



THE IIEP LETTER

NEWS AND ANALYSIS ON EDUCATIONAL
PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT



VOL. XXXV N°1 JULY 2019

QUALITY SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ALL

QUALITY, UNIVERSAL SECONDARY EDUCATION: WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

By Pablo Cevallos Estarellas, *Head of IIEP Buenos Aires*

At the 2015 World Economic Forum, the global education community adopted the ambitious new goal of universalizing quality secondary education as a means to allow everyone to participate fully in the 21st century world.

That same year, the Incheon Declaration stated that 12 years of 'free, publicly funded, equitable quality primary and secondary education'

should be accessible for all, and that at least nine years of these (primary and lower-secondary education) should be 'compulsory, leading to relevant learning outcomes' (Article 6). To achieve this goal, countries must expand their secondary school systems, which were originally created for the education of just a small university-bound elite. Countries must also successfully include those who have suffered from structural exclusion. ...



NEWS

LIFE SKILLS: FROM BUZZWORD TO BUILDING BLOCK



FOCUS

PREPARING YOUTH FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK IN AFRICA



BREAKING BARRIERS

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER MANAGEMENT



INTERVIEW

A SECOND CHANCE FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

EDITORIAL



By Suzanne Grant Lewis, Director, IIEP-UNESCO

For 25 years, the world's education agenda focused on access to basic education, with the greatest attention on primary education. This agenda did not have global relevance because many countries had achieved universal primary education and were working to expand secondary educational opportunities. In 2015, the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) marked a commitment to a far more ambitious agenda to ensure free, equitable, and quality secondary education, among other targets. SDG 4 tackles the twin challenges of equity and quality to ensure that children and youth are not just in school, but are learning.

We now have just over 10 years until the SDGs expire. The challenge is immense, and a broad spectrum of partners must work together to make this goal a reality. In this issue of our newsletter, we look at opportunities to create universal, quality secondary education and the implications this target has for planning.

Lessons from Latin America illustrate the urgent need to overhaul the fundamental structure of secondary education, which was exclusive in its original design. Later in the issue, we learn about the enormous reform of the world-famous French *baccalauréat*. The Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education (PSIPSE) focuses on the need to support youth in developing skills that are relevant and valuable to their context and the uncertain future that awaits. The author shares key lessons from an upcoming study on 18 projects implemented by PSIPSE partners in seven countries on how to scale up youth life skills and interventions.

Turning to the African continent, IIEP Pôle de Dakar discusses the implications of mass enrolment in primary education for secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa. Mastercard Foundation also shares a sneak peek of a new report for policy-makers and education stakeholders on how to maximize the impact of secondary education in Africa as a springboard to the world of work.

Adding complexity to the challenge of quality universal secondary education for all is the global refugee crisis. As a displaced child grows older, gaining access to quality learning becomes increasingly difficult. Only 61% of refugee children attend primary school, compared with a global average of 92%, according to the United Nations' Refugee Agency. At the secondary level, access plummets to just 23%, compared to 84% globally. Responding to these challenges, Ministry of Education officials from Jordan share their experiences in planning for refugees from Syria over the past eight years.

Once a neglected sub-sector, today governments well recognize the critical role of secondary education in economic development. For our youth, it represents a time to consolidate learning and embark on life choices, whether it be pursuing tertiary education or entering the labour market. It is time that we all put secondary education higher on our agenda.

IN THIS ISSUE

QUALITY, UNIVERSAL SECONDARY EDUCATION: WHAT WILL IT TAKE?.....	1
EDITORIAL.....	2
LIFE SKILLS: FROM BUZZWORD TO BUILDING BLOCK	4
BREAKING BARRIERS IN EDUCATION.....	5
GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER MANAGEMENT	
AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAXIMIZE THE IMPACT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN AFRICA	6
SOARING DEMAND FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION	8
RETHINKING SECONDARY EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA	9
A SECOND CHANCE: SYRIAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN.....	10
REFORMING THE BACCALAURÉAT: THE START OF A NEW ERA?	12
PERSPECTIVES.....	13
QUALITY SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ALL REQUIRES ...	
HIGHLIGHTS	14
DEVELOPING TRAINING CAPACITIES FOR LASTING IMPACT	
TRAINING PROGRAMMES	15
PLANNING FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION	
IIEP PUBLICATIONS.....	16
A TALK WITH THE AUTHOR: IBRAHIMA DIALLO	

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of UNESCO or IIEP. The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this review do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO or IIEP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

The IIEP Letter is published twice annually in English, French, Spanish, and Russian. All articles may be republished with credit to the authors and IIEP-UNESCO.

Get in touch with us – we welcome your feedback:

NEWSLETTER@IIEP.UNESCO.ORG

ISSN 1564-2356



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



International Institute
for Educational Planning

... CONTINUED

The extent of this challenge can be observed in Latin America, a region that has already been trying to universalize secondary education since the beginning of this century. Currently, the entire cycle of secondary education is compulsory in 13 of the 19 countries in the region, while lower secondary education is mandatory in another five. These efforts have resulted in a substantial increase in secondary school enrolment. However, significant challenges remain, especially in relation to graduation rates and learning outcomes, which remain low.

Only in one country of the region (Cuba) is the proportion of students completing lower secondary above 90%, while in another seven, completion rates are below 80%, despite this level being obligatory, according to the [2017/2018 Global Education Monitoring Report](#). In upper secondary education, only five countries have completion rates above two-thirds. In relation to learning outcomes, a comparison between the results of the regional end-of-primary exam (TERCE) and the international end-of-lower secondary test, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) suggests a decline in reading performance, according to the same GEM Report. Furthermore, in the PISA science test, [at least 50% of students](#) in all participating countries of the region scored as low performers.

