



UKFIET



colloquium

EDUCATION FOR ALL: QUALITY COUNTS

Proceedings

**Compiled
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Every investment in basic education must be measured against how well it serves both to expand access to education and to improve learning to all children, youth and adults. This endeavour begins at home, with a national consensus on quality and a robust long-term commitment to achieve excellence. However, the international community must also give strong and consistent support to countries that are boldly seeking to expand and improve learning for all their citizens

Foreword, *Education For All: The Quality Imperative*. UNESCO 2005

Proceedings of the UKFIET Colloquium
EDUCATION FOR ALL: QUALITY COUNTS

Held at the Institute of Education, London on 23 November 2004

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1. The Aims and Objectives of the Colloquium

Trevor Corner and Yusuf Sayed

Convened by UKFIET, with DFID as the major partner, this Colloquium coincided with the publication of the *Global Monitoring Report: The Quality Imperative* and thus provided one of the first major forums for its discussion and dissemination.

The objectives of the Colloquium were to:

- introduce the UNESCO 2005 *Global Monitoring Report: Education for All: The Quality Imperative* and explore the key issues that arise from it.
- examine current policy knowledge about 'education quality', the extent to which this is explicated by the report and seek out implications for major stakeholders in development.
- identify ways to prioritise the quality of education for sustainable development in the light of disparate cultures and contexts.

The colloquium provided a moment for reactions and first impressions of the GMR to be voiced and for critical responses to be explored. By creating space and time for dialogue, it allowed DFID and the many contributing bodies to consider how the GMR might inform policies and programmes.

Introductions to the colloquium were given by Angela Little (London Institute of Education), Rosemary Preston (UK Forum for International Education and Training), and Yusuf Sayed (Department for International Development). Each underlined the importance of the Global Monitoring Report and its focus on 'educational quality' which, as well as bringing further attention to the major issues of Universal Primary Education and Gender of previous years, was now opening up debate on both the nature and meaning of educational quality in addition to ways in which this may be achieved.

The UNESCO Global Monitoring Reports have, over the last few years, provided evidence-based knowledge on the topics of: rights in education, equality, national strategies, targets for reforms, gender equity, assessment of progress towards EFA goals and, in GMR 2005, frameworks and policies for understanding and improving the quality of education. Not least they have provided international and comparative reviews of available research, identifying gaps, as indicated in the presentations and workshop reports in the following pages. GMR 2005 also tries to address how the stark realities in low-income countries require new ways of understanding what quality education can mean in terms of teaching and learning, and the resources that can be made available to support it.

The introduction on the cover of the 2005 Report reads:

Quality is at the heart of education. It influences what students learn, how well they learn and what benefits they can draw from their education.....As many governments strive to expand basic education, they also face the challenge of ensuring that students stay in school long enough to acquire the knowledge they need to cope with a rapidly changing world.

This document is a summary proceedings of the views of education specialists from universities, government departments and a range of NGO representatives who, on initial acquaintance with the current Global Monitoring Report, were willing to comment on the issues it raises for them.

2. The Global Monitoring Report: *The Quality Imperative: Key Issues* **Christopher Colclough University of Cambridge** **Chair: Trevor Corner (UKFIET / Middlesex)**

The first plenary presentation was given by Christopher Colclough who had led the production of the GMR 2005 for UNESCO. Introducing and defining quality education as understood in the report, he proposed that it must encompass cognitive aspects and creative and emotional development. He then went on to examine the key messages contained within the GMR 2005, which included:-

- Additional resources will improve education quality, particularly in resource-scarce environments. This proposition is contingent on these resources being used effectively.
- Inputs are not the only factor to school improvement, as effective schools can be achieved through other means, such as leadership and organisation.
- There continues to be a serious shortfall of resources to achieve UPE and gender parity goals.
- Education quantity and quality are complements, not substitutes.
- Improvement in education quality will pay for itself by improving efficiency (decreasing repetition and drop out) alongside associated economic and behavioural change benefits.

The key challenge to improve education internationally, is to ensure a policy emphasis on quality as much as on quantity. After reviewing research on importance of good quality, and discussing indicators of progress towards the EFA goals (see especially Chapters 2 and 3 of GMR 2005 and Appendix 1), attracting teachers and reducing teacher absenteeism emerge as high priorities, along with more structured pedagogies, even if discovery-based methods remain ambitious in resource constrained environments. Curriculum, instructional time, learning materials, mother tongue language instruction and school environment are all key components of educational quality.

Strategies conducive to better quality (addressed in Chapter 4 of the GMR) include improved governance at the school level, and within and between its wider environments; the existence of participatory learning networks; combating corruption and ensuring that regional and social inequalities are minimised. Finally, whilst the link between aid and better learning outcomes deserves further study, improving aid effectiveness would help the achievement of these goals. Successful qualitative reforms, as shown through numerous case studies, require attention to the quality of teaching, a strong lead by government, and the commitment of society to improving education and policy continuity over time.

