording the Ministry the opportunity to present the Tunisian approach to these crucial issues.

He wishes you all success for your conference.

Concern about “employability” has always been and still is a top priority of our higher education system. Our former as well as our ongoing reforms are predicated on the assumption that a university degree should lead to a job.

All the decision-makers in the sector, from deans and directors to faculty and administrative officials, are constantly urged to think and act with the view that they are preparing the students for professional life; they are constantly encouraged to adapt teaching methods and course-contents to the specific needs of the job market.

Students and parents, too, have become concerned with employability. They have been pushing for the reinforcement of short-term training programs which more readily lead to employment.

Also, the economic environment, and society in general, persistently call upon the university to take account of economic needs and social expectations.

The issue of employment therefore is central to our higher education, especially when we bear in mind that half of the new job seekers in Tunisia in the coming five years will be higher education degree-holders.

As a result, one of the issues today is how to anticipate future professions and how to diversify the fields of study to meet their constraints. In this respect, the number of specialties leading to a higher education diploma has risen from 127 in 1987 to 796 in 2005-2006 (when we add masters programs).

At post-baccalaureate orientation and all through their studies, students are kept informed about the specializations available to them; measures that ease up the transfer from one field of study to another and allow the combination of different training tracks have been taken. These measures aim of course at increasing the job opportunities for the graduate.

Another measure we value highly consists in the elaboration of programs and policies designed to inculcate in the student the spirit of entrepreneurship. Seminars and courses on enterprise building are taught in the graduation years; they aim at clarifying the procedures (including the numerous incentives) related to the creation of individual projects. At present, a guide and a CD-ROM are being put together to make the content of these seminars more accessible.

Enterprise creation has become one of our University's top priorities. It means that we are focusing our attention on the needs of the outgoing student, and the objective is to equip him or her with the kind of competency and skills needed for self-employment.

In addition to offering courses on entrepreneurship, university institutions have been holding open door sessions for students, parents, and entrepreneurs; these sessions aim at familiarizing the senior students and graduates with the business world and especially with its emerging trends.

Alumni associations, in this regard, are very helpful. Alumni, with their hand-on knowledge of the business world and the job market, can give practical advice to the academic authorities on the appropriate ways of synchronizing their teaching programs to suit the job market need, and on how to expand internship opportunities.

The Ministry of Higher Education is at present turning the University into a space around which enterprise creation takes place, especially in future-oriented and promising sectors. Given the fact that universities are set up in most of the governorates of the Republic, this policy will give a powerful impetus to regional economy, especially in the ICT market.

In addition to these spaces, the government is encouraging the setting up of enterprise incubators within technology parks, around higher institutes for technological studies, as well as in other institutions providing practical training, such as arts and crafts schools and institutes of applied humanities.

In the same spirit, the recent measures allowing researchers part or full-time leave to valorize their research results, either by setting up their own businesses or by joining existing ones, are bound to reinforce the relationship between research and industry and to encourage the recruitment of degree-holders in the new economic sectors.

As professions and jobs are rapidly changing, and as technological innovation is gathering momentum, the universities have been given full latitude to reform, adapt, and enlarge their curricula in a timely fashion.

The procedure seeks to introduce a greater diversification among the graduate job seekers, in order either to facilitate their insertion into the job market or to prepare them more adequately for self-employment.

As employment is turning global and as the job market is widening, it has become necessary to adopt pedagogic indicators that are internationally used, especially by the more advanced countries, including degree nomenclature, diversification of languages as teaching tools, and intensifying of internships.

With international partnerships, joint degrees have obviously become an objective. Agreements with prestigious foreign universities have been signed to take advantage of their know-how and ease up international mobility for the purpose of study or employment.

Teaching is the moving force behind training. For, if we provide students with a sound, practical, and useful training, we will have greatly increased their chances of success and enhanced their prospects.

For this reason we have been for many years pushing for vigorous pedagogic innovation. We have thus encouraged the redesigning of modules, the digital writing of courses, the reform of teaching methodologies, in tune with the requirements of an ever-changing economy.

However, the major structural reform implemented this year has been the taking on of the BA-MA-PhD system. So far, 59 out of our 190 academic institutions have adopted it; the rest will follow suit in the coming two years.

Primarily the reform aims at bringing our higher education system in line with its modern counterparts; yet, as the reform will allow for greater mobility of students,

degree-holders, faculty, and researchers, as well as for greater flexibility in curricula, it is necessarily bound to boost employment opportunities.

To reinforce the reform and insure its success, we have focused on short-term professionally-oriented fields of study. Despite our efforts, the percentage of students in these fields remains below the one of OECD countries; it stands currently at 32%, whereas it is a little over 40% in OECD countries.

Our policy today aims at reinforcing this type of training, for we know from statistics and experience, that the rate of its employability is much higher than for long-term studies.

We have for instance adopted the common European standards concerning short-track fields of study, especially the taking up of 6 semesters for coursework, alternating with internship sessions, or 5 semesters of coursework followed by a 6th that is entirely devoted to internship.

The challenge of employment can only be successfully met when other battles are won; battles such as “quality”, “evaluation” and increased “institutional autonomy”. Only then can higher education truly respond to the concrete needs both of the national as well as the global job markets.

In the knowledge economy that Tunisia aspires to build, higher education plays a key role, surely because it trains highly-skilled ICT engineers and technicians but also because it trains a generation not of jobseeker but of job-creators.

INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGES ON EDUCATION

Ian O. Lesser

President, Mediterranean Advisors, USA

In listening to this conversation, I am struck by how central questions of education, employment and reform have become to foreign policy perceptions in my country, but also in many other places. It is very much a part of the current American thinking, not only when we look at this region, but also when we look at the world as a whole. It even goes so far as influencing judgements about national power, potential and prestige.

For example, the thinking about China and India today, and the frequency with which people talk about the large numbers of highly trained, very good scientists and technology engineers that have been produced in China and India. It is something that the United States is impressed by, but also views in some not so subtle ways as a threat, as seen by industry or government.

First, when we look at this part of the world, we have a tendency to see education as an opportunity, perhaps according to our own models – and we can debate whether that is a good idea or not. The “north” sees a stake in what goes on in southern Mediterranean societies in terms of stability, and education is seen as part of the equation.

There is also a sense of anxiety, in many places in the North, in Europe and North America, about our own choices and debates on education policy. I was impressed by the earlier comment in our discussion about the issue of jobs *per se*, versus civilization and culture. I think there has been a rush toward a more pragmatic, practical model. That is certainly the case in my own country, where over the last decades there has been a marked decline in what used to be called a liberal education.

We often talk about education reform, employment and stability, as some sort of inexorable equation: if you have reform, if you have more job creation, if you have more prosperity, that automatically produces social and political stability. It may, but it may well not. Revolutions are very often made by frustrated middle

class individuals, and here I come back to the point about the balance between job creation and civilization, outlook and tolerance, which should not be forgotten.

This debate is not just about alternative models for education, and their utility. It is imbedded in a larger debate about economic, social and political models, and that is one of the reasons why it is very difficult to change things in the education arena; because people understand it as code for other kinds of social and ideological change. That's not a positive or a negative observation, it is simply an observation about reality. It certainly applies in my country as it does in other places.

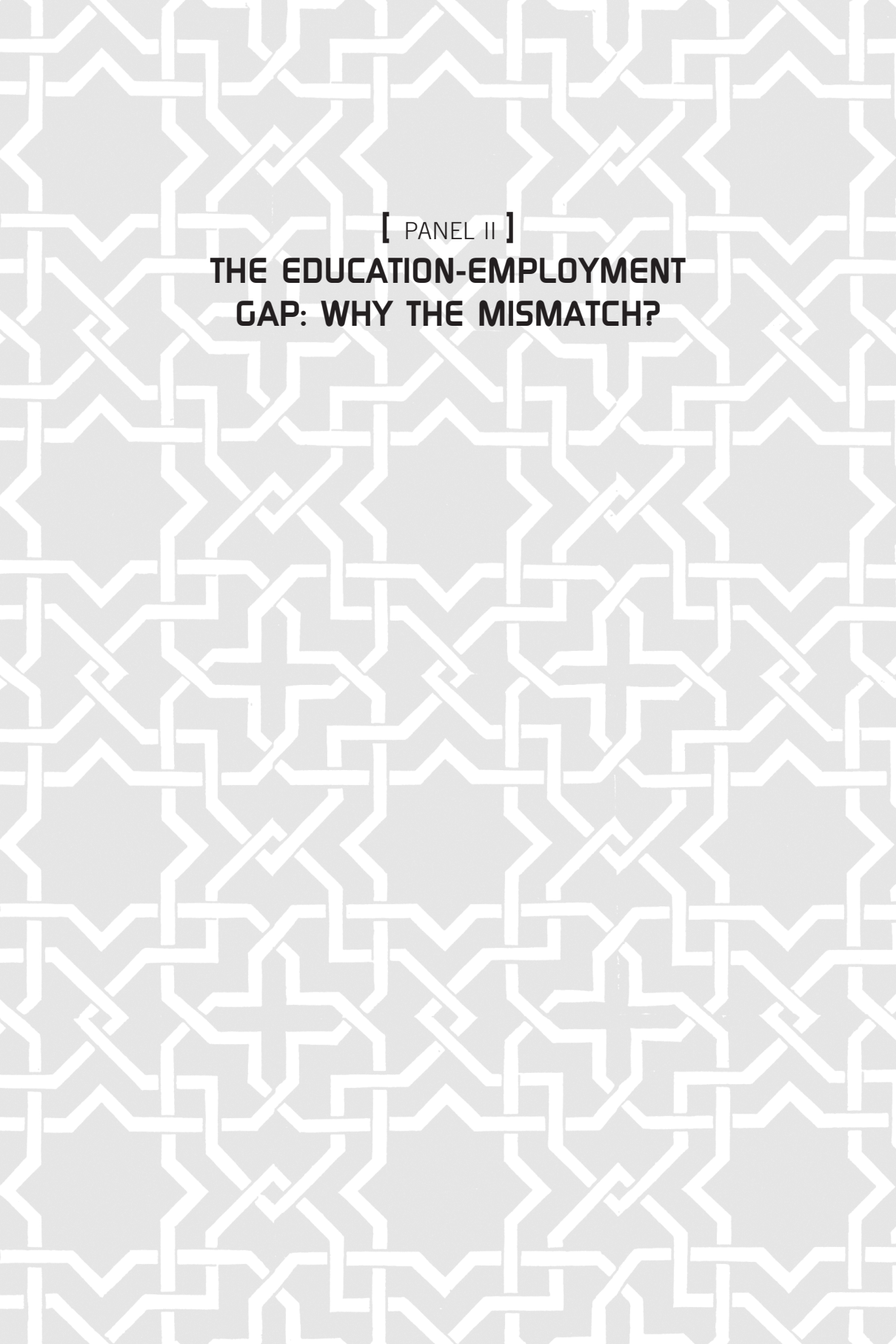
A second point I would make, is that, although in my perception education policy is largely a national preserve, it is very clear, if you look at the Mediterranean or the relationship between the United States and Mexico, that you cannot set education and labour policies in isolation. As an example, I spent many years in California, and it was clear that an administrator in the school district of San Diego County would find it difficult, perhaps impossible to set policy without reference to what was happening across the border in Mexico. It affects the student population, the kind of students you have, etc., and the same would hold for education planners in Mexico looking north. In this vein, I wonder, in the Mediterranean region, what kind of relationship will exist between education policy in France, Spain or Italy, and education policies in the Maghreb. It is not that conditions in adjacent regions should dictate national policy, obviously, but there may be a declining ability to set national policies without some reference to what others, across the Mediterranean, are doing.

Third, I have spent some time thinking about Turkey, in the vein of lessons learned from that case. Turkey is one of the places where there has been a kind of a revolution, especially in higher education over the last decade: a very rapid growth of private universities, very successful, very high quality. They not only attract a large number of students, but they are beginning to influence how the state system sees itself. They are even beginning to influence the balance between the state and the private sector in society. That is a very revolutionary thing in

Turkey, where for 70 years, the military and its training establishments have been a key vehicle for upward mobility. That has really changed. Many young people who might have aspired to the military in previous decades now want to work in the private sector. That has produced a structural change in Turkey but it has also brought some anxieties. When Turkey had its financial crisis in 2000-2001, many young people discovered that there were real insecurities associated with careers in the private sector. The question of stability, employment and the civil service is being revisited. So, this is something that is in flux in Turkey, and an experience with possible relevance for North Africa.

Given patterns of globalization and interdependence, north-south in the Mediterranean as well as transatlantic, it is striking that there are few if any effective mechanisms for addressing education and employment challenges on a cooperative basis. Whether it is the Barcelona Process and the European Union neighbourhood policy, or the G8 and American equivalents – the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative and the Middle East Partnership Initiative – current arrangements seem inadequate. U.S., certainly, is not spending anywhere near as much money as Europe on development and reform in North Africa as whole. But beyond the question of resources, it seems to me there is also a question of coordination in emphasis and programs. There is a need for more creative thinking about initiatives that foundations, the private sector and governments, on both sides of the Atlantic, can take trilaterally with North Africa, to work on a range of issues, including education and employment.

Just a last final point to keep in mind: What do we do when reforms don't work? If we look ahead, what are the hedging strategies that countries in the region, the U.S. and Europe ought to have in mind if national reforms fail to close the gaps between demography, job creation and education. This is a very real possibility when we consider that education policies hardly work adequately in the "rich" north. With far fewer resources it is going to be much more difficult in the south – an open question, worth pondering.



[PANEL II]

**THE EDUCATION-EMPLOYMENT
GAP: WHY THE MISMATCH?**

THE CHANGING EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON NORTH AFRICAN EDUCATION SYSTEMS AND EMPLOYMENT

Driss Guerraoui

Advisor to the Prime Minister, Morocco

I am very pleased to be with such prominent personalities from the scientific world today at this prestigious university where we are gathered to discuss and share our views on a problem that is crucial to the future and stability – not only of North African countries – but the international community as well.

I would like to draw some lessons from the experience of Morocco and other countries in the region and elsewhere in order to shed light on the future. I will start with some considerations regarding the problem of employment in our region. When speaking about employment today, we need to take four essential elements into consideration. These elements allow us to foresee the possibilities our region has regarding employment.

The first issue deals with demographic growth. North African countries must deal with employment in light of this phenomenon. Today, we notice that the growth rate of the active population exceeds the possibilities of job creation in all sectors of activity in our countries. This poses a real challenge that decision makers must take into consideration in all future policies for job promotion in the region.

The second observation I want to make is that there is a cause-effect relationship between job promotion and the global dynamics of economy. These dynamics have generated new economic activities. I will illustrate this with three examples. In the United States, according to available data, two and a half million new enterprises are created each year. In France, there are two hundred and fifty thousand new enterprises each year. In Morocco, we create about thirty thousand new enterprises each year. There is clearly a cause-effect relationship between each economy's ability to create new enterprises and its capacity to absorb unemployment and create jobs.

The third consideration is the relationship between employment and technology. Nowadays, we observe that with the post-industrial ways of organizing economic

activities and exchanges, paid jobs are giving way to atypical jobs outside the wage system, within a framework where the technological choices made by enterprises are more and more capitalistic and pay less attention to the labor factor. National and international companies are able to produce merchandise with a minimum of waged jobs. John Rifkind estimates that 25% of the world's production is done by 4% of the active population, and that in 2025, only 2% of the active population will perform waged jobs.

The fourth consideration is the relationship between employment and economic growth. We know that, in order to promote employment, we need to promote growth and investment. But the reality is much more complex. There are cases where there is growth without employment and cases where growth destroys employment. But there are also cases where the promotion of investment results in the creation of employment. Consequently, we need to take into consideration this complex relationship between economic growth and employment and analyze the employment question outside the framework of this mechanical relationship – in the context of a real globalization of unemployment and of the emergence of a new generation of unemployment and unemployed persons.

There are at least six lessons we can learn from these considerations on employment.

The first one is of a global nature. We are researchers and decision makers who are being called on to break with the traditional approaches to employment. National economies are compelled to pass from a “right to work” logic to a “right to income” and “right to deserved work” logic.

The second lesson is that today there is a general belief, including among unemployed persons, that the state is unable to continue being the main job provider. The state can no longer manage employment on a public, centralized scale. We can only achieve a sustainable promotion of employment through decentralized management of employment and through entrepreneurial initiatives that foster the creation of small enterprises by young people and that strengthen the capacity of absorption of unemployed people by the private sector.

The third lesson is that the local and regional levels are becoming the main

settings for the promotion of employment. The recourse to local skills and know-how is the only way to create job opportunities adapted to each territory.

The fourth lesson is that, nowadays, all sectors of activity are vehicles for job creation. And to make this promotion of global, diversified employment possible, the public and private sectors must avail themselves of new ways to tap intelligence and commercial and technological innovation.

The fifth lesson is the capacity of globalization to promote employment. Nowadays, economic openness and globalization offer vast potential for job creation. However success in this will ultimately depend on each nation's ability to use globalization to find new opportunities to strengthen the innate capacity of national economies and to create new economic activities. We see this in Morocco, in many economic areas – not only tourism – and I think there is a major lesson to be learned from globalization governance policies.

The sixth lesson is of a cultural nature. North African economies suffer from the generalized conviction that the state must provide jobs, and that all young graduates are entitled to jobs. This “give and get” dichotomy constitutes the big challenge we have to face, because it requires schools and the media to change mentalities, so that we can move away from a logic of assistance toward a logic of initiative, intelligence, self-organization, merit and fair competition.

This takes me to the second part of my presentation: what type of education and training is best for our region in this era of globalization? There are five lessons we can draw from this subject. The first one is the need for the education system to be an integral part of a life-long educational approach. Obsolescence comes fast with know-how, qualifications and technology, imposed by the free competition between enterprises and nations. But it also comes fast because of the growing changes in organizational systems. That is why permanent, continual training must be put at the service of the new policies for job promotion.

The second idea is that there is a pressing need for multi-activity training and versatility. Nowadays, we have become increasingly aware that, in order to increase employability, we must support policies that foster flexibility and mobility, be they geographical or sectoral.

Third, diversified training must be designed to meet the needs of the new economy's actors. Banks and enterprises are no longer the sole generators of wealth and investment; there are other actors such as local bodies, trade unions, and a network of non-governmental organizations with social and economic missions. In education and training, education systems must adapt to the emergence and plurality of actors.

The fourth orientation is the need to build an integrated, global education and training system. The mission of schools is changing dramatically. In the past, schools were focused essentially on producing knowledge and providing general training. The mission of professionalization must accompany the classical functions of schools in order to teach students how to become entrepreneurs. In the 80s and 90s, with the consolidation of Moroccan institutions, schools inaugurated a new teaching mission, which is citizen education. This new mission was aimed at educating young people to get involved in the march toward development and democracy. That is why schools must teach human rights, women's rights and respect for the environment.