Both the achievements and the challenges of the Latin American countries make their reform experiences a valuable resource for other countries aiming to advance towards universal secondary education.

A first lesson that can be learned from Latin America is that universalization requires a broadening of the original purpose of secondary education. Throughout the region, legal frameworks were modified in order to establish that secondary schooling was not just meant to prepare all students for accessing higher education, as it used to be, but also for entering the labour market, for developing students' citizenship skills, and, in some cases, for advancing their moral and personal growth. This formal expansion of objectives recognizes that selecting any single purpose for secondary schooling – such as for preparing for entry into higher education – is incompatible with the goal of universalizing quality secondary education for all.

A second lesson suggests that, if these comprehensive objectives are to be



© UNESCO/CAROLINA JEREZ

Students raising hands at the Municipal School Marcela Paz - La Florida in Santiago de Chile.

guaranteed for all, their formal adoption has to be accompanied by change in the structure of secondary schooling. In most Latin American countries, in spite of the legal changes explained above, secondary education systems remain fragmented into multiple and separate tracks, each with its own focus and curriculum. Typically, there is an academic track, a technical one, and a vocational one, as well as specific 'adaptations' for indigenous peoples, adults, or rural populations. In this diversified context, while all tracks aim at preparing students for at least one of the objectives mentioned in the education laws, none aspires to prepare students for all of them.

Tracks that allegedly prepare students for university are likely to teach some general content and develop some citizenship abilities, but they rarely cover professional skills for work. Likewise, most other tracks generally do not equip students with the necessary knowledge to have realistic chances of accessing and graduating from university, focusing instead on specific technical and/or vocational skills. The effect of this diversification of tracks is that students are forced to specialize prematurely, do not share a common core of learning, and see their post-secondary opportunities limited by the specific kind of secondary school they attended.

In societies that are marked by extreme inequalities, such as those of Latin America and of many other countries working

towards universal secondary education, this diversification becomes even more problematic because opportunities to access the different education tracks are not distributed equally. Instead, the socio-economic background of students will often determine whether they have access to a secondary track that will make it easier for them to secure well-paid jobs, or to one that will restrict them to more limited opportunities.

In view of the global goal of universalizing quality secondary education, the recent experience of Latin America shows how, despite ambitious legal changes, secondary school systems may remain stuck in dynamics of early selection and discrimination, reproducing the very inequalities that they are meant to reduce. The challenge that this and other regions of the world face today is therefore to rethink the very structure of secondary education systems so that they live up to their objectives and guarantee significant learning outcomes to all students. ✨

LIFE SKILLS: FROM BUZZWORD TO BUILDING BLOCK

By Nancy Palmer, Learning Coordinator, The Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education (PSIPSE)



'Life skills are part of their life. It's not like academics where you learn things, you pass, and then you forget what you learned. It's something you have to do over and over, so it becomes a habit, it becomes a lifestyle.'

—Rehmah Kasule, President and Founder, CEDA International

There is growing recognition that young people need more than academic knowledge to succeed in school, work, and life. However, as summarized in a Brookings Institution [report](#), 'understanding that children need a particular set of skills to live constructively in the 21st century is not the same as an in-depth understanding of what those skills are, how they develop, or how to teach them.'

Combined with varying definitions of what they are, life skills are often dismissed as a buzzword. However, if countries are committed to quality secondary education, they must support all youth in developing the skills that are relevant and valuable

in their socio-cultural context and the uncertain future that awaits.

The [Partnership to Strengthen Innovation and Practice in Secondary Education](#) (PSIPSE) commissioned an in-depth study of 18 projects implemented by PSIPSE partners across seven countries to uncover lessons on how to design, deliver, measure, and scale up youth life skills interventions. Here are three of them.

SYSTEMATICALLY DIAGNOSE THE LIFE SKILLS YOUTH NEED

An important starting point for practitioners and policy-makers is deepening their understanding of the skills youth need to navigate their specific circumstances. Two

strategies to accomplish this include needs assessments and backwards mapping from policy or programmatic goals to the pathways to achieve those goals. An inclusive and context-specific needs assessment can clarify which skills are valued by different actors at the lowest level of policy or programme implementation where change has most impact.

Designing programmes and policies this way contributes to a coherent education system – meaning they are integrated in a way conducive to learning. While potentially obvious, these strategies are particularly important given the nuance around life skills.

EMBED LIFE SKILLS INTO THE FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEM BY MODIFYING HOW CORE SUBJECTS ARE TAUGHT

The formal education system remains one of the most effective platforms to reach the largest number of youths at scale. Doing this successfully requires supported and motivated teachers. Teachers are often overburdened and trained to prescribe information rather than use a broader set of active learning techniques. In their whole-school ICT integration programme, the [Global e-Schools and Communities Initiative](#) adopts a phased approach, supporting teachers to steadily build their confidence in using ICT tools to cultivate specific skills while teaching STEM subjects.

Unfortunately, high-stakes examinations encourage teaching to the test. Modifying assessments (both formative and summative) to measure these skills could motivate teachers to cultivate these skills, supporting alignment between what is taught and how it is taught and assessed. The [Luigi Giussani Institute of Higher Education](#) is aiming to do just that in partnership with the

Uganda National Examinations Board. In addition to developing an examination that will measure higher order thinking skills like critical thinking, they are supporting teachers and school leaders to adopt practices that promote these skills across academic subjects.

