Sustaining Educational and Economic Momentum in Africa
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Foreword

Most African countries and their external partners can take pride in the unmistakable progress towards the Education for All (EFA) goals for 2015 agreed at the Dakar 2000 World Education Forum. The increase in access to primary education has been particularly remarkable, reflecting the combined impact of laudable education reforms, substantially increased public financing of education and greater flows of external aid for education.

Yet the good news has been dampened by the global financial crisis that broke out in full force in late 2008. Recovery has been slow, uneven, and often uncertain and the adverse effects of the crisis on domestic budgets and aid flows are now making it more difficult for African countries to solidify policy reform for lasting results in education. The hard won gains of the last ten years could well be reversed, thereby jeopardizing attainment of the EFA goals and those of the African Union’s Second Decade for Education in Africa. More worrisome is the potential setback to nascent efforts in many African countries to align the expansion of secondary and tertiary education more closely with the needs of the economy and to equip the workforce with the skills, particularly in science, technology, and innovation, to help businesses compete successfully in the global economy.

These concerns are a sharp reminder of what has become increasingly clear since the 2000 World Education Forum: that the agenda for educational reform development belongs to the whole government, not just to the ministries charged with developing and implementing education and training policies. It was thus with foresight that the organizers convened a conference to engage ministers of finance and of education in a dialogue on their joint leadership and mutual responsibility. That the conference attracted the participation of 44 African ministers from 28 countries, among them 16 ministers of finance, not only attests to its timeliness but also reflects agreement among African leaders on the centrality of education and training as an instrument for national development and economic progress, particularly in today’s knowledge-based global economy.

The success of the conference augurs well for the future. It is however, only a start. Our hope therefore is that the ideas discussed at the conference, as summarized in this report, would initiate a process of continued dialogue and reflection. We are hopeful, too, that they would inspire a determined effort at cross-ministerial collaboration in the design and implementation of education policies. In today’s vastly altered economic context, such collaboration is not only helpful but essential to secure durable progress in national development.

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Acknowledgments

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This paper was prepared on behalf of the conference organizers by Birger Fredriksen, the conference rapporteur. It was processed for publication by Petra Righetti.

This paper seeks to capture discussions at the conference as understood and interpreted by Birger Fredriksen, the conference rapporteur. It does not necessarily reflect the policies of the governments represented by the ministers at the conference or the official position of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, the African Development Bank, or the World Bank. Any inaccuracies or errors in the report are those of the rapporteur alone and should not be attributed to the officials who spoke at the conference or to the ministries or organizations for which they work.
# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAU</td>
<td>Association of African Universities</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADEA</td>
<td>Association for the Development of Education in Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFD</td>
<td>Agence Française de Développement</td>
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<td>AfDB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>CAR</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONFEMEN</td>
<td>Conférence des Ministres de l’Education des Pays Ayant le Français en Partage (Conference of Ministers of Education in Francophone Countries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>EPDF</td>
<td>Education Program Development Fund</td>
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<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<td>FTI</td>
<td>Fast Track Initiative</td>
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<td>GCE</td>
<td>Global Campaign for Education</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GMR</td>
<td>EFA Global Monitoring Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>R&amp;D</td>
<td>Research and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>SARUA</td>
<td>Southern African Regional Universities Association</td>
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<td>SSA</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVE</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>UPE</td>
<td>Universal Primary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>USHEPIA</td>
<td>University Science, Humanities and Engineering Partnership in Africa</td>
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<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>WGCOMED</td>
<td>ADEA Working Group on Communication for Education and Development</td>
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Executive Summary:
Reflections on the Outcomes of the Conference

This Conference brought together 44 African ministers of finance and of education from 28 African countries for a structured dialogue on sustaining Africa’s economic and education progress in the current context of a global economic slowdown. Representatives of Africa’s key regional institutions and development partners participated as observers. The overarching objective of the Conference was to deepen understanding of why ministers of finance and of education must exercise joint political leadership to protect the education gains of the past decade while fostering a dynamic alignment between the education sector and national goals for social and economic progress, and of how they might do it.

This summary distills the main outcomes of the dialogue at the conference which the main body of the report documents. It focuses on the three expected outcomes defined prior to the conference regarding increased understanding and consensus among key stakeholders on:

- The rationale for and the capacities needed by ministries of finance and of education to jointly exercise strong political leadership for aligning strategies for educational development with national agendas for economic growth;
- The need for concerted actions to protect Africa’s education gains of the last decade and to prevent that the economic downturn causes a repeat of the education decline experienced in the 1980s and 1990s; and
- The critical role of strategic domestic policies, buttressed by a more catalytic use of external aid, to help ensure holistic and sustainable development of the education sector amidst the challenges of the current economic downturn.

Conference participants welcomed the event and appreciated the timeliness of the topics selected for discussion and the convening of both ministers of finance and ministers of education as key national actors for addressing these issues. They applauded the quality of the presentations by the invited subject experts and the fact that the organizers arranged the program to maximize active participation in the dialogue by ministers in their roles as presenter, chair of sessions, or discussant. In this manner, the conference achieved one of its key objectives, which was to create a forum for substantive dialogue mainly among the ministers.

Rationale For and Capacities Needed to Exercise Stronger Joint Political Leadership

Over the last 40–50 years, there have been many education conferences for African education ministers. The unique value of this conference was that it was the first continent-wide event in recent memory (perhaps the first ever) that brought together
both ministers of finance and of education from Sub-Saharan Africa as well as those from North Africa to discuss pressing issues pertaining to education and training. That both groups of ministers found it useful to attend suggests in itself an understanding among the ministers of the strong mutual interdependence between education development and economic growth and of the need for joint political leadership to ensure alignment between national objectives and strategies for education and the economy.

This enhanced understanding of mutual dependence and joint responsibility manifested itself at the conference in different ways:

- On the side of education ministers, the discussions acknowledged the need for the education sector to break out of the “silo mentality” sometimes displayed by education politicians and specialists. Awareness of this need was reflected in statements such as: (i) the importance of evidence-based education budget proposals to justify their request within the context of the government’s overall development priorities and budget constraints; (ii) the need to align education and training programs more closely to labor market demands; (iii) the imperative of better coordination among the ministries which often share responsibility for education and training issues and between these ministries and employers; and (iv) the benefits of greater pan-African cooperation to capture economies of scale and foster synergy in the area of education, training and research.

- On the side of finance ministers, the discussions showed a deep appreciation of the fundamental role of education and training in national development. Attesting to this view are such statements pertaining to the following: (i) the multi-faceted roles played by education and training in shaping the moral, ethical and social values of society, in preparing young people for employment and citizenship, and in fostering mutual respect, social cohesion and cultural integration in the society; (ii) the growing importance of knowledge and innovation as drivers of economic growth, and the role of skills development in enabling African countries to better compete in an increasingly competitive global economy; and (iii) the need for adequate funding of technical and vocational education and training (TVET), including programs benefiting the informal economy. Some of the ministers argued that an effective policy to address unemployment among youth requires a significant overhaul of governments’ budgetary policies for training as well as development of modes of co-financing by employers and others.

In short, interventions at the conference reflected a growing mutual understanding among the ministers of the rationale for exercising strong joint leadership in dealing with the many linkages between education and the economy. A few of the participants responded to the organizers’ encouragement to discuss whether existing institutional capacity, mechanisms and accountability arrangements are in place to exercise such joint leadership. However, time constraints prevented an in-depth discussion of these issues.
The Need for Concerted Actions to Protect Education Gains during the Crisis

There was broad agreement among ministers on the need amidst the current crisis for concerted actions to protect the educational gains of the last decade and, beyond that, to ensure that investments in education and training continue to build a strong foundation for future development. This agreement spans several aspects, but most references were made to the need to mitigate the likely negative impact of the crisis on education budgets:

- The arduousness of the financial challenges to protect the gains towards Universal Primary Education (UPE) while also managing the pressure on secondary education and advancing reforms to expand and improve TVET and tertiary education.
- The likelihood of limited (or indeed reduced) space for domestic funding for education as a result of the projected slowdown in economic growth.
- The added risk of reduced external support as the global economic crisis weakens political support for aid in donor countries, including aid provided through the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI). Notably, while external aid for education has risen since 2000, most donors are under-delivering on their past commitments and their pledges in recent years have stagnated or declined.
- The additional vulnerability of countries that depend heavily on aid. Uncertainties about the impact of the crisis on aid volumes will reduce aid predictability and exacerbate political risks, especially in countries where a large share of the budget for teacher salaries is paid out of aid flows.
- The special challenges of post-conflict countries in mobilizing the domestic resources required to rebuild their education systems, in securing dependable flows of external aid to facilitate successfully the transition to peace, including through education programs that play a particularly important role in this process.
- The fairly good track record of effective use of education aid in Africa, as attested by the region’s solid gains in educational coverage over the last decade. This record should help maintain external support for the sector during the crisis.
- The call by some ministers for (i) innovations in education financing, including emphasizing the increasing role played by private providers in many countries in secondary and, especially, tertiary education, and (ii) a significant re-evaluation of the government’s budgetary priorities with respect to the support for TVET.

The Critical Role of Strategic Domestic Policies and More Catalytic Use of Aid

Many ministers underlined the critical role of strategic domestic policies and of strong political leadership to guide education development. Several described the progress in their own countries in putting in place the required framework. Notable examples including ensuring that education policies, programs and budgets are integral parts of Poverty Reduction Strategies and of medium-term expenditure frameworks. Some ministers also reported progress in increasing the resources devoted to education.
Yet the dialogue also highlighted the wide diversity among countries, both in the process of policy formulation and in the quality of the policies themselves. Moreover, as one minister put it, good policies, and plans do not necessarily translate into effective implementation. Also, severe budget constraints make for difficult trade-offs between the needs of ministries responsible for education and training and those of other ministries. Knowledge and skills are necessary but not sufficient: they must be complemented by capital investments in many other sectors as well as with interventions that determine conditions that affect growth, for example, the country’s macro and socio-political stability, the quality of the business environment, the ability to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) and the loss of talent through brain drain. Several ministers also noted that skill shortages in some areas often coexist with graduate unemployment in other areas and that more needs to be done to better match training supply with labor market demands.

In short, while there was consensus on the critical role of strategic domestic policies and of strong leadership, there was also recognition that crafting the right policies and practicing transformative leadership remain a work-in-progress. Some ministers acknowledge that visionary political leadership focusing on policies in education and training in the medium to long-term could help African countries make the transition from a “survival” to a “growth economy.” In this regard, the ministers raised several concerns requiring urgent attention:

- **Within the education and training sector:** Sustainable pathways for the development and financing of TVET; the challenge of rapidly growing youth populations and cost-effective measures to equip them with skills for gainful employment, and the need to address severe shortages of trained teachers and, in some settings, the very low salaries paid to teachers.

- **Outside the education sector:** The slow progress in reducing fertility levels which implies continued high population growth and heavy fiscal burdens on the working population to nurture and educate the young. Some ministers noted that a root cause of the problem is neglect of female education in the past which left a legacy of high female illiteracy rates and kept fertility rates high today. Weak institutional capacity has impeded the implementation of even good policies; and slow economic growth has seriously constrained education budgets and the employment opportunities for school leavers.

The ministers also explored the idea of providing strong political leadership without “ politicizing” the education debate. The Singapore Minister of Finance—invited to the Conference as distinguished guest speaker—emphasized that education policy choices necessarily are highly political. However, it is possible to limit “ politicization” by monitoring and evaluating the impact of alternative policies and keeping the electorate informed. The objective should be to create a virtuous political cycle to support education, whereby solid evidence informs the democratic process and helps move education concerns higher up on the political agenda.