Points raised by participants in response to the presentation and contents of GMR 2005

- There is a lack of focus on HIV/AIDS and confused messages as to whether schooling or (quality) education provides protection or increased awareness.
- There is a need to include more analysis of the politics of improving education quality, especially with regard to teachers' unions. This is true in situations where teacher unions are preoccupied with making the lives of teachers more bearable.
- The issue of who is defining quality and whether stakeholder perspectives on quality were included in the GMR.
- There are few references back to GMR 2004 on Gender and a lack of gender disaggregated information in GMR 2005.

3. Quality of Education — An Evolving Concept A UNESCO Perspective¹

Mary Joy Pigozzi
Division for the Promotion of Quality Education, UNESCO

Introduction

There is a need for a new approach to understanding the quality of education. This is because the current understanding is no longer functional. In addition, in many instances the education that is offered is no longer pertinent to the societies in which we live. Underpinning this wish to reconsider “what is quality” is a desire to focus on learning.

What drives the goals of education today?²

Traditionally the quality of education has been an internal affair, the responsibility of the educational authorities at governmental and institutional levels. Today, however, the quality of education is no longer the exclusive preserve of educational authorities and professionals. Ministries other than the Ministry of Education are taking an interest. The same is true for NGOs, businesses, and the general public—all putting different pressures on education. The ramifications of this extend far beyond the walls of individual ministries and educational institutions. To explain why this is occurring and why the quality of education has become a high profile issue, it is necessary to take several key factors into account.

First the growing importance of the quality of education cannot be divorced from the heightened salience of education policy and education reform within the whole range of public policy, mainly because of the acknowledged linkages between education and economic performance, participation in the global economy, and the building of knowledge societies. Much concern about the quality of education derives from the belief that poor quality will frustrate efforts to use education as an effective lever of economic growth and development in this age of accelerating globalisation.

Second, the nature of the problem has been redefined. Traditional approaches to the quality of education have often relied upon proxy measures such as increases in financing and other inputs in the level of educational provision. While clearly not irrelevant or unhelpful, such outlays may not prove decisive when another criterion for defining and measuring the quality of education is used, namely, measurable educational outcomes (knowledge, competencies, skills, and behaviours). Governments and citizens are increasingly concerned about the discrepancy between outlays and outcomes: what is learned. This necessarily raises further questions about what works, in teaching and learning processes.

Third, such questions are fuelling a growing trend towards greater government interest in and use of evidence through which student learning attainment may be monitored both nationally and cross-nationally. This interest has two important dimensions. The first is whether students are learning the right things to lead a decent life in a fast-changing world. The second is closely related. Monitoring of student performance over time and in comparative perspective, including across national boundaries, can provide information vital for assessing how well or how badly

¹ This paper was originally presented at IIEP, Paris in June 2004

² This portion of the paper is taken from the annotated agenda of the Ministerial Round Table of Ministers of Education, UNESCO, Paris, 4-5 October 2003, which was prepared by the author and Mark Richmond.

education systems are preparing young people for future adult roles as creative, thinking citizens who can sustain themselves and contribute to the well-being of their families, communities, and societies.

Fourth, such information is becoming more politically sensitive as it points to the unevenness of quality within and between education systems. Quality levels vary widely from one education system to another and, within a single education system, there may be sharp variations, e.g. between public and private schools, between urban and rural schools, between education for the majority and education for minorities, immigrants, the marginalized. Even in the same classrooms boys and girls can have significantly different learning experiences. The unevenness of quality is a critical issue facing education systems and is particularly important in relation to the widening education gap between countries, the tasks of development, and the effects of internal disparities on social cohesion.

Fifth, the growing diversification of societies, largely as a result of migration, urbanisation and cultural change, joined with increased sensitivity to the national, regional, gender, cultural, ethnic, and religious bases of individual and group identity, is placing fresh demands upon education systems and is challenging assumptions about the purpose and functions of education. Issues concerning the quality of education cannot be separated from these developments, which have an impact on the learning environment provided by schools and other learning spaces. Problems of discrimination, racism, and violence within schools affect learning opportunities and learning achievement.

Sixth, and directly related to the point above, are questions that point to the fundamental purposes of education. Disparity in educational quality often mirrors other disparities, which many view as directly tied to the fulfilment of human and other rights. Thus education is being asked to become one tool, of many, that can build societies based on peace, equality, and democratic practice.

“Quality education” as a dynamic concept

These different pressures have resulted in the concept of quality education coming to the fore as learners, parents and communities, educators, leaders, and nations acknowledge that what is learned and how learning occurs is as important as access to education. The age-old problems that have plagued educational quality remain, and are further complicated by new challenges such as the role of education in relation to peace and security and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, for example.

One difficulty is that while most people understand intuitively what they mean by the quality of education, there may not be a common practical understanding of the term. This is especially true now, at the beginning of the 21st Century, when education is increasingly understood to be more than reading, writing, and arithmetic and extends to the expanded vision of education, as articulated at the Jomtien Conference on Education for All in 1990 and re-affirmed at the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000³.