SUPPLEMENT WITH STANDALONE LIFE SKILLS SESSIONS TO SUPPORT MARGINALIZED YOUTH WITH SPECIALIZED NEEDS

Not all life skills can be cultivated in the classroom, and building strong interpersonal relationships is difficult when schools are trying to move students through the system efficiently. Most PSIPSE partners leverage standalone life skills sessions, bringing in external mentors to facilitate. However, recruiting teachers – and building their capacity to serve as mentors – brings the benefit of scalability and lower attrition rates. [CorStone](#) is adopting this approach as they scale their resilience-based programme across the state of Bihar, India, and replicate it in Kenya. [Aflatoun International](#) and [Karibu Tanzania Organization](#) are

implementing a programme with Tanzania's Folk Development Colleges that supports teenage mothers – who are not permitted to attend public schools – to complete their secondary education and become self-sufficient adults.

There are still more questions than answers when it comes to life skills development. Answering these questions will require the same life skills – creativity, critical thinking, communication, and problem solving – that play a foundational role in helping every child thrive.✱

This article draws extensively from the work completed by PSIPSE's learning partner team at Mathematica Policy Research, including: Swetha Sridharan, Poonam Ravindranath, Emma Pottinger, and Clemencia Cosentino. To read the full study and the accompanying practitioner and policy-maker-specific focused briefs, visit: psipse.org/library

Breaking barriers in education



For years, secondary education was a neglected sector. New guidelines are in the pipeline to help support ministries of education and their partners in ensuring stronger teacher management at this crucial level of education.

Teachers are at the heart of the learning process. That is why strong, rational teacher management is of the utmost importance. It helps ensure teacher availability, the right level of qualifications, and efficient management of public resources. There is no exception at the secondary level, which only in the past decade has become a priority area of the education development agenda.

Yet, ensuring an adequate supply of competent and well-qualified secondary teachers is a complex task: by 2030, it is estimated that countries will need to recruit nearly 45 million secondary school teachers, according to estimates from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Depending on the context, difficulties faced by planners and managers can include an inadequate supply of qualified teachers, teacher shortages in specific subjects, imbalances in teacher allocation and lack of adequate information to monitor teacher utilization.

Compared to the primary level – where teachers teach one class – secondary level subject specialization translates into more complex planning and management processes, as well as higher staff

costs. Tools and techniques for the management of primary teachers are easily available. However, there is little information on how to do this at the secondary level.

That is why IIEP Paris and Pôle de Dakar are developing a practical guide for ministries of education and their partners for stronger teacher management at the secondary level. The guidelines will show planners and managers how to:

- Explain the major challenges of teacher management at secondary level;
- Apply techniques for the planning of secondary teacher demand and supply;
- Calculate indicators used for the diagnosis of secondary teacher allocation and utilization;
- Make recommendations to improve the use of information systems and monitoring tools, and regulatory mechanisms for secondary teacher management, in their own country.

Stay tuned for more information on the release of our new guidelines!



AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAXIMIZE THE IMPACT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN AFRICA

By Kim Kerr, Director, Regional Programmes, Mastercard Foundation

We are in a unique moment in Africa's story, with the opportunity presented by a large youth demographic – but are we doing everything we can to prepare young people for the future of work?

Ensuring that Africa's youth secures employment or can create their own livelihoods is arguably the single most significant task facing African policy-makers today. Africa's working-age population is projected to grow by 70%, or by 450 million people between 2015 and 2035 ([World Bank](#)). Between 10 and 12 million youth enter the workforce each year across Africa, but only 3.1 million jobs are created, leaving the majority of youth unemployed or underemployed ([African Development Bank](#)). Digitization, automation, and technological

advances are changing the nature of work globally, including in Africa. These trends will increase uncertainty and the pace of change, raising the premium on skills that help young people to be adaptable, resilient, and creative problem solvers.

Reimagining secondary education as a platform for work is a paradigm shift. Until now, secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa has been viewed primarily as a stepping-stone to tertiary education. With rising primary enrolment and completion rates and low tertiary enrolment on the continent, secondary education

Teacher, Norbert Agola, leads his class in entrepreneurial skills in a secondary school in rural Uganda.



©INTERSECT MEDIA FOR MASTERCARD FOUNDATION

“ WHILE GOVERNMENTS AROUND THE WORLD MUST WORK TO BETTER ALIGN THEIR EDUCATION SYSTEMS WITH MARKET DEMAND, THE COMPLEXITY, MAGNITUDE, AND URGENCY OF THE CHALLENGES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA ARE UNIQUE. ”

They are also less likely to make the transition between school and work because of early marriage or early motherhood, both of which place additional barriers to women's entry to work. In some countries, social norms sometimes enforce job segregation by gender, which makes it more difficult for women to find productive work alternatives. For instance, young women in the household enterprise sector work mostly in narrowly defined fields such as dressmaking or hairdressing, even though a range of other occupations could enable them to earn a higher income. Also, first-generation school leavers aspiring to be wage workers lack a family history in formal employment, so they may not have the networks or social capital to help them find jobs. If these gaps are addressed, we can bring Africa's youth one step closer to building bright futures, while also making a sustainable contribution to economic growth.

The report will provide policy-makers and education stakeholders with practical recommendations and examples of best practice on how to help young people prepare for today's complex, ever-changing work environment and ensure that no young people are left behind.

Reforming secondary systems to provide young people with the skills they need to succeed in the labour force and as entrepreneurs will also pay off for national economies. While not a substitute for appropriate government policies to foster job creation, boosting the productivity of Africa's massive youth cohort through upskilling will help drive economic growth. It can also reduce poverty and improve the quality of life for young people and their families. There is also some evidence that increasing levels of education may be associated with declining levels of informal employment, indicating that boosting youth's productivity through better skills could contribute to jobs growth (International Labour Organization and the African Center for Economic Transformation).