Nowadays, schools must proceed even further toward achieving another goal: that of promoting innovation, creativity and intelligence. It is by doing this that we will be able to go from a work-based approach to an approach based on the upgrading of people and their creative capacities. In effect, the only way we can generate new wealth and resources for investment is through creativity,

The last lesson we can draw is that of training for internationalization. There is a consensus that training must converge toward internationalization, which will allow our students to keep up with international economic and technological problems and with the globalization of economies. Proficiency in foreign languages and in new information technologies is central to transforming the world market into the real market for our unemployed graduates, and the real market for those who want to become entrepreneurs and create new wealth.

These are the lessons I wanted to share with you regarding employment, education and training.

BRIDGING THE GAP

Richard White

Miami Dade College, USA

Executive summary

In today's increasingly competitive environment, the success of industry depends largely on the development of an effective talent management strategy. This strategy must include visionaries who are both technically and conceptually skilled in developing such a strategy. The focus of this presentation is to demonstrate an effective strategy of bridging the gap that many times exists between education and employment. In conjunction with Florida Power and Light, Florida's primary energy provider, Miami Dade College has developed a program that addresses incumbent employee development, succession planning, and training opportunities for new hires into the system, thus bridging the gap recognized by most in education and industry today.

Background

In 1994, Florida enacted legislation to provide for accountability within the Community College system. This legislation provided for "ongoing improvement and assessment of the improvement of the quality and efficiency of the Florida community colleges."¹ The statute calls for a number of issues to be addressed such as: (a) Graduation rates of Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Science (AS) degree-seeking students compared to first-time-enrolled students seeking the associate degree; (b) Minority student enrollment and retention rates; (c) Student performance, including student performance in college-level academic skills, mean grade point averages for community college A.A. transfer students, and community college

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¹ Florida Statutes, Title XLVIII, 1008.45 Community college accountability process, available at: http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch1008/SEC45.HTM&Title=>2006->Ch1008->Section%2045#1008.45.

student performance on state licensure examinations; (d) Job placement rates of community college career students; (e) Student progression by admission status and program; and (f) Career accountability standards identified in s. 1008.42, as well as other measures. Funding to the community college system is based on the State's evaluation of these performance measures at each of the colleges within the State. Prior to this performance-based funding method, Miami Dade College focused almost exclusively on awarding Associate in Arts degrees, the first two-years of a Baccalaureate degree, and then transferring students to upper-division universities. The college now offers Baccalaureate, Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, College Credit Certificates, Vocational Credit Certificates, Advanced Technical Certificates, Applied Technology Diplomas, Credit and Vocational, as well as, Community Education Non-Credit programs. These programs now target workforce needs within the community.

"Roueche, Johnson, Roueche, & Associate's book, *Embracing the Tiger: The Effectiveness Debate and the Community College*, documents the growing trend toward accountability mandates and predicts even stronger measures in the very near future. These measures will strike at two of the key needs of community colleges – accreditation and funding. Accrediting agencies are increasingly demanding that institutional effectiveness data systems be implemented before granting accreditation. Regarding funding, Tennessee, Texas, and Florida are already implementing arguably the strongest accountability mandate – performance-based funding. In these systems, data must be collected to document student outcomes (e.g., retention, graduation) with future funding tied to a college's performance on these key indices."²

Given this mandate from the institution's stakeholders Miami Dade College works with State, County, and industry partners to provide an integrated workforce development system that connects the County's residents with employment in targeted industries or occupations that offer a living wage and opportunities for advancement.

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² Mark D. Milliron, Ernest R. Leach, "Community Colleges Winning through Innovation: Taking On the Changes and Choices of Leadership in the Twenty-First Century", Leadership Abstracts, available at: <http://www.league.org/publication/abstracts/leadership/leadabccwi.htm>

Objectives

Miami Dade College (MDC) developed the Energy Job Growth Initiative (EJGI), a highly innovative project that tackles the urgent workforce development needs of the energy industry in Florida. This project will educate and train the next generation of energy workers for the Florida Power & Light Group, by:

- > Ensuring a worker pipeline by recruiting and retaining employees, particularly minorities, veterans, and special populations.
- > Developing workforce skills, competencies, and access to career pathways for new and incumbent workers through education and training.
- > Building the education and training capacity of MDC by increasing the number of academic instructors, offering student support services, and developing curricula.
- > Sustaining the program by building a training infrastructure, nurturing leadership and partnerships, fostering expertise in regulatory issues, and planning for future direct costs.

EJGI will apply proven strategies to deliver comprehensive training for Florida's energy workers. The EJGI will implement a full array of recruitment activities and retention services. Training experts from academia and industry have collaborated to develop specialized skill sets and competency models that incorporate Good Documentation and Manufacturing Practices within integrated lifelong learning, distance education, and career advancement models.³ Job placement specialists will incorporate energy industry-related career guidance within the training delivery model for all stages of lifelong learning. The EJGI will result in the following outcome objectives:

- > Educate and train 600 new and incumbent workers.
- > Achieve an adult entered-employment rate of 80%.
- > Maintain an adult employment retention rate of 90%.

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³ MDC will develop all models to be consistent with the *Nuclear Energy Industry Training Accreditation Standards* of the U.S. Department of Energy and the curriculum standards of the Florida Department of Education.

- > Track average earnings of program completers at 80%.
- > Achieve a youth employment or education placement rate of 60% for 200 youth.
- > Reach a youth degree or certificate attainment rate of 30%.
- > Attain a youth literacy and numeracy gain rate of 80%.

MDC will maintain a public-private sector consortium including MDC; Florida Power & Light Energy, Florida Power & Light Company, and FiberNet; South Florida Workforce, Inc. (Region 23); the Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast (Region 20); Miami-Dade County Public Schools; Indian River School District; Florida International University; and others. To implement this program MDC has requested \$998,817 in grant funds from the Department of Labor, and the EJGI Consortium will contribute \$454,342 in cash and in-kind matches, representing a 45.5% local match.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES IN ALGERIA

Maya Sahli

École Nationale d'Administration, Algeria

First of all, I want to thank the Luso-American Foundation for its invitation and Professor Benmokhtar for welcoming us to this important institution.

The ideas I am going to discuss will entail several debates about reforming our respective education systems, particularly in the North African countries.

The relationship between education and employment rests upon a certain number of conditions. The drive to match higher education to the job market is being encouraged more than ever in all parts of the globe.

When speaking about the Algerian education system, I will focus on two main issues: first, the problem of the heavy, rigid education system and, at the higher education level, a certain number of problems that I classify as principal and secondary problems. I will cite some of these problems, addressing the ideas already expressed by the other North African participants. When speaking about the most important problems in higher education, I will just mention the problem of the rising massification in the number of students, the financing of the higher education system and the degradation of the quality of university teaching.

There are two main factors that have largely affected the job market in Algeria. First are the on-going economic reforms that are operating a radical change in the economy with the passing from a State-oriented economy to a liberal, market-driven economy. This market economy is now the only model in the world and many developing countries, including Algeria, must embrace this economy. The State must take the lead in the transition to a different economic model. But the State will not be the only actor because it will undergo the supervision of international organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank under the structural adjustment programs.

The second problem for employment is the repercussions this economic restructuring will have on recruitment procedures. In the absence of an effective economic dynamism – because this is a gradual, long term process – we are witnessing a

growth in the number of unemployed people in the market economies as a consequence of the closing of enterprises and worker-reduction policies.

Another factor that has reconfigured the job market is the arrival of new communication and information technologies. The job market has suffered a radical transformation and it is time to think about the match between education and employment. I want to bring three thoughts to discussion, which may serve to frame a redefinition of education policies.

First of all, a historical consideration that is necessary if we want to evaluate education systems objectively. Second, a political consideration, to analyze the future challenges and anticipate the social, economic and cultural consequences of these challenges. Finally, a methodological consideration that defines the concepts and approaches to be adopted.

Education and training are pivotal to the emancipation of society and the satisfaction of individuals. These factors are being taken into consideration by the educational reform system in Algeria. However, whether or not they are achieved or not will depend on the time factor.

In our region, social progress, economic competitiveness and cultural richness will depend more and more on the quality of the services provided by the education system. We must recognize that our higher education and training institutions are currently rigid organizations that are very difficult to manage. It is necessary to introduce efficiency, efficacy and competitiveness parameters at the higher education level.

In managing the change that goes along with educational reform, schools must institute innovation and adapt to the changes in the job market and society. In North Africa, the role of schools is central in implementing education and social reform.

This brings us to a thorny question, which is how to achieve an acceptable balance between universal education and job market insertion. I prefer to insist on the “how” and not so much on the “why” because the “why” of reform and change is already taken for granted in our countries. We no longer have a problem of opportunity but a problem of feasibility. How are we going to deal with change?

My first idea is to address the challenges of the education/employment equation. Nowadays, this relationship cannot be reduced to merely planning the flows of students in education. On the other hand, we must avoid the oversimplification of merely considering the qualitative and quantitative suitability of the links between education, training and employment. This dialectic is better understood in the light of national and international changes in the economy. The new mission of education and training implies a general revision of the organization, functioning and regulation of educational systems. In fact, there is a mismatch between education and employment and in-depth reforms were initiated to avoid a worsening of the unemployment rates. These reforms have proved essential in breaking with the isolated, rigid educational systems that are so far-removed from the job market.

Our basic, secondary and higher education systems produce large numbers of unemployed graduates. In Algeria, we have recently evaluated why the education system is malfunctioning. We have about 900 thousand to one million children and adolescents that left school before the nine compulsory school years. According to official data, in 2003-2004 unemployment affected 24% of the active population; that is, more than nine million people. Since 2003, two million jobs have been created.

Each year, thousands of young graduates come out of schools and universities and end up jobless. This takes us to the problem of the job market's capacity to integrate these unemployed graduates. I will cite two examples concerning job creation: one from the justice sector and the other from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In 2002, within the framework of the justice reform program in Algeria, it was stipulated that 300 new magistrates must be trained each year for a period of seven or eight years. There is a pressing need for civil servants in the courts. Demand to enter the *École Supérieure de la Magistrature*, the school where magistrates specialize, is very high. Presently, there are about seven thousand law graduates applying to this school. The creation of a ceiling for the number of entrants leads to a situation where, to achieve the minimum of 300 new entrants, we sometimes have to enroll candidates who don't have the minimum GPA of 10.

Sometimes we have to admit students with a GPA of 9.5 to fill the vacancies decreed by the Ministry of Justice.

We have an inverse system at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At this moment the competition for diplomatic attachés and secretaries is taking place. We have made a preliminary selection of one thousand candidates, one hundred for the post of diplomatic secretary and about nine hundred for the post of diplomatic attaché. The number of posts available is 15 for the diplomatic secretaries and 25 for the diplomatic attachés. In the last few years we have been recruiting the exact number of budgetary positions or less than that, because we favor quality over quantity. For instance, last year there were 15 vacant positions for diplomatic secretary and we only selected nine candidates because they were the only ones who passed the exams. I gave you these examples in order to analyze the relationship between training, education and employment when it comes to university graduates.

Second, one of the main goals of educational policy is to assure equal opportunity in access to education. In Algeria this problem does not arise because school is free at the basic, secondary and university levels. The problem arises when it comes to assuring equal opportunities on the job market. We need to promote openness in the job market for graduates and in Algeria this is guaranteed by law. For some years now, the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Vocational Training have been cooperating and interacting closely to find answers and solutions to the job market issue. Life-long training is one of the fundamental principles of any educational policy. It involves providing individuals with the opportunity to acquire or reinforce their knowledge and skills in order to become qualified workers and full-fledged active citizens. I think this is a major concern for our education systems and it takes us to the importance of implementing evaluation procedures.

The third issue I would like to discuss involves the boundaries in the relationship between education and employment, and particularly the management of the educational system. Self-evaluation is essential in arriving at a correct analysis of the education system's performance. It means that we must recognize the failures

and the weaknesses of our education systems in order to start afresh. As far as we are concerned, employment, as a prime socialization factor, must go along with the education and training of citizens and with scientific and cultural progress. This means that we have to think – not only about training workers to be skilled – but about training to turn out educated citizens who possess scientific and cultural knowledge. Job market insertion depends on attitudes and behavior. When we educate an individual, we must ensure that he or she has the chance to develop integration skills and adequate behavior capacities.

It is equally important to mention the gender issue when dealing with the relationship between education and employment. In Algeria we do not have a system that excludes women's from the job market. On the contrary, there are more women in justice than men. At the School of Magistrates they represent 52% of the future judges. They are also the majority in teaching and health and the number of women in technology and science is rising. There is no gender exclusion but a positive discrimination policy. The problem is that when women reach medium level positions in their careers, they tend to stagnate there and it is hard for them to achieve decision-level positions. On the other hand, we have equal work for equal pay, which means there are no salary disparities between men and women.

The fourth idea I want to mention concerns the challenges. I will not repeat the challenges that my predecessors discussed – only certain core points. In the coming years the challenges faced by our education systems will grow exponentially. The management of education systems will face internal and external pressures, as it becomes more and more interdependent within the system of economic globalization. Universities will have to face the issue of their relationship with society and the job market. Universities should maintain their role as producers and diffusers of knowledge, while producing skilled graduates who are able to face the challenges imposed by the external world.

We also need to consider the economic payoff when designing education and training curricula. The task of integrating students in the job market must not be relegated to the background; and we have already discussed the need to set up

partnership policies. In Algeria, there are partnership programs between education institutions and national and international enterprises. This approach is gaining more and more visibility and it is also a means of opening universities up to their environments. Another challenge is the poor performance of the school system and the unpredictability of the demand for training versus the supply of jobs in the future. We know that the performance of each economic sector reflects the efficacy of the system as a whole and its ability to remain open to outside influences.

No matter how effective the performance of education and training is, job creation largely depends on economic growth. The qualification of human resources is a non-negotiable factor of development. I think that our systems in North Africa must bet on the qualification of human resources. We no longer need general training. Instead, we have to move toward more expertise and specialized skills. I think this will be the premise of 21st century schools; that is, schools that not only educate citizens, but also foster knowledge transmission and competence acquisition.

I will conclude by saying that our concerns take in a number of factors. However, the time factor is crucial in eradicating the obstacles that exist in our education systems and assuring a balanced relationship between education and employment.

MANAGING THE CHANGE

Mohamed Loufi

University of Sunderland, UK

Introduction

The views presented in this paper do not reflect the Ministry of Education's opinions about university reforms carried out in Egypt but represent my personal understanding of the challenges we are facing and a suggested approach to solve them.

In this intervention, I would like to analyse the current situation in Egypt where I identify three major influences on the education system that need to be addressed. In that context, the management of change becomes a key challenge for the government since its mismanagement heavily contributes to the education / employment gap in the country.

Then, I would like to look at the role and functions of the University to define society's expectations from the education institutions and to see how this affects the education / employment gap.

The third part will envisage possible policies that could help reduce this gap.

If universities are allowed to fulfil a new, revised role in a free autonomous society, I conclude that the reality of an education / employment gap is perhaps not so alarming an issue.

1] Major influences

A first reason for the gap is Egypt's inability to cope with major global influences. Such influences have been referred to by several educational decision makers like Baroness Morris of Yardley, the former secretary of Education, or the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Sunderland when they presented a report on "The Globalisation of UK Higher Education", seen as the main challenge facing British education.

Professor Bernard King CBE, the Vice-Chancellor University of Abertay Dundee, called the impact of such general trends ‘inflection points’ in a presentation he entitled “Peripheral Vision: Inflection Points, Boundaries, Competition and Survival” when he spoke at the Magna Charta meeting in Bologna 2006.

I will refer to three of these major influences that, in my view, have the largest affect on the education / employment gap.

1] The Information Revolution

The last ten years have seen the widespread use of the internet, WWW, blue tooth, mobile phones, mp3. This raises the following questions:

- 1.1]** Does the Egyptian education system meet related student aspirations?
- 1.2]** Is the education system flexible enough to be able to use these new technologies?
- 1.3]** Will lecturers, in the current educational environment, be able to teach the students the knowledge and competencies that can satisfy society's needs?

The fact that the number of unemployed young university graduates is growing at an alarming rate seems to indicate that these questions have not been answered satisfactorily.

The Education Model as it stands does not fulfil society's needs in terms of high level quality training (is it then fit for its purpose?).

2] Demographic change (Supply and Demand)

The current supply of education services in Egypt does not meet the demand neither in terms of quality nor in terms of quantity. In terms of quality, a large number of the universities in Egypt, as they now stand, would have difficulties passing an international low level accreditation process (that would look at the adequacy of the means used to meet given educational aims). In terms of quantity there are not enough universities (providers supplying higher education) to cover the demand. Referring

to Dr Hossam Badrawi, the Chairman of the Education Committee of Egypt's ruling party, the country would need some 150 universities in the near future – just to cover population increase without increasing the participation rate or offering different approaches to teaching and learning that would help students to train as partners of a free market society. However, a high quality mass higher education is expensive, in terms of both financial and human capital. In relation to such quality and quantity requirements, universities in Egypt are under-funded and unable to meet the government's aspirations – or theirs.

I would say that this is where the vocational issue should be. Does Egypt need 150 universities or should not more colleges and vocational institutions be provided to offer a more balanced and diversified system of tertiary education?

The Education Model as it stands does not fulfil the society's needs in terms of minimum quality or quantity provision (has it adequate means to achieve diverse purposes?).

3] Globalisation and Multinationals

'The current education provision as it stands in Egypt does not answer the needs of the local or global market'. Let me shed more light on this statement.

In the present global market, employers expect to find three fundamental competencies in potential employees, Knowledge, Critical thinking and Problem solving capacities. The universities provide knowledge but, as indicated above, such knowledge may not reflect the emerging society. As for Critical thinking and Problem solving they are skills that involve creativity and imagination, characteristics rarely central to university daily work.

Example

In a discussion with a member of World leading IT company, the regional director explicitly expressed his experience with employing graduates from Middle Eastern Universities. He said: "they have the knowledge. What they lack is Critical thinking and Problem solving".

Example

Graduates of the Education system in Egypt are **under-qualified and over-qualified** at the same time: under-qualified because they do not get the proper level of learning enabling them to meet market demands; over qualified because the jobs they get from the labour market often require less qualifications (i.e. has a bank teller to have a BSc Degree to count money?)

Training an undergraduate student costs annually the Egyptian government some LE 8000. A bank teller, if he or she can do the same job with a high school diploma, could be productive 4 years earlier, and would save the education system 32000 Egyptian pounds, also freeing space for others who could benefit from an academic degree, thus reducing the demand for higher education.

Such examples also evoke another issue, the balance between university and vocational training, (HNC and HND degrees), the latter being focused on reinforced links between Education and Industry.