Comment [M1]:

The understanding of what constitutes a quality education is evolving. The conventional definition remains important to understanding quality education. It includes literacy, numeracy, and life skills, and is linked directly to such critical components as teachers, content,

³ UNESCO. “The Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments”. UNESCO, Paris, 2000.

methodologies, curriculum, examination systems, policy, planning, and management and administration. Basic academics remain essential.

There is a demand, however, for education to reflect upon its relevance to the modern world. While in the past much of the emphasis on education related to cognitive understanding and development, now there is a need to also address the social and other dimensions of learning. Education is expected to make a contribution to sustainable human development, peace and security, universal values, informed decision-making, and the quality of life at individual, family, societal, and global levels.

The relationships between access and quality

There is a common misunderstanding that access to education must always precede attention to quality. This is not the case. There is evidence that, in some cases, learners are not taking advantage of school places even when they are available, and in other cases, learners drop out when what they are learning is not relevant to their current or future needs—students “vote with their feet”. The following points are now clear.

Educational access and quality are distinct concepts. These two concepts are intricately linked, especially when supply and demand are considered. While quality is impossible without access, access without quality is often meaningless to those for whom access is made possible.

Conclusion

Does this set the bar high? Emphatically yes! But this approach allows education systems the flexibility to determine the ways and means they will use to approach the bar. Education systems and their processes cannot be expected to change overnight. To think so is unrealistic. A vision of quality that takes into account its various dimensions sets the standard. Teachers, schools, communities, systems, and nations are the ones responsible for determining how this vision should be interpreted and, incrementally, put in place.

4. Responses to the Plenary Session **Yusuf Sayed (Department for International Development),** **Patrick Watt (Global Campaign for Education) and** **R Govinda (NIEPA, Delhi)** **Chaired by David Archer (Action Aid)**

A DFID Perspective

Giving DFID's initial response to the GMR, Yusuf Sayed commenced by insisting that rights to education and rights to *quality* education are essential to ensure that education is meaningful, transformative and empowering. Quality is the missing link to drive and sustain demand for education. It is not contradictory to equity, rather it is even more important for the poor. Highlighting key challenges for DFID, Sayed argued that there is a need:

- to talk about quality in the existing policy frameworks (PRSP, ESD etc)
- to monitor improvements in quality against readily available learning outcome indicators for cross-country comparison.
- for quality and system-wide reform which allows for scaling up good quality beyond isolated innovative pilot projects. How and where this is done needs to be carefully examined.
- to ensure quality for all, including marginalised and socially excluded groups.

- to ensure ownership of quality reforms.
- to assess and understand the policy environment in difficult/ fragile states.
- to examine the potential for empowering schools and communities.

In prioritising quality, major questions remain for DFID:

- Whose responsibility it is to drive and implement policies?
- How to build more effective partnerships for quality?
- How and where to invest in quality?

A Global Campaign for Education Perspective

For Patrick Watt, a quality education system is a system that meets its own goals and is therefore cost-effective. Quality education is vital to unlock other rights. At the national level plans are needed which address components of quality, but are flexible enough to adapt the school system to the demands of different groups. Donors need to move aid up-stream, make it more effective and meet financing gaps by covering recurrent costs with predictable and reliable aid.

A NIEPA Perspective

GMR 2005 fails to provide a quality benchmark or baseline to measure improvements (and hold to account countries for progress or lack thereof). Govinda suggested that this is because we are prisoners of our own sophistication, as basic issues of quality are clearly visible. There is a need to identify variables which include test scores as well as other basic facets of quality education to sharpen the instruments of delivery. These standards need to be identified and data need to be generated to assess whether systems meet this basic minimum.

Points and issues raised by Colloquium Participants

- Careful consideration should be given to reducing transaction costs and replication by bilateral agencies. More than just government schools need to be taken into account as private and non-formal schools, distance learning, etc., all pose distinct challenges. Including these in the quality agenda should be a priority.
- Schools are not always safe places: levels of insecurity and violence in schools are key indicators of quality, especially for girls.
- Research and policy questions that emerged include the possibility of revisiting the same schools over time to provide classroom-based evidence and examining how quality can be brought to fragile states.

5. Drivers of Quality

Workshop Reports

a. Teachers and the Curriculum: Keith Lewin (Sussex) and Angela Little (Institute of Education)

The seminar identified a range of issues that link teachers and teacher training to educational quality and outcomes. Though teachers lie at the heart of the educational process, post Jomtien EFA programmes often gave insufficient attention to issues of supply and demand, deployment, conditions of work, and availability and quality of training. At Dakar some of the problems were beginning to be recognised and it is now very clear that achieving the MDGs depends centrally on teacher development. The discussion explored issues arising from the MUSTER project (www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cie), and made the following points.

It is necessary to differentiate patterns of training and subsequent CPD to suit contexts that vary widely. In some countries the supply of teachers is now adequate, and new entrants are a small minority of the teaching cadre. In others as many as half of all teachers have been trained over the last five years within high demand systems, where short periods of training before and on the job are the only practicable option. These circumstances require a variety of approaches to training.