As African governments continue to invest in and reform their secondary education systems, we should not lose sight of the scale of the challenge. While governments around the world must work to better align their education systems with market demand, the complexity, magnitude, and urgency of the challenges in sub-Saharan Africa are unique. With several countries in the region moving towards a massive expansion of their secondary systems, there is an extraordinary opportunity to rethink what skills young people need to learn and how to deliver those skills. These developments are crucial for societies to meet the challenges inherent in the evolving nature of work, growing inequalities, and sustainability. The time to act is now. ✨

Learn more about this project and access the upcoming report here: <https://mastercardfdn.org/research/secondary-education-in-africa/>

will increasingly become a key platform from which young people in Africa will transition to work. Alongside shifts in curricula, investments that widen access to secondary education will allow this generation to play a pivotal role in realizing Africa's vision of economic transformation, laid out by today's leaders in the African Union's Agenda 2063. At Mastercard Foundation, we believe that quality, relevant secondary education has great potential to help build a skilled, adaptable workforce. We know that this is the case not only from our work on the ground across the region but from the findings detailed in our forthcoming report, *Secondary Education in Africa: Preparing Youth for the Future of Work*.

In the report, we have identified a number of important gaps in the skills young people need to succeed in a changing world of work. These include foundational skills, digital literacy, and 21st century skills. Projections to 2030 suggest that formal employment will not grow fast enough to absorb a growing population and the majority of young people will remain in the informal sector for the duration of their working lives. In this context, entrepreneurship skills, including how to set up and build a business, will also be critical.

Additionally, today, approximately only one-third of sub-Saharan African youth are able to access secondary school. Young women are particularly at risk of not completing school.

SOARING DEMAND FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

By Beifith Kouak Tiyab, Deputy Head, IIEP Pôle de Dakar

In sub-Saharan Africa, recent progress at the primary school level means that more and more children are ready to progress to secondary education. What will it take to make this a reality?

Over the past two decades, sub-Saharan Africa has made undeniable progress in improving access to and completion of primary education. The access rate to the first year of primary school is now close to 100%, while the completion rate has risen from 54% in 2000 to 70% in 2017. While primary education still excludes many children, these results are a positive development.

As a direct consequence of this massification of primary education, more and more children are now knocking on the door of lower secondary schools. However, current data indicate that on average only 6 out of 10 children actually access the first year of lower secondary school. The transition from primary to secondary school still needs to be improved, despite several sub-Saharan African countries having abolished either the primary school exit exam or the secondary school entrance exam.

Insufficient educational provision is certainly the first factor limiting access to secondary education. The access of a pupil leaving primary school to secondary school presupposes the existence of an available place within a secondary school in the same or a nearby locality. However, in most

sub-Saharan African countries, while the supply of primary education is relatively well developed, the supply of secondary education is much less so and therefore does not allow all those who complete primary education to continue in secondary education. This is particularly noticeable in rural areas or areas remote from major urban centres. This effectively limits access to lower secondary education for children from rural areas or poor families.

The pedagogical organization of secondary schools is a second area in need of improvement. Teacher specialization by discipline can be costly. At the primary level, a single teacher is sufficient to take charge of a class; however, the secondary level requires much more to cover all the subjects in the curriculum. This can be very expensive without effective management modalities to optimize the use of teachers, especially in small schools.

In the coming decades, with both the high population growth of the African continent and progress in primary completion, millions of children will be eager to continue their schooling. To think that a simple mechanical removal of filters such as the primary school leaving examination or the college entrance examination will make it possible to offer

a continuum of basic education to all these children is illusory. The universalization of access to secondary education is a new challenge for African States.

Reforms will undoubtedly be necessary to provide an appropriate response. At the institutional level, States could gain in efficiency and coherence by placing basic education under the supervision of a single ministry with increased attention to financing lower secondary education.

At the operational level, it would be beneficial to ensure a coherent and continuous curriculum between primary and lower secondary schools; to adapt the profile of teachers, train them in sufficient quantity and optimize their management; to develop basic education institutions that encompass both primary and lower secondary schools; and to offer alternatives to quality vocational training.

There is certainly no magic formula. Solutions will stem from a strategic reflection by each country to remove the various constraints on a successful transition to secondary education in order to offer all children 'a complete cycle of free and quality basic education', in accordance with the commitments of the Education 2030 Agenda. ✨

RETHINKING SECONDARY EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA

By Pablo Cevallos Estarellas, Alina Kleinn, and Maia Dommanovich, IIEP Buenos Aires

In Latin America, secondary education reforms have sometimes reproduced societal inequalities. Could a common core of learning outcomes help?

At the beginning of the 21st century, most Latin American countries initiated ambitious reforms of their secondary education systems. Various motives drove these reforms – which aimed to universalize secondary education by making it obligatory – such as preparing students to navigate a knowledge-driven society, increasing productivity and competitiveness in global markets, and improving the quality of democracies. More generally, the reforms followed the global trend of ensuring equal education opportunities for all.

Almost two decades later, the results of these reforms have been mixed. By 2015, just over 50% of the population between 25 and 35 years old had completed secondary education on average across Latin America (IIEP SITEAL, 2018). While more recent enrolment rates suggest that these numbers will be rising in the future, low finalization and high dropout rates continue to slow down the progress towards universal secondary education. What is most worrying, however, is that successful completion of secondary education in Latin America seems to be correlated to students' social and economic backgrounds. Disaggregated data are not always available, but when they are, they suggest significant challenges in relation to equity. In Mexico, for example, enrolment rates for rural and indigenous populations are far below the average (Weiss, 2012). In Uruguay, the lower secondary finalization rate of students who experience poverty is less than half the rate of students who do not experience poverty; in upper secondary, the gap widens even more (De Armas & Retamoso, 2010).