Obtaining a relevant education could open up a lot of new jobs and also attract foreign investments. Taking the words of the Prime minister, Ahmed Nazif, when he spoke at the World Economic Forum in Davos, I would conclude the following concerning the Egyptian government's view on the needs to manage change:

- 1] there must be political will to create in Egypt an environment favourable to investment, in particular foreign investment, **and this exists in Egypt;**
- 2] attracting foreign investment to Egypt (invest in Egypt) will create jobs and bring in hard currency, **no one can argue with this.**
- 3] The backbone for this strategy is human capital (**invest in Human Capital**), people being the motors for investment,

May I quote an example to this: a major computer company (Dell) has set in India its service centre for the UK market (a good example of India's attraction for capital). If India did not invest in IT Education and produce IT graduates who are able to satisfy Dell's expectations, there is a good chance the company would have never opened a service centre in that country. There are several successful examples

to such call centres linked to foreign investment, but this is not the main thrust of this paper, so I prefer to stop here on that and dwell on an issue more central to my topic, a cultural problem.

Vocational training, in Egypt, is perceived to be the natural choice of weaker students and/or for students from lower class families. The way forward is to create the demand and respect for these degrees (to be perceived by the nation as good degrees – enough to get married at least).

From the previous examples, it is clear that the Education Model as it stands does not cover all social needs implied by the new definition of society.

II] The university's role in society: what are the institution's functions?

If by political, I mean the organisation of the 'polis', i.e., the city, which implies the arrangement of people as a collective, the university can fulfil various roles in the development of society. It is where the academic meets and enriches the political dimension of a given community, local, regional or national.

The Academic View

According to Dr Andris Barblan, the Secretary General of the Magna Charta Observatory, and the former Secretary General of the European University Association, the University has four main functions that he sees as 'quests' with strong social impact:

- 1] The quest for **Truth**, i.e., the search for original knowledge at the frontier of the 'known', thus leading to wisdom and the development of new concepts
- 2] The quest for **Welfare**, that stems from material needs and can be met through specific data, information – in particular thanks to technical innovation in R&D
- 3] The quest for **Meaning**, rearranging and filtering what is already known to come up with new understandings of society's development and

- 4] The quest for **Order**, i.e., giving qualifications that publicise levels of skills and competencies, in order to justify access to a certain rung on social mobility ladder.

These four dimensions, when combined, make the university's specificity. In other words, to ensure the full presence and social roles of academic institutions of higher learning, these four – sometimes contradictory – levels of activities should be present in the daily experience of the university – although in different proportions, thus making unique the profile and identity of each institution relative to others in higher education.

The Political View

Speaking at a recent meeting of the Magna Charta in Bologna, Morten Ostergaard, a young Danish MP, considered that, once the identity of an institution was conscious to its members and partners, the university had to ensure vis-à-vis the society it belonged to

- 1] **excellence**, thus becoming engines of an economy or of a society driven by knowledge since the university is the crucible where meet truth, welfare, meaning and order as social dimensions of the community
- 2] **cohesion**, by mastering the conflicts these diverse quests and understandings of knowledge represent, in particular through questioning its social heritage and routines
- 3] **enlightenment**, by stressing in particular life long education as an eye opener for citizenship and social involvement: this engaged dimension should be central to the new contract societies have to pass with their universities as motors of their transformation and development.

From that perspective, both political and academic views strengthen each other, thus confirming and highlighting the role of Universities in their societies.

In Europe, taking stock of this double point of view, the Bologna process invites institutions not only to be responsive (reacting to a given context) but also to be

responsible (actively shaping their own environment). In the Middle East, universities are also invited to an active role as partners of the society they live in: this means taking enough distance from the problems of the day and developing a holistic view of the situation while offering alternatives to existing strategies, thus engaging as full partners in the solving of the urgent and actual needs of the community they share the fate of.

In other terms, universities are expected to become the partners of political and economic organisations in their city, region or nation, thus meeting the requirements of constant social transformation, in particular in the field we are interested in, the Education / Employment Gap.

III] Suggestions for managing change

From the above argument, it is clear that there is a need for the proper management of those organisational changes required to address such issues. An effective management of change should encourage universities to play a new role in society – a society considered as a whole thus setting employment in its social renewal context – the best way to assess the Education – Employment gap and to bridge it constructively. How can this be facilitated?

1. First strategy is to enhance institutional quality in answering precise social demand, i.e., to support the supply side of higher education. I refer back to Professor Badrawi and the need for more education institutions able to meet the increasing demand due to demographic growth. There should be enough Universities in terms of supply so that they can really rival each other, by defining a specific offer that justifies the differences made apparent by proper **competition** between education institutions. Such competition between Universities as institutions should influence their attractiveness to students – in particular in terms of graduates' employability. Competition, when regulated, should thus lead to greater relevance – for students and society – of targeted education able to reduce the *Education-Employment gap*.

2. A second strategy would consist in giving **autonomy** to universities so that they can be responsible to society for their choices and actions; this implies for universities to be governed as economically independent but sustainable entities (thus forging autonomous and viable institutions); then they can be asked to respond to social needs, to feel a duty towards society: from the fitness for social purpose of their teaching offer, universities could also be ranked accordingly. If we view Education as a service, the relevance of which is better fashioned by adherence to a free career market, then the Universities need to reform and adapt to the real needs of society if they do not want to face extinction or sclerosis. Indeed, planning of long term employment requirements – like it was done by central planning institutions in Soviet economy – proved inefficient since all factors of evolution could never be taken into account, especially as training people for a specific job implies a long time-lag – at least five or six years between the moment a need is felt and the provision of a number of graduates rarely corresponding to the needs at the time of their qualification. If universities, closer to the market than national administrators, are given enough autonomy, they should be able to scan the needs of their environment and meet society's mid- and long-term requirements, both serving and shaping their community. Then, they should be much more at ease with their role to reduce the *Education-Employment gap*.

3. Funding should be **student indexed** (this means, in order to sustain competition, that funding should follow the student from one institution to the next). This means, for the student, to be free to choose the University, public or private, where he/she wants to study. That choice, if well informed, should depend on the quality of the Education service to be received – a quality that should translate into better employability.

4. Introducing **support programmes** and projects that would strengthen the link between society and the education institutions would represent another strategy for change. Such links, in turn, help focus more closely on producing more market-oriented degrees with a higher employability content. An example of this is the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP's) now being implemented on a wide scale

in the UK or the US. ITI in Cairo has already experimented similar ideas with great success. Such programmes should reduce the *Education-Employment gap*.

5. **Quality** should be the main reference for degrees meeting social needs – quality defined as fitness *for* purpose (question of the means being used) as well as fitness *of* purpose (question of the goals to be reached). When both are combined, the system can inspire institutions to achieve higher than minimal levels of service to society. Thus EQUIS, the **European Quality Improvement System** in administrative and business education, pulls towards higher references of quality – some kind of European model of excellence in the field – than the usual national criteria of achievement, a European model defined in close collaboration with the corporate world, the prime user and employer of future MBA graduates. Defining quality beyond minimal success can only help reduce the *Education-Employment gap*.

Competition, autonomy, a student focus, support programmes and a combination of fitness of and fitness for purpose could combine to revive educational systems that, for too long, have ignored the link between the quality of their instruction and the relevance of their graduates' career for society.



Luso-American Foundation
Building



Luso-American Foundation Garden



From left to right:
Isobel Coleman, Richard
White, Charles Buchanan,
Rui Pereira, Maya Sahli
and Driss Ouauicha



Al Akhawayn University campus



Participants planting a tree
(from left to right):
Oliveira Duarte,
Filipe Didelet, Rui Pereira,
John Richardson, Charles
Buchanan, José Luis
Cardoso, Luis Valente
de Oliveira, Pedro Lourtie,
Manuel Pechirra.



Al Akhawayn University mosque



From left to right:

José Luis Cardoso, Luis Valente de Oliveira, Stephen Guyer, Ghizlane Tbeur, Pedro Lourtie and Richard White



From left to right:

Nakhle Wehbe, Rui Pereira, Charles Buchanan, John Shoup, Amal Elobeidi, Maya Sahli, Manuel Pechirra, Dina Elkhawaga, Luis Valente de Oliveira, Filipe Didelet, Youssra Benchrif (AUI staff) and Mehdi Azeriah (AUI staff)



Al Akhawayn University Library



From left to right:
John Richardson, Isobel Coleman, Rachid Benmokhtar, Nakhle Wehbe and Charles Buchanan



General view of the conference room



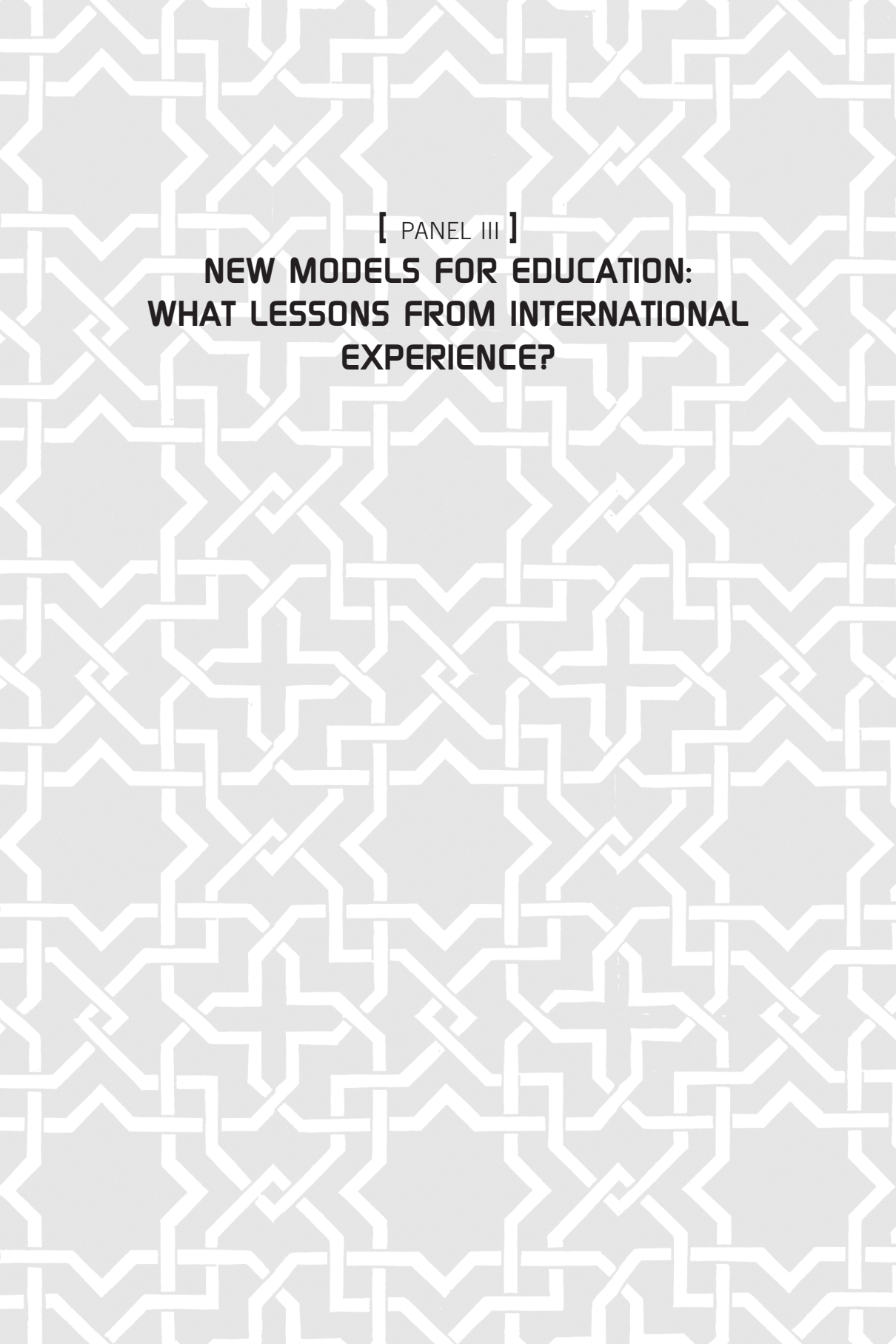
From left to right:

Asmae Eljamali (AUI student), Dina Elkhawaga, Driss Ouauicha, Ian Lesser, Amal Elobeidi and Pedro Lourtie



From left to right:

Vivian Solana, Souad Adnane (AUI student), Ravi Kaneriya (AUI student), Richard White, Mohamed Loutfi and Alpha Peterson (AUI student).



[PANEL III]

**NEW MODELS FOR EDUCATION:
WHAT LESSONS FROM INTERNATIONAL
EXPERIENCE?**

THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION MODEL IS NOT THE BEST SOLUTION

Nakhle Wehbe

UNESCO, Lebanon

I would like to thank the organizers of this conference for inviting me to this distinguished academic assembly. I would also like to say that my contribution does not in any way commit the UNESCO Regional Office in Beirut and that I am solely responsible for the ideas that I will try to develop during this conference.

The purpose of this meeting is not to watch a parade of new educational models that have impressed participants, but rather to liberate work rules or political and educational measures from the history of structural loans and techniques borrowed by consumer countries. I plan to draw experience from the way things are done in some 15 Arab countries.

I will start by commenting on the subject of this session entitled New Models for Education: what lessons can be learned from international experience?

A spontaneous gestalt-type reading and a more pondered reading ¹ of this session's subject show that international experience, among other references, should guide our steps and inspire our action to reform the (pre-university and higher) education system in order to maximize the impact of education on the economy in general and the labor market in particular. In fact, there is nothing negative or suspicious in this. What might be more or less annoying in the approach to this subject is indirect encouragement to examine ready-made "models" of education, i.e. to find formulae that are applied just as they are.

To put it clearly, the subject of this session suggests implicitly that it would be desirable to dig into the education systems of developed or industrialized countries to find an education model that, on one hand, has proved to be effective² in its country of origin to the point of producing tangible effects on the national economy and labor market and, on the other hand, is applicable in our countries.

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¹ Which would find a positive connotation of encouragement in the term "new".

² In the economy and labour market.

This is my question. Is it wise to do this? Is it wise to try to import ready-made solutions and apply them in our countries with the only justification that these solutions worked fine in their countries of origin?

Personally, I'm not crazy about this type of adoption or rather clinical grafting. Because it is clear that a graft of this importance at this level would certainly bear several risks, some of which could be fatal. Partial or total rejection of the model (intrusive foreign body) is one of the most formidable of the likely risks. In general, the local culture is vulnerable to the side effects of an imported education model adapted as a whole.

"Why are you apprehensive?" you may ask. In fact, it's not so much apprehension but rather the conclusion of some rich experience of education systems in most Arab countries.

Without going into too much detail about procedures and measures, let's look at the overall result of choosing to adopt some elements or adopting the whole coveted model.

In the first case (selective adoption), the importing country or institution doesn't mind breaking up the model and extracting the parts that it thinks are useful. This almost certainly upsets the way the model works, as its most distinctive features are the ones that have been removed and generally replaced by local "extensions" that are not only incompatible with the basic philosophy of the mutilated model but also deprive it of all its originality. In fact, a country or institution wishing to pick and choose from international experience, rarely manages to set aside its values or its unconscious historical prejudices when choosing the model and so it seems almost normal to reject any seemingly unsuitable components of the chosen model. It would be absurd to suppose that a feature borrowed from an international model would work in the same way as it did in its original environment, after being transplanted to a different setting.

In the second case (adopting a model in its entirety), if the national authorities permit the import and the model is not affected by cultural identity crises, the adopting institution will soon find that it is producing foreigners, cultural aliens in their own country. The adoption by the public sector in a developing country (an

Arab country to be precise) or by a private-sector institution in that country of an education model created by an industrialized country with the idea of reproducing the same results generated by the original version in the importing country will, in most cases, end in disappointment for the importer. It is very hard for the nature and the combination of the different components of the importing society to get along with the living conditions and workings if not of the model itself, at least of its products.

We tend to forget that an education model is not just a configuration or well-thought-out disposition of infrastructure, technologies, know-how and subjects. More than all this, it is essentially a way of being, acting and thinking. In other words, a model is above all a coherent selection of principles, values and approaches laid out on a canvas of knowledge and techniques. An imported education model cannot be applied in the same way as we apply some manufacturing model, as if men and women were cans of food.

What importers often forget is that, by the time a model has been implemented in its country of origin and used for as long as it takes to generate sufficiently clear, convincing results for its fame to spread abroad, it will already have exhausted the characteristics and virtues that made it innovative. The graduates that it will be called upon to produce in its adoptive country will therefore be considered second-hand products. (I don't believe for a second that an advanced country will reveal the secrets of a scientific or technological discovery before milking it for all it is worth and developing a new, more effective version than the one it is going to pass on to others).

Before embarking on such an adventure, shouldn't we therefore ask ourselves whether it is wise to dip into international experience? If we did, what would the challenges be? Can we expect to become creative, innovative and competitive if we choose to allow ourselves to be molded so as not to betray the illustrious model?

It is time to realize that by getting used to consuming ready-made know-how we will end up developing a taste for intellectual laziness and accept the absence of any contribution to the production of knowledge, which would mean almost total

neglect of scientific research, as is the case in Arab countries today. As a result, we will be condemned to always consuming others' leftovers and will never have our own knowledge or expertise. This will make it very difficult to guarantee satisfactory competitiveness for graduates from an imported model, in the knowledge that a copy, however faithful, will always be ignored in the presence of the original.

Let's add to all this that the transfer of knowledge and technology assume the receiving society's acceptance of the functions and side effects from the foreign entities transferred. It would therefore be wise to ensure that the graft and its recipient were compatible before any attempt at education surgery, to minimize the risk of rejection. And we must not forget that the adoption of a broken-in model is never free of charge.

If a model has already proved itself elsewhere then, in a way, the institution cannot be held accountable as, if there is a malfunction somewhere in the model's circuit, it is the students who are primarily responsible and not the institution.

But, coming back to that which has raised most voices, and whatever the stakes and reasons for the choice of an imported education model, I will ask the same question more directly. Can we take an education model out of its environment and transplant it in another without exposing it to serious deformations? If an education model operated in a setting where transparency, traceability, general and academic freedom, equity, equal opportunities, gender equality, meritocracy and competition mixed, helped and completed each other, can it survive and be productive in an environment where opacity, dishonesty, inequalities, corruption, censorship and oppression thrive? Can we manage a modern education model with a system of traditional thinking?

I am deeply convinced that a reform of any nature is, above all, a change of structures, mentality and values.

This first part of my presentation inevitably leads me to wonder why there is this insistence on making education in general and higher education in particular profitable without having to upset the education system's structures and other sectors of society. Is this a probable function of the use of prefabricated models?

Instead of hunting for international models, why don't we try to build or carve

out our own education system? Let's stop trying to play the fish by distorting the real problem and making it easier to dodge it. The real question is not improving the efficacy of education; it is improving the quality of this education. We should not confuse quality and efficacy. Efficacy is a temporary feature that only lasts as long as the adaptation of production to demand, while quality is lasting efficacy. In other words, the true question is not choosing between aligning the architecture of school and university programs with current market needs but rather giving graduates general and specialized skills at the same time.