As regards actions to promote more strategic use of external aid in the education sector, only a few ministers commented specifically on this aspect. Most of the ministers focused instead on the need for more aid, and for counter-cyclic use of aid to mitigate the impact of the current crisis on domestic education funding. This focus is
consistent with the manner in which external education aid often is discussed in international fora. The tendency is to discuss the volume of aid rather than where aid can have the strongest catalytic impact on the education sector. It probably also reflects a need for more work to clarify questions such as:

- **The “additionality” of aid:** To what extent does (and should) aid for education leverage additional domestic financing for education, rather than substitute for domestic effort to mobilize national resources to finance investments in the sector? In this regard, some will argue that even if aid for education does not expand the education budget, it at least allows the country to shift its own resources to other vital sectors, thus having a positive development impact.

- **The “fungibility” between domestic and external funding:** What type of aid is likely to produce the strongest catalytic impact in a given country context? Some will argue that domestic and external financing are fully fungible and that there is therefore no need for particular attention to the use of aid, apart from ensuring that it is used efficiently wherever it is deployed. Others argue that domestic and external funding are not fully fungible in contexts of high aid dependency and severe budget constraints; and that national budget processes are often such that domestic funding for certain high-impact programs would not be funded if aid is not designated to them.

- **The appropriate criteria for aid allocation among countries** and the balance between “performance-based” and “needs-based” aid. How should aid be allocated in view of the prospects of different countries in attaining the Education for All goals by 2015?

- **The relevance of financing of “global public good” functions and pan-African cooperation in the education sector.** To what extent should donors prioritize these functions in considering the distribution of aid between country-specific support and pan-African/regional initiatives, networks and organizations?

Several ministers commented on the last point listed above, suggesting that because countries compete for external support to address national concerns, they give too little attention to Africa-wide issues and pan-African cooperation. They argued for allocating more resources for such issues, by African countries as well as by development partners. Some speakers expressed concerns about the sustainability—and especially of scaling up—of some successful existing regional initiatives and networks in light of their heavy reliance on donor financing. Some ministers noted that while lack of resource constrains regional cooperation, often the most serious impediments are political in nature. More needs to be done by the African Union to resolve issues in the political domain.

Finally, the Concept Note prepared by the organizers prior to the conference foresaw that the “Ministers would articulate an agenda of practical actions for collaboration to help ensure continued education and economic progress in Africa in the coming years.” Although the agenda of practical actions did not materialize, the conference was successful in stimulating a lively dialogue and in building consensus among the two groups of ministers on the need for joint actions on education and training issues. The ministers acknowledged the dialogue initiated at the Conference
would serve as a useful starting point for closer collaboration among themselves and with their external partners.

Each of the three agencies that organized the Conference can take follow up measures to help strengthen this collaboration. The two development banks can do so by ensuring that education and training issues are routinely put into the broader context of national strategies for growth and poverty reduction rather than treated from the perspective of the sector alone. ADEA, for its part, can continue to play a leading role, in collaboration with its member agencies and its counterparts among African ministries of education, in fostering continued dialogue and learning on the key issues raised at the conference. ADEA’s has a laudable track record over the past 10-15 years in this regard and can take pride in having helped enriched policy dialogue on key issues affecting the education in Africa. This achievement reflects the effort made over the years, especially within the ADEA partnership, to promote this type of dialogue. By extending the dialogue to include ministers of finance, this Conference has made a highly valuable contribution to an ongoing process of enhancing the quality of education decision-making in Africa.

Note

1 Appendix 1 provides the list of participants, and Appendix 2 provides the program of the conference.
The Conference brought together 44 African ministers of finance and of education from 28 African countries (Appendix 1 provides a list of the participants) for a structured dialogue on sustaining Africa’s economic and educational progress in the current context of a global economic slowdown. Representatives of Africa’s key regional institutions and development partners participated as observers.

African countries have achieved laudable progress during the last decade towards the Education for All (EFA) goals for 2015 that were agreed in Dakar in 2000, particularly with regard to Universal Primary Education (UPE). This progress reflects the combined impact of several factors, notably courageous education reforms, substantially increased public financing of education—made possible largely by sustained economic growth and increased political priority for education—and greater inflows of external aid for education. The momentum may be jeopardized, however, by the current worldwide economic downturn. Tightening domestic budgets and external aid could increase the difficulty of sustaining policy reform and strategic investments, thereby putting at risk the hard won gains of the last ten years. They could also undermine Africa’s efforts to develop post-basic education and training and delay achievement of key goals of the African Union’s Second Decade for Education in Africa (2006 - 2015). The result would be to frustrate the aspirations of the increasing numbers of African youth who seek to go beyond primary education and to deny their prospective employers the skilled workforce that could help boost business competitiveness and economic growth.

The emerging global economic circumstances provided a key rationale for the Conference. Its purpose was to stimulate dialogue among senior policy makers on policy options to achieve a mutually reinforcing relation between education and the economy. In particular, the key concerns were to:

- Sustain the momentum towards the 2015 EFA goals as the overarching priority in the coming years and minimize the risk of repeating the education decline in Africa countries during the economic downturns of the 1980s and 1990s.
- Give increased attention to the urgent need for development of post-primary education to supply the middle and higher-level technical and managerial skills needed to sustain and accelerate the economic growth achieved over the last decade.

Against this background, the overarching objective of the Conference was to deepen the understanding of why ministers of finance and of education must exercise joint
political leadership to protect the education gains of the past decade while fostering a dynamic alignment between the education sector and national goals for social and economic progress and how they can do it. To this end, the Conference program (Appendix 2) was organized around seven inter-related themes, as summarized below.

Note

1 The ADEA Working Group on Communication for Education and Development (WGCOMED) organized a training seminar for African journalists to coincide with the conference for the journalists to disseminate information on the conference’s rationale and outcomes in the African Press. More than sixty articles published in Arabic, English, French and Portuguese can be found on the WGCOMED website.
SECTION 2

Summary of Presentations and Discussion

The Conference opened in the afternoon of July 15. The opening ceremony was chaired by Ms. Obiageli EZEKWESILI, Vice-President of the Africa Region, the World Bank. The chairperson welcomed the participants and invited goodwill remarks from the host government as well as from the Africa Union, the European Commission, UNESCO, UNICEF and the FTI secretariat. All the speakers stressed the importance and timeliness of this Conference, affirmed the support of their institutions for its objectives, and noted the uniqueness of the event in convening ministers of education and of finance to discuss how to sustain during the crisis the remarkable education momentum achieved by Africa over the last decade.

Following the goodwill remarks, the Keynote Address was delivered by Mr. Donald KABERUKA, President of the AfDB. Entitled Human Capital for Africa’s Long-Term Development: Sustaining Progress in Challenging Times, the address emphasized the following themes:

- The timeliness of this opportunity to explore how to maintain the education momentum at a time of crisis and how to strengthen higher education and science as key inputs to Africa’s development. The need to protect core investments in human capital during the crisis is particularly acute in many low-income countries and sustained support from the international community is needed to mitigate the impact of the crisis on domestic budgets.
- While some MDGs have continued to be elusive, Africa has made major progress towards UPE. But the challenges to achieve this objective by 2015 are still formidable, including huge numbers of children out of school; high population growth; poor education quality; shrinking budgets and increased demand for post-primary education. To successfully address these challenges, the private sector has a role to play, especially in post-primary education.
- Rapid enrollment growth has often eroded quality, especially of higher education. In the 1960s, Africa had several reputable universities. To rebuild tertiary and scientific capabilities is urgent: No nation can succeed in today’s competitive and knowledge-based economy without that capability. A starting point may be to invest in universities that have the ability to serve as centers of excellence in science and research. Universities also need to develop more innovative ways of collaborating with their counterparts in other countries. Financing of higher education is a world-wide problem, and African countries
need to develop financing strategies including clarification of the role of private sector provision. The AfDB has adopted a new Higher Education, Science and Technology Strategy as a basis for increased support for this sector.

To address capacity and quality constraints at all levels require measures in many areas including leveraging the use of technology, including information and communication technology (ICT) more effectively. This is an area of particular interest to the AfDB. Success also requires that public investment in education is seen in context with investments in other sectors. For example, water and sanitation are important factors in ensuring enrollment and retention of girls. Also, the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG 1) is to reduce poverty by half, and education plays a critical role in achieving this goal. But in the long term, the real poverty for today’s African children is to be isolated from the world due to lack of knowledge. We all need to work together to sustain the progress achieved in the last decade in reducing this isolation. Thus, the importance of this conference.

Following the Keynote address, the Chair offered concluding remarks pointing out that while the financial crisis created difficulties, it also offered a golden opportunity for fresh thinking. She emphasized the importance of preventing reversals of the progress that African countries have achieved, of protecting the size and predictability of budgets for education, of ensuring that spending on education produced learning outcomes, of innovative partnership with the private sector for service delivery, of reversing the decline of tertiary education in many African countries, and of investing in Africa’s human capital to help the continent reduce its dependence on commodities to drive growth. She affirmed the World Bank’s commitment to support African countries in their effort to improve education at all levels as part of their strategy to accelerate economic growth. She stressed the importance for Africa of the themes to be debated during the Conference. The conference then adjourned for the day.

Over the next 1.5 days, the Conference agenda (Appendix 2) was organized around the following seven themes:

(i) Political leadership to better align education and economic development;
(ii) Mutual accountability of ministers of finance and of education for education development;
(iii) Education priorities in a challenging environment;
(iv) Skills development for economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa;
(v) Pan-African cooperation in education and training: What is the scope and what are the barriers?
(vi) Priorities for education finance and external aid to support Africa’s development in the coming years; and
(vii) Pressing on amidst the global crisis: Next steps to sustain Africa’s education and economic momentum.

The rest of this section will summarize the presentations and discussions under each of these seven themes.
A key tenet of the conference was that a strong mutually dependent relation exists between education and economic growth, and that visionary political leadership is needed to ensure close alignment between these two sectors. In particular:

- African countries cannot achieve rapid and sustained economic growth without a better educated population that is equipped with relevant skills for employment. The supply and quality of workforce skills play an increasingly important role in determining countries’ ability to compete and achieve sustained economic growth at a level sufficiently high to reduce poverty.
- In the absence of sustained economic growth, countries will find it difficult, if not impossible, to attain EFA in a manner that is both financially and socially sustainable, not least because growth (a) generates the funding needed to maintain EFA once attained and to meet the growing demand for post-primary education resulting from UPE, and (b) creates the jobs demanded by the graduates.

The treatment of this theme comprised three sets of interventions: (i) presentation by the invited distinguished guest speaker; (ii) country perspectives by two African ministers of finance on experiences with leveraging education for growth and national development; and (iii) a panel discussion and dialogue with the participants on country perspectives on aligning education to economic and other national development goals.

Presentation by the Invited Distinguished Guest Speaker

This session was chaired by H.E. A. MOTSHEKGA, Minister of Basic Education, South Africa. H.E. Tharman SHANMUGARATNAM, Minister of Finance, Singapore, was the distinguished guest speaker. His presentation provided an excellent example of keeping a simultaneous focus on education and on economic development. Entitled *Investing in a Knowledge-Based Society: East Asia’s Experience*, the presentation focused on Singapore’s strategy for educational development in the context of changing national and global circumstances over the last almost fifty years. At each stage of development, Singapore’s leaders made difficult trade-offs whose cumulative impact was to
transform the education system into one of the best performing systems in the world today. Singapore’s excellence in education is one reason for the country’s extraordinary economic progress over the past few decades.