To tackle these equity problems, several countries have initiated programmes designed to help disadvantaged students access, remain in, and complete secondary education. These programmes can take different shapes, but when they aim at attracting students who left the system without completing secondary education, they usually constitute alternative tracks

that run in parallel to the regular secondary school, have an accelerated pace so that they can be completed in a shorter time, or allow for graduation without completing the full curriculum. While such programmes may appear to be a good strategy to increase equity by assisting students who struggle to gain a foothold in an education level that was originally designed for a select group of the population advancing to higher education, they are problematic for two reasons. First, the creation of special education programmes for a specific profile of students suggests that it is these students' characteristics – such as being disadvantaged or vulnerable – which are responsible for their failure to complete the 'regular' secondary education track, instead of the education system itself (Nobile, 2016). Consequently, these programmes can be considered as band-aid policies, which tackle inequity by its symptoms, instead of dealing with the sources of exclusion that emanate from the very format and structure of secondary education systems.

Second, these programmes heighten one of the core barriers to equity that came with Latin America's secondary education reforms: the existence of various secondary school tracks, each with its own purpose and its own curriculum. This variety contributes to the reproduction of inequalities as different tracks tend to be attended by different strata of society and, in some cases, are even explicitly aimed at specific population groups. While most of Latin America's secondary education laws establish holistic and all-encompassing learning objectives for secondary education, the paragraphs describing tracks designed for specific populations state less ambitious objectives in a number of countries. Tracks for rural populations in Brazil and Colombia, for example, have an agriculture-focussed curriculum that may even be further specialized depending on what is considered most relevant learning content for a specific geographic context, and for national economic growth, while access to tertiary education is not

“ SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA SEEMS TO BE CORRELATED TO STUDENTS' SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND. ”

even mentioned among the objectives. Meanwhile, in Mexico, the students of the rural track, the distance-education track, and the track for indigenous populations scored worse than the rest on the 2009 PISA test (Weiss, 2012).

Overall, in the same way that the over-diversified tracks of secondary education systems pose a challenge to equity in education, offering additional 'alternative' tracks for students struggling to complete secondary school does not take into account the fact that the high diversification in the educational offer – not only in thematic content but also in quality and scope of learning goals – is precisely what helps to reproduce inequalities in Latin American societies.

It is difficult to imagine a primary school system in which some schools would teach social studies, natural sciences, modern languages, and mathematics, while others would eliminate some of these subjects in favour of teaching a more specialized curriculum. This is because, as a universal, compulsory level of education, we expect all schools to equip all students with the same, basic knowledge and skills. As secondary education becomes compulsory around the world, it is essential that the notion of a common core of learning outcomes, independent of the additional specializations that students may choose, become just as self-evident as it is in primary education.★



A SECOND CHANCE: SYRIAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Nearly half of the 650,000 registered Syrians who have fled war to live in Jordan are children. The vast majority reside in urban areas and over 85% live below the poverty line, according to the [United Nations Refugee Agency](#). In this difficult context, the Ministry of Education is working relentlessly to give all residents of Jordan a chance to flourish.

In this interview with the Ministry of Education in Jordan, Dr Najwa Alqubelat, Director of the Planning and Educational Research Directorate, Dr Yousef Abu Al-Shaer, Manager of Educational Research Directorate, and Dr Adnan Al-Omari, Researcher, discuss deep-seated challenges as well as the range of initiatives in place to provide learning opportunities for everyone.

WHAT IS THE STATE OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN JORDAN TODAY, AND ESPECIALLY AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL?

Despite limited resources and capabilities, the Ministry of Education has been committed to providing educational services to all children in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Over the past few decades, the education system's response to the influx of refugees from neighbouring countries has become a burden on the system's infrastructure, exposing its limitations, depleting human and material resources, and affecting the quality of the educational services offered to students. However, to enable the educational system in Jordan to best respond to displacement, and ensure quality education for refugees, the Ministry of Education has cooperated with partners and supporters of the right of displaced Syrian children in Jordan to access

education in line with international agreements. Accordingly, Jordan has provided free education and financial incentives to displaced individuals, in order to address the issue of students dropping out due to financial limitations, as well as having facilitated the formal procedures for accepting non-Jordanian students into Jordanian schools to integrate them with Jordanian students. The Ministry also adopted a double-shift system after classrooms had reached full capacity during normal school hours, and opened schools in refugee camps to offer quality education to refugees. Other than dealing with the issue of dropping out because of financial reasons, the education system and its supporting parties have been keen to provide all possible opportunities – across academic, professional, and vocational subjects – to refugees so that they receive the highest quality of secondary education services despite the many obstacles.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN MEASURES UNDERTAKEN BY THE MINISTRY?

Jordan's Ministry of Education has worked closely with international organizations to provide Syrian refugee children with education through initiatives to integrate refugees into the education system and to give them the right to learn. The Ministry of Education has also made significant changes to its strategic education plans, partnering with many organizations to expand access to formal education through the establishment of schools in refugee camps and adding more school places through a double-shift system. Compensatory coursework and lectures are also available to help refugees make up for missed school time, and support is provided to help facilitate the registration of undocumented students in schools. Other initiatives include providing free textbooks to students in distress, launching public information campaigns to encourage enrolment in schools, hiring and training temporary teachers (on labour contracts) to meet demand, and providing teachers with specific training on how to help students in difficult situations. These initiatives, along with other measures taken by the Ministry and with the support of international bodies including IIEP, have brought in the relevant ministries and national institutions and have consolidated efforts both to integrate refugee students into education and to provide them with more opportunities for formal education.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES?