I am deeply convinced that the simplest solution for involving education in the economy and maximizing its impact on the labor market is not choosing a second-hand model but giving graduates durable, intrinsic value. This means preparing a specialized graduate who also has very solid general knowledge that will give him the flexibility he needs to become a perfect all-rounder. If universities have the impression today that they have been overtaken by the rapid change in the economy and the labor market, it is precisely because they insist on preparing over-specialized technicians who will soon realize why a bee outside its hive is just a fly. So let's stop thinking that university ought to give students all the knowledge and skills they need to do their future jobs and let's stop filling programs with futile subjects at the expense of in-depth study of some basic subjects.

It is time to stop extending the list of questions, findings and analyses and start expounding ideas bringing likely solutions to the problem of quality of education and its involvement in the economy and the labor market.

First, please do not confuse being open to others (national or foreign) and being dependent on others. It is impossible to overcome the cognitive complex of dependence and improve the quality of education without producing know-how, i.e. without stimulating scientific research. On the contrary, there will be no real scientific research as long as academic freedoms suffer deeply in almost all Arab countries. By neglecting research and driving it out of university, the conduct of teachers and students is more like that at primary school. By infantilizing university, education and students, we risk ending up with graduates with children's cognitive and cultural baggage.

In any case, I can't see how a teacher who does not do any real scientific and qualitative research can provide good-quality higher education. Or how higher education that does not sponsor scientific research, whatever education model it adopts, can participate in the development of the economy or the creation of new jobs.

The evaluation and exam system in higher education in most Arab countries has been invaded by multiple-choice questions. It is the least suspect method but also the one that is most effective in reducing to a minimum the educational virtues of the education system. The encouragement by this kind of question to just memorize small, limited bits of knowledge does nothing to advance quality.

Added to all this is a pedagogical schism that has laid the foundations of educational laxity by preaching that it would be inconceivable, according to some psycho-pedagogical theory or other, to evaluate students with exams containing questions on a subject that had not been learned in class. This is the best way of preventing the natural progress of the transfer of learning in new situations, on one hand, and of legalizing and organizing cramming on the other.

This kind of an exam system guarantees a high pass rate, which in turn ensures high visibility for the institution. This partially explains that. In fact, this examination method does much more for the institution's image than student performance.

Once an institution has entered the advertising rat race, i.e. it has agreed to be compared with other institutions of its kind, it has agreed to rely on statistics to keep up its ability to sell itself to potential customers. The pass rate is a yardstick for completing this kind of transaction. If an institution stops regarding pass rates as a component of its image and students as a sum of money that must not be lost, i.e. if it has the courage to refuse students who do not meet the standards and fails students who have not acquired the necessary skills and knowledge in a satisfactory, operational manner and makes them repeat the year, the institution will be on the way to a quality education that will be highly appreciated in the employment market. People have to get it into their heads that quality does not rhyme with generalization.

THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION MODEL IS NOT THE BEST SOLUTION

If the goal is to involve education more and more in the economy and the employment market, the least people can do is to reinstate work as such and give it an intrinsic value. Why don't we ask why countries that have managed to free themselves from underdevelopment bet on a durable education system? The case of Japan and the tiger countries speaks volumes. Perhaps we should go back to the values of yesteryear and consider work as a value in itself and not a complement to the vacation period (a way of killing time while waiting for our vacation) and, above all, combat the dangerous prejudice that people should get diplomas, however little they have to work.

THE MIDDLE EAST UNIVERSITY PROJECT

Vivian Solana

Middle East University Project, Boston/ Madrid

I am going to present the work of the University of the Middle East Project, which I work for in Madrid. I hope my observations will complement the very interesting presentations we have had so far.

I will focus on the role of a very important group of agents linking education to employment – the teachers. In our organization we have identified secondary school teachers as very important individuals in connecting youth to their societies at a time when young people are making their choices to pursue either higher or vocational education.

I would like to start with a very brief background and history of the Middle East University Project (UME). The idea behind the UME was developed by a group of graduate students from Harvard University, originally from the Middle East and North Africa which, at that time, was in the midst of a highly-charged political climate. The vision was to create a physical University of the Middle East with the idea of helping to sustain peace in the region and fostering the common development of the countries in question. The group began by organizing courses that would take place every summer for a month with different sorts of professionals, but in particular secondary school teachers.

The Teacher Education Institute has been our flagship program since 1997 when the UME was first incorporated in Boston. Every year the institute gathers around 30 secondary school teachers from throughout the MENA region. The selection process for the Teacher Training Institute is extremely thorough. We send applications directly to high schools in the region. We also travel to the region for personal interviews. We normally receive about 150 to 200 applications every year for only 30 openings.

In 2003 the UME opened an office in Madrid. We have held different types of programs in Spain, which broach subjects such as sustainable development, governance and child health, among others. We are becoming more and more focused

on our work with teachers. Just recently in Seville we held a program entitled “Identity and Education” with our alumni. Our teacher training mission is to provide cutting edge teacher training in a shared multicultural, international environment. The aim is to enhance the leadership skills of high school teachers from the Middle East and North Africa and create teacher and school-based networks to actively foster critical thinking, promote intercultural understanding and implement innovative pedagogical initiatives in the various countries involved.

This initiative came as a response to concerns many of us had regarding – not only the lag in education in the MENA region – but especially the lack of linkage between employment and education. We work under the assumption that training teachers to foster critical analysis and create links between their students and their communities is essential in countering this situation.

Another aim of the project was to counter the vision of a world based on a clash of civilizations and contribute to a different understanding of culture and the role that education has in it.

I would like to speak about one of the key points in our recent strategy. Over the years we have been developing a significant teacher network throughout the region. The teachers’ evaluation and input help us a lot in designing our programs. They have also led to a new perception of our work, which is to empower our alumni so that they can replicate in their own schools the work we have done with them. We work under the assumption that there is a lot of learning to be conveyed, absorbed and exchanged and that there are certain issues in other educational systems that are definitely “food for thought” for teachers in other countries. Yet we are very sensitive to creating spaces and opportunities for teachers to make their own models and develop work that will respond to their own needs and concerns.

In April 2006, we organized a Civic Engagement Workshop, working exclusively with our Moroccan alumni. The workshop came about as a direct request from them and was extremely successful. This initiative is going to lead to the formation of a Moroccan alumni association of the UME, hopefully some time in 2007. We hope to replicate this experience, slowly but surely, in all the countries represented

in our network thus creating interconnecting centers of learning and expanding our work in the region through our alumni. The workshop was designed to complement and respond to Moroccan education reforms, which are embraced by the UME. Our Moroccan alumni are also very enthusiastic about these reforms and feel they need to be given training for these reforms to move forward.

We define civic engagement as a set of opportunities to engage students in activities outside of the classroom. They are initiatives that illustrate the link between the students and their local, national and global communities. This workshop was highly practical and very interactive. It dealt with plans of action for the teachers: the kind of activities they wanted to develop within their schools and a space where they could discuss their ideas. There were also American teachers involved who discussed their own civic engagement activities and developed joint projects with the Moroccan participants.

I would like to conclude with quotes from our alumni: “I learnt a lot of terminology for the drafting of projects and how to work in a group with maximal team spirit and efficiency. I also progressed methodologically and wish to be able to imitate my professors, to become more useful to my students and to other people I will be training in the future. I also learnt how nice my colleagues from the UME are. You have opened my eyes and given me self-confidence”. An American secondary school teacher said, “The Civic Engagement Workshop was a great opportunity to help American trainees understand working relations on a personal level with educators from the Arab world, especially considering the tensions in USA around Muslim-American relationships. Meeting and having intellectual discussions with Moroccan teachers was very rewarding and it really made me rethink my own projects at school”.

THE FORD FOUNDATION HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Dina El Khawaga

Program Officer, Higher Education, Ford Foundation, Cairo, Egypt

I want to thank the Luso-American Foundation and Al Akhwayn University for organizing this discussion seminar and for engaging institutions from this region in the discussion as equal partners in education reform. This is a new exercise because we often act solely as agents or donating institutions and we think more in terms of reports and efficiency, without caring to explain the rationale behind these initiatives and without discussing our motivations with the different actors involved. Donating institutions rarely make the required adjustment to integrate all stakeholders in these types of initiatives. I am really glad to participate in this meeting because it allows for much more transparency and coordination from both sides.

That said, I want to speak about how the Higher Education Program at the Ford Foundation was built during the last 30 years and why higher education has been chosen as the main area of the Ford Foundation's efforts in international cooperation. This does not mean that we want to impose education models or share new lessons; it is really an experimental approach, attuned to the problems the people of this region face in their daily lives.

The bulk of the Ford Foundation's work on higher education started in the United States in the 50s, and not in any of the 12 global offices. The program was conceived in accordance with certain values such as social inclusion, respect for diversity and universal access to education. Later, the program was expanded and began to be managed by the different global offices in order to respect each region's specificities. This also allowed greater interaction and the sharing of values and initiatives. The work of each office takes both universal and regional concerns into consideration. So, in Ford Foundation's work, there are common initiatives at a global level and specific regional initiatives.

What then are the common initiatives implemented by the Ford Foundation's offices to, "counterbalance the effects produced by the new economy in society",

in Amartya Sen's words? This quote has helped us a lot in the integration and inclusion of unprivileged people.

For instance, one of our global programs, the AFP-International Fellowship Program, is a 250 million dollar program that covers 25 countries, allowing 20 to 30 students to enroll in Masters and PhD programs each year. We believe that if disadvantaged students have the chance to study in North American, European and Australian universities, their original communities will ultimately be able to better manage and develop themselves. Contrary to other scholarship programs around the world, the AFP only asks that candidate students be community leaders who work in churches or mosques or who are active in their communities.

Our second global program is called Pathways to Higher Education. It is a 120 million dollar program that has covered 15 countries until now. Its aim is to promote university access for excluded minorities such as indigenous populations in Latin America, black people in South Africa, and the least developed regions in the MENA region. This program has also been designed to foster extra-curricular competencies such as informatics, English language learning, and citizenship education (elections, civil peace and social cohesion).

Side by side with these two global initiatives, there are regional initiatives. I will focus on an initiative, implemented in sub-Saharan Africa, that Egypt joined one year ago. It is a four-pronged program that centers on informatics, new study fields, leadership in universities and university networks.

Why do we work with a perspective in mind that is not directly connected to employment? Because the majority of donating agencies are already working on the relationship between the job market and universities, and very few institutions are addressing the challenge of how higher education institutions maintain their original mission, which is to provide higher education for all, in spite of the scarcity of financial resources. I mean, how can universities continue to train artists, sociologists, historians and political scientists when there is no social demand for these professions?

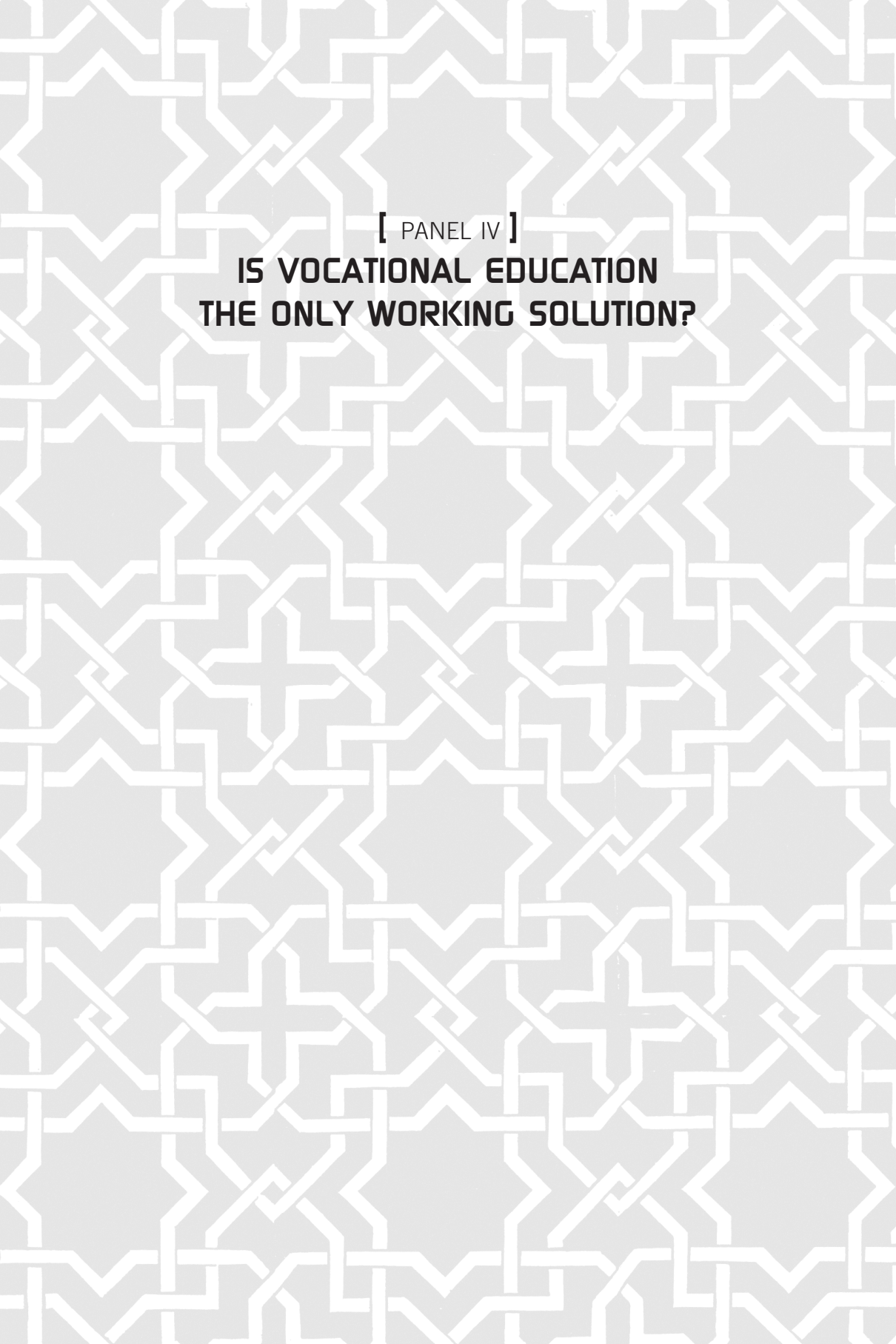
Inspired by this program, we have implemented a Higher Education Program for the MENA region. This program has three main guidelines. The first one is aimed

at building partnerships between public and private universities with the purpose of not penalizing private universities which, under the program, are considered “resource institutions”. This can help mass universities become better social actors. For instance, the American University of Cairo helps public universities implement their Middle East studies programs. The American University of Beirut has a summer program, open to the region’s public universities, to address the issue of how Arab universities can become more effective in the fight against AIDS.

Another line of work is the public-private partnerships for mobility. If we do not have leadership programs or extra-curricular programs in public universities, how will private universities be able to provide the know-how and the means to help these initiatives? The program consists of creating poles of excellence in private and public universities. The idea of a diversified education system is totally new in this region. We have always addressed the issue from a national point of view, that is to say, the more university departments and centers we have, the better we will be able to ensure sovereignty – but – to the detriment of quality. The challenge here is to work toward implementing quality assurance policies such as curricula development, effective assessment and ongoing teacher training.

The third axis of the program is partner diversification. One of the problems I identified in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership is that it consists of working mainly with ministries. It has not diversified its partners in the higher education system. We believe it is important to diversify and include new partners. Among the Ford Foundation’s Higher Education Program partners there are ministries, student committees, NGOs, faculties, departments, TV stations, publishers and public and private research centers. It is important to allow all the stakeholders to have their own agenda and to express their points of view about how to implement higher education policies. This inclusion policy leads to greater clarity and more diversity in the discussions on higher education policies.

This is what I wished to say to you. The Ford Foundation is a donator, working on social sciences, seeking to test the initial model put in place in the USA, and to adjust it, according to the diversity of the social partners that are part of the higher education system.



[PANEL IV]

**IS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
THE ONLY WORKING SOLUTION?**

ENGENDERING THE HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY IN LIBYA

Amal Elobeidi

University of Benghazi, Libya

First of all I would like to apologize for the fact that my ideas are probably not going to match the title of the panel, “Vocational Education”. However, let me just briefly cover what I am going to talk about this afternoon.

During the last three years I have become more involved in gender issues in Libya. This was part of an old project in the Faculty of Economics of the University of Benghazi, which is one of the main higher education establishments in the country.

The title of my presentation is “Engendering Higher Education Policy in Libya”. When I talk about engendering, I do not mean feminization. I am talking about gender equality, mainstreaming and empowerment policies.

First of all, I would like to mention a few things about higher education in Libya and broach some of the problems Libya faces in that particular sector. For the last two decades, higher education in Libya has suffered from several problems, including administrative instability and the lack of financial resources. These problems have affected most of the higher education policies, such as research policy, equal opportunity policies and admission and registration policies.

The instability and the structural changes related to the higher education sector have had an impact on the stability of some of policies that have been adopted. It has affected the efficiency of public higher education policies. I will give you some examples of how these changes have affected the system.

Since 1977, we have witnessed either the separation or fusion of a number of ministries. Between 1977 and 1983, there was a Ministry of Education. In 1984, the Ministry split into the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Universities. In 1985, the Ministry of Scientific Research was created. In 1986, the Ministry of Universities was extinguished and its competencies passed to the Ministry of Education. In 1988-1989, the Ministry of Vocational Training was created. Between

1990 and 1992, there was a Ministry of Education, Higher Education, Scientific Research, Youth and Sport and a Ministry of Vocational Training; I think this is incredible because each sector needs its own agenda and policies. In November of 1992, the Ministry of Education again started to concentrate solely on the education sector. Between 2000 and 2005, there was no Ministry of Education or Higher Education. These institutions were moved to the local government of each province. So, for five years we did not have such an institution. In March of 2006, the Ministry of Higher Education was again called back to the cabinet. This lack of stability has affected education policies in general and higher education policies in particular.

Another point has to do with the political commitment of the Libyan regime. One can say that the practical and widely-publicized policies of the regime towards women were aimed at encouraging women to play a significant role in social, political and economic changes within Libyan society. A view of the statistical information about the status of women in Libyan society shows an increasing number of women in the education system at all levels. For instance, statistics regarding higher education show that women represent more than 50% of the graduate students in all fields. Even in those fields that used to be predominantly male, such as law, women now represent 60% of the students, and 50% in engineering.

However, despite the increasing number of females in education, women still play a minimal role in the economically active population. They represent only 20% of the total labor force in Libya. Women also represent more than 70% of the public service sector, mainly in education and health. Therefore, in reality it must be said that in Libyan society the status of men comes out ahead.