The Singapore experience is in many respects similar to that of several other well-performing East Asian countries, some of which were former colonies and were at a level of economic development similar to most of Africa at the time of independence. Therefore, while national policies must always first and foremost be rooted in national circumstances, the policy choices made to address the challenges encountered by many East Asian countries are of great relevance to African countries.

In his presentation, the Minister focused on (i) the role of education in transforming Singapore from a developing to a developed country, (ii) education financing; and (iii) lessons learned that may be useful to other countries.

Role of Education

The East Asian countries’ succeeded in creating a virtuous circle between education and economic growth. In Singapore, this process went through three phases to reflect changing national and international conditions:

- **Phase 1 (1959–1978): Survival-driven.** From Singapore became self-governing in 1959 the priority was given to rapid achievement of UPE as a means of creating a common identity and shared aspirations in a multiracial society. The different language streams (Chinese, English, Tamil, and Malay) of the colonial education system were merged into one bilingual national system (English plus one vernacular). Given the shortage of resources, the government followed a pragmatic approach including use of poorly trained teachers, large class size, and double-shifts. Technical and vocational education (TVE) was also given high priority. The TVE system grew rapidly in response to the evolving needs of the economy. Initially small, providing training in basic skills, towards the end of the 1970s TVE accounted for about 20 percent of secondary enrollment, and the breadth and depth of the training provided had expanded very substantially. In addition, two polytechnics providing tertiary level technical education were established during this period, one in 1954 and the second in 1963.

- **Phase 2 (1979–1996): Efficiency-driven.** By the end of the 1970s, Singapore’s initial comparative advantage in low-skilled, labor-intensive manufacturing was gradually eroding, and a shift was made towards more capital-intensive industries. The strategy included attracting multinationals to invest in high-technology operations, and promotion of science and technology research and development activities. To train the labor force for this more complex economy required a revamping of the education system including a more differentiated curriculum to allow them to progress at a pace more suited to their abilities; greater school autonomy; continued strengthening of technical education at the secondary and tertiary levels, including concerted efforts to change traditional negative attitudes towards practical learning; and development of the universities. Also, after having achieved universal primary and lower secondary education during the first “survival phase,” the focus now shifted to quality improvement.
Phase 3 (1996–present): Innovation-driven. Globalization and technological advances cause rapid changes in the competitiveness of nations. Economic growth is now increasingly determined by innovation and application of new ideas, especially in a country devoid of natural resources. To support this knowledge and innovation driven economy required Singapore to shift to an “ability-driven” education strategy aimed to motivate Singaporeans to continually acquire new knowledge and skills and develop a spirit of innovation, enterprise, and risk-taking. Schools are encouraged to build on “niche strengths,” the idea being that every school can be above average in something. The strategy also gives greater emphasis to tertiary education: 90 percent of an age cohort continues beyond secondary education (which ends at grade 10) of which two-thirds do practice-oriented training at the post-secondary level, and about one-third earns university degrees.

Education Finance

Singapore has always given high priority to education, now 25 percent of total government expenditures. While education spending (3.5 percent of GDP) is below the OECD average (5.8 percent), Singapore still ranks on the top of international student learning assessments. The Minister suggested four factors contributing to this result:

- **High system efficiency** achieved by streaming of students to tailor content to different abilities and interests, and class size (40 students) well above the OECD average, giving priority to teacher quality and efficient use of the teachers;
- **High priority to teacher training and motivation**, including comparatively high salaries and generous in-service training opportunities;
- **Allowing universities to charge realistic fees** so that they can recruit the best faculty. Government provides bursaries for middle and low income families; and
- **Attracting private funding for university endowments** facilitated by the government providing dollar-for-dollar matching funding for donations.

Lessons Learned

The Minister emphasized three main lessons:

- **Stay relevant to the labor market**: Practice-oriented technical education at the post-secondary level (after Grade 10 in the Singapore system) remains central also in a knowledge-based economy; avoid mismatch of skills; keep strong focus on science and technology, with equal participation of male and female; and maximize linkages between training institutes, polytechnics, universities, research institutions and industry.
- **Meritocracy and competition help rather than hinder the poor**: Selection into secondary and tertiary education strictly based on performance enhances social mobility, provided that schools in poor neighborhoods receive the same minimum threshold of resources as elsewhere, and special funding is available to expose students from poor families to opportunities outside the school. As a result of this approach the best students at the end of primary education
represent all social strata, with the top 1 percent coming from 64 percent of the country’s schools and the top 5 percent coming from 97 percent of the schools.

The system is only as good as its teachers: The key focus of Singapore’s strategy has been to train, develop and motivate teachers and principals by (i) making teaching a profession of choice (teachers come from the top 30 percent of each cohort); (ii) training future teachers for subject expertise, not just pedagogical skills; (iii) providing intensive in-service training and development through various arrangements, including work attachments in the private sector, sabbaticals for teachers and principals, and scholarships for graduate studies; (iv) paying market rates benchmarked annually on the private sector and subject to annual performance appraisal of teachers; and (v) promotion by merit, not by seniority: youngest principals appointed in their mid-30s, the oldest around age 50.

The Minister concluded by emphasizing the importance of (i) developing competent and motivated teachers and innovative principals; (ii) providing resources for schools to customize their programs according to their students’ needs (“top-down support for bottom-up initiatives”); (iii) shielding education from politics: Education reforms take time and should not be driven by short-term political cycles; and (iv) conscious effort by the government to ensure alignment between education and the economy.

Country Perspectives by Two African Ministers

The ministers of finance of Uganda, H.E Ephraim KAMUNTU, and of Senegal, H.E Abdoulaye DIOP, made short prepared statements on their countries’ perspectives on leveraging education for growth and national development. In the briefing provided by the organizers, the ministers had been invited to reflect on the following: (i) the strength of political leadership for education; (ii) the systems, processes and agencies established to ensure that policies are implemented efficiently and adapted pragmatically to incorporate experience gained as well as to ensure alignment over time between education development and economic growth; (iii) the trade-offs their ministries have to make between ensuring that the education sector get the resources needed to develop the skills required to sustain economic growth, and responding strategically and fairly to the competing demands on the government’s limited budget; and (iv) the extent to which their countries are facing severe imbalances in the labor market with shortages for certain types of skills coexisting with high unemployment for other skills categories.

In his presentation entitled Vision for the Future for Uganda Minister Kamuntu explained his country’s vision for development and the strategies and roadmap being put in place to realize it:

- **Vision**: Transforming Uganda’s economy from one predominantly poor, based on subsistence agriculture, to a modern, competitive and industrialized economy. Key indicators: (i) GDP per capita increases from US$ 440 to at least US$900 (becoming a middle-income country); (ii) Human Development Indicator rises from 0.49 (Uganda ranked 156 out of 179 countries) to at least 0.7 (ranked 100), and (iii) Global Competitive Index improves from 3.35 to 4.0.
Strategies: To achieve this vision, Uganda needs to improve its human capital and its contribution to growth, increase the share of industry and manufacturing in GDP and the share of manufacturing in total export; modernize agriculture by increasing productivity and developing agro-processing facilities; intensify infrastructure development; and improve accessibility to services. For education, this means that Uganda needs a labor force that is highly literate, that masters science and technology and that has the ability to apply this knowledge to innovate and solve problems.

Policy implications: For education to make its contribution requires good policies and committed leadership as well as a sector-wide strategy and budget prioritizing research, education and skills development. To develop and implement such a strategy requires a closer dialogue between the education and finance ministries and greater recognition that education is an integral part of the economic growth agenda, and that for education to fully contribute, it must be part of a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to development.

Minister Kamuntu concluded by prosing three questions for reflection by the participants:

- **Ministry of Education:** What strategy and programs would you propose for our country to achieve this vision; how would you spend the resources differently to achieve these goals?
- **Private sector/civil society** as beneficiaries of investments in human capital, what contributions can you make to human capital development?
- **External partners:** Are you willing to extend your support to all education levels?

The presentation by Minister DIOP emphasized that:

- The conference was very timely, given the growing importance of knowledge for economic growth and the potentially negative impact of the crisis on education financing. The importance of education is well recognized by Senegal which devotes 40 percent of its budget to this sector. The period 1995-2005 was the highest continuous growth period for Senegal since independence (4.4 percent GDP growth per year). Lately growth has declined, impacting negatively on public budgets. But the government is committed to protecting education financing.
- High priority for education is an integral part of Senegal’s Poverty Reduction Strategy, reflecting a strong belief in the role of knowledge, innovation, and entrepreneurship as determinants of economic productivity and competitiveness. To this end, while primary and lower secondary education remains the top education priorities, increased attention is given to practically-oriented technical and vocational training to provide the skills required for potential growth sectors.
- Since 2001, many reforms have been enacted outside the education sector to attract knowledge-intensive industries. This is part of Senegal’s “Accelerated Growth Strategy” which identifies ICT and telecommunication services as one
of five promising growth sectors. The vision is that by 2015, this will help Senegal become an “emerging economy,” with such services contributing 15 percent of GDP. In short, the government clearly recognizes the importance of knowledge as a driver of economic growth, and is initiating particular programs and mechanisms to attract knowledge-intensive economic activities and related investments.

- Severe budget constraints make for difficult trade-offs between the needs of education and other sectors. But the government continues to give high priority to producing the skills needed to attain high, sustained economic growth. However, in Senegal, skill shortages coexist with graduate unemployment and increased efforts are made to improve the match between the training provided and labor market demands, including by promoting a more competence-based training approach, establishing professional training centers for key sectors of the economy and signing of a national convention between the government and the private sector to promote youth employment.

Panel Discussion and Dialogue with the Participants

The presentations by the three ministers were followed by a panel discussion among them and with conference participants, chaired by Ms. EZEKWESILI, World Bank Vice President for the Africa Region. The discussion and interventions by participants may be summarized as follows:

- **Evidence-based rather than politics-driven education policies:** In response to questions about how to shield education from politics, the Singapore Minister of Finance emphasized that education policy choices necessarily are highly political. However, it is important not to “politicize” the education debate, and to ensure that the choices between different policy options are based on solid evidence developed by professionals, and to shield education from politicians promoting policies which are not evidence-based. Experience from Asian countries (including China and India) suggests that it is possible to create a *virtuous political cycle* to support education. For example, in recent years, there has been a growing tendency among poor people to demand better schools from their politicians. Thus, although education change takes time, the democratic process can be used to move education concerns higher up on the political agenda. Furthermore, the Minister underlined the role played in Singapore by education professionals rather than politicians in developing, implementing and evaluating education policies and programs as well as in appointing and evaluating educational professionals.

- **Doing first things first:** The Singapore minister reiterated the importance of getting the basics rights before progressing with other reforms. For Singapore, this meant things such as introducing a common national curriculum; providing everybody with textbooks; selection to sought-after elite schools based on meritocracy; ensuring employment for those trained; and the choice of English as the main language of instruction. This last choice had been politically difficult in the beginning, but has turned out to be an excellent
choice given the importance English has gained as the international language of business, something they had not realized when the choice was made. Other countries (for example, Burkina) argued for the benefits on bilingual education, but underlined that there are many pre-requisites for success (for example, availability of well-trained, bilingual teachers).