Teachers' career trajectories are changing. Significant numbers may not work as teachers for a 30 year career. This has implications for the length of initial training, and its format and content. HIV and AIDs are a factor in some countries, with a tragic influence on attrition rates and needs creative and sympathetic response. The composition of the teaching workforce is changing and more women are becoming teachers, sometimes to the extent that the supply of male primary school teachers is becoming fragile. Many existing teachers are motivated to upgrade their qualifications, and some migrate from primary to secondary school teaching.

Two debates, the inter-relationship of theory and practice, and the primacy of subject or pedagogy, continue to pre-occupy teacher trainers, the teaching profession, and its clients. The best balances between pedagogic content knowledge, disciplinary knowledge, practice-based reflection, and professional studies continue to challenge curriculum developers and Colleges. Often the balance seems to reflect the realities of the past, rather than the challenges of EFA, the preferences of tutors rather than the needs of trainees. This risks leaving the teaching profession with the newly qualified short of essential skills and those with long experience replete with redundant expertise.

Newly qualified teachers are poorly served by systems of aftercare which vary from the barely adequate to non-existent in many low enrolment countries. Newly qualified teachers are posted with little support at the most critical stage in their careers. CPD is not directed towards the consolidation of what skill may have been acquired in College and poor practice is all too often emulated.

Multi-grade teaching methods are vital for thousands, if not millions, of teachers in the developing world. Multi-grade classes go unrecognised by most education policymakers, yet they constitute a large, if not majority, proportion of all classes in many education systems. Teachers need support in training, but also with curriculum. Most national curricula are predicated on mono-graded and not on multi-grade classes. If teachers are to work effectively in multi-graded classes then curriculum authorities need to redesign and restructure national curricula to suit them.

ICT-based teacher education was seen as a possible means of reaching large numbers of teachers for CPD. At the same time it currently poses many insurmountable challenges, including infrastructure and connectivity, as well as the lack of responsiveness of course writers to the felt needs of teachers in classrooms.

b. Policy and Strategy: Facilitators: Sally Gear (VSO) and Chike Anwanyu (CEF)

The workshop was structured into small discussions groups to focus on the "positives", the "gaps" and any "clarifications" in the 2005 GMR coverage of policy and strategy for quality education. In view of the very recent publication of the report, participant levels of familiarity with it was varied. As a result, some of the discussion was not so much a detailed reaction to the

report but rather general views of participants on key issues around policies for quality education. The main points can be summarised into three headings.

Standards.

The report does not attempt to provide a universal set of standards for quality – there was some discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of this approach. Arguments were put forward on the need to have base level/non-negotiable quality standards for schools; for example, a teacher to be present for 4 hours a day, schools operating for a minimum of 6 hours a day, and indicators provided to assess “quality curricula”

Many participants emphasised the importance of national ownership and consensus on the key elements of a quality education system. The group was broadly in agreement that the imposition of universal standards on quality education would not be appropriate, suggesting instead that it was important to have different yardsticks for different countries and their local setting of goals according to culture/conditions. The possible tension between the child-centred and inclusive approaches suggested in the report was also discussed, as was the assessment-oriented approach, which is the political driver embedded in many education systems.

Non-state Provision and Public/Private Partnerships

There was some discussion of the lack of sufficient attention within the report to the role of non-state providers and their impact on quality. There was general agreement that state provision alone would be insufficient to deliver EFA and that both non-state provision and public/private partnerships were likely to play a role in education provision in many countries. There was some concern expressed in relation to the impact on quality of non-state provision. However another group mentioned the potential positive influence of some faith-based providers in ensuring that curricula is more inclusive of different value systems. These issues, it was felt could have been should be covered slightly more comprehensively in the report.

Consistency and Continuity

The importance of consistency and continuity in education policy was an issue raised by several participants. There was some concern that the definitions of quality education were very much subject to trends in donor thinking and also governed by political imperatives which were constantly in flux. A key determinant to a quality education system was the ability to have continuity and consistency in policy.

A lack of consistency and continuity was also noted in relation to the GMRs themselves! In particular, the omission within this year’s report of a clear continuity with the key messages and recommendations from last year’s GMR on Gender Equality.

Political Context and Ownership: Who decides?

Participants felt that the description of what quality education looks like, as articulated in Chapter 4 of the GMR, lacked sufficient attention to the broader political context within which education policy making is undertaken, particularly in the South. The issues raised were country ownership, the donor-recipient relationship and the imperative of macro-economic reforms which can restrict teacher recruitment and support. There was also a discussion on the need for political pressure to bring about inclusive reform, for example in India the role teachers’ unions played in working to ensure that the rights of ethnic minority children are not neglected..

In addition the current climate/trend of decentralisation policies was also discussed as a key "context" within which debates on quality education need to be placed. Does the report provide sufficient evidence on the impact on quality of decentralisation?

In conclusion the group welcomed the fact that the issue of quality was being given focus in an international report, as emphasis to date has been an access. Also the attention given in the Report to teachers and teacher education and the importance of taking a multi-sectoral approach was appreciated.

c. A Schools Perspective on Quality: National and International Issues
Facilitators: Peter Williams (CCE) and David Stephens (Forum for the Future)

Key sections of the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 for this workshop were pp 49-56 and pp 75-77 for analysis, and pp 168-177 for policy suggestions.