Women lack authority and participate less and are therefore less able to rise to decision-making positions. This is borne out by a number of examples. I conducted a research survey using the networking approach and through the Official Gazette to find out how many women have been appointed to and been active in the cabinet. This can be determined by looking into the representation of women within the elite structure in Libya from 1969 through 2006. From 132 members of the

cabinet since 1969, 129 were male and only three were women, a fact that belies the idea of participative democracy. In the legislative group, among the 54 members who served in the General Committee of the People's Congress, which is a body equivalent to a parliament, we find that 89% have been men while only 11% have been female. In other words, women play a minor role in political affairs in Libya at the higher level. The few women who have been part of the executive or legislative group had jobs as secretaries or Ministers of Women's Affairs or Social Affairs. Of course, we can find the same patterns in many other societies.

Let me now move to some of the problems that women face in the higher education sector. The female academic and non-academic staff within the university has no access to relevant information on equal opportunities, especially those regarding legislation and resolutions. There has been a lack of objective recruitment criteria of staff members during the past few years, since ideological commitment is one of the main criteria for recruitment at the teaching and administrative levels at all universities. The distribution of budgetary resources for various fields of studies such as science and the humanities has an impact on gender issues; and here I would like to mention that there is no gender budgeting at the Ministry of Higher Education. This has to do with the idea that women are part of Libyan society; so if they have any particular problems, they can have their say through the existing channels for participation. The dominant idea is, "If we are one society, we don't make a distinction between women and men."

The lack of funding for research is due to the misuse of resources, which are usually channelled into ideological, propaganda activities. Some faculties are given a small amount of money to be used for logistical and daily needs. Some faculties receive only 5000 Libyan dinars monthly, the equivalent of 3500 dollars. This is the case of the Faculty of Economy and Political Science, which has 9000 students and 300 staff members.

There are limited training programs in gender issues at the Ministry of Higher Education and at universities. However, there are some other fields of training in computing, programming skills and management that are offered especially to low management staff.

Inequality also exists in the number of males and females working at the Ministry of Higher Education and at universities, especially in the decision-making positions. From 1969 to 2006, only one woman was a Minister of Education for one year. Since the establishment of the Gariounis University in Benghazi in 1955, no woman has been appointed to the position of university president and only two women have been named deans of faculties. Only four women at the university are department heads. Out of the 1300 academic staff, about 400 are women and 9000 men.

In some faculties such as law, engineering, education and the arts, almost 60% of the students are females. No gender policy exists at the higher education level to bridge the gap between male and female representation in all aspects of Libyan society.

In my view, we must include all gender policies at the higher education level, not just mainstreaming and empowerment policies. Given that more than half the students in Libyan higher education are women, and that most of the best students in all fields are also women, gender issues should become part of the country's policies in all walks of society.

THE AVEIRO NORTE PROGRAM: A SUCCESSFUL CASE OF BUSINESS-TRAINING RELATIONS

A. Manuel de Oliveira Duarte

University of Aveiro, Portugal

I've come here to share with you a few of the experiences my university has had in the area of vocational education and training. First off, I would like to stress that I am not coming to propose models or claim that what we are doing is better than what others have done. I would just like to share our experiences with you, receive your input and, if possible, establish some links with other colleagues who are willing to try out other approaches. By sharing, we also stand to learn.

In order to put things into their proper context, I am first going to talk a bit about the Portuguese educational system. About 30 years ago, our system was organized so that after the four initial years of primary education, you would have to make a choice; and the choice, at the time, was mainly based on economic considerations. Youngsters from less privileged families would go to technical schools, while others would go to the lyceum, a concept, I am sure is very well known here in the Maghreb, because it is of French influence. Lyceum students were largely college-bound, while those in technical education were meant to start working early and earning wages to help their families.

Around 1975-1976, along with other alterations that took place in the Portuguese political system, this system also changed. It became more democratic. All students were to follow a common educational path and decided at a later date if they preferred the more academic type of education provided by universities or the more vocational kind of training provided by the polytechnics.

The result, over the last 10 to 15 years, has been a disaster. As a result of the switch, there has been a vacuum in our educational system, mostly with regard to turning out people with technical and professional qualifications. The secondary school system has simply not been able to produce them. Only 10% of the students go into technical education, and they are those whose academic performance is not good enough for acceptance into a university program.

I would like to give you some numbers that show how we have evolved over these last 40 or 50 years. In 1960, there were only 30 thousand students in higher education. Nowadays the number is rapidly approaching half a million. From four universities we went to 14, and many private universities were also set up. With very rare exceptions, these private universities are capitalizing on those students who are not able to enter the public university system.

The public system suffers from a profound supply-demand mismatch. That is, a large number of the programs do not meet labor market demands; on the contrary, the labor market has strong demands for certain kinds of qualifications that no university has produced so far. The polytechnics, meanwhile, have refrained from turning out students with these qualifications, because they have been trying to imitate the universities.

We are experiencing a situation – and this extends to the OECD countries – where, by 2010, 80% of the technologies used will have been developed in the last 10 years. In contrast, 80 % of the labor force in the market by 2010, will have acquired their qualifications more than 10 years ago. This rapidly changing technological and organizational situation regarding the economy, together with the picture of the Portuguese educational system that I described, led my university to come to a decision about taking action by the end of the 90s. The initiative that was launched was known as the Aveiro Norte Program. It was our initial approach to what we call post-secondary vocational education at the University of Aveiro.

Aveiro Norte is the northern region of the district of Aveiro, a highly industrialized area with a strong vocation for trading and lots of export industries such as auto parts, cork, shoe manufacturing, metalomechanics, etc. We decided that the main target of the program should be to promote technical and vocational education among youngsters. In addition, we would promote the return of working and employed mature persons to schools. These were people who needed either professional requalification or first-time technical training. We decided to operate both during working and after-work hours to make it easier for employed people to attend.

We also thought it necessary to change the view that existed 30 years ago: that technical education was the natural choice of lower class families. We realized that

even today this viewpoint has not changed and that another even more detrimental viewpoint has taken hold – that technical education has become the natural choice for students with poor grades. So, we decided to combat this viewpoint and attract good students to technical education.

To achieve these aims, we decided to upgrade cooperation between the University and the leading economic sectors in the region: those that were offering employment and needed more people with these kinds of skills. There was no use in offering these kinds of qualifications to economic sectors where there was no chance of employment. Therefore, we decided, without any kind of embarrassment or prejudice, that we would design these courses and their curricula in close cooperation with industrial companies.

The teams of lecturers would be a blend of academic people and people from companies.

At present, the program is based in one of the northern towns of the district of Aveiro, and it has managed to put together a network encompassing companies, municipalities and schools of secondary education, mainly those that were ministering technical courses 30 years ago.

Our operational model is based on a decentralized supply. We all realize this is very difficult and very expensive. It would have been easier to do all of this at the University of Aveiro's campus, but we decided to decentralize and have had very encouraging results.

We make sure to always have local partners offering suitable hosting conditions, workshops and classrooms. These may be old technical schools or companies. The lecturers and trainers come from the local companies, but the pedagogical and scientific responsibility is always shouldered by someone from the University of Aveiro.

The initiatives we are carrying out are basically technological specialization programs. These are post-secondary programs that last one and a half or two years and focus on a specific professional area. Students spend one third of the program training inside a company. When they complete the program, students come out with a professional qualification that corresponds to level 4 of the European system.

If students, at the end of the program, want to continue their studies, we give them credits for what they have studied before. We also have continuing education courses of shorter duration.

Now let us see how these technical specialization courses correspond to the Bologna model in terms of the length and amount of work. Basically, they correspond to half a degree in the three-year model that the Bologna Process gave rise to. Traditionally, our educational courses are stratified, and the first year is very introductory in nature. The second year is combination of the introductory and some specialization. The professional part comes only at the end.

As you may already have realized, in our program training starts at week zero. When students start the program, they immediately enter a company, which we call in Portuguese *empresa madrinha* (godmother company). We like to think that the technical specialization courses have some degree of overlap with the Bologna-style first degree, but they also have an added dimension, which is the professional component inside a company. Another peculiarity is that, in the past, entering a university or polytechnic was like entering a tunnel, where you would come out after four, five or six years. In the framework of the cultural background of the population in this region, this is a very long time. Students and their families are not willing to go so long without earning money. So, giving students the chance to work, with the possibility of returning to the educational system after a short period of time, sometimes as part time students, was very attractive to them and proved to be the right option.

We think that the courses should offer a kind of education and training that is very focused and preferably applicable to a profession. During the last two days here, I have heard people say that overspecializing and very narrow training can sometimes be dangerous. I agree entirely, but there is always a starting point and that is to offer jobs to young people who want jobs soon, jobs that will allow them to start working in a qualified manner. Obviously, during these courses, we try to instill in our students an appetite for further studies and further learning. But it is very important for students to be able to get a job at the end of these programs if they wish to do so. Otherwise the undertaking and the program would fall into discredit.

THE AVEIRO NORTE PROGRAM: A SUCCESSFUL CASE OF BUSINESS-TRAINING RELATIONS

The type of teaching must be very motivating as well and one of the solutions we sought was to have people from companies as trainers. Sometimes these are the same people who mentor and help the students when they train inside the companies.

What these programs should *not* be is a second choice for those students who would otherwise enter a university or a polytechnic. We must be able to attract students with good grades, who will become part of the mixture that includes students with poor academic performance. We should remember that poor academic performance often stems from a lack of motivation. When you blend these two types of students, sometimes a miracle happens – and it has happened to us. But it also happens because you have a company nearby that gives them the training and, later on, gives them the job. We must avoid the danger of social stigma, of sticking labels on these programs: labels that say they are designed for people who can't do anything else.

We are active in the areas of social design, logistics and industrial organization and production technologies (automation, robotics, mechatronics). These areas are very much in line with the local economic sectors in our area. We also teach information and communication technologies, a subject that cross-cuts all the other areas. The program started four years ago. So far, we have been able to mobilize several hundred students. The rate of employability is approximately 80%. Industrial partners and local chambers of commerce have been crucial to the success of the project.

This experience is now being replicated in other regions of Portugal. This is a decision of the current government, which has set the challenge that, in five years, we should go from the few hundred students we have so far, mostly concentrated in the district of Aveiro, to ten thousand or more, scattered all over the country.

ESTSETUBAL: CURRENT CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

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Synopsis

This paper discusses the different ways Setubal's College of Technology (ESTSetubal) promotes cooperation with companies, public organizations and research centers. The types of cooperation and the current situation in tertiary education are presented. A number of questions are raised and possible answers to them are given.

1] Polytechnic tertiary education and economic development in Portugal

In Portugal since the seventies or the eighties of 20th century, the political powers have attempted to respond to the growing expectations of the population (and municipalities) while meeting the needs arising from economic development. Around the beginning of the eighties, the main political commitment was for Portugal to join the EEC (now the EU). This meant that a large investment in education, professional training and research would be needed sooner or later.

However, there was also another goal. Following a long period of both emigration and internal migrations to the coastal cities, the eastern regions of the country had lost increasing numbers of their inhabitants. Higher education institutions could be a way to stop, or at least to reduce, these outflows and contribute to the economic and social development of the host regions.

In the sixties, only four universities were operating in Portugal. Yet, even before 1974, considerable growth had begun. The rapid development of public polytechnics and private institutions in the eighties intensified the first wave of growth.

The polytechnic suited the need for tertiary education in sparsely populated regions because these institutions were smaller and applicants could access the

system more easily at a regional level. It ultimately meant that access to education was closer, and this improved the educational outlook for those families without an educational tradition.

Thus, the polytechnic tertiary education system was set up in Portugal. Its main aims were to:

- > Decentralize higher education institutions;
- > Reduce the exodus of youngsters from their birth places;
- > Increase the qualifications and skills of the population;
- > Promote economic development.

However, since the forties, the national birth rate had been dropping. The massive increase in the number of students applying to a tertiary educational system that had formerly been closed and restricted in the eighties began decreasing in the nineties. In the nineties both compulsory exams in secondary education and more demanding entrance standards for higher education were introduced. All of the above-mentioned factors contributed to a reduction in the number of applicants; and since then, the demand for higher education has been lower than the supply from the combined public and private sectors. This raises the question of what to do with the polytechnics, seeing that, for both cultural and social reasons, the applicants and their families prefer the university system.

2] ESTSetubal in the last two decades

Given the situation described above, ESTSetubal started two three-year bachelor's degree courses in 1988, offering a total of 60 vacancies. However, that number increased very quickly, not only because the number of new students demanding entrance to the college increased, but also because the number of failing grades in some specific exams was very high. This situation caused an increase in the number of years needed by the average student to graduate (five instead of three for instance). Therefore, new courses were created in the nineties in attempt to

meet the needs of the job market. In 1998, following the new trend, ESTSetubal offered a second cycle for most of its programs: in other words, three years for bachelor's degree followed by two years for the *licenciatura*. This new approach led to an increase in the number of students.

Conversely however, a recent sharp increase in fees and the decreasing number of new students intending to study in ESTSetubal has put an end to the upswing in students. In the last two years, the number of students in the college has fallen by more or less 400.

As a direct consequence of the downturn in the number of students, we have undergone a corresponding downturn in the number of staff. The means required to achieve an optimal balance between budgeting for salaries (depending on the funding rules) and the number of staff members is nearly always a source of unhappiness.

Simultaneously, ESTSetubal also wanted as many staff members as possible to hold a master's or doctorate as soon as possible. Today, the ratio of staff holding these degrees can be considered satisfactory, given the situation. Note that at first, doctoral degree holders were required to be at ESTSetubal for lectures and outside for the degree work, namely research. Only after the first phase of the funding programs, were some staff members freed up from the lectures to do outside research.

Yet new opportunities have arisen during this decade: first, post-graduate courses and second, technological specialization programs. ESTSetubal has also started a vocational short courses program.

Recently, new regulations regarding applicants without an ordinary secondary education diploma and students over 23 were introduced. For the first time the number of these new students enrolling has been significant – if not highly significant.

3] Levels and types of tertiary education

Before discussing ESTSetubal's additional activities, I would like to outline the types and levels of higher education we have in Portugal.

First of all, the boundaries between the university and the polytechnic subsystems were never well defined. Basically the law states that polytechnic institutions are more oriented towards professional training and are designed to provide scientific and technical education that is more focused on the transfer of existing knowledge. On the other hand, universities must focus on the advancement of knowledge and take possible future developments into account in order to provide conditions that will allow scientific and technological development to take place. In terms of research, one possible interpretation of the difference is that it mirrors the distinction between applied and fundamental research. The polytechnic would be the former while universities would be the latter.

One question arises though: if polytechnic staff must go to the university for master's and doctoral degrees, how do we ensure that the fields they choose lead to "applied research" rather than "pure research"?

The Portuguese higher educational system included four levels: *bacharelato*, *licenciatura*, master's and doctoral degrees. The polytechnic could only award the first two types of degrees: *bacharelato* and *licenciatura*.

Under the *Bologna* reforms, the first level (three years for most programs) is now called the *licenciatura*. The second level is now normally deemed to be the master's degree.

Besides tertiary education, the technological specialization programs (CETs) were introduced. But once more a number of issues arose:

- > Is the polytechnic the best place for the CETs to be held?
- > Is the polytechnic staff motivated to teach CETs?

However, not only post-secondary specialization programs can be held at polytechnics. In Portugal, quite a lot of attention has been devoted to lifelong education and retraining opportunities. This is crucial for sustainable development and to maintain and increase worker qualifications in order to meet future technological challenges. At the heart of the worker qualification issue is the extremely traditional educational system and the big discrepancy, in cultural terms and in people minds, between intellectual work and manual labor. This discrepancy means that there has been little recognition of informal training activities.

4] Cooperation between ESTSetubal and the outside organizations

Between 1985 and 1995, ESTSetubal recruited new staff almost every year. These recruitments allowed people from different places, who had different professional degree types, to join the staff. Because of this, in the middle of the nineties, the staff had become very well-balanced. There were people coming from industrial companies, people coming from secondary and tertiary education systems, young people without professional experience (but including both professional and scientific vocations) and people with different types of professional experience. In addition, among those with appreciable professional experience, there was a mixture of scientific and professional vocations. This initiative allowed ESTSetubal to dub itself as a college that was also dedicated to outside cooperation: and this was also a way to increase our budget.

From the very outset, cooperation between ESTSetubal and outside organizations became a reality. Cooperation between ESTSetubal and companies was carried out on a regional basis, thanks to individual contacts. Institutional contacts consisted of cooperation with similar European institutions under existing European programs (Socrates-Erasmus for instance). However, after the early nineties, individual contacts also became, at least as important as institutional ones in this area. In 1989, ESTSetubal joined the municipality of Setubal in creating the Setubal Professional Secondary School. In 2003, that partnership ended and since then, the municipality has run the Professional School on its own.

Professional cooperation can assume different forms:

- > Advisory and consultancy;
- > Professional and lifelong training courses (short courses);
- > Participation in specific projects.

Pedagogical and scientific cooperation has involved:

- > Student exchanges;
- > Staff exchanges;
- > Pilot projects;

- > Research projects funded by the EU, including both universities and companies;
- > PhD and MSc thesis supervision (or co-supervision);
- > Applications to public programs;
- > The CISCO academy.

Note that there has been virtually no cooperation so far with foreign companies – not including universities – and non-European entities.

5] Vocational and professional training

Portugal entered the EU in 1986. It was a turning point for lifelong learning and it allowed companies to be supported by the European Social Fund. But so far the specific requirements involving continuing education have not been adequately understood. Technological development and the decreasing number of students in traditional education systems will cause higher education institutions to focus more and more on vocational and professional training.

Is the polytechnic prepared to face this new challenge? Can polytechnic staff understand and fulfill the needs of different individuals and companies for professional training? Is it possible and advisable to always run courses with only one trainer at a time? Who can fund this type of training? Are companies prepared for these initiatives?

Professional and vocational training must include:

- > Post-secondary regular specialization courses;
- > Professional and lifelong training courses on demand;
- > Post-graduate courses;
- > Short-courses.

6] Challenges for the future

At the present (2007), taking into account the new political directives, public funds will not be enough to support even salary expenses. Because of this, cooperation between ESTSetubal and outside organizations is crucial. However, it will still not bridge the gap between our expenditures and foreseeable public funding.

This is our first challenge: the relationship with economic, administrative and social organizations is still mainly based on individuals; institutional guidelines and policies are urgently needed. Once more, individual entities are at the forefront: since we have felt the difficulty in making ourselves known worldwide, groups have been formed to work outside the institution. For instance, one of these groups is very interested in having ESTSetubal be part of future cooperation with the Portuguese Institute to Support SMEs (IAPMEI). Marketing support meetings would be one idea.

This is our second challenge: it is urgent to understand and implement new teaching methodologies to replace old, teacher-centered methodologies that are based on cognitive contents. Here, relations between ESTSetubal and outside organizations are also very important, because both companies and schools must be able to meet reciprocal needs. The labor market is changing because of economic and technological developments and teaching methodologies and educational programs must change accordingly. In line with this, ESTSetubal recently applied to public program designed to promote student success.