The massive influx of refugees into Jordan in recent decades has led to an increase in the demand for educational services. This has created a number of challenges, including some students missing the opportunity to receive quality formal education. The Ministry is keen to provide learning opportunities for all resident individuals, including refugees, in Jordan so that they can obtain quality education in line with the Government's objectives to promote a knowledge economy. Given the context at the time, the schooling infrastructure and absorptive capacity were among the most important challenges that hindered the realization of efforts to provide learning opportunities for all. Issues that had to be addressed included the high density of students in schools, as well as the difficulties of setting up a large number of rented schools and constructing and providing continuous maintenance to new schools that take into account the needs of students, including those with special needs. Another challenge was that students

drop out of formal education for economic reasons and enter the labour market due to the lack of financial incentives for students to stay in school. Information on out-of-school individuals and on the number of refugees in Jordan at specific times is also scarce. These issues are hampering the Ministry's efforts to build secondary education programmes and provide educational specializations that take into account the labour market's needs, and to put in place optimal strategic planning by ensuring adequate human resources, infrastructure, and financing.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EDUCATION FOR THOSE IN REFUGEE CAMPS AND FOR THOSE INTEGRATED INTO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OUTSIDE CAMPS?

There is no difference in the educational services provided in the schools located in the camps and those located outside the camps. The schools were divided into categories; those located in the camps, those offering double shifts, and those offering one morning shift, to facilitate the appropriate support and funding for each type of school. The teachers appointed to camp schools are given contracts after receiving training. The schools offering double shifts are often located in cities or villages depending on the number of refugees residing in the area in order to accommodate the large numbers of refugee and Jordanian students. The second shift of the double shift schools' teachers are hired with contracts (not under a fixed-term). The duration of the class period is shortened, and schools are open on Saturdays. Having said that, it must be emphasized that there is no difference in the quality of education provided in the schools located in the camps and those located elsewhere that host Syrian students. The way the support is appropriated depends on how many Syrians are present in a certain area. The Ministry also worked to facilitate the admission of children who are living in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, accepting undocumented students until their conditions are corrected and exempting them from school fees.

DISPLACEMENT IS TYPICALLY NOT A TEMPORARY SITUATION FOR A CHILD. WHAT IMPACT DOES THE PROTRACTED NATURE OF CRISES TODAY HAVE ON EDUCATIONAL PLANNING?

Despite the nature of the recent crises in the region, migration into Jordan is not new to the country's educational system. Asylum has been a real challenge for the education system for decades, dating back to the 1940s. The system has only been able to successfully overcome these challenges by

integrating established initiatives, as well as deep administrative and technical expertise, and support from international organizations in providing quality educational services to students amid the lack of resources. However, despite these local efforts, and internal and external support, the influx of migrants has had a negative effect on the quality and development of educational services. The challenges varied in their severity and in the Ministry's ability to control and overcome them in order to ensure the students' continued presence in classrooms and their commitment to formal education. One such challenge is the rate of students dropping out, for reasons including the need for male students to provide financially for their families, and early marriage for female students.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO AN EDUCATIONAL PLANNER IN ANOTHER COUNTRY WITH A HIGH REFUGEE POPULATION?

The Ministry of Education's experience in dealing with the influx of refugees has been a model for decades. The efforts of leaders and royal directives have translated the harsh experiences and profound crises into success stories and helped establish an approach for the Ministry to continue to provide the best quality educational services for students, including systematic learning opportunities to all refugees in the country. The development and implementation of ambitious education strategies that embrace partnerships with ministries and local agencies that share common interests are paramount. They allow leaders to manage refugee crises, capitalize on the available human and material resources, and work on training (the remaining) human resources for educational purposes. In addition, it is important to rely on scientific thinking based on logical and practical principles in the management of an education crisis. This might mean, for example, the development of follow-up plans and strict standards to evaluate the quality of planning and implementation while ensuring human and material resources are utilized in the best possible manner, or maintaining direct communication with decision-makers to keep them up to date. Furthermore, continued support from international human rights organizations and donors is a significant source of both knowledge and finances that can be relied on not only when dealing with a refugee crisis but also when managing resources to ensure that goals are achieved with the minimum effort and cost.✳

This interview has been translated from Arabic with the help of Shérzade Miboubi, Esraa Salim, and Farah Wael.

REFORMING THE BACCALAURÉAT: THE START OF A NEW ERA?

By Pierre Mathiot, Director, Sciences Po Lille, and Michaela Martin and Ana Godonoga, IIEP-UNESCO

Spring is generally a popular time of year in France. However, for those in their last year of high school, it is marked by an intensive period of studying for the renowned *baccalauréat*. Students need to study for a dozen exams, all crammed in over a few days in June. Many wonder about the relevance of these exams, as higher education institutions will only take into account whether or not a candidate passes, and not their specific results. France's 170,000 teachers are also under high pressure at this time of year, as they are preparing to mark some 700,000 exam papers.

The organization of the traditional *baccalauréat* has long represented a titanic undertaking for many. However, in 2018, the Ministry of National Education and Youth tasked Pierre Mathiot, Professor of Political Science and Director of Sciences Po Lille, with designing a new reform, which aims not only to revamp the *baccalauréat* but also to transform teaching and learning in the French upper secondary education system. The first edition of the new *baccalauréat* will take place in 2021.

WHAT ARE THE CORE OBJECTIVES OF THE REFORM?