The focus of discussion in this session was on the school itself as a functioning institution and its relationship to education quality. In much writing about education (and often in the GMR itself) 'school' as an adjective and 'schooling' as an abstract noun are simply treated as synonymous with 'education'. But what parents actually encounter in getting their children educated, and what learners experience in the suburb or village, is an actual community in an operational institutional setting: their experience of the education inputs, processes and outputs so comprehensively analysed and dissected in the GMR is in the social context of the classroom and school. This might well lead students, parents and teachers to ask whether the essence of education quality is completely captured by the framework for understanding education quality in Chapter 1 of the report (see pp 35-37) where the five elements in the framework are learner characteristics, socio-political and economic context of education, teaching and learning (strategies and practices), other enabling inputs (mainly material and human resources) and education outcomes.

As the GMR discourse develops the centrality of the school - as an important entity above and beyond the resource inputs, pupil characteristics, subjects taught, timetable, teacher qualifications class sizes etc that are so significant to its operations - receives greater acknowledgment. Almost a quarter of Chapter 4 on policies for the future is devoted to better schools. This is as it should be for it is in the school playground and classroom that perhaps a quarter of the living and growing of young people takes place in their most formative years. School experiences are not just preparation for life: they are life. Educational outputs don't come in a sort of 'pay packet' on the day children leave school: they are attributes displayed and experiences assimilated every school day. This underlines that the ethos of the school and its character as a place that is child-friendly, secure understanding and appreciative of all its teachers and learners. This is so crucial for children's development into competent, confident and responsible adults. These are key requirements for motivating acquisition of cognitive skills and even more important in values education. The school as a micro-society must practise and embody the messages of inclusion, healthy living, co-operation that societies uphold. (*see account of Cuba's and Canada's experience on pp 50-51 and the discussion of 'schools as social institutions' on p 76-77*).

It is a challenging task to develop indicators of the child-friendliness of schools and the quality of school life. These concepts are elusive in terms of measurement and formulae, even if they are readily recognised by the school visitor. Even the most basic analysis of what is quantifiable is often difficult at national level in developing countries, since there is frequent failure to analyse national data in terms of school characteristics. Tables showing a profile of schools by enrolment size, staff establishment, curriculum coverage, possession of basic facilities or stability of staffing are often

lacking even though, as the GMR points out, education policies for quality improvement have ultimately to be operable in actual institutional settings.

d. Gender and Quality

Facilitators Elaine Unterhalter (Beyond Access Project) and Khadijah Fancy(CAMFED).

The questions posed at the start of the workshop were:

Is there a link between quality and equality and is there a tension between them?

When we measure quality how do we take into account equality issues?

The facilitators thought the best way to approach these questions was to introduce gender into the different models used in the GMR.

Key issues and questions raised:

- The voices of children and parents are missing in demanding education quality. How do we get their voices heard so that they can influence local policies?
- Curriculum used in schools should be changed to introduce gender sensitive issues.
- Whether national frameworks and policies need to be made gender sensitive or whether we should be working more at grass roots levels to inform the local communities about gender sensitivities and how they can be overcome.

The discussion mainly concentrated on the social and cultural aspects of introducing gender equality and how it will be difficult to change people's perceptions. A point was made on a practical issue of people from poor backgrounds not being able to afford school fees, so they still choose to send their sons to schools instead of their daughters as they assume that they will be able to earn a better living. During the final part of the workshop the group looked at what can we change (enabling inputs) to really make a difference. The training of teachers for Gender Sensitivity through curriculum development was seen as crucial. The short-term memory of the gender equity battles 30 years ago in UK education was lamented.

From the DFID's perspective it was encouraging that some of the above issues have been tackled through the Girls Education Paper. This paper has now been published and disseminated giving further information through which these issues can be discussed and debated.

e. HIV and AIDS workshop Facilitators: David Clarke (DFID) and Colin Brock (Oxford)

This group discussed the prevention and impact of HIV-AIDS on quality education. It noted that overall the GMR 2005 lacked sufficient and evidence-based discussions on these relationships. Several participants took issue with the idea that education (or schooling) reduces the risk of infection, especially with regard to tertiary education. A lack of recognition of evidence and international agreements weakens the link between HIV-AIDS and quality education in the GMR: a dedicated separate section would have been beneficial. The many areas deserving of closer attention include: examples of good practice in spreading information; the use of existing structures for teacher training/ capacity building; the problem of stigmatisation; workplace policies for teachers; the role of life skills in awareness building (essential conditions, need for assessment?); teaching about living with AIDS; the inclusion of non-state providers of education services into the quality education agenda (private, FBOs, NFEs, community schools, distance education, 'edutainment'); the role of peer education and learning; the possibilities for reaching the un-reached (nomadic, young people outside school etc); the challenge of orphans and vulnerable children for achieving quality education; and a more nuanced analysis of who is at risk, disaggregated and examined by gender and age. The overall message from this workshop was the need for greater prominence of HIV-AIDS issues in quality education considerations.