This is our third challenge: the number of doctoral degree holders at ESTSetubal must increase if the aim is to offer quality-based higher education supported by applied research. Once more, cooperation is vital and new case studies should be brought into the school.

This is our fourth challenge: ESTSetubal must be able to open minds to meet the challenge of regional, national, European, and worldwide cooperation. By this we are referring, not only to the USA, Brazil and other Portuguese speaking countries, but our southern neighbors, who have been so near, and yet so far – until now.

THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE ALLIANCES FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Stephen L. Guyer

Morocco Education and Employment Alliance, Morocco / USA

I am going to speak about an initiative in Morocco, which is an alliance between USAID and the International Youth Foundation. This initiative targets key issues of education employment in Morocco.

First, I want to explain what the alliance is doing in Morocco and the main goals we are striving to accomplish. Second, since most of you here are educators, or involved in foundations dealing with education, I am going to put a major issue we have in Morocco on the table. It is something one has to deal with, because it is a long term solution that goes beyond education and training.

I have been in the private sector in Morocco for the last 15 years and I am helping USAID and the International Youth Foundation (IY), which is based in America, to carry out a new project that neither of them has done before. This project aims at creating alliances between the business sector, educators and associations, and foundations.

We use the word alliance because it is not a partnership. The IY Foundation is involved in 70 regions around the world. The Foundation's projects are quite new in North Africa, particularly in Morocco and Egypt, but they have been in Palestine for quite a while.

The idea was to create Education and Employment Alliances in six countries: Morocco, Egypt, Pakistan, India, the Philippines and Indonesia. These alliances are not to be partnerships, but a series of partners. The Foundation, like USAID, has been used to work with other foundations, NGOs and ministries, in partnerships for specific projects. They come in with the funding; they have the ideas, agendas set by themselves or the local country partners; and they carry out the project. The idea was to go into these six countries, pass the ball to the private sector, and say, "Educational training needs private sector involvement." Most people agree with that.

I am not talking about vocational training, although I know in Morocco and every country I am involved with, vocational training has a key role to play. The kind of education I am talking about is education for employment. I am talking about people who are out of the school system, have dropped out of school, have not made it to university, or have finished university – we cover all these areas from the ages of 15 to 25. The goal is to give them something extra they did not get in school and help them get a job.

The idea of involving the private sector obviously came about because the private sector is more in tune with what the workplace needs. So, the idea was to create a steering committee of major private sector actors in Morocco, and that ball was passed to me. I created a steering committee, not of individual CEOs and presidents, but of individuals who have a vast background in business and who represent business associations. Of course, the American Chamber of Commerce is involved because of USAID, but the three major Moroccan business associations are involved: “Small and Medium Enterprises”; the big Fortune 500, what we call the *Patronat Marocain* or CGM; and a major group of women entrepreneurs, directors and CEOs. That gives us thousands of members in our association, plus a few Moroccan foundations.

The idea is to create a board of trustees or a steering committee of private sector individuals with USAID and the IY Foundation behind them. They are to create very precisely targeted training programs for different sectors. All sectors of the economy are included. We have a grant cycle and a policy established with this committee that votes on these projects.

We are training between 30 to 100 students per project. We now have 10 grants. I am not going to detail any of these grants, because that is not the point. The point is that this alliance is aimed at two things. One is to create grant programs to train people to get jobs. Our alliance members are then engaged to mentor, give internships and hire those students. Since, as I said before, we have a thousand members due to this association, we are expecting them to pull their weight and get things done.

The second major idea down the line is to engage business in CSR-corporate social responsibility, to show Moroccan businesses what we all know in the education

and employment field and that they have to take the leadership role and get involved.

These alliances are not just about a private company putting a project on the table because it suits their sector. These alliances are meant to involve an NGO or foundation, a public sector, meaning the local Ministry of Education, and the private sector. Each project has four to six members. The projects taking place now engage up to 23 members of our alliance. This includes famous companies such as Microsoft and Unisys Morocco; the Ministry of Education; two of the biggest public universities in Morocco: Hassan II University in Casablanca and the Academy of Casablanca; the associations I mentioned earlier; and entrepreneurial business groups.

The alliance was launched a year and a half ago. Since then, we have had two grant cycles and now have 10 programs. The first program cycle dealt with specific business related skills that we needed, mostly IT skills. The second cycle came as this alliance matured and we added a requisite that the entrepreneurial skills developed, because these skills are not just business skills. They are mindsets, ways of thinking and opening one's mind.

But the last major issue that we want to cover in our programs is one that I want to put on the table for you educators to deal with long term. It is something that we call life skills. In discussions earlier today, people asked me, "What do you mean by life skills?" There are many terms for this very large topic. You can call them behavioral skills, adaptable skills or portable skills.

There are things in a good school that you learn from age five up. In certain systems, like the Moroccan local system and even the French system, you do not learn any of them. A student gets out of school, and he does not become an entrepreneur unless he has the mindset for it.

These life skills are essential to our mission. We were involved in a survey of a couple of dozen small, medium and large companies in Morocco, to establish what Moroccan businesses needed. One major issue that was brought up was this idea of life skills. This is something that is difficult to train people for and it entails life-long learning.

We are also actively involved with two Moroccan foundations in our projects. One is called AL JISR, which means “the bridge” in Arabic. They put businesses and schools together with the businesses adopting a school. They have their own steering committees and a board that decides exactly how they want to create linkages between the businesses, parents’ associations and the schools; then they set the yearly schedule.

This has become very successful; it is an initiative the Prime Minister is actively supporting. He wants to see every single Moroccan local school be adopted by a business. There are now only about 100 schools that have been adopted by big businesses, but the goal is to add new schools every year. Until last year there have been huge conferences, sorts of fairs, where companies go to adopt a school. As a result, the schools adopted have gone from 12 to 75 to 100 just in the past two years.

The second foundation is called MJID – the Morocco Foundation for Youth, Initiative and Development. This Foundation is involved in two life skills projects for teenagers. The EFE – Hassan II Project, which we are funding, deals with college age students from ages 15 to 17. The other is aimed at students in their late teens to their early 20s and is being carried out in conjunction with Microsoft, the Academy of Casablanca and the GE Foundation from the United States. The GE Foundation is writing the life skills curriculum, which is based on the one they use in Mexico and India. We adapted the curriculum to Morocco and it is now up and running.

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT FOUNDATION IN THE REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Adnane Raïss

EFE – Education for Employment Foundation, Morocco / USA

There is a consensus among policy makers about the crucial need for private sector involvement in the field of education, particularly through public and private partnerships. I am very delighted to share with you a model that the Education for Employment Foundation (EFE) has developed, that fits perfectly within that framework.

The EFE was established about four years ago by a New York entrepreneur who put on the table a ten-million dollar fund that has served as seed money. Yet the EFE also receives international local funds for its various projects, as well as grants from UNDP, USAID and corporate and individual donors. The EFE model is in fact very pragmatic, very employer driven and very supply driven. It consists of designing innovative schools and training programs that are directly linked to jobs. What we do is identify sectors of the economy that are witnessing real growth and job creation potential, but lack the qualified human resources and skills necessary to expand successfully.

So, with the support of local governments, we seek the involvement of dynamic businesses and industry leaders, to provide internships, employment opportunities, financial and in-kind contributions and recommendations for skills training. Then a partnering university is identified to host the training center and the program, and also to share resources, assist with curriculum design, and explore training opportunities in various sectors.

With these local partners, the Foundation has developed non-profit centers, or foundations, for customized skills training that incorporates contracts with businesses to ensure jobs for graduates. In fact, the Foundation does not launch a training program, unless it has secured hiring commitments from employers. But it also seeks the expertise of leading career colleges and universities in the West, training

for local trainers, career counseling centers, on-the-job training, and when useful, distance learning, continuing education programs, and sustainable financial structure for cost recovery. So, this is, in nutshell, the model that the Foundation has developed to address the current mismatch between employer needs and labor pool qualifications and engage the private sector in educational reform efforts throughout the region.

Again, the private sector is involved throughout the process, from the needs assessment to curriculum design: providing training itself, selecting and identifying participants and trainees, recruiting, mentoring and providing follow-up activities.

Just to give you a few examples of what the Foundation has implemented in terms of activities and projects throughout the region, in Egypt the EFE is working with the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Health and with a national university to establish a nursing career academy because there is a very significant shortage of nurses in Egypt. The Foundation is working with those stakeholders to develop a world-class, two-year training program that will meet those specific needs. In addition, the Foundation has developed partnerships with four hospitals in Egypt to hire the nurses trained by the program. A recent partnership has also been developed with a leading hospital in New York City also to hire those nurses from Egypt.

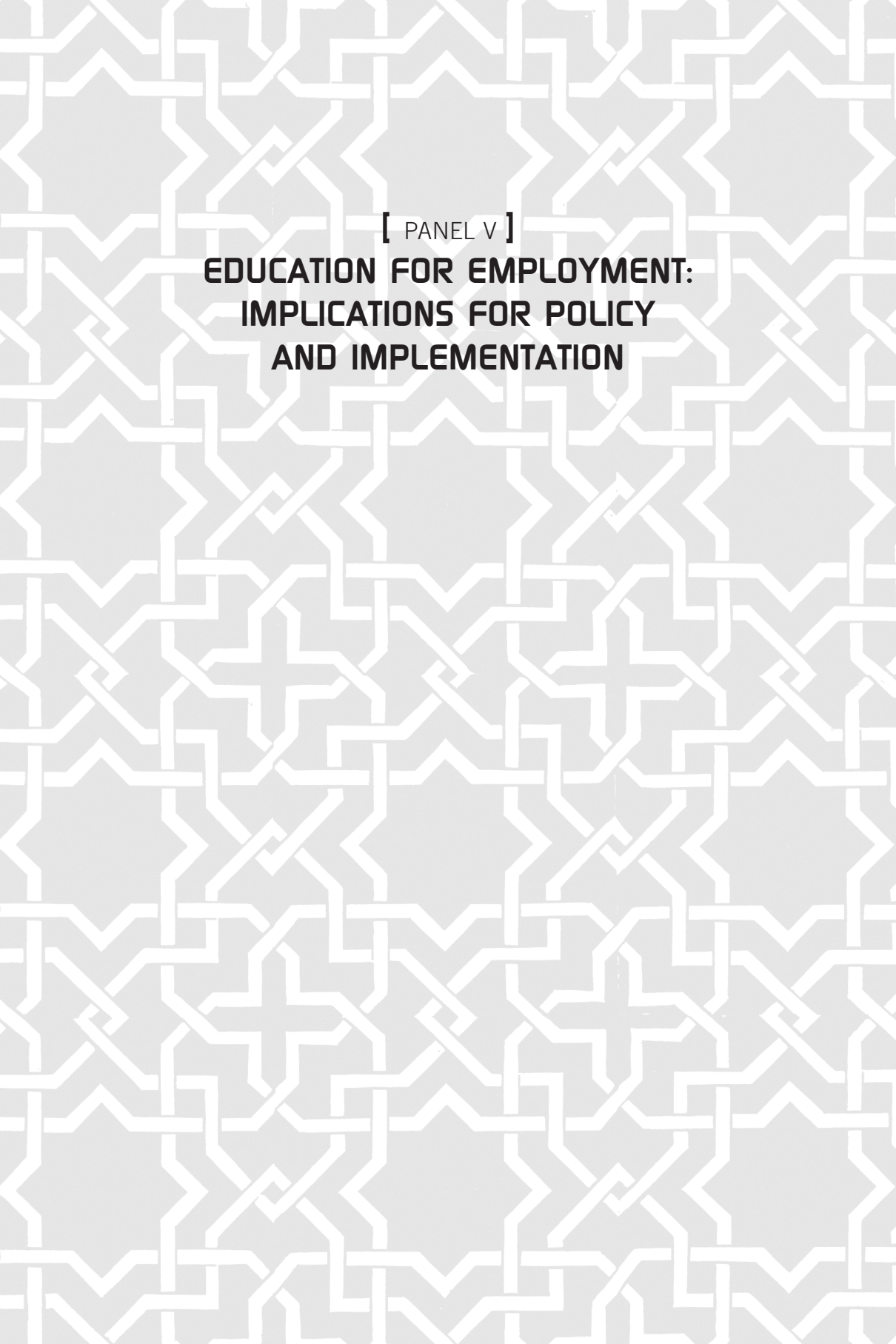
In Gaza, the EFE has developed a partnership to hire accountants with a major construction company called Consolidated Contractors. So, it has developed a mini MBA training course with the Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland and is also working closely with the Islamic University of Gaza to train accountants that will be hired by the company locally and also through the holding company's subsidiaries based in the Gulf.

In Jordan, the EFE is working with the Al Issra Private University to implement the Workplace Success Program. This initiative is designed to provide professional skills for youth and unemployed graduates, to help them not only secure their first job but to keep their first job. So, it consists mainly of training in the area of personal development, communication skills, teamwork, ways to develop a career plan and ways to develop a support network in the industry.

**THE EXPERIENCE OF THE EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT FOUNDATION
IN THE REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

Last but not least, in Morocco the EFE is in the process of launching a national foundation, working with key employers and strategic players to design and implement world-class training programs for unemployed youth. For instance, we are working with the leading holding company to develop a world-class sales training program; and we are working with a marketing and sales guru from the Harvard Business School, Professor Ben Shapiro, to adapt a training course to the Moroccan context. This idea came about because there is an appreciable shortage of sales training initiatives and sales executives in Morocco. We are also working with the Hassan II University and other professional associations to implement the Workplace Success Program and to adapt it to the Moroccan context. We then aim to replicate it and make it available to as many young people as possible.

This is the EFE model that has fit in quite well with the public-private partnership model. It illustrates that effective involvement of the private sector can really make a significant difference in the way youth are trained, recruited and led to find successful careers – not only in the private sector – but in the public sector as well.



[PANEL V]

**EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT:
IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY
AND IMPLEMENTATION**

EMPLOYABILITY OF YOUNG GRADUATES IN THE NEW TUNISIAN ECONOMIC SETTING

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Summary

The growth in per capita revenue and social transfers, the increasingly egalitarian distribution of revenue and property and the growing feminization of employment have had a positive effect on the family budget and on the attitude of economic agents to the supply and demand of employment. There are more and more economic opportunities for going into business and there is a new segmentation of the job market. Universities are better positioned, thanks to a strategy of including employability as a criterion in their evaluation system and following the career paths of their graduates.

Introduction

The structure of the Tunisian job market has been marked by two main phenomena – demographic and economic growth on the one hand and globalization, tertiarization and regionalization of the world economy on the other.

1] The demographic and economic scenario

Thanks to an effective family planning policy, Tunisia has managed to bring its demographic growth under control. The demographic growth rate has gone down from 1.7% in 1994 to 1.09% in 2005. The expected growth rate in 2011 is 1.12% and in 2016 it is 1.04%. This means a 10.7 million increase in the population in 2011 and 11.3 million in 2016 and structural change in the population consisting of a

decrease in the populace aged under 15 years from 25.3% in 2006 to 23.3% in 2011 and 22.8% in 2016 and an increase in the working population (aged 15-59) from 65.2% in 2006 to 66.4% in 2011, going down to 65.5% in 2016, and an increase in the population aged over 60 to 10.2% in 2011 and 11.8% in 2016 as opposed to 9.5% of the total population in 2006. These changes have been accompanied by an almost continuous increase in GDP by about 5% a year (on average), which means that per capita income has trebled in the last ten years and the standard of living of the middle classes (65% of the population) has improved, thanks particularly to the Tunisian government's social transfer policy (20% of GDP). *The larger difference between the GDP growth rate and social transfers per capita on one hand and the demographic growth rate on the other explain the multiplication of economic opportunities and a new attitude on the part of the job market.*

We also find that the working population is aging, which means that there must be a new strategy for ongoing training and a growing feminization of training, which will have a positive effect on the family budget and social security. There number of university graduates has also been increasing. It will go from 14.1% in 2006 to 18.8% in 2011 and 23.7% in 2016, which will impact on the structure and quality of additional demand for jobs.

In the period from 1997 to 2006, there was additional demand for jobs to the tune of 769,000 against a supply of 705,000, which represents a coverage rate of 91.7% of additional demand as opposed to 89% in the eighth plan.

We also find *a drop in the unemployment rate from 15.9% of the working population in 1997 to 14.2% in 2005, linked to an increase in female employment, which shows that there is a negative correlation between female employment and the overall unemployment rate.* The increased feminization of employment in Tunisia has generated new jobs and new income.

From a structural point of view, the number of graduates in additional demand went from 15,600 in 1997-1996 to 54,000 in 2005-2006 while the number of graduates in the employed working population went from 8.3% in 1997 to 13.3% in 2005. We can expect an increase in the number of university graduates in additional demand to 66% in 2009. *The behavior of these young graduates in demand for*

employment cannot be analyzed without reference to the family budget and initial allocations, which means new attitudes and new segmentation of the employment market.

Unemployment among university graduates

The structure of unemployment is marked by a greater presence of university graduates. The relative weight of graduates in overall unemployment went from 3.6% in 1997 to 13.6% in 2005. The continuous increase in the number of university graduates partly explains the growth in academic unemployment, which went from 8.1% in 1997 to 14.8% in 2005. It is therefore important to ensure that university courses are suited to the needs of a job market that is also increasingly segmented on the supply side.

The declining profitability of the university education system

Where the *unemployment of young graduates is concerned*, it is necessary to find a strategy that will increase the external yield of the education system. The trouble is that the idea that a university education is no longer of any use is becoming rooted in the minds of young people, parents and decision-makers. The absence of job prospects results in discouragement and absenteeism in future graduates, further reducing the output of the higher education system. This new reality has given birth to a rationale aimed at getting a degree, the value of which is socially losing ground, at a lower cost in work and in participation in the activities of education institutions. When they finish their education, graduates have accumulated little knowledge, including from a linguistic point of view, and have lost countless aptitudes and abilities that increased their employability. These factors are at the root of excessive costs of internal anomalies (expenses arising from repeating years and dropping out) and external overheads (expenses arising from lack of qualifications, additional training, assistance in finding a job and unemployment) and the costs of detection (the expense of the centralized organization of exam sessions and time devoted to these exams).

In addition, it is difficult to evaluate the output of types of education when

demand for them depends on the social and mental structure of a society. An example is the aversion to training for manual work and professions. This situation, inherited from the old colonial system (especially in the public sector), means that non-manual occupations (civil service, public administration and state-owned companies) are well paid, making them attractive and giving them a considerable training budget. The creation of new jobs in the public sector helps perpetuate this structure and gives rise to an artificial demand for certain types of education. This type of inter-sectoral distortion explains the excessive increase in pay in relation to relatively low productivity.

It seems, therefore, that university education is subject to a social demand, as the work relationship is built in a framework that goes beyond the law of supply and demand, a framework that is governed by scales of value and outdated mental structures.