The reform aims to simplify the organization of the *baccalauréat*, make it more relevant as a certification of competencies gained from secondary schooling, and ensure its relevance to higher education. To this end, the reform has also led to a reform of the broader upper secondary education system. More specifically, it advocates for the development of student-centred teaching and learning by addressing the following three issues:

Diversifying the curriculum and assessment to enable the development of a wider range of skills. The cumulative score of the new *baccalauréat* will be determined based on a mix of summative and continuous assessment. The summative assessment comprises five exams that students take

during their second or final year of high school, including French, Philosophy, two specialized courses selected by the students, and the oral exam (*grand oral*). The continuous assessment – known as the *contrôle continu* – consists of a number of mock *baccalauréat* exams that students take throughout the school year. The *contrôle continu* is believed to have a more formative value, by taking into consideration students' achievements throughout high school.

Giving students greater choice and exposing them to cross-disciplinary learning. During their first year of high school, students will study a core group of subjects, including French, history, and two modern languages. In their second year, students will be able to select three specialized courses out of 12, including two new cross-disciplinary courses – Humanities and Classical Literature and History, Geography and Political Science.

Providing students with support and guidance to facilitate their transition to higher education. Support and guidance for students in upper secondary education is a core feature of the reform. This is particularly relevant in a context where around 60% of Bachelor-level students fail during their first year of studies, often because of selecting the wrong course and a lack of preparation for their desired field of study. With the new reform, high school students will be able to benefit from 54 hours of guidance per year on areas related to their orientation and progression to higher education. The initiative also aims to build closer links between upper secondary education and higher education through closer curricular alignment and the use of results that students receive in the *baccalauréat* in their admission to higher education.

HOW HAS THE REFORM BEEN RECEIVED BY THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY?

Despite its promising objectives, the implementation of the reform faces

challenges due to path-dependencies and long-established traditions in the French education system.

Building consensus and convincing key stakeholders of the benefits of the reform has not been an easy task. The complexity of the education sector in France, the plurality of stakeholders involved in its governance, and the routinized ways of managing and delivering education makes the implementation process challenging. For this reason, any change introduced needs to take into consideration the context in which the education system operates and the realistic capabilities of teachers and school managers to institutionalize the reform.

The teaching profession is deeply rooted in disciplinary identity, making collaboration for the development of pedagogical competency and cross-disciplinary teaching difficult. In France, as in other parts of the world, there is an increasing need to train teachers on the importance of multi-disciplinary collaboration for the development of effective pedagogical competencies. It is likewise important to support teachers in becoming better mentors for students.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE REFORM FOR THE BROADER EDUCATION SYSTEM?

Such a large-scale reform has implications for the education system at large. Cohesive vertical and horizontal transitions are required throughout the entire education system, including general, technical, and professional education. There is also a need to build stronger coherence in the curriculum and assessment between and within different levels of education. Finally, well-articulated learning pathways need to be complemented with strong guidance and counselling systems to support students at different stages of their studies. *

[Watch the related IIEP Strategic Debate.](#)



QUALITY SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ALL REQUIRES ...

Join the conversation on Twitter [@IIEP_UNESCO](https://twitter.com/IIEP_UNESCO)

Lucy Volemi-Godia

FROM KENYA

... a curriculum that is able to cater to all the needs of the learners and focuses on the future needs of its society.

Najeel Azad

FROM AFGHANISTAN

... inclusive pedagogies that cope with the needs of marginalized persons.

Gordon Patrice

FROM TANZANIA

... well-trained and motivated staff, proper infrastructure, focused learners who feel they owe society better performance and attitudinal change, education that is geared towards producing learners who can use it to address problems in their environment. Finally, proper staffing – putting the right person in the right position.

@jhonatanalmada

FROM BRAZIL

... an integrated journey for students; teacher qualification; planning and management; and support for vocational and technical education.

@yonanestel

FROM CANADA

... \$€£¥ [Financing]

@djosseparfait

FROM BENIN

... qualified teachers, continuously trained and equitably distributed in schools.

Parents International

FROM BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS

... a strong basic skills foundation and a brand new teacher approach to facilitate learning for all. It can only happen if accompanied by parental engagement and student participation in design and implementation.



IIEP SEMINAR

DEVELOPING TRAINING CAPACITIES FOR LASTING IMPACT

By Jimena Pereyra, Training Specialist, IIEP-UNESCO

A high-quality national training offer can help ensure that generations of planners and managers have the skills to respond to the evolving demands of education systems and to implement national policies and reforms.

Education officials from 14 countries recently gathered at IIEP-UNESCO in Paris, France, for a seminar on enhancing the quality, relevance, and reach of national and regional training institutions that focus on educational planning and management.

Over three days, from 27–29 May 2019, representatives of training centres and ministries of education participated in plenary and group discussions on how to better leverage national training capacities to respond to both national challenges and the demands of the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4).

The seminar, which included a two-week online introductory phase, also aimed to promote cooperation between institutions worldwide and the sharing of best practices in delivering high quality training.

Developing the capacities of national training institutions is a key focus area of IIEP's [Medium-Term Strategy](#) (2018–2021) to support countries in building strong and self-reliant education systems. IIEP is currently working with national training institutes in Cambodia, Afghanistan, and Senegal.

A high-quality training offer in-country can help ensure that generations of planners and managers have the relevant skills to both respond to the changing demands of education systems and achieve national policies and reforms. In-country training offers also give greater flexibility in terms of language, access, and content that is tailored to the specific needs of a country. This is increasingly important as the decentralization of education puts new emphasis on strong planning and management skills at

sub-national levels. Such training can also contribute to a country's efforts in preparing a sound education sector plan, which is key to meeting national policy goals, international commitments, and supporting efforts to obtain domestic and international funding.