6. Reflections from a School Improvement Perspective. David Hopkins (Chief Adviser on School Standards, DFES).

Summary Abstract

Education for All (EFA) is a bold and innovative educational programme, redolent with moral purpose. The goals of EFA reflect cutting edge, educational aspirations and it is important that we do not just argue for an approach to educational policy that would realise the aims of EFA. We should also to raise standards of achievement and learning in all United Nations member countries. At present international policy is largely predicated on structural reform and this has a poor track record in terms of raising standards and ensuring equity. An approach that focuses on improving the quality of classroom practice, on capacity-building and systemic reform offers far more promise.

In order to achieve these ambitions there are three areas that provide an agenda for action:

- The first and crucial priority, particularly in light of the recent strategic review, would be to ensure that EFA was on track, to accelerate the energy within the programme and to recalibrate delivery within key areas. As EFA moves beyond initial implementation it is essential that programme co-ordination becomes increasingly strategic and differentiated, with a robust delivery chain established in participating countries.
- Second, it is vital for the medium to long-term success of EFA, that UNESCO leads the international debate on educational reform in more developed and developing countries. Just as educational reform in individual countries depends on a systemic response, the same is also true for the international community.
- Third, to enable this to happen, it is vital that UNESCO itself is fit to its purpose. Responsibility for co-ordinating EFA and of ensuring momentum in member countries requires a responsive and adaptable organisational structure. In particular to:
 - Build regional capacity, through networking and innovation.
 - Intervene and mobilise resources in critical situations.
 - Use data from GMR and other monitoring activities to focus support and challenge Governments and agencies.

David Hopkins gave a personnel perspective on the EFA Goals and the EFA Development Index and the extent to which countries are responding to them He argued that quality drives the improvement process. The 2005 GMR has no clearly argued strategy. School improvement strategies that work need programmes that can be implemented. The new challenge is how to achieve reforms for which central support is vital.

Both local and central initiatives have to work together. Pam Christie's breakdown of learning and culture recognises the complex organisational dynamics that can cripple the work of schools. Her research includes advice given to the South African Government on creating learning communities within schools. Hopkins emphasised the need to develop and evaluate of a range of curriculum and teaching programmes arguing that that the best materials should be in the hands of teachers to adapt them to their own circumstances.

Implications for UNESCO,

Hopkins identified four pieces of the jigsaw that need to be put in place:

1. **Fit for Purpose** – how UNESCO proportions its budget and runs itself
2. **Principles** – Clear principles, equality, quality, ownership, ensuring efficiency
3. **International Challenge**

4. Regional Challenge

From a strategic perspective, six functions, or roles, were outlined and proposed for the interest of UNESCO:

1. **Advocacy and principles**
2. **Monitoring** – Data produced – Countries to challenge information.
3. **Challenges** – to hold countries and international agencies to account.
4. **Co-ordination and key Partners-** Partnerships on a global scale. Global organisations need to be at the forefront of innovation and need to intervene in conflict situations
5. **Innovation and Regional Capacity Building** – Ensuring that the schools have the basic provisions.
6. **Intervention** – The focus should be on learning, teaching materials, supply of teachers and the power of leadership inside schools which should improve the quality of teaching.

The Global Monitoring Report is thus quite correct to focus on quality and school improvement, but there is also the need for an organisation such as UNESCO to drive the agenda with moral purpose.

Key issues and questions raised by Colloquium Participants

- The digital divide and lack of basic infrastructure means that high quality material such as computers and the internet, which teachers adapt to suit their own needs, is beyond the resources presently available.
- Notions of school leadership, networking and ownership give agency to the local level and are vital for sustaining improvement

7. Forum for discussion

Kenneth King (University of Edinburgh)

Given the remit of providing a crisp summary of the strong themes and dichotomies that had emerged throughout the Colloquium, five aspects of quality were put forward as a way to examine the nature and effect of quality on dimensions of education. Not all of these were given a lot of attention in the GMR:-

- **Quality and Culture** – teacher commitment is vital, but is hugely affected by context. Two contrasting regions were cited. In Latin America where teacher commitment is often not there in poor areas, the poor will not succeed. In East Asia, 90 per cent of the teachers will their pupils to succeed. As a result the poor do relatively better.
- **Quality and the Non-State Sector** – There is an enormous range of non-state provision in many countries and a widespread belief that faith schools and different kinds of private for profit and non-profit schools can be superior to public schools in the provision of quality education? What are the factors at work here? Again, teacher commitment may be crucial but also other elements that are very hard to quantify, among them school ethos.
- **Quality and Language** - a large proportion of Sub-Saharan African children are learning in a language that is not their own. This is a big policy issue in itself and raises important questions to raise about the role and purpose of language in education, in different contexts. Language may well be one of the crucial factors behind the failure of children to capture much more than 15 per cent of the curriculum content, as reported in some countries in the GMR.
- **Quality and Finance** – there are some very sensitive issues here. In some countries, there are clear patterns of the elite investing in private preschool and private primary in order to profit from selection to the highest quality, subsidised public secondary schools, and to the best public universities.
- **Quality and Politics** - this is an area not really discussed within the GMR.