2] The job market

Even if coverage of additional demand for jobs does not stop going up in Tunisia (around 90%) and the stock of unemployed rises more slowly than the working population with jobs, a fall in the unemployment rate does not lead to a positive or negative judgment on employment policy. In fact, the disorganization of the job market, especially in terms of the mismatch between vacancies and first job seekers (in the case of university graduates) is a major problem.

There is the problem of adapting the profile of the unemployed to the requirements of vacancies. The way out is education adapted to companies' increasingly varied needs (approach problem). The job market does not show companies' needs (especially SMEs) or their real ability to recruit and pay a certain salary. The pay mechanism is different from the price mechanism, as it is subject to certain constraints (minimum wage policy), the heterogeneity of the work factor that imposes less transparent, inexplicit work contracts (asymmetric information, agency problems), limited mobility of human and financial capital and current vagaries.

Analysis of jobs and employability

The positive impact of social legislation on employability took the form of an improvement in the institutional structure and effective functioning of the labor market (recruitment, work contracts, licensing, protection, training, etc) through different employment programs like the Job Fund (2000), the Tunisian Solidarity Bank (1998) and the micro-credit system (1999), with 911,000 beneficiaries up to 2006, and also a policy of encouraging companies to recruit, the creation of companies, the youth employment program and the inclusion of vulnerable social categories (needy families, the disabled). It is a question of setting up an institutional framework favoring the creation of jobs and reinforcing employability.

The challenges of employability in the framework of the segmentation of the Tunisian job market

The segmentation of the labor market is an essential characteristic of market economies. Analyses of the segmentation of the labor market are based on the hypothesis that there are several relatively compartmentalized, mutually impermeable labor markets, which means differentiated management of jobs. People normally talk about the dual labor market theory. This theory is based on the hypothesis that the job market is divided into two parts. The first is that of stable, protected jobs, while the second is that of unstable, impermanent jobs. This theory reflects the specific situation in the USA in the 1960s. In fact, all countries have experienced structural dualism in their job markets to different degrees in all periods of their development, as a result of historical and economic circumstances. This segmentation is obviously marked by great social inequality, as employment relations are normal in the primary market and atypical in the secondary sector.

In Tunisia, the current situation is different from the dual labor market of the 1990s. The Tunisian labor market does not fit into an under-segmented dual model. Structural changes in this market mean that it tends more and more towards a three or even four-segment market – an external segment (civil service, public administration and state-owned companies), an internal segment (national and international undertakings) and a new-profession segment (increasingly tertiarized). *This segmen-*

tation can be explained by new attitudes in the supply of jobs by companies under pressure from international competition and in demand for jobs by the effect of higher per capita income and the feminization of employment.

In the external segment, there are only barriers to entry for qualifications non-specific to companies or professions. Job duration ranges from short to medium and long term and *job security remain the most important decision parameter for job seekers, in spite of slow automatic promotion.* Today, this sector is highly saturated, which explains the unemployment of graduates with the no specific qualifications.

For companies, employees are a reserve that can be adapted to respond to the technical and functional demands of the job (functional flexibility). There is no form of mutual commitment and pay differences are essential in explaining employee mobility. However, employers cannot limit themselves only to pay differences to recruit the profiles that they need. Hiring may be fast and cheap but there is no view of career progression. The problem of attracting skills arises as they have specific in-house training. The company segment is itself under-segmented depending on how oriented its activity is to domestic or foreign demand. Training requirements must be harmonized with international rules, in any case.

The professions segment involves employees with specific vocational qualifications proven by a certificate or professional license. The perfect compartmentalization of this market is the result of formal public training courses or training given by the profession or sector. The link between employer and employee is weak and employee and employer mobility involves relatively low costs. This is the case for physicians, pharmacists, lawyers and, recently, the new professions. Ease in changing employers results in employers developing a company-specific career policy to prevent brain drain. It is here that horizontal and vertical job differentiation (specialization) leads to the disappearance of certain jobs and the creation of new ones (integration of new tasks) that require new, company-specific know-how (ongoing, in-house training). In this case, it is difficult to enter the company's internal market because it is closed to unqualified job seekers.

Inter-company relations in a branch help them approach the theoretical labor market, thanks to a desegregation process. What is most important to companies is technological innovations specific to their branch or sector.

The “company” sector includes employees who have acquired company-specific qualifications, which tightens the bond between employees and employers. Jobs are thus “mobility chains” or “career ladders”. All employees from the outside market have to begin their careers on the lowest rung. From here, they begin to acquire the specific knowledge that gives them access to more qualified positions. This segment is tightly sealed against employees from other segments or even those from the same segment working for another employer. This seal is generally institutionalized in the law and inter-company agreements. This market is clearly distinguished from the theoretical labor market by the durability of the pay relationship, the importance of *ongoing training* and the acquisition know-how, advancement and internal promotion. Thanks to investment in human capital, employer-employee relations can be long-lasting.

3] Strategies adopted by the higher education system

In view of this segmentation of the job market due to the new attitudes of graduates and employers, the Ministry of Higher Education, concerned about the employability of young graduates, has developed the following strategy:

- > Identifying promising, knowledge-intensive sectors for inclusion in globalization and establishing links with strategic cutting-edge areas such as new ICTs, biotechnology, medical technologies, software production, design, applied languages, etc. Most high school graduates must be directed toward these sectors
- > Reinforcing the partnership with the economic and social environment – strengthening the partnership with the Union Tunisienne de l’Industrie, du Commerce et de l’Artisanat (UTICA), chambers of commerce and mixed chambers to find out about the specificities of professions and

jobs with companies and getting professionals actively and responsibly involved in drafting syllabuses, building new fields (especially undergraduate-masters-doctorate) and trainee students or graduates. It is also necessary to increase cooperation with the institutional environment (BTS, job centers, micro-credit system, etc) to encourage young people to set up their own businesses and find forms of sponsorship and expansion to encourage entrepreneurship. It is also necessary to help reform the institutional framework to allow graduates to more effectively gain access to new forms of employment (tele-working, working from home, virtual companies, the internet economy, etc.)

- > Examining the needs of the international job market in inter-university cooperation projects and introducing joint courses and joint frameworks to facilitate the mobility of young students and graduates, especially in new ICTs, biotechnology, electrical engineering, mechatronics, transport and logistics, etc.
- > Transferring to the undergraduate-masters-doctorate system this year and introducing international rules on the flexibility of training, the diversification of fields, self-development and the external evaluation of universities, quality programs and establishment projects; giving fields a specific academic and practical content to improve graduates' employability in local and international job markets and facilitating recognition of equivalence with foreign degrees
- > Developing a global quality strategy to continuously improve the quality of teaching, tools and the pedagogical environment, introducing a competitive framework for universities for the choice of the best project submitted; increasing research and technological innovation; increasing educational software production, digital teaching and distance learning; intensifying external evaluation of universities; and strengthening centers of excellence at all universities (generalizing schools of engineering, interuniversity partnerships, joint degrees, joint theses, use of Tunisian skills abroad, use of the expertise of Tunisian and foreign retirees).

- > Universities in Tunisia are subject to an evaluation system based on a set of criteria, which includes employability. Each university must have information on the career of its graduates and inform the university observatory so that it can take it into account when counseling high school graduates and setting up new courses.

Conclusion

The field of action of the university education system must also include the protected segments (internal or primary markets) and the unprotected segments (external or secondary markets). Internal markets take labor allocation mechanisms away from companies and constitute an area of mobility that the university education system must make more flexible to mitigate under-employment and poor productivity and thereby guarantee ongoing promotion of employees. For the external markets, the university education system must continue to solve the social problem of employability and access to the internal market by developing a consistent information system for university career guidance towards the professions of the future, thereby changing the classic choices for high school graduates and their parents.

EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP*

José Luis Cardoso

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1] Better education for better jobs

I will begin with a short note on the Lisbon Agenda, the name currently used to refer to the European Union summit that took place in Lisbon in March 2000, where a very ambitious agenda was put forward in order to build up in Europe the so called knowledge-based economy and society. Innovation and competitiveness are the key words for this European project.

Sometimes this project is merely seen as a kind of a competitive game against the United States and Japan. I do not believe we should see the Lisbon Agenda in this way, since it basically aims to add key elements fostering social progress and economic development to the political agenda. Knowledge is very much at the heart of this new economy, which will bring innovation, competitiveness, new jobs, better jobs and qualified jobs to the European economies. This also means spreading and disseminating knowledge, and applying knowledge to business activities and to the needs of the labor market in a globalized world.

When this agenda was set up in Lisbon in 2000, the discussion uncovered fears about increasing economic growth in China and India. Most of the Lisbon Agenda was set up to bring capacity and momentum to the European economy, so that it would be prepared to face competition, not only from the United States, but also from the new emerging economies. We have to think of it in a setting of global competition, which in Europe also means taking into account the issue of social cohesion.

What we are discussing in European countries is a new model of development, which not only presents goals for economic growth and increased productivity levels, but also a great concern for social cohesion. If we have to transform the

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* Tape transcription revised by the author.

economic system in order to foster competitiveness and bring more innovation to the economy, we also have to take care of the sometimes old-fashioned education and social welfare systems that we still find in Europe today. And this social dimension of the Lisbon Agenda is very important as far as the notion of economic development is concerned.

What I would like to suggest is that, if we are really concerned with competitiveness and innovation, we have to particularly take into consideration the role of education in our societies.

Here we are talking about human capital and its relationship to sustainable economic growth. This is an old story in the history of economics. Even nowadays, when economics is a very technical and sometimes difficult discipline, there are basic ideas we can learn from the classic authors. Among those classic authors, the name of Adam Smith stands out. What he said about the role of the division of labor in the process of capital accumulation is not substantially different from what we can say today about the importance of skills and the specialization and development of abilities and competencies in improving economic performance.

When we talk about human capital, we are dealing with the quality of resources that are needed to sustain economic growth. And most of the recent economic theories on endogenous growth go back to Adam Smith and the simple ideas on why education and innovation are important in fostering economic development.

This close link between education and development shows that there is a permanent new challenge for universities, because universities have to be engaged and committed to a mission. The old generation of teachers has to change its ideas, be prepared to work with society, and provide a quality response to the growing need for scientific and technological information and knowledge. Universities are institutions that have the mission of disseminating knowledge, and also cooperating with business to make knowledge something useful to the economy and society as a whole.

What we really need is not only more training and education. We are not only talking about quantity, though quantity is important in itself, but rather about more education and training of quality and relevance to existing and future labor market needs and demands.

2] The Bologna Process

Let me now talk a bit about the reform of the European higher education system, known as the Bologna Process. At the beginning, there were 20 countries that signed the initial declaration in Bologna in 1999. At present, more than 40 countries have accepted this commitment to improving the quality of teaching and research methods, not only to bring uniformity to the three-cycle structure of higher education, but also to create better conditions for the mobility of students and faculty members, and to improve a system of credits that will make this mobility easier.

Though it does not deal with the details of the Bologna Process, the contribution by Pedro Lourtie is devoted to this issue. I would like to share my experience as a member of the committee in charge of following up and monitoring the implementation of the Bologna Process in Portugal. The way we, in Portugal, are dealing with this challenge is quite positive. In a single year, more than 60% of our universities and polytechnics have adhered to the process, and the remaining institutions will enter in the years ahead. The response has been quite positive because Bologna also represents a new commitment to quality.

The Bologna Process is closely related to the theme of our conference, given the modifications and innovations it expects in teaching methods. Universities are undergoing substantial change, namely regarding the current attention being paid to learning outcomes and the formation of skills and competencies. Innovation in teaching methods also means more emphasis on case studies and problem-solving as means for bringing the university closer to the real problems of the “outside” world.

Curricula reforms are put forward in dialogue with employers, because we believe that the highest level of academic content should be combined with an accurate response to the need for highly skilled jobs in the new economy.

Curricula development is also defined according to a competency-based approach. We concentrate on learning outcomes for which we try, not only to provide general and specialized knowledge in a specific field of study, but also to cross-cut skills involving language and communication, team-work, leadership and entrepreneurship.

This is why employability is a word that is indelibly linked to the Bologna Process. It means that university reform cannot be conceived without taking into account what is going on in the labor market. Therefore, we may conclude that the Bologna Process represents a new challenge for the higher education system and an effective commitment by universities to work with society.

3] Employability

In other panels of this conference we have been discussing issues related to vocational training and life-long learning, which are also at the very heart of the discussion of the implications of the Bologna Process to the labor market.

In this context, it is worth mentioning the role to be played by the European Qualifications Framework, which will provide a certification of worker competencies, and will certainly contribute to increasing job mobility in the labor market. This instrument allows for a better knowledge of the actual skills and competencies that universities, and the higher education system in general, have provided to the students.

The notion of employability helps us understand this relationship between education and the labor market. Employability means a set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations.

What I would like to emphasize is that employability is not just about getting a job. Employability is about the process of development of skills and competencies, and hence the reason this process of development of competencies is so closely associated with the Bologna Process and curricular reform in universities.

The emphasis on this process of developing critical reflective abilities, with a view to empowering and enhancing the learner, implies benefits for the individual, for the workforce and for the community. This means that when we address the problems of the modern labor market, we are not only seeking more jobs; we are especially, and above all, looking toward better jobs. Therefore, we talk about

“sustainable employability”, which can be achieved by means of technical vocational education, training and internships – all within a process of life-long learning.

To make this feasible, it is important to launch a new system of recognition of credits in the education system, by allowing the transfer of credits obtained through professional experience. This is also a key element of the Bologna Process, which contributes to a stronger and closer relationship between the university and the workplace, as well as to increasing mobility between them.

4] Entrepreneurship

One further topic I would like to suggest for discussion is the issue of entrepreneurship. This is also an old issue in the history of economics. It was possibly Joseph Schumpeter, the economic theorist of the early 20th century, who most clearly broached the importance of entrepreneurs and their role in the process of innovation (conceived as “creative destruction”) and as crucial motors of economic development. This notion can be traced back to Richard Cantillon, of the mid-18th century, who for the first time defined the entrepreneur as one who faces risk to combine different factors of production in the process of wealth creation.

One modern definition of entrepreneurship could be “the process of uncovering, developing and creating value through innovation”; and this means that entrepreneurs are those who turn ideas into action, and this involves initiative, creativity, responsibility and risk taking. It also implies project management to achieve objectives. These are also the principles that have to be put forward in education reforms, when we view universities as places with a special responsibility to foster a knowledge-based economy.

Entrepreneurship is about the development of individual skills and social attitudes. Therefore, education is at the heart of the creation of this entrepreneurial spirit. Entrepreneurship is not something that is innate; we can also *train* entrepreneurs, and life-long learning is a means towards the end of creating this entrepreneuring

spirit. This is why it is important to launch new types of cooperation between higher education and business.

Let me give you two examples from my own school's experience. The first example concerns our experience with an undergraduate unit-based course called Business Laboratory. What we are doing is providing undergraduate students with an experimental business environment. During the course, the students are given the opportunity to integrate their knowledge of the different functions of management by creating a comprehensive business plan and then executing the plan in accordance with the different types of knowledge they have gleaned in different fields of management. The process entails creating virtual enterprises; and we are now moving toward creating real business start-ups for these undergraduate students.

The second example I would like to give is a consequence of the recent partnership agreement we signed with Carnegie Mellon University. Under the agreement, we will have a program on technical change, innovation and entrepreneurship. This will be a research, post-graduate program for students from Portuguese universities. It is a partnership with the School of Engineering of the Technical University of Lisbon and with the Catholic University of Lisbon, which means that we have one public and one private university in partnership with an American University, to build up this program on entrepreneurship at the post-graduate level.

This implies, of course, encouraging mobility of faculty members between the university and the business environment; and it also entails involving business people in teaching activities. Summing-up, entrepreneurship deals with the creation of an open-minded approach and implies the recognition of the mutual benefits resulting from the cooperation between university and business, namely in the following aspects: a broader application of research outcomes, the creation of innovative and marketable products and services, a better response to the changing needs of the labor market, and better integration of graduates into the workplace. We need to explain to the students that there is practical experience beyond the classroom and invite them to interact with the business world.

5] Policy implications

To conclude this presentation, I would like to mention a few policy implications suggested by what has been said.

We can discuss to no end what the role of the State and government should be: whether it should be supervisory or regulatory, whether we should have a protective State or a productive State. I believe that we all agree it is time the State had – not a productive or a regulatory function – but basically a supervisory one in promoting the activities we have been talking about. However, I would like to make it clear that I do believe there is a room for State intervention in education, especially with regard to ensuring the long-term sustainability of this sector.

Education is about investment in the future; and therefore I argue that public funding is appropriate to maintaining a minimum level of quality and to guaranteeing that an increasing number of people will reach different levels of education, from primary to higher education.

There is no question about the place of private education in the higher education system; and in our countries we have to face the need for new combinations of private and public funding models. For instance in my school, which belongs to a public university, the annual budget covers only a part of the payment of faculty and staff salaries. All other activities are covered by private funding, through the fees of students who attend postgraduate courses, MBAs, and PhD courses, and through agreements with businesses on both consulting, and research and development projects. So, one third of our budget now comes from private institutions and private funding. This shows that we are open and should develop this relationship with businesses further.

We have to remove legal obstacles that stand in the way of implementing policies seeking to develop public-private partnerships. With this purpose in mind, we need to reinforce university administrative autonomy, as it is important in providing the right incentives for the right policy decisions. This means that public provision of funds should be based on performance and outcomes, which is why we need to heed accountability rules and quality assurance procedures.

This is a key element in our discussion, when dealing with the implementation and development of public-private partnerships, because we have to make sure that private agencies will look at us as institutions that are willing to be assessed and evaluated.

Employers should be involved in decisions concerning the feasibility and the expected return of public investment. It is not only the staff of public institutions that have a word to say. The board of trustees of these institutions, coming from the private sector, should be prepared to advise and control.

On the other hand, we should become better acquainted with the criteria employers use to recruit undergraduate and graduate students. Different agents should be called on to provide information that will give us a better grasp of what is going on both in the education sector and the business world.

To conclude, I hope I have been able to show that entrepreneurship is a basic motivation behind the reform of the higher education system in European countries such as Portugal. There is little doubt that entrepreneurship should be supported on a greater scale and that more incentives should be provided to start-ups. In effect, entrepreneurship should be considered one of the major issues when we talk about education, employment and their mutual impact on the betterment of society.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE STATE IN MOROCCO

Hammad Kassal

Al Akhawayn University and President of the SME, Morocco

It is a great honor to be with you. Today I will not be speaking as an academic, but as a business manager and director of the Moroccan Confederation of Entrepreneurs.

I want to thank the organizers for having chosen such an important subject for this conference. A recent study has demonstrated that in the next 20 years, 100 million new jobs will need to be created for young people in the Middle East and North African region. This requirement is completely different from what happened in our region in the 70s and 80s. At that time, the State was the main job provider in Morocco. The quality of training and unemployment were not great concerns because all university graduates were absorbed by the State, and there was even a time when working at private enterprises was frowned upon in Morocco. I remember that in the 70s when my mother asked a person what his job was, if he answered that he worked in an enterprise, she would say, "That poor guy, he doesn't even have a job!" In other words, working for companies was not well-regarded by society.