- **Central role of teachers:** Several speakers noted with interest the importance given in Singapore to teachers including their high level of pre-service training and access to in-service skills upgrading, opportunities for attachment to industry to gain experience and, especially, their comparatively high salaries. However, it was also noted that Singapore can afford these policies at its present level of economic development. During the “survival-driven” stage, teachers were quite poorly trained and remunerated. Also, the teachers’ performance is evaluated annually, and having served in difficult schools is part of the requirement. Also, teachers in different “cluster schools” share experience.

- **Other possible lessons from Singapore:** In addition to the role of sound policy, visionary leadership, and good teachers, several speakers suggested other possible lessons relevant to their countries including the role of meritocracy, the matching of public funds to private contributions in financing higher education, and the capacity not only to develop but to implement policies. Participants also found the stages of development interesting and useful for their own situation.

Additional comments from various participants include the following:

- Ultimately, the quality of the people is the engine of development, and the capacity to change is closely related with the population’s level of education attainment. The level of education of mothers is particularly important.

- Finance ministers commented that sometimes sector ministers do not sufficiently appreciate the linkages and trade-offs between investing in different sectors, for example, the importance for education of investments in health, water and sanitation. Also, in many countries, there is an important mismatch between the type of training provided and that demanded by the market. More needs to be done by education and training ministries to adjust outputs to labor market demands and to ensure that additional resources are invested more effectively.

- In many African countries, the private sector is starting to respond to demand for education. For example, Uganda has now more private than public universities.

- Good policies are important, but are of little help if a country lacks the capacity to implement them. The capacity to implement is often the main constraint in advancing political reform in Africa.

Finally, several speakers observed that a high degree of coordination between ministers of finance and of education is uncommon and that the sense of shared responsibility for education is often weak. These issues are addressed in the next part of the conference agenda.
CHAPTER 2

Mutual Accountability of Ministers of Finance and of Education

One key lesson from countries which have been successful in aligning individuals’ educational aspirations and the nation’s wider objectives for social, political and economic development is the crucial importance of strong national political leadership. To exercise such leadership requires close cooperation between the ministries of finance and of education, and institutional capacity in these ministries to promote evidenced-based dialogue on programs and budgets. The next session on the conference’s program was designed to stimulate a dialogue on how this shared responsibility is handled.

Prepared Presentations by Ministers

The session comprised one presentation by a minister of education, H.E. Marie-Odile BONKOUNGOU from Burkina, and one by a minister of finance, H.E. Athanase MATENDA KYELU from DRC. The session was chaired by Ms. Zeinab EL-BAKRI, Vice President, AfDB. The briefing provided by the organizers suggested that the ministers include comment on the following questions:

■ Does the Ministry of Education have the technical capacity needed to prepare evidence-based education budget proposals as basis for substantive consultations with the Ministry of Finance on why the request for resources is justified within the broader context of national education priorities and budget constraints? Similarly, does the Ministry of Finance have the technical capacity needed in the field of education and skills development to engage in such consultations?

■ To what extent are existing institutional mechanisms able to facilitate such consultations as well as with other key education stakeholders such as employers and teachers, to ensure that the policies adopted and the resources allocated reflect the whole government’s policies and priorities for human capital development?

■ To what extent is existing accountability arrangements—for example, through monitoring by the government or parliament—able to ensure that, within the government’s budget constraints, education receives the resources needed to
meet national education objectives, and that these resources are used efficiently?
- What are the main issues faced by the two ministries in their interaction with development partners on education and training matters?

The presentation by Minister BONKOUNGOU focused on the following points:

- **Mutual accountability mechanisms:** Education is a high-priority sector in Burkina. This is reflected in key policy statements such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy and education policy documents. There are also several coordination mechanisms including a monitoring committee for the ten year education program chaired by the Prime Minister and joint supervision of the program by the government and its external partners. There is also collaboration between the education and finance ministries at different stages in the annual budget preparation process. This helps ensure that budget choices reflect national priorities. The development partners support these priorities, contributing in 2009 about 24 percent of the overall education budget.

- **Main problems:** The crisis has led to a reduction in external budget support, and decline in aid predictability as several financing agreements are ending. Rigidity in the procedures of some partners is also a problem. Internally, weak financial management capacity at the decentralized level constrains implementation.

- **Main challenges:** How to mitigate the negative impact of the crisis on education so as to maintain its contribution to economic growth? Part of the response resides in ensuring effective application of good governance principles in the education sector; and making sure that the decentralization of education is taken adequately into account during the budget preparation process.

- **Need to maintain progress:** The education progress made by African countries in recent years must be protected during the crisis. Beyond the crisis, countries must continue to invest in the education sector as a vital foundation for the future.

The presentation of Minister MATENDA KYELU focused on the following points:

- **Impact of the financial crisis:** The crisis has a major impact on public financing which will affect most sectors including education and poses a serious risk to the attainment of the MDGs, especially in post-conflict countries where the constraints on education funding is particularly severe. In turn, this means a risk to these countries broader development prospects, considering the key role education plays in facilitating the transition from conflict to peace and in helping the countries break the vicious cycle where lack of educational and employment opportunities lead to hopelessness among youth, engendering new conflicts.

- **Need for national strategies to address impact of crisis:** In addition to Poverty Reduction Strategies, countries need to elaborate national development strategies that imperatively need to take advantage of the role the global economy can play as an engine for economic growth and poverty reduction. In
DRC, two major strategic plans respond to this need, and define five priority areas for action. Education is given a clear priority as shown by the fact that its share of the government budget increased from 1.9 percent in 1999 to 14 percent in 2009.

- **Mutual responsibility of finance and education ministers:** This includes ensuring both the allocation of sufficient resources to education and the effective use of these resources. This responsibility has to be exercised in a context where the sector faces very severe resource constraints in all areas, where teachers lack motivation despite the fact that almost 80 percent of the budget is used for teacher salaries, and where—given DRC’s low primary school enrollment ratio—the highest priority must continue to be given to primary education, despite the pressure to expand post-primary education.

- **Strategy to adapt to fight the crisis:** Given the critical role played by education in national development, it is imperative to give increased priority to this sector. In particular, two avenues merit attention: (i) more effective use of existing public resources: even in DRC, not all resources allocated to the education sector are used; and (ii) better harmonization of external aid. The government and the development partners must share the same vision for the development of the education sector, and the partners should establish a special trust fund for countries with low enrollment ratios, especially fragile/post-conflict countries.

### Dialogue among Participants

The discussion following the two ministers’ presentation touched on the following points:

- **The emergence of good practices:** The emergence of good practices for defining priorities and establishing more joint accountability in achieving national education development goals including the importance of the government establishing clear priorities, and of ministers presenting these priorities to parliament for discussion and decision. Some stressed the importance of knowledge-sharing on good practices in this area.

- **The trade-offs between different levels of education:** Some ministers expressed concerns about the neglect of parts of the education system (for example, adult literacy and other pro-poor education spending) as demand pressures for post-primary education increases. This could also pose risks to policies for free primary education, quality improvements and attainment of EFA goals. Private provision of education has an increased role to play, especially at the post-primary level. In general, countries need to establish clear national education priorities.

- **Shortage of teachers:** This is a problem in many countries, leading to large class-size and difficulty in introducing reforms, for example, to use national languages since success requires good, bilingual teachers.

- **Institutional capacity:** Some ministers emphasized the need to enhance the capacity of decentralized structures for them to participate in the decision and accountability processes on the allocation and use of education resources.
However, there were practically no comments on the current *technical capacity* of ministries of education and of finance to prepare well-argued education budget proposals and to conduct substantive consultations on such proposals. Nor was there much discussion of existing coordination mechanisms and mutual accountability arrangements.

In summing up the discussion, the chair person emphasized (i) not only ministers of education and of finance but the entire government needs to share the responsibility for education development, including for defining the trade-offs in resource use between different levels and types of education; (ii) the need for knowledge-sharing on good practices in ensuring such mutual accountability; (iii) the risk of not reaching many of the EFA goals in 2015, and (iv) the need to mobilize all resources including from communities and the private sector to maintain the progress towards these goals.
CHAPTER 3

Education Priorities in a Challenging Environment

Because of factors such as the major education progress achieved since 2000 and the current global economic crisis, the policies needed during the last five years of the 2000-2015 period to reach the 2015 EFA goals will in many respect be quite different from those yielding the progress gained since 2000. The purpose of this session was to highlight the main findings of the 2009 EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) with respect to progress towards the EFA goals, to explore the evolving nature of the education policies needed to maintain the momentum towards UPE, to galvanize progress toward the other EFA goals, and to suggest ways of aligning post-primary education more closely to national goals for economic growth and competitiveness.

The presentation was made by Kevin Watkins, Director of the GMR, followed by prepared interventions by three ministers of education highlighting challenges faced by their countries in implementing EFA programs. These four interventions were followed by dialogue with participants, including a concluding summary by the session’s chair, H.E. Geraldine NAMIREMBE BITAMAZIRE, Minister of Education, Uganda.

Progress and Challenges in Meeting the EFA Goals in a Changing Environment

Mr. Watkins’ presentation focused on the following points:

- Education for All is not just one of the MDGs but also plays a key role in unlocking progress towards the other MDGs and, especially, contributes towards reducing extreme poverty, child and maternal mortality, and malnutrition. In addition, education helps advance democracy and citizenship, and builds skills needed to compete in the knowledge-based global economy.
- Since 2000, education has been a success story, especially the progress towards UPE. The progress is explained by several factors: Stronger leadership, increased and more predictable financing, implementation of key anti-poverty measures, more equitable resource allocations across regions, and improved governance. However, the challenges to achieving UPE remain daunting: large number of out-of-school children, high dropout rates, low quality, severe teacher shortages, low teacher morale, and deeply entrenched inequalities among income groups. Beyond primary education, there has been relatively little progress towards the other EFA goals.
While external aid for education has increased since 2000, in recent years, commitments have stagnated or declined and globally donors are seriously under-delivering on their past commitments. The economic crisis in donor countries weakens political support for aid, including for the FTI which has a limited support base, relying on a few donors for a high share of its support.

Recent projections suggest serious decline in economic growth in SSA. Given that increased education spending has been a driving force behind the progress towards UPE since 2000, and the fact that perhaps as much as two-thirds of the increase in education budgets were explained by accelerated economic growth, the slowdown in growth could have serious negative impact on education budgets. This negative impact would be reinforced by decline in private spending resulting from reduced household income and remittances.

To protect education gains during the crisis requires responses at both the national and international level. At the national level, governments need to strengthen their commitment to poverty reduction and equity, monitor closely the impacts of the crisis on budgets, social indicators, and vulnerable groups, strengthen the pro-poor focus of fiscal policies, and scale up support for social protection measures. At the international level, more attention needs to be given to help ease budget pressures in SSA. This requires strong and early aid response, for example, front-loading of aid could play an important counter-cyclical role by mitigating the negative impact of the crisis on domestic budgets. Donors could consider an enhanced role for FTI as a mechanism for counter-cyclical funding.

Perspectives from the Trenches of Implementation

Mr. Watkins’ presentation was followed by three prepared presentations from the ministers of education from, respectively, the Central African Republic (CAR), H.E. Ambroise ZAWA, Sao Tome and Principe, H.E. Jorge de BOM JESUS and Rwanda, H.E. Daphrosa GAHAKWA.

In his presentation, Minister Zawa emphasized:

- Due to civil unrest, education in CAR has been stagnant for about 15 years. Some progress has taken place recently thanks to resumption of aid under FTI. If aid were to stop because of the economic crisis, this would be a major setback. Even now, teacher payments rely heavily on fees paid by parents. This means that access of children of poor families, especially girls, is severely constrained.