The final question raised here was how does dissemination of the ideas of the GMR 2005 reach the poor countries? In this colloquium there were enough copies of the GMR for everyone, but it will probably be very difficult for scholars and policy makers in the South to get access to these excellent materials. This was partly answered with the suggestion from the floor that a similar Colloquium should be held in several poorer countries, e.g. at the University of Nairobi, where we can get the messages out to the local population.

Key responses which arose from this presentation included:

- the value of degrees in indigenous languages is decreasing – so should we be worrying that a large proportion of children are not taught in their own language?
- the importance of teaching teachers to use resources locally and for children to bring objects into schools that will help in situations where there are lack of resources.

- the need to unpack the power dimension and the power relationships which pervade education quality policies, both internationally (between multilaterals and bilaterals) and in-country.

Christopher Colclough responded as follows-

- As good an understanding as possible of issues and determinates of education quality (and other themes) to influence policy is required. GMR has tried to show that issues are complex and that multiple options exist.
- Regarding benchmarking, it was discussed by the GMT team, but it was decided not to do this in an indicative framework, given regional and country differences (e.g. Korea and Japan have great cognitive test scores, but large class sizes). Thus how to make quality better depends on context.
- How to implement and generate change: GMR tries to show the present situation and to point to possible futures.

Yusuf Sayed suggested three final messages which participants should consider.

1. The value of intensive discussions about the GMR is gaining recognition across the interested parties of NGOs, government and universities, along with elucidations of the ways and means by which its proposals can be implemented.

2. These, in turn, need action and implementation. The financial support needed to bring this about is the theme of increasing discussion by governments in more developed countries, not least because of the longer term ramifications of a divided world can lead to major conflicts, famine and migrations.

3. The quality of education at country and school level is also the work of international agencies which need to be effective, harmonised to support country-led work

8. Speakers

David Archer: Action Aid

1990 David Archer has been with ActionAid. In 1993 he proposed a convergence between Freire's work and the methodologies developed by practitioners of Participatory Rural Appraisal. This led to the "*Reflect* approach". He monitored three pilot experiences with this approach in Uganda, Bangladesh and El Salvador and in 1996 compiled the "*Reflect Mother Manual*" with Sara Cottingham. The *Reflect* approach is now used by over 350 organisations in 60 countries.

David Archer is now Head of the International Education Unit of ActionAid and facilitates ongoing networking of *Reflect* practitioners through the International Reflect Circle CIRAC – which won the UNESCO International Literacy Prize 2003. He is co-author of "Communication and Power" (practical new resources on *Reflect* published by CIRAC 2003 - see: www.reflect-action.org). He is also involved in adapting the approach to the UK.

David is presently coordinating a team undertaking research for the 2006 EFA Monitoring Report – looking at benchmarks of good practice and the costs of adult literacy programmes. He is also taking part in an evaluation of the World Bank's work on EFA over the past decade.

Christopher Colclough: UNESCO/ University of Cambridge

Christopher Colclough is an economist, with a long-standing interest in education and international development. He is a Professorial Fellow in economics at the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, and, from January 2005 he became the inaugural Director of the Centre for Commonwealth Education, University of Cambridge. During 2002-4 he was the Director of UNESCO's annual Education For All Global Monitoring Report.

Angela Little: Institute of Education, London

Angela W. Little has been Professor of Education (Developing Countries) at the Institute of Education, University of London since 1987. She contributed to the World EFA conference in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 with a roundtable paper *Understanding Culture: a pre-condition for effective learning*, and to the EFA conference in Dakar, Senegal in 2000 with an evaluation of the work of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All (EFA). Her EFA-related books include *Beyond Jomtien (1994)* (a study of six EFA programmes in Asia, Africa and Latin America), *Labouring to Learn (1999)* (a study of the achievement of EFA by the Indian Tamil plantation community of Sri Lanka), *Primary Education Reform in Sri Lanka (2000)* and *Education for All: Policy and Planning Lessons from Sri Lanka (2003)*. Her forthcoming book, *EFA: the challenge of multigrade teaching*, will be published in 2005.

David Hopkins: Head of Standards and Effectiveness Unit, DfES

Professor David Hopkins was appointed Head of the Standards and Effectiveness Unit in the Department for Education and Skills and Chief Adviser to Ministers on School Standards in January 2002. He previously served as Chair of the City of Leicester Partnership Board, Dean of Education at the University of Nottingham and as a Tutor at the University of Cambridge, Institute of Education. Before becoming a civil servant he outlined his views on teaching and learning, school improvement and large scale reform in Hopkins D. (2001) **School Improvement for Real** London: Routledge/Falmer. He is writing here in a personal capacity:

the views expressed in this paper do not necessarily represent a policy position on the part of the Department for Education and Skills.

Mary Joy Pigozzi: Division for the Promotion of Quality Education, UNESCO.