During the seminar, participants explored a range of issues related to leveraging the impact of in-country training. Specific objectives included:

- To reflect on the knowledge and skills planners need to respond to national challenges and international goals, specifically the Education 2030 Agenda;
- To examine the various institutional arrangements for training providers and the level of autonomy;
- To identify strategies, tools, and resources to improve the quality and relevance of training;
- To discuss different training modalities, including e-Learning, to expand the reach of EPM training;
- To identify potential areas for cooperation and networking with other national training providers.

Countries participating in the seminar included: Afghanistan, Cambodia, France, Guinea, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Lao PDR, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, United Arab Emirates, and Viet Nam. ✨

PLANNING FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Register for a free MOOC on mainstreaming early childhood education into education sector plans, and help give all children the best start in life.

Professionals from ministries of education and their partners can register for a new Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on mainstreaming early childhood education (ECE) into education sector planning. The MOOC will take place during five weeks in October and November 2019.

Co-organized by UNICEF, UNESCO, and the Global Partnership for Education and hosted on the IIEP-UNESCO Virtual Campus, the MOOC is designed for professionals from countries that want to improve early learning and achieve better education outcomes. The course will demonstrate how to strengthen the ECE sub-sector by ensuring that it is a core component of education sector planning.

Top ECE experts will introduce participants to fundamental concepts and key planning tools and processes needed to integrate pre-primary policies in national education sector plans. Participants will also learn how to analyse the current state

of ECE in their country, how to develop ECE policies and programmes, how to cost and finance them, and how to support their implementation with support of an education sector plan.

The benefits of early childhood development are widely acknowledged and are key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Yet, an estimated 175 million children are not enrolled in pre-primary education. To ensure access to ECE for all children, governments will need to plan for and implement quality ECE programmes as part of their national education sector plans.

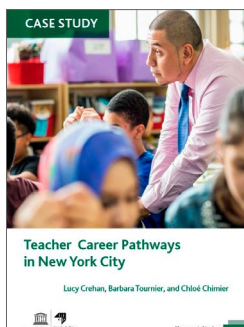
This MOOC – offered in English – will foster a global community of practice where participants and instructors can interact with each other and share best practices on strengthening ECE. ✨

Register for this free MOOC on our website: at.iiep.unesco.org/ECEMOOC

Worldwide, at least 175 million children are not enrolled in preschool. In low-income countries, this means only 1 in 5 young children is enrolled.



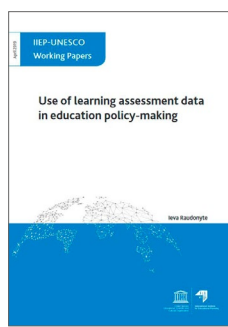
This UNICEF-funded mobile kindergarten in Janjin Bagh, Erdenetsogt Soum, Mongolia provides quality, complementary early learning for over 23 children from the area's nomadic, herder community.



[CASE STUDIES ON TEACHER CAREER REFORMS](#)

Various authors

Don't miss these case studies on teacher career reforms. [The New York City](#) (United States) case study on Teacher Leaders is already out, while forthcoming studies from Ecuador and the Western Cape (South Africa) will be available soon on the IIEP website.



[USE OF LEARNING ASSESSMENT DATA IN EDUCATION POLICY-MAKING](#)

Ieva Raudonyte

This Working Paper provides a snapshot of the available literature on how learning assessment data influences educational policy-making. It also discusses the various barriers, such as reliable and relevant information, to using learning data in policy-making.



[MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES: THE EMERGING LANDSCAPE OF DIGITAL LEARNING IN INDIA](#)

Karanam Pushpanadham

This IIEP Foresight Paper looks at initiatives in India to facilitate lifelong learning through digital technologies. This is a valuable paper for countries looking to capitalize on the development of ICTs to increase access to higher education and to adopt innovative learning methods.



[VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN MAURITANIA, SENEGAL, AND BURKINA FASO.](#)

IIEP Pôle de Dakar

Three new reports are available now (in French only) on the implementation of reforms for vocational training in Mauritania, Senegal, and Burkina Faso. Another related publication [Actors and Partnerships in Vocational Education and Training](#) is also available online (in French).

DOWNLOAD ALL IIEP PUBLICATIONS FREE OF CHARGE OR ORDER A HARD COPY AT PUBLICATIONS.IIEP.UNESCO.ORG



A talk with the author

Ibrahima Diallo is an expert in youth integration and employment at IIEP Pôle de Dakar. He discusses ongoing analysis of vocational training policy reforms in Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Senegal, and Côte d'Ivoire.

What was the impetus for this work? We share a common observation with the French Development Agency: African countries are developing vocational training policies that bring about relevant reforms in the sector, but they are struggling to make them operational. For this reason, the [vocational training expertise platform](#) (PEFOP) has supported national actors in four partner countries to identify the obstacles, their causes, and the levers that could improve policy implementation. The methodological approach adopted consists of combining the perspectives of public, private, and civil society actors on five thematic issues: 1) public-private

partnerships, 2) steering by economic demand, 3) validation of skills processes, 4) access and equity, and 5) sustainable financing. *What common challenges have emerged in the four countries?* The analysis highlighted three common issues: 1) Actors struggle to identify the skills and needs of the labour market and how to translate them into training programmes; 2) In the absence of an operational system for the recognition of prior learning (RPL), skills acquired outside the formal training system are not recognized; 3) Access to training is an important issue for rural populations, and especially among girls.

What levers could improve the implementation of vocational training reforms? A first lever would be the development of effective public-private partnerships – the cornerstone of a sustainable vocational training system. In Burkina Faso and Mauritania, regional partnership mechanisms are providing public and private actors with a space for reflection and action on the development of TVET. A second lever could be the development of operational RPL systems that guarantee greater social equity. A third lever could be the pooling of resources so that countries can adapt them to their national contexts, to avoid taking over all stages of production.