- Post-conflict countries such as CAR face particularly difficult problems in mobilizing the resources required to rebuild their education system and start making up the progress missed in the period of civil unrest. Therefore, given the role education plays in building national unity and peace as well as in producing the skills needed to restart the economy, education needs special attention by the government as well as the external partners.

Minister de BOM JESUS emphasized:
Recognizing the importance of education for national development, his country initiated in 2001 a comprehensive reform process including curriculum reform and teacher training, and abolition of double-shift teaching. The focus is on EFA, but there is need for urgent attention to post-primary education (only 15 percent of the cohort completes secondary education) and to education quality.

The ministry of education has good cooperation with both the ministry of finance and its external partners in developing and implementing its education reform.

Minister GAHAKWA emphasized:

- Rwanda has already been trying to learn from Singapore’s experience. One of the constraints on expanding education has been the continued very high population growth resulting from the failure to rapidly reduce fertility levels as done in East Asian countries. One reason for this is the low admission and high dropout rate of girls in the past. The duration of basic education has now been extended to nine years. But because of the shortage of facilities and teachers, this has put enormous pressure on the system, reinforced by the fact that many former dropouts now want to re-enroll to benefit from the extended basic education cycle.

- Rwanda still aims to attain all the MDGs, and to become an “advanced economy” by 2020. However, primary education is not sufficient to provide the skills needed to compete in the global, knowledge-based economy. There is an urgent need to expand post-primary education and, especially, to “fast track” the renewal and development of TVET. The main problem is mobilizing the financing required to do this while at the same time protecting the progress made towards UPE. Education is both a right and an indispensable tool and catalyst for development. However, the question is how to finance it? Continued support from the development partners is very important, especially during the downturn. But there is a need for new-thinking and innovation with respect to education financing.

Dialogue among Participants

The four interventions were followed by an animated discussion among the participants.

- Tanzania faces strong pressure on secondary education, given the country’s rapid progress towards UPE in recent years and the low existing capacity of its secondary schools. Since 2006, the government has increased its efforts to address this problem, but the challenges are daunting: Three to four times as many teachers as are currently available will be required, and there are severe shortages of textbooks and science labs. Financing is a major problem, especially for post-primary education. Tanzania has started to introduce e-learning as one option to manage costs but the development of post-primary education can be expected to pose major challenges in the years to come.
Burundi’s progress towards the 2015 EFA targets is seriously constrained by a shortage of financing. The abolition of school fees resulted in a major enrollment surge which aggravated the shortage of teachers and classrooms. Teachers are now being trained on the job. Due to capacity constraints, only 40 percent of primary school graduates can access secondary education, the remaining 60 percent have no education opportunities beyond primary school. The government has created a ministry for TVET and is appealing to development partners for support.

Cameroon underlined that the constraints on developing education goes beyond financing. The country faces severe shortage of trained teachers, and weak capacity for planning, policy development, data collection and management.

The Central African Republic emphasized again that post-conflict countries have special pressing needs, and appreciate the support received from FTI;

Mali stressed the importance of investing more in ICT as a cross-cutting investment benefitting all sectors.

Sao Tome and Principe also stressed the shortage as well as high costs of secondary school teachers. They are trying to address the shortage by bringing in as teachers technical personnel from other sectors.

In summing up, the chair stressed the challenges faced in meeting the pressure on secondary education, and in reforming and expanding TVET. There is also a need for more realism about the possibility to reach all the 2015 EFA targets. Even if good progress has been made by many countries towards UPE, the progress towards some of the other EFA targets has been much more modest. Finally, many important reforms still need to be made in post-primary education.
CHAPTER 4

Skills Development for Economic Growth in Africa

This session dealt with the urgent need for greater attention to developing the skills needed to support economic growth in an international context where the quality of the workforce plays an increasingly important role in determining countries’ ability to compete and achieve sustained economic growth. The session comprised (i) three presentations, (ii) interventions from three African ministers, and (iii) a dialogue among participants. Each of these three segments is summarized below. The session was chaired by H.E. Sanoussi TOURE, minister of finance, Mali.

Presentations

Shahid YUSUF of the World Bank Institute made a comprehensive presentation on Economic Growth and the Role of Skills, focusing on the following themes:

- The experience of successful countries shows that export-led industrialization remains a good bet, with the state taking the lead in developing and managing institutions, and promoting competitiveness, minimizing coordination failures, and maintaining sound macro-economic policies. But industrialization needs to be underpinned by development of physical infrastructure, domestic savings, sound financial systems and foreign direct investments (FDI) to accelerate technology transfer and link up export industries to global value chains.

- It is desirable to transition rapidly from resource-based and low-tech products to medium and higher-tech manufacturing. Productivity gains are achieved through “agglomeration economies” in major urban industrial centers and through knowledge. These two factors interact to generate ideas and disseminate technology. For small open economies, there is no obvious substitute for trade as a source of demand growth. Data for the Republic of Korea; Singapore; and Taiwan, China on changes over the last 20 years in the top five export industries illustrate well this rapid shift from low-tech, labor-intensive products to higher-tech manufacturing.

- Education and skill development play vital supporting roles in this process by developing (i) a disciplined, literate and trainable workforce; (ii) entrepreneurial talent and expertise to manage the economy, create and staff effective organizations, plan urbanization and operate equipment and
infrastructure; and (iii) the ability to absorb and assimilate technology gained through FDI, trade and other channels so as to upgrade industry and diversify exports.

- The importance of skills as drivers of economic growth is increasing. Between 1970 and 1999, the transition from light manufacturing to more sophisticated industries, expansion of business services, commercialization of agriculture, and spread in the use of ICT have increased the skill content of most economic activities and, in turn, the returns to investing in higher education. Innovation is actively sought through more research and development, by inculcating a culture of creativity in schools, and by improving the quality of the labor force.

- The deepening of knowledge is achieved by factors such as: (i) raising the quality of learning, attracting the talented into teaching, rewarding good teachers and holding them accountable for student learning; (ii) improving curriculum and the examination process, and collecting and disseminating widely information on the performance of schools to promote competition among them; (iii) promoting closer cooperation between tertiary institutions and the business sector to align training and research more to labor market demands, (iv) greater public support for R&D activities conducted by private and public research institutions and think tanks; and (v) promoting an environment conducive to entrepreneurial activities, encouraging expansion of activities which are research intensive and likely sources of innovation, and stimulating local and international networking among knowledge workers via open innovation systems.

- Skill and knowledge deepening is vital to SSA because of the region’s: (i) limited growth of manufacturing industries and manufactured exports. The share of manufacturing in GDP is quite low in SSA and, contrary to East Asia, there has been little change in the export mix over the last ten years; (ii) stagnating at a low level of agricultural productivity; (iii) continued dependency on oil, natural resource-based products, and tourism, which offer limited potential for growth; and (iv) huge future challenges posed by trends such as climate change, continued rapid population growth, food insecurity, and rapid urbanization.

- Education, training, and research are increasingly the drivers of twenty-first century economic growth. To harness the power of knowledge and ensure close alignment between training and research outputs and skill needs in the economy necessitates a system-wide approach. Key universities have a decisive role to play. But to play this role effectively, they will need to be highly selective of both faculty and students, autonomous, competitive, and well-funded. They will also need to work closely with the business community and with other institutions. But manpower planning has its risks: matching future labor market demand is difficult.

- Finally, knowledge and skills are necessary but not sufficient: they must be complemented by capital investments in both hard (transport, water, energy, irrigation) and soft (education, medical, research) infrastructure, financed through a combination of domestic savings, FDI, and development assistance. Even skills and capital are not the whole story: international markets will
determine potential demands; entrepreneurial domestic firms will drive production, exports and innovation; macro and sociopolitical stability will affect the business environment, the capacity to attract FDI and the ability to avoid brain drain; and the capacity to implement policy is as important as the quality of policies.

The presentation of Boukary SAVADOGO of the AfDB was entitled *Skills Development for Youth Employment and Productivity Growth in the Informal sector: What are the Options?* The presentation emphasized:

- The important and multi-faceted role played by education and training in poverty reduction, covering ethical, economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions. Education plays a key function in shaping the moral, ethical and esthetic values of society, in preparing individuals for employment and citizenship and in facilitating mutual respect and social and cultural integration in the society.

- The urgency of increased attention to the problems faced by youth in Africa. Due to the slow demographic transition, and contrary to other regions, Africa’s population is becoming more youthful, and this is projected to continue for at least the next 20 years. Compared to other regions, youth in SSA have high levels of illiteracy, low levels of skills relevant to current labor market demands, and higher levels of un- and under-employment. They are also more affected by HIV/AIDS and civil conflicts, resulting in a high proportion of youth being afflicted by AIDS, being orphans or being or having been child soldiers.

- Because of the stagnation of the formal sector, the informal sector accounts for more than 70 percent of nonagricultural employment and has in recent years increased its share of both output and employment. The sector is very heterogeneous, characterized by low set-up costs and entry requirements, and small-scale operations each employing only a few workers in labor intensive activities. The workers have very limited if any formal education. While the sector has provided relief for the majority of youth who have not gained formal sector employment, workers in the informal sector are often unskilled and low-paid, and have very limited work security and social mobility. However, training and incentive programs developed to support the informal sector have had limited success.

- The AfDB has financed a variety of education, social funds, micro-finance, and post conflict operations aimed at addressing directly or indirectly skills issues in the informal sector and among youth. In education, these have supported general education as well as TVET with increased focus on ICT and competence-based training, using labor market information to guide the design. Some programs have targeted girls and women with diversified vocational training; others have provided second chance learning opportunities to youth who are without primary education. Social fund and micro-finance operations have promoted community development and employment through capacity building at local levels and support for income generation activities and for basic social services. Particular attention has been
given to helping groups who so far have had limited access to financial services, especially women and youth. Finally, the AfDB has financed post-conflict and reconstruction projects that have emphasized skills training and employment creation, especially for youth and ex-combatants.

- The way forward should be built on a three-prong approach. First, enhance the knowledge base by conducting in-depth studies to assess the needs for capacity development in the informal sector. Second, support countries in the development of policies, strategies, and action plans aimed at mainstreaming youth employment as well as informal sector development in national development strategies. Third, support countries in their efforts to implement such strategies, especially those geared to increase the employment and income generation capacity of the informal sector by skills upgrading, quality improvement of goods and services, facilitating access to finance and promoting youth entrepreneurship.

Richard WALTHER, consultant to ADEA, presented the conclusions of a set of studies conducted by ADEA for its 2008 biennale conference. Entitled The Role and Importance of Technical Education and Vocational Training in relation to Employment and the World of Work, the presentation underlined that to get out of the poverty trap, Africa needs to transform its economy from being largely a subsistence economy to one of growth and development. To achieve this, it is necessary to upgrade the skills acquired by all and particularly by the youth. The studies show that the skills upgrading cannot be done only through formal education and training, but calls for an approach that recognizes and validates a diversity of mechanisms and programs, often provided by the public sector, but in close partnership with economic, social, and regional actors, who understand the training needs of their constituencies. In particular, the situation of vocational training in African countries suggests action along the following lines:

- **Need for an integrated training system.** In most African countries, to the extent youth find work, it is mainly in the informal economy. Despite this fact, the training and other mechanisms designed to help youth find work largely target the minority who gain formal sector employment. Countries must develop systems integrating all the various nonformal and informal paths towards apprenticeship and training followed by the majority of young people and provided by a variety of professional organizations, NGOs, and public and private institutions.