Dr. Pigozzi has been on the faculty at Indiana University and Michigan State University and has experience in the public and private (both profit and non-profit) education sectors. In addition, she works professionally in French. In her previous position she was responsible for the development of both the UN system-wide Girls' Education Initiative and UNICEF's global Girls' Education Programme. Among her other contributions to UNICEF work were the development of the organisation's policy and strategic approach to education in emergencies and for reconstruction, policy development on the linkages between education and child labour, and rethinking in the area of measuring learning achievement.

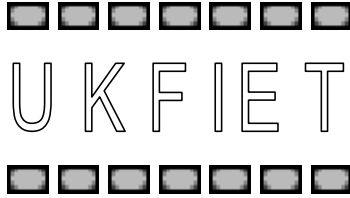
Currently, Dr. Pigozzi is the Director of the Division for the Promotion of Quality Education at UNESCO. The work of this division is closely linked with that of other Divisions in UNESCO's Education Sector. Among the areas covered are measurement of learning achievement and aspects of quality such as values and education for peace, education for an improved quality of life (including prevention of HIV/AIDS and drug abuse, education for sustainable development, and practical applications of quality through the Associated Schools Project Network).

Peter Williams: Commonwealth Consortium for Education

Peter Williams is an education planner, specialising in policy and practice in developing countries. Earlier in his career he worked in the Ministries of Education in Kenya and Ghana, and served on government education commissions in Botswana, The Gambia, Namibia and Zimbabwe. He was on the Secretariat of the International Commission for the Development of Education (Faure Commission).

He is Honorary Secretary of the Commonwealth Consortium for Education, a group of pan-Commonwealth NGOs committed to education development and co-operation in the Commonwealth, and Joint Deputy Executive Chair of the Council for Education in the Commonwealth. He serves on the Education Committee of the UNESCO National Commission and edited the former Education Committee's publication *Education for All: the UK Dimension*, which addressed experience in the UK itself in addressing the six Dakar EFA goals, including quality of education. He has written extensively on international student mobility.

Professor Williams is a former Director of Education at the Commonwealth Secretariat and Professor of Education in Developing Countries at the Institute of Education in London. During his time at the Commonwealth Secretariat, a focus of the Education Programme was improving the quality of basic education, including the management and support of teachers.



colloquium

Education For All: Quality Counts
The Jeffrey Hall, Institute of Education,
Bedford Way, London
Tuesday, 23rd November 2004

Objectives For The Colloquium

The colloquium will examine the issue of education quality and its implications for civil and global societies and national/international organisations.

Specifically it will:

1. Introduce the Global Monitoring Report and its key issues
2. Examine current policy knowledge about educational quality and its effects
3. Identify ways to prioritise the quality of education for sustainable development

Programme

10.00 am	Registration and coffee / tea / biscuits Foyer of Jeffrey Hall
10.30 - 10.40am	Welcome: Professor Angela Little London Institute of Education Opening remarks: Dr. Rosemary Preston: UKFIET Dr. Yusuf Sayed: DFID
10.40 - 11.30 am	Plenary Introducing the Global Monitoring Report 2005: Key Issues Professor Christopher Colclough: University of Sussex/ UNESCO Chair: Professor Trevor Corner: Middlesex University
11.30am -12.30pm	Responses. Yusuf Sayed: Department for International Development Patrick Watt: Global Campaign for Education R Govinda: NIEPA, Delhi Chair: David Archer ActionAid
12.30 - 1.30pm	Lunch in Jeffrey Hall

Programme (Cont)

1.30pm - 3.00pm

5 Parallel Workshops

Drivers of Quality

1. Teachers and the Curriculum

Facilitator: Professor Keith Lewin, University of Sussex

2. Policy and Strategy

Facilitators: Sally Gear (VSO) and Chike Anwanyu (CEF)

3. A School's Perspective on Quality:
National and International Issues

Facilitator: Professor Peter Williams (CEC)

4. Gender and Quality

Facilitators: Elaine Unterhalter, Beyond Access Project IoE, Khadijah Fancy, CAMFED

5. HIV and Aids

Facilitator: David Clarke (DFID) and Kate Webley (SCF)

3.00 - 3.15pm

Coffee / Tea / Biscuits in Jeffrey Hall

3.15 – 3.45pm

Response

Professor David Hopkins:
Head of Standards and Effectiveness Unit, DfES
Chair: Dr. Rosemary Preston , Warwick University UKFIET

3.45 - 4.30pm

Plenary Discussion with Speakers

Led by Professor Kenneth King, University of Edinburgh UKFIET
Chair: Dr. Rosemary Preston UKFIET

4.30pm

End of Colloquium

Every investment in basic education must be measured against how well it serves both to expand access to education and to improve learning to all children, youth and adults. This endeavour begins at home, with a national consensus on quality and a robust long-term commitment to achieve excellence. However, the international community must also give strong and consistent support to countries that are boldly seeking to expand and improve learning for all their citizens

Foreword, Education For all: The Quality Imperative. UNESCO 2005