The promotion of enterprises is something recent; it was a consequence of the redefinition of the State. This happened in Morocco at the end of the 80s with the structural adjustment program; and it has allowed for the emergence of new economic actors, especially private enterprises. The State was no longer an employer or an investor; it became a consumer. There was a need for new alternatives to the State's setback, and private enterprises appeared to save the day.

From that moment on, the State has undertaken several actions to promote the emergence of a rational and modern class of entrepreneurs in Morocco. Among those actions there were many reforms, such as institutional reforms, the labor code reform – or the financial markets reform – designed to enhance the business environment. We realized that only enterprises could create wealth and employment.

But in order for this change to be successful, we had to take education and training into consideration. Unfortunately, we have noticed that, for a long time, Moroccan universities have educated people to become civil servants, not managers or agents of change.

In Morocco, 96.6% of the economic fabric was composed of small and medium-sized enterprises. The main challenge these enterprises face is the capacity to define their needs. SME managers do not have the time to recruit and train; they need operational people who are immediately available. And these people must have professional training; we do not need just sales people, but professionals as well.

When we looked into the job market, we saw that the country had trained more philosophers, sociologists and arts people than professionally-skilled people. The main problem experienced by the Moroccan system is the weakness of its scientific and technical education. Nowadays, when we survey Moroccan high school students, most of them want to enroll in business and law faculties. In Al Akhawayn University, for instance, we have more students in business courses than in engineering.

Another problem is the total lack of communication between universities and enterprises. Entrepreneurs regarded university teachers as theoreticians housed in ivory towers. And researchers, many of whom were Marxists, considered business managers to be exploiters whose work couldn't have a significant impact on the country's development.

This lack of communication has led business managers to create private training institutions. Since 1985, many private schools have emerged to provide courses in business administration. Most of them are owned by industrialists.

These weak points led the State to intervene in three fields. The first was education reform, whereby teaching was gradually adapted to the needs of the private sector. We are still in the experimental stage of this reform, so we cannot evaluate the results yet. The second axis was the opening of universities to their surrounding environments and the engagement of business managers in teaching programs. The best example of this is the Al Akhawayn University, which is a very open university. I am teaching here, not as an academic, but as a business manager

and the main concern here is to inculcate in these students an awareness of their environments and the framework in which they are going to work in the future.

The third axis was to encourage the private sector to invest in vocational training. Recently I was in Paris trying to encourage French business managers to invest in Morocco. One of them said to me he was in the foundry business but there are no young people, at the bachelor's level, capable of assuming jobs in foundries and industry. This is the big challenge posed to Moroccan society: to implement a system where there is a mutual interest of both stakeholders, universities and business managers, in training. Initiatives have been created to inculcate in young people the idea that only enterprises can provide them with jobs in the future, and that they need to create self-employment, instead of waiting for the State or businesses to employ them. The inculcation of an entrepreneurial mentality in young people is the only viable solution nowadays.

This spirit takes time to develop because quite a lot of prejudice still exists. In Morocco, young unemployed graduates demonstrate in front of the Parliament; but they should be demonstrating in front of Moroccan employers. They are still looking for stable jobs in public service. Even today, when we offer a job in a private enterprise to a young person, he refuses it because he does not view it as a stable and socially-recognized job.

One of the recommendations that should come out of this conference is that of instilling young people from the earliest age with the entrepreneurial spirit. This is the only way to free young people from their dependence upon the State, and from the prejudice against private sector jobs.

THE NETWORK OF EURO-MEDITERRANEAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Enric Olivé

University of Tarragona, Spain

I am here today as the executive secretary of a new network called the Network of Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education Institutions, created in October 2006. This network has been a very useful tool in building up the Euro-Mediterranean area. The European Union has several programs in the field of education that do not concern business or employment directly, and that do not involve great amounts of money.

One of these is the Erasmus Program. When the European Commission made the decision to implement this program ten years ago, its importance was not yet perceived. But today, thanks to this program, the European Union is more cohesive than before. It is a personal training experience for students, which allows them to get to know other countries and education models better. Indeed, all kinds of new families have been born out of the Erasmus program. Another program is the Bologna Process, which has been widely discussed in this conference. The Bologna Process is a determining factor in assuring quality and change in European universities, and especially in establishing links between society and universities.

With these programs and objectives in mind, the founders of this network have realized that any consolidation of a Euro-Mediterranean area would have to include partnerships between universities from both sides of the Mediterranean – not only to guarantee peace – but mainly to build a common Euro-Mediterranean training and education space that could assure quality and mobility between the North and the South.

The first Euro-Mediterranean Universities Forum was held in Alicante in 2004. The following year, in response to an initiative from the Rovira i Virgili University, and the support of the Jean Monet European Program, the second Forum was

held in Tarragona. The issue debated was the contribution of higher education to prosperity, stability and peace in the region. A total of 32 universities from the north and south of the Mediterranean actively participated, in an attempt to build bridges and work together. Out of this meeting arose the Tarragona Declaration for Dialogue and Cooperation between the Mediterranean Universities. This is the working tool that is to lead towards a Euro-Mediterranean area of Higher Education and Research. Its main aim is to travel a route that is similar and parallel to the Bologna Process, for the convergence of European educational systems.

In little over a year, the Tarragona Declaration has been signed by more than 90 universities, and has the support of the European Institute of the Mediterranean and the International Association of Universities. The signatories have agreed to collaborate with one another in the spheres of research, teaching and teacher and student mobility, to contribute to the progress of their countries and the entire region.

The image of European Higher Education in the Mediterranean was the theme of the third Mediterranean University Forum, organized in Malta on June 2006, by the University of Malta, with the support of the Jean Monet Action of the European Union. The Forum brought together almost 300 representatives of universities, national and international institutions, and organizations from 38 countries from the Euro-Med region and beyond. They discussed the main challenges and opportunities of direct cooperation and exchange, among the universities throughout the region.

This is the background of the Euro-Med Universities Rectors Conference in Tampere, Finland, in October 2006, organized under the Finish Presidency of the European Union. The signatory universities considered the Tarragona Declaration to be the founding text of the Network of Euromediterranean Higher Education Institutions.

This network should consist of universities and research centers, with the support of the community, state and regional political institutions of the countries involved. The network is the instrument that can lead to setting up comparable criteria and methodologies that will modernize the educational systems, promoting an internal market for research into the Euromediterranean region, and encouraging the use

of the Information and Communication Technologies as tools to overcome geographical distance and compete at the international level.

It must also be representative of the Higher Education instruments of the 35 Euromediterranean countries, and become a solid interlocutor for international political institutions.

Its strategic objectives are to build a higher education area that is a world reference, to encourage mutual learning, and to be the driving force behind scientific cooperation, to the benefit of the social and economic progress of the participating countries.

[ANNEXES]

AUI PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

In keeping with its motto, the University is continuing its quest for academic excellence together with the preservation of its identity. Academic excellence starts with students with the proper qualifications and motivation. In the face of increasing demand and in order to fine tune the selection process, the University developed an entrance test in Fall 2000 (General Admissions Test) to evaluate the applicant's scholastic aptitude. Pre-selected candidates are then interviewed to assess their oral skills as well as other aspects of their personality.

Along with improvements at the level of access, the Center of Academic Development and Study Skills (CADS) was launched to help undergraduates make the transition from secondary to University education and also from a structured environment to one that promotes self-learning.

This center provides the students with the required computer and library skills and independent study through research projects. The impact of both an improved admission procedure and the CADS is being carefully assessed, but already reports received indicate that they are steps in the right direction.

Academic programs are also constantly being improved taking into account feedback from students, professors and enlisting the help of outside consultants. Closer monitoring of the students' academic performance as well as an early warning system to detect signs of weakness through improved academic advising procedure have also been put in place.

In addition to the CADS, other centers have been opened. In the last year, The Executive Education Center was opened and received its first batch of executives. This center provides executives with short-term training as well as access to graduate degree programs. The University also opened The Institute of Economic Analysis and Prospective Studies, a research center destined to provide decision-makers with elements to help in the putting together of economic development strategies.

In addition to providing academic training, the University prides itself in being a place for the promotion of inter-personal and moral skills. It is felt that the basis of a good education is a sound basis in human and ethical values. The way to achieve

this is through active participation in student activities and community service. Student clubs are very active in this respect and provide an excellent opportunity for development. Students learn tolerance and acceptance of others and mutual respect.

The University also enlarged its partnerships with international institutions and currently has exchange and research programs with almost 40 universities in various countries, mostly in the United States. These programs allow students from various universities to come to Al Akhawayn and our students to go abroad for one or two semesters for courses in their majors as well as elective courses destined to broaden their experience. Joint research programs have also been started.

The relationship of the University with national and international businesses is also growing. Sponsorship agreements were started with several prominent businesses whereby they sponsor deserving students and establish contacts with them through internships for mutual benefit. Such actions are destined at promoting excellence by attracting academically bright students.

Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah

President

AUI IN BRIEF

Founded in 1993 by Royal Dahir (charter), Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane (AUI) opened its doors to students in January 1995 and a completely modern and networked campus. The University is coeducational, residential and primarily undergraduate but has rapidly growing graduate programs. The outlook is international and tolerance is promoted and expected of students, staff, and faculty belonging to over 25 nationalities who live and work together.

The 40 hectare campus is located in the oak forest on the north side of the resort town of Ifrane. Facilities include 16 residence buildings for students whose rooms all have their own bathrooms. There is a gymnasium and an indoor Olympic, regulation size swimming pool next to the soccer field and track across from the 3 regulation tennis courts. All classroom buildings are located next to each other and have faculty offices distributed throughout. The main auditorium seats 600 and is the site for concerts and special events. Smaller auditoriums accommodate guest lecturers.

The town of Ifrane has a regular population of 12,000 that expands to nearly 100,000 on weekends, holidays and summers because it is a popular destination for its beauty in all 4 seasons. The elevation is 1600 meters (5000 feet). Nestled in the Middle Atlas Mountains, the Province of Ifrane is home to the largest cedar forest in North Africa and is the most biologically diverse area in Morocco. The ski slopes of Michlifin and Hebri are about 25 minutes from campus. The imperial cities of Meknes and Fez are an hour (65 kilometers) from Ifrane. The capital city of Rabat on the Atlantic coast is 2 hours from Ifrane; the Sahara desert is just 6.

There are numerous activities each week and over 40 clubs to appeal to nearly any interest: sporting, artistic, cultural, or academic. In addition to the several inter-mural teams and tournaments, there are official men's and women's teams representing AUI in national university leagues in volleyball, soccer, basketball and tennis. The sport facilities and altitude have attracted the national swim teams of Egypt, Algeria, to train and Syria at AUI in addition to the various Moroccan national teams of tennis, soccer, and track.

With just over 1000 students enrolled, the majority are full time and live on campus. The opening of a new residence on campus in late 2005 will allow the student body to expand to 1200. The student population is and has been in all 10 years balanced at 50% female and 50% male. There is an increasingly international character to the student body with over 160 students of 28 nationalities on campus in study abroad and exchange programs in regular semester, or attending the intensive Arabic and North African Studies summer program.

Academic life is rigorous but highly personalized: the student faculty ratio is 11 students for each full time faculty member. All faculty members have offices and maintain a minimum of 9 office hours per week for easy access by students. Because the average class size is 17, students have ample opportunity to question, respond, and interact with the professor and classmates

The resources of the Mohamed VI Library are among the best in Morocco and the region. The number of titles in print is 65,000 and growing. The subscription to electronic collections has grown rapidly such that there are over 1 million full-text articles in over 4500 journals with are available to students, faculty and staff. Services include a multimedia center, individual and group study areas, and reference assistance which are all housed in one of the most striking buildings on campus. His Majesty, Mohamed IV, honored the library by giving his name, an unprecedented distinction in the Moroccan academy.

The faculty is composed of 95 highly qualified professionals, most with PhDs or doctorates, of whom 83 are full-time and 12 are part-time. Highly international, 50% of faculty members are Moroccan, a number of which have dual citizenship, and 50% of faculty members are international representing over 15 nationalities.

AUI students are encouraged to spend a semester or two as an exchange student at one of over 30 highly respected partner universities and colleges in Austria, Finland, France, Italy, Japan, Korea, and the USA. In 10 years AUI has established 50 formal academic agreements with institutions in 13 countries primarily in the USA and Europe due largely to the personal links of faculty. In the last 2 years, more links have been established in the Mediterranean region and several links among other Universities in North Africa and the Middle East are in development. AUI recently signed

an agreement with the Lebanese International University for the exchange of students and faculty. In a Health Care Quality Management training program funded by the European Union, AUI is currently working with Alexandria University and October 6th University of Egypt, Yarmouk University in Jordan, as well as Swedish and Greek institutions. AUI enjoys a solid relationship with the South African Institute of International Studies and recently began talks with the leading universities of Nigeria following the visit of the Nigerian Ambassador to Morocco.

Each semester there is an average of 30 exchange and study abroad students at AUI while the special programs of summer attract nearly 100 foreign students from the USA and around the world. Increasingly there are a number of European and North American students who come to AUI because their cultural heritage originates from North Africa. These students seek to learn or improve their level of Arabic as well as learning more about the region and culture to build upon the fragmented knowledge acquired from parents and grandparents.

The increasingly internationalized character of the student body has not yet matched the highly diverse faculty but has led to wide participation in inter-religious dialogue both in formal and informal settings. A central concern in the founding vision of His Late Majesty Hassan II was the importance of AUI as an intellectual and spiritual space where the 3 religions of the book (Islam, Judaism and Christianity) could co-exist in harmony and affirm common heritage and values. Tolerance being the capacity to recognize and respect the beliefs or practices of others has enjoyed a long tradition in Morocco continues to be promoted in the University Common Core curriculum and through the numerous activities on campus. Every year time is devoted to various countries and cultures on campus including Palestine Day, Egypt Day, Korea Day, German Week, Japan Day, Thailand Day, and Amazigh and Native American Week.

To support cultural and academic endeavors, the technology and computing support at AUI are a priority. AUI has recently leased lines at a capacity of 8 megabits per second and now has the fastest connection among all institutions of higher education in Morocco and North Africa. There are 3 ISDN lines dedicated for video-teleconferencing which is an easy way to connect classes around the world. The fully

wired campus has just over 2000 connections with a connection in every classroom and every student room. Over 50% of students have personal computers and laptops. The University community uses Lotus Notes for an integrated email and productivity system. The AUI web site www.aui.ma has been fitted with a class 3 digital certificate providing 128 bit encryption to secure all its communications and applications such as admissions on-line and on-line registration.

To access education at AUI, families are required to pay tuition and fees as far as they are able. All admission decisions are need-blind. Financial aid in 2004-2005 amounted to nearly one million Moroccan Dirhams. Approximately a third of students receive assistance in the form of scholarships, part-time jobs and special interest rates for bank loans. Merit-based and some need based aid is available.

ABOUT FLAD

The Luso-American Development Foundation (FLAD) was created by the Government of Portugal in May, 1985 as a private independent grantmaking and operational foundation with the mission of assisting Portugal in its development, mainly by building strong ties with the United States (US). FLAD program areas are: Education, Science and Technology; Culture; Environment; Civil Society and Innovation; International Cooperation; and Public Administration – New Perspectives. From its inception FLAD was also recognized as a 501 (c) 4 foundation in the US. Twenty years later, the Foundation has become recognized as one of the prominent actors in transatlantic relations, with an active program linking up Portugal's institutions with partners in the US as well as in other European Union (EU) countries.

FLAD's initial endowment, which amounted to approximately \$111,900,000, was created by the Portuguese government through annual transfers (ending in 1991) made available by the US government to Portugal under the Defense and Cooperation Agreement between Portugal and the US. This endowment is invested in financial markets in Portugal and abroad providing the income needed for the Foundation to maintain an annual grant program averaging \$7,000,000.

Throughout these 20 years the Foundation has helped reform public administration, strengthen civil society organizations, reinforce institutions of higher education and undertake policy research in many areas.

Sustained economic growth requires assisting universities' teaching and research capacities, which was done through long and short term exchange and research programs with US partners. To this end, the Foundation has supported a Master and Ph.D. scholarship program sending each year about 35 Portuguese scholars to US universities in such diverse study areas as bio-technology, robotics, telecommunications, materials, nanotechnology, medicine, life sciences, environment, cultural heritage and fine-arts.

Increasingly, FLAD stresses the policy impact of its grant activities, seeking opportunities to engage in actions that will yield good policy analyses. Because these have to be transmitted efficiently to the interested parties at the political

level, the Foundation has reinforced its publishing efforts in recent years. When needed, FLAD convenes the policy *fora* required for researchers, experts and students to meet and discuss important issues with the policy makers, government or members of parliament.

FLAD frequently promotes the transatlantic dialogue to convene EU and US institutions interested in discussing a specific issue, sometimes using its own facilities. Recent examples include: meetings of The Transatlantic Dialogues (Labor, Environment, Consumer, Business, Parliament) organized with the European Partners for the Environment (Brussels); transatlantic leadership summits involving the main EU and US foundations to coordinate their efforts in assessing and seeking solutions to some world problems, such as migration, health and sustainable development.

The Foundation is an active member of two of the main international networks of Foundations – The Brussels-based European Foundation Center (where FLAD sits on the Board of Governors and on its International Committee and Chairs its Legal Committee) and, in the US, the Council on Foundations. It Chairs the Bellagio Forum for Sustainable Development, a group of US and EU foundations dedicated to promoting grant making in the environmental field and collaborating together on initiatives to support sustainable governance. FLAD co-chairs the Transatlantic Donors Dialogue with the German Marshall Fund of the US, one of the several “dialogues” created under the New Transatlantic Agenda signed in 1995 between the US and the EU.

Despite the fact that most of its programs involve the United States, FLAD also works with other institutional partners from the EU, Brazil, Portuguese speaking Africa, and the Mediterranean region.

The Mediterranean Region

The Foundation’s activities regarding the Mediterranean Region began in the early 1990s when it organized a number of international conferences on the Region

that compared US-EU views. The material presented at these meetings was later published in book form. In addition to the activities focusing on the Mediterranean mentioned above, for the past eight years the Foundation has been co-chair of the Trans-Mediterranean Civil Society Dialogue, which operates under the auspices of the European Foundation Center in Brussels. More recently, FLAD's interest has been focused on the Maghreb region, especially Morocco, where support was given for three conferences on gender, civil society and climate change. These conferences, which included Portuguese speakers, also received FLAD funding for later publication of their proceedings. A special Maghreb Leaders Forum meeting is planned for the second half of 2007, in Algeria, continuing the discussion started at the frame conference, about education systems and the job market.

In this area, the Foundation provides support for a new project comparing the integration of Muslim communities in European capitals, organized with the Italian Social Science Council, in Rome. Lisbon's Muslim community is being studied within this project.