- **Need for partnership.** The variety of existing training providers demonstrates that setting up of an integrated system cannot succeed without the active participation of all the professional, economic, and social partners concerned. In a number of countries, these partners are already engaged in defining the need for skills in different local settings and in providing the training. They must increasingly become the partners of public authorities, so as to continuously adapt the training programs to respond to the evolving labor market demands.

- **Need for diversified training.** A large share of young people miss out on skills development, for example, primary school dropouts; primary school completers too young to work; various marginalized rural groups; girls who
are highly under-represented in training programs; low-educated ex-combatants; the handicapped and other vulnerable groups. To respond to the diverse needs of such groups requires both flexible and diversified paths of training. Many countries have begun to develop such diverse paths. However, to be successful, such formal, nonformal, and informal training paths must lead to recognized and certified qualifications.

- **Need for financing.** An integrated system of skills development requires appropriate financing. So far, professional training receives very limited public funding and whatever is received is almost exclusively for formal training. An effective policy to help young people find work requires a significant overhaul of the government’s budgetary priorities as well as development of modes of co-financing by employers and others including development partners.

- **Need to be competitive in global markets.** A new integrated skills development system is indispensable to improve African countries’ productivity and enable them to compete in the knowledge-based global economy. This means enabling young people to acquire knowledge and skills needed to become full members of today’s globalized world. Ensuring that the life-skills learning needs of all young people are met is one of the six EFA goals as well as an important part of the MDG poverty reduction goal since upgrading the skills of young people facilitates their transition from childhood to work. Finally, skilled labor helps accelerate economic growth which is required to generate the resources needed to finance attainment and maintenance of primary education and the other EFA targets.

**Comments by Ministers on the Challenge of Developing Skills for Growth**

Three African ministers commented on the challenges of producing the skills needed for economic growth.

**H.E. Mwinyihaji MAKAME**, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, Zanzibar underlined:

- Satisfaction with the importance given to skills development and with the way the issues had been addressed by the three speakers.
- That economic growth in most African countries is closely linked to agricultural development which, in turn, is constrained by the shortage of skilled technicians at all levels, from short-term training to low and middle level certified technicians to specialists trained at the graduate and post-graduate levels.
- To stimulate agricultural development, African countries need a comprehensive approach including reforming and revitalizing technical training institutes, developing innovative funding mechanisms for such institutions, and establishing micro-financing and credit schemes to support agricultural development.

**H.E. Rose GAHIRU**, Minister of Vocational Training and Literacy, Burundi noted that:
The scarcity of resources for education and training is partly the fault of the education and training sector since there is a great miss-match between the type of training provided and that demanded in the labor market;

The lack of balance between resources devoted to, respectively, general education and TVET, the latter being severely underfunded. This constrains economic development and even the ability to mobilize public funding, given that those who have undergone professional training are more likely to find work and pay taxes than those who have not received such training; and

Youth unemployment is a serious and rising problem that should worry African politicians. Access to more and better quality TVET is part of the solution.

H.E. Ato Demeke MEKONNEN, Minister of Education, Ethiopia, stressed that the development of general education and of TVET is very critical to national development and that the growth of the two subsectors is also closely inter-related. In this regard, the quality and relevance of education is very critical. The minister summarized key aspects of what Ethiopia is doing to address challenges faced, including:

- Strengthening of the national capacity to adapt technologies developed elsewhere and applying them to conditions in Ethiopia.
- Addressing serious “attitudinal constraints” since parents are expecting and encouraging their children to choose academic secondary and university education rather than technical education and training.
- A major current challenge in developing the type of skills needed to generate youth employment is to break this miss-match between the type of education demanded by parents and students and the type of skills needed by the economy.

Dialogue among Participants and Summing Up for the Day

The six interventions were followed by a rich discussion of the following topics:

- Many participants emphasized the urgency of developing and implementing effective strategies to address the “youth unemployment bomb.” Some said that strategies had been developed, but were poorly implemented. Initiatives to develop training opportunities for youth often run into funding problems preventing purchase of needed equipment and hiring of trained teachers.
- One problem in addressing the general negative attitude towards TVET is to change the perception of TVET as “second rate, dead-end” education offering limited possibilities for further education. Governments need to make deliberate policies and investment choices in favor of TVET, and donors should be more forthcoming with support for countries having developed sound training policies.
- Countries need stronger and more visionary political leadership, focusing on the education and training policies needed in the medium to long-term. When EFA is achieved, and the “survival” stage is completed, what should be done to ensure sustained economic growth? In many countries, 80-90 percent of the employment is in the informal sector. What type of education and training
policies will help accelerate economic growth in a sustainable manner? One participant said it is time to get serious and stop talking and start doing. “We are the leaders, the elite; we have the responsibility to show leadership.” Education is the great equalizer and a critical enabling factor to for example, empower girls and women and to fight HIV/AIDS.

The recent rapid progress towards UPE means that a high share of primary school graduates will neither find employment, nor an opportunity for continued education at the post-primary level. It is very important to provide them with training opportunities to increase their chances of gainful self-employment.

In their response to some of the questions, the presenters underlined that:

- Investments in skills development is a necessary but not sufficient condition for growth. Such investments need to be accompanied with capital investments as well as good policies both with respect to aligning skills development to labor market demands and, more generally, to creating a good business climate.
- More needs to be done for agriculture and, especially, to improve productivity. However, this will prove difficult if countries do not accelerate industrialization so that gainful employment is created for those who need to leave agriculture.
- Singapore has been very successful in improving the attitude towards TVET. However, a successful strategy must include many elements, such as offering post-secondary opportunities to avoid that TVET becomes “dead-end” training, cooperating closely with industry to focus TVET programs on areas with good employment prospects; and conducting effective information campaigns to counter the negative perception of TVET.
- Countries such as the Republic of Korea and Singapore achieved major progress in the education and training sector although they devoted a smaller share of GDP to this sector than does on average SSA. Factors explaining this success include their sustained, long-term economic growth (which resulted in sustained growth in education budgets), success in providing flexible training programs aligned to the rapidly changing skills needs of the economy, and rapid demographic transition.
- In summary, effective skills development policies and programs at all levels—from basic short-term programs aimed at improving productivity in the informal sector to advanced programs at the tertiary level—are key to innovation, growth, and poverty reduction. However, to be successful, such programs cannot be implemented in a vacuum; they represent one indispensable element of a set of economic, social, and industrial development policies. And to ensure that these national policies are aligned requires strong and well-coordinated national political leadership.

In summing up the day’s discussion, Shantayanan DEVARAJAN, chief economist of the Africa Region of the World Bank, drew attention to some interesting aspects of the “Singapore story”: 
To implement successful education and training policies is not the role only of education and training ministries; it is everybody’s business to create the virtuous circle required to align education and training provision with economic and social development needs.

Countries that want to develop TVET need to change the negative attitudes and values regarding TVET. If pupils are “streamed” as in Singapore into academic and vocational/technical streams, countries need to ensure that they give opportunities for both groups of pupils to progress in the system.

It is also interesting to note that, in Singapore, meritocracy was an equalizer, stimulating social mobility among different social and income groups. However, for this to work, selection needs to be protected from political interference.

As regards education financing, Singapore gives priority in public financing to basic education and TVET while substantial fees are charged for higher education; it also uses scholarships to help deserving students, particularly those from poor families.

Singapore’s policy to attract the best talents to the teaching profession, including through comparatively high salaries, is very interesting. However, it is also important to note that (i) salaries depend on performance which is monitored and evaluated, (ii) a trade-off has been made to pay teachers well, but to have a class-size well above the OECD average, and (iii) during the “survival stage,” salaries were modest and a number of cost-saving policies were put in place to ensure rapid achievement of universal primary education and adult literacy.

It is also significant to note that there was no reference in the Singapore presentation to foreign aid as a factor in its success, and that Singapore spends a lower share of its GDP on education than the average OECD country (even less than the average for SSA). The focus was on effective use of available resources and, with respect to foreign aid, to attract advice, training, technologies and R&D activities that could help rapidly move the industry from low-tech, labor intensive activities to high-tech manufacturing and services activities where Singapore could be competitive in export markets.

During the crisis, external aid has a role to play in protecting education gains made by Africa during the last decade. In fact, these gains demonstrate that the sector has a fairly good track record in terms of effective use of aid, something that should help maintain external support for the sector during the crisis.
To produce the skills needed to compete successfully in the increasingly knowledge-based global economy is a difficult challenge for low-income SSA countries. Barriers include modest coverage of tertiary education, poor match between the training provided and labor market demands, and the erosion of quality of training during the economic decline of the 1980s and 1990s. Efforts to address such barriers are frustrated by severe budgetary constraints that make it difficult to recruit and retain highly qualified academic staff and to provide high cost specialized equipment. In addition, the size of national labor markets for specialized skills is very small, resulting from a combination of a very small part of the labor force engaged in the modern sector and many SSA countries with small populations (in 2006, 14 countries had two million inhabitants or less). This makes it difficult to provide cost-effective training in most specialized areas.

The purpose of this session was to explore how increased regional cooperation in delivering high-quality training and research could help ease the above type of barriers. The need to harness the potential benefits from such cooperation has been underlined in the African Union’s Second Decade for Education in Africa (2006 – 2015). Indeed, for many small countries, increased pan-African cooperation could be one of the few avenues available for providing cost-effective training of many types of specialists. The briefing provided by the organizers suggested that the two presenters discuss:

- How to establish effective collaboration between national institutions in utilization of specialized staff and equipment, and in quality assurance, as well as in fostering university partnerships for developing research capacity?
- How to enhance cooperation with countries in other regions in developing regional capacity, especially in science and technology. How to design and implement these types of partnerships so that African countries build and sustain the training and research capacity they need to address their high priority development needs?
What is the role of regional/subregional institutions? In the 1980s and 1990s, several such institutions were created but failed (especially in Francophone Africa). What can be learned from past experiences?

What is the role of private training providers and public/private partnerships in covering African countries’ training and research needs?

Apart from actions on the supply side to facilitate regional cooperation in training and research, what actions are required on the demand side with respect to, for example, regional labor markets for academic staff and highly qualified labor, and in use of research outputs or training material developed by other African countries?

Finally, how to achieve more effective collaboration among countries in ensuring general availability of affordable training materials at all levels of education?

Presentations

The two presentations were made by Mamadou NDOYE, former Executive Secretary of ADEA, and Njabulo NDEBELE, President, the Association of African Universities (AAU). This was followed by a prepared intervention from H.E. Alex TETTEY-ENYO, Minister of Education of Ghana. The session was chaired by H.E. Mamphone KHAKETLA, minister of education and training, Lesotho.

Mr. Nodye’s presentation was entitled: Regional Collaboration in Education and Training: What are the Experiences, Value Added and Choice of Strategies? It focused on the following points:


The joint endeavors have had multiple objectives and functions, for example, promoting policy dialogue and development of common strategies; enhancing coordination and harmonization of programs and diplomas; stimulating advocacy, knowledge-exchange and innovation; facilitating mobility among students and academic staff; and conducting joint training and/or research programs. Leading objectives have been to promote division of labor, economies of scale, and optimization of use of scarce resources including expensive equipment and highly qualified staff. The strategies have ranged from creating intergovernmental institutions or consortiums to giving national institutions a regional or continent-wide vocation.

The outcomes of such joint endeavors have been mixed. On the positive side, they have provided forums for consultations on and coordination of policies, strategies, and programs. They have also helped (i) Create “social capital” by helping develop a climate of consultations, collaboration and integration; (ii) Promote sharing of “good practices” and technical expertise; (iii) Develop
agreement on equivalences between diplomas and titles, and (iv) Establish regional “centers of excellence” and joint education research and evaluation networks.

However, the joint endeavors have also encountered many problems, including (i) Low implementation of many continent-wide and regional initiatives due to lack of resources and weak political engagement from member states. Also many solid evidenced-based research outcomes have not been translated into applied policies; (ii) Low financial contribution from member states has made programs very aid dependent. In turn, donors have been weary of committing to long-term financing for initiatives that may not be financially sustainable without government financing; and (iii) In addition to weak political support and low financing, implementation may also have been constrained by factors such as reluctance to “yield” national sovereignty; language barriers; communication problems in this vast continent; problems of governance and possibly external pressures.

Despite past problems, the new context of rapidly increasing importance of knowledge, research, and innovation as drivers of economic growth makes increased pan-African cooperation indispensable and urgent, especially in the area of education, training, and research. No country has the critical mass to do it alone. However, more effective and sustainable approaches need to be developed. In particular, stronger political support is required. Promising approaches include (i) Strengthening well-performing national institutions to become regional centers of excellence in areas key to Africa’s development; (ii) Creating regional thematic networks/inter-country “nodes” to promote collaboration and exchange of technical expertise and knowledge in areas key to enhancing education quality; (iii) More support for the African Union (AU) and the regional economic communities and better follow-up on decision made at AU Heads of States meetings, (iv) Fostering a climate of emulation of good practices, and of timely delivery and high performance expectations, and (v) Establishment of new modalities for more effective and sustainable financing of regional activities.

Mr. Ndebele’s presentation was entitled: Strengthening African Tertiary Education through Regional Cooperation: Successes, Challenges and Options for the Way Forward. It focused on the following points:

- Three major positive continent-wide trends should help foster a better climate for cooperation: More elected governments, decline in transnational conflicts, and a decade of solid growth and strengthening of market economies. But broad challenges to sustained development remain, including achieving greater social stability, coherence and public trust by delivering on electoral mandates; sustaining the trend towards peace and stability through stronger regional collaborations; and supporting entrepreneurial trends through policy and regulatory innovations.

- Created in 1967, the AAU has a highly diversified membership, accounting for 213 universities in 45 countries. The secretariat is in Ghana and the AU has recently recognized AAU as the lead organization for higher education in
Africa. AAU’s work program covers higher education leadership and management; staff and student mobility; research and innovation; and institutional development.

- Key conditions for success of this type of regional collaboration include: (i) The ability to focus on well-defined regional and continent-wide issues that have been identified by synthesizing concerns brought forward by individual institutions; (ii) Solid preparation, timely and high quality response to membership needs; and (iii) An emerging sense of regional competitiveness from shared successes.

- In response to the great diversity of institutions and large distances, regional associations may exist within the AAU umbrella. The Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) is a good example. It was endorsed by SADC ministers of education in 2003 and now includes 45 of SADC’s 63 public universities. The program is organized around research, networking, dialogue and student exchange. Most costs are born by donors.

- The “University Science, Humanities and Engineering Partnerships in Africa” (USHEPIA) is another interesting cooperative program, comprising a staff development partnership among eight universities in eight southern and eastern African countries. The program has supported post-graduate studies, producing 40 PhDs who have all remained in Africa. However, there are questions whether this type of collaboration can be scaled up, given is heavy reliance on donor financing.

- Collaboration among African universities offer many benefits, including spreading centers of excellence and good practices across the region; facilitating mobility and choice among staff and students; promote public-private sector partnerships and regional diversity; comparison with others will stimulate competition among institutions and national “self-reflection.” But cross-boarder systems will complement, not replace national systems.

- Finally some questions: Southern Africa and East Africa have in place emerging regional collaboration bodies. Is there political support for similar developments in West and Central Africa? Can increased cross-border cooperation live comfortably with national sovereignty?

Mr. TETTEY-ENYO prepared intervention noted that:

- Expansion and improved effectiveness of pan-African cooperation is paramount to the region’s development, and offers many opportunities for countries to support each other. Most progress in improving cooperation has been in the political and economic domains; much less has been achieved in education. Ghana has tried to learn from other countries in the formulation of reforms, and Ghanaian officials have visited a number of countries in this regard. Officials from other countries have also visited Ghana for the same purpose. Nevertheless, the level of pan-African cooperation in the field of education is still very low.

- There needs to be a greater realization that African countries face many common problems that can be addressed more effectively through joint
programs. To advance, policy makers and professional need to be more confident in sharing their country’s weakness and successes thus stimulating learning and the development of pragmatic solutions. More effective collaboration at all levels will also help harness economics of scale and thus ease financial constraints.

- Within the education and training sector, there is a lot of scope for cooperation including in accreditation of diplomas and in research.

**Dialogue among Participants**

Several ministers intervened in the discussion, emphasizing the following points:

- The need for greater cooperation and learning among countries in areas such as policies to address the growing demand for higher education, especially short-term programs in how to improve education quality and relevance; girls’ education; language of instruction.

- Countries compete for external support to address national concerns, giving too little attention to Africa-wide issues. More resources should be reserved for such issues by countries as well as by development partners. Also, more needs to be done towards developing qualification standards recognized region-wide.

- Many African professionals are making serious efforts to promote cooperation as evidenced by the many existing African regional networks and institutions. However, these efforts need to be strengthened and this cannot be achieved without increased and more predictable financing. In turn, this will require improved management and greater accountability.

- Often the constraints towards greater regional cooperation are political in nature. More needs to be done by the AU to resolve issues in the political domain.
Priorities for Education Financing and External Aid

Increased public education funding—made possible by accelerated economic growth, stronger budgetary priority for education, and increased education aid—is a major factor explaining the education growth achieved by most African countries since 2000. However, projections for SSA suggest a sharp decline in economic growth in 2009 and 2010 compared to recent years and increasing budget deficits. This could have serious negative impact on domestic education funding. Furthermore, in the last major global economic slowdowns between 1992 and 1997, though milder than the current one, development aid fell from 0.33 percent of donor nations’ GNP to 0.22 percent. If something similar were to happen this time, this would accentuate the impact of decline in domestic funding, especially because the share of aid in the education budget of the “median” SSA country has increased to reach about 25 percent in 2006. The stagnation in education aid disbursements between 2004 and 2006 and the sharp decrease in 2007 are, therefore, very worrisome.

On this background, this session focused on the challenges faced by external aid for education in helping countries to both sustain their progress towards EFA and develop the training and institutional mechanisms required to provide the skills needed to support sustained economic growth. While domestic education financing is the key determinant in achieving these twin goals, donors’ aid policies will also make a difference. How should these policies and priorities evolve to enhance the catalytic impact of aid on education development, especially during the current economic crisis?

Presentations

Presentations made by Michel JACQUIER, Deputy CEO of the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), and Birger FREDRIKSEN, consultant to the World Bank, explored some aspects of the above question. This was followed by a prepared intervention by H.E. Mekonnen MANYZEWAL, State Minister of Finance of Ethiopia, and by discussion among the participants. The session was chaired by Dzingai MUTUMBUKA, chair of ADEA.

Mr. Jacquier’s presentation, entitled Strategic Policies for Holistic, Efficient and Sustainable Development of Education in SSA focused on two interrelated aspects: The role of external education aid in the context of the global crisis, and option for the development of post-primary education in this context. With respect to the former, the presenter emphasized:
There is a need for countercyclical aid to mitigate the likely negative impact of decline in commodity prices, transfers from migrant workers, and FDI on GDP growth. However, the global crisis is not only a financial one but affects many sectors (climate, food security, health, migration, and so forth), and governments and donors face many competing financing demands. Therefore, while France will meet its commitment to raise aid to 0.7 percent of GDP by 2015, the growth will not be linear, and additional resources will target growth enhancement, food security, climate, and multilateral initiatives to support macro-economic stability. Other donors are likely to face similar trade-offs. This means that the provision of countercyclical aid will not necessarily target education, which means that national budget priorities—including use of aid provided as general budget support—will be decisive in achieving such targeting.

There is also a need to find a good balance between aid earmarked for specific sectors and general budget support. Budgetary trade-offs between sectors must be based on effective sectoral strategies, coherent with the country’s overall development strategy on which there needs to be a broad national consensus. The utility of international sector lobbying for specific MDGs without exploring the opportunity costs for other sectors has its limit. The issue of balancing support between sectors is a key aspect of the FTI which provides targeted funding for education through its two funds, but also argues for general budget support.

AFD’s experience with budget support targeted on education is mixed. In some cases it has led to little resource additionality for the sector; in other cases it has led to some additionality but external partners have focused on expenditure programs and fiduciary risks rather than on promoting reforms and on the political economy of such reforms. However, while general budget support offers benefits by fostering government ownership and use of national systems, this approach is demanding in terms of governance, technical capacity and political leadership.

Countries are at different stages in reforming their civil service and public financial management systems as well as in their ability to provide strong leadership and effective program implementation. Therefore, aid instruments need to be diversified to strengthen capacities and support reforms. Budget support is effective in cases where government policies are robust, well articulated and based on a broad national consensus, political leadership is strong, and the capacities to implement, monitor, and regulate are well developed.

National capacities in these areas are often weak and external aid should help develop them. Over the last decade, French aid has made a deliberate effort to do so by supporting analytical work, policy development, and capacity-building at the national level especially by strengthening regional pools of expertise located at multilateral agencies (Pôle de Dakar in UNESCO, CONFEMEN) that can support national teams. The objective has been to help countries conduct their own analytical studies and evaluations of their education systems. Frequently, national budgets are very constrained and do
not provide sufficiently for this type of work. Therefore, external partners should complement their budget support with aid that countries can draw on to build capacity.

As regards the role of aid in developing post-primary education in SSA, Mr. Jacquier underlined that the economic crisis will affect education in two ways: by constraining education budgets and by limiting modern sector employment. This happens at a time when the progress towards UPE generates rapid increase in the demand for secondary education, and when the ability to compete in the global economy requires specialized skills. Most education sector programs give limited support to help governments analyze the trade-offs between investments in different levels and types of education. To address this weakness, the AFD and the World Bank jointly conducted a study to clarify the options available to governments. The study, first presented at the 2008 ADEA Biennale, assesses the implications for 2020 of achieving a set of objectives regarding student flow management, organization of service delivery, share of private funding and domestic resource mobilization. The study made simulations individually for 33 SSA countries and covered recurrent as well as investment costs. Highlights of the findings include:

- There will be strong enrollment pressure at both the primary and secondary levels, but these will vary widely between countries. For example, to universalize lower secondary education by 2020, enrollment would need to be multiplied by a factor ranging from 1.8 to 14.0, the average for the 33 countries being 4.2. Measured in per capita terms, unit costs in SSA are broadly similar to the world average for primary education, but are substantially higher in secondary and higher education. For example, unit costs in secondary education in low-income SSA countries are more than three times that of unit costs in low-income countries in other regions.

- The parameters governing unit cost vary a lot across SSA countries, and there is considerable scope for more effective trade-offs between quality and quantity. The simulations explore the impact on unit costs of two options—one “Spartan” and one “Generous”—in terms of class size, number of hours of instruction per week, teaching load per week, teacher salaries, expenditures other than salaries and repetition rate. It concludes that universal 9-10 grades of basic education can be achieved in several SSA countries by 2020 if reasonable policy choices are made, but that a longer time perspective is needed in countries where enrollment presently is low and where the demographic transition has not yet started.

- If 20 percent of the public budget is allocated to education, in all scenarios the spending required exceeds by far domestic resources. If aid dependency is not to exceed 35 percent of the education budgets, possible options could include a combination of (i) Raising to at least 23 percent the share of government spending devoted to education; (ii) Reforming the delivery system to reduce unit costs along the “Spartan” option, and (iii) Diversifying student flows beyond lower secondary education (more apprenticeships and short-term employment-targeted training).
Student flow management beyond basic education is key to mastering the costs of expanding the system; “laissez-faire” is not an option as it would cause further saturation of institutions, high level of graduate unemployment, and strong financial pressure. The share of the modern sector in total employment is small and relatively stable (around 10 percent). This calls for enhancing the quality and relevance of upper secondary and tertiary education rather than expansion, as well as more private funding. Furthermore, the importance of the informal sector in generating employment calls for improved productivity in this sector through improved training, easier access to credit, and support for technical innovation.

In conclusion, SSA must improve the quality of its labor force to be able to better compete in the global economy. Such improvement is on its way thanks to the impressive progress towards UPE and extension of lower secondary education. While there are still many quality and equity issues to be solved in primary education, the most urgent challenge now is to develop and diversify post-primary education. This requires additional budgets but also major reforms whose impact on costs and sustainability can only be gained in the medium to long term. The political economy of such reforms will entail risks. However, avoiding reforms in favor of laissez-faire is likely to pose much more serious long-term risks. External technical and financial aid is necessary to support and sustain such reforms.

Mr. FREDRIKSEN’s presentation was entitled External Aid for Education: The Challenge of Enhancing its Catalytic Impact. As background for discussing ways of enhancing the catalytic impact of aid, the presentation emphasized two points:

- SSA’s strong education growth since year 2000 reflects a sharp increase in public education funding. Education budgets increased annually by about 9 percent during the period 1999–2006 as compared to about 1 percent per year between 1980 and 1999 when SSA saw serious education stagnation. Close to two-third of the growth in domestic funding was explained by higher economic growth (5.3 percent annually between 1999 and 2006 as compared to 2.3 percent between 1980 and 1999). This growth was reinforced by increased disbursements of aid which grew annually by about 16 percent between 1999 and 2006, but dropped sharply between 2006 and 2007;
- Given the role increased funding played in re-launching education growth in SSA over the last decade, there is justifiable concern about the impact of the crisis on both domestic and external funding. The share of education in GDP is already quite high in many countries; therefore, growth in education budgets may be even more dependent on sustained economic growth than in the recent past. Given the relatively high aid dependency in the sector, a decline in aid could have serious consequences. To avoid this, it is important to (a) Use aid counter-cyclically to mitigate the impact of the crisis on domestic funding. Because of the difficulty in reversing education decline, counter-cyclic funding may be more important for education than for other sectors; and (b) Improve the catalytic impact of aid on the effectiveness of total resource use (domestic financing plus aid) in the sector.
The rest of the presentation focused on how to leverage aid as a catalyst to improve the effectiveness of total resource use in the sector. Efforts under the “Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness” have focused on improving the technical efficiency (TE), that is, the efficiency by which aid allocated to a country is delivered by donors (improved coordination; harmonization of procedures, and so forth) and used by the country (improved ownership, governance, and so forth). Little attention has been given to the allocative efficiency (AE) of aid, that is, the extent to which aid is used for purposes where it has the greatest catalytic impact on total education spending. Improved TE is necessary but not sufficient to improve aid effectiveness if the aid is not used where it has the highest impact.

Where aid is likely to have the greatest catalytic impact depends closely on specific country conditions as well as on the international context. In particular, the most effective allocation is likely to be different in a crisis situation such as now than during a period of rapid economic growth. The actual allocation of a given amount of aid – by country, within a given country or between country-specific allocations and support for global and regional activities and institutions – is the outcome of a very complex set of decisions at the level of donors and recipient countries as well as priorities agreed through international agreements (for example, attainment of the MDGs). Therefore, to study the effectiveness of allocation of aid requires a holistic approach. For example:

- **Strategic use of aid within countries**: The purpose for which aid is used matters because there is not full fungibility between domestic and external funding in the SSA context of high aid dependency and severe budget constraints. While aid can replace domestic funding, national budget processes will often not allocate domestic funding to replace aid to fund certain high-impact inputs if aid is not available. Thus, the catalytic impact of aid can be increased by: (i) Enhancing additionality by avoiding that aid substitutes for domestic funding thus increasing dependency without increasing the resource base. This happens when access to aid reduces domestic resource mobilization or if aid given as budget support reduces domestic education funding; (ii) Using more aid for “soft investments” with high long-term impact but that often are difficult to prioritize over short-term urgencies in national budget processes, for example, analytical work, policy development, “south-south” cooperation, piloting of innovations, national consensus-building on polices, capacity-building; and (iii) Ensuring that aid priorities evolve to respond to emerging national priorities, for example, the progress towards UPE since 2000 has shifted the priorities from general increase in access to quality and equity at the primary level, and sustainable expansion of post-primary education.

- **Allocation of aid by country**: Education aid is very unevenly distributed among countries. In 2006, total aid commitments to primary education per primary school-aged child averaged US$17 for SSA. Seventeen countries received less than US$10 per child while six received more than US$50. Could the effectiveness in reaching the global EFA goals be improved by changing the country allocation to give higher priority to countries far away from reaching the 2015 goals (including “fragile” states) and less to countries making good progress, now rewarded by high levels of aid? However, that would imply a
switch away from the more performance-based aid provided since 2000 (which has given good results) towards more “needs-based” aid.

- **Country-specific versus “Global Public Good”:** Changes in the global aid architecture has caused decline in aid agencies’ capacity to supplement financial aid with high-quality technical support and policy advice. First, despite many positive effects, the switch towards budget support has reduced the number of education specialists in bi- and multilateral agencies, shifted responsibilities for education to generalists and macro economists, and reduced targeted funding for technical support, capacity-building and other “soft investments.” Second, the increased country focus has led to less funding for regional cooperation/networks and cross-country learning as well as for global and regional institutions providing “global public good” functions in the education sector. While the overwhelming share of aid should go directly to countries, the effectiveness of country-specific aid may improve if donors were to shift even slightly the balance of their aid in favor of strengthening (i) their own technical capacity to provide high-quality advice (as called for in the “Accra Agenda for Action”) and (ii) the capacity of regional and global public good institutions to provide on demand technical support and policy advice to countries.

Finally, modalities have emerged at both the international level (“Paris Declaration”) and national level (stronger donor cooperation) to enhance the technical efficiency of aid delivery and use. Although some work is done within the framework of FTI, there is little attention among donors to assessing the collective impact of their individual decisions with respect to the distribution of aid among countries and, especially, between country-specific and global public good functions. Progress in this area would be important to enhancing the effectiveness of education aid. It would however require conceptual work to develop broad agreements on aspects such as: What type of aid is most effective in a given context within a given country? Which criteria should be used for allocation of aid among countries? How to assess the impact of and the need for more aid for “public good functions” in the education sector?

In his prepared intervention following the above two presentations, H.E. Mekonnen MANYEWEAL emphasized that the first priority in ensuring that aid plays its role in mitigating the negative impact of the crisis on education financing is to ensure that past aid commitments by donors are met. Early recovery in donor countries should help to achieve this. Also, aid needs to become more predictable. However, while external aid helps, the most important factor in maintaining the progress in the education sector is what happens at the national level in terms of sound economic management, good governance, and development of a diverse set of instruments appropriate to addressing the issues faced in each national context. In particular:

- Investment in education should retain high priority in good as well as in less good times. High economic growth is very important in generating the resources required. However, more effort also needs to be devoted to mobilizing more resources by broadening the tax base and reforming the tax collection system.
The composition and use of resources in the education and training sector need to be reviewed. Good management of the sector is critical to efficient resource use.

A well performing and managed education system is fundamental to the maintenance of peace and stability.

Dialogue among Participants

Because of time constraints, there was a relatively brief discussion following these three interventions, emphasizing the following points:

- There is a wider consensus now than in the past between the ministries of finance and education on the central role of education and skills development in accelerating economic growth, reducing poverty, and promoting peace and stability in Africa. Ultimately, the quality of a country’s people is the main development engine. In turn, this means that there also is wide agreement on the importance of maintaining during the crisis the education momentum achieved over the last decade. Nevertheless, because of the many urgent demands on the government’s budget, ministries of education need to become better in justifying their claim on resources and in accounting for how they are used.

- The rapid onset of the crisis is alarming, and it could have devastating impact on government and education budgets. The primary objectives must be, for governments, to maintain and accelerate economic growth and for external partners to provide predictable support. As regards the latter, too little is done to monitor donors and hold them accountable for delivering on their promises.

- The education sector needs to re-examine its priorities in light of the crisis, develop new plans, and clearly align the plans with spending priorities. In this regard, the proposal for an “indicative framework” for cost parameters in secondary education could be useful in assessing current cost structures.

- The education sector in many African countries is still at the “survival stage” (in terms of the model used by the Singapore Minister of Finance). Some of the approaches used in more advanced systems (such as merit pay for teachers) may not yet be applicable; the applicability of others (such as governments providing “matching funds” to finance higher education) should be examined. There is also a serious problem of unemployment among graduates which often co-exists with unmet demands for skills in many areas. This miss-match needs to be addressed.

- There was also a call for more realism about the possibility to reach the 2015 EFA targets. Even if good progress has been made by many countries towards UPE, the progress towards some of the other EFA targets has been much more modest.

- Finally, there is a need for new thinking with respect to education financing.
CHAPTER 7

Pressing on Amidst the Global Crisis: Next Steps

This short closing session, chaired by Shantayan DEVARAJAN, Chief Economist, Africa Region, World Bank, comprised four different interventions: (i) Reflections on practical steps to sustain Africa’s educational and economic progress by H.E. Maker MWANGA FAMBA, Minister of Education, DRC, (ii) Discussion among ministers; (iii) Concluding remarks by the representatives of the institutional sponsors of the Conference, delivered by Ahlin BYLL-CATARIA, Executive Secretary, ADEA, Yaw ANSU, Director, Human Development, Africa Region, World Bank, and Thomas HURLEY, Director, Human Development, AfDB; and (iv) Vote of thanks, by Zeinab EL-BAKRI, Vice-President, AfDB.

In his reflections on practical steps to sustain Africa’s educational and economic progress, Minister MWANGA FAMBA emphasized that many countries are still struggling to progress from the “survival mode” to sustained growth. Countries such as DRC are still very dependent on export of raw materials and the governments’ revenues depend closely on price fluctuations on the world market for these materials. When prices are high, revenues are high and not always used effectively. When prices are low, budgets are low and service delivery in areas such as education is seriously affected. In this context, how to maintain progress in the education sector during a period of economic crisis that will affect both domestic education budgets and aid flows? In the case of DRC, a number of analytical studies and strategic documents have been, or are being, prepared to develop a roadmap for the future development of education, including:

- Creating a technical cadre to address the current low capacity for education sector planning, implementation and management at the central level as well as the capacity-building needs resulting from the ongoing decentralization process.
- Basic education receives the highest budgetary priority. Beyond primary education, the priority is in favor of math and science education, to develop short-term professional training, to develop training in ICT, and to create centers of excellence in areas of particular importance to the country’s development. To achieve this requires developing close links between education and the economy.
In the ensuing discussion, some ministers noted the importance of education ministries to prepare long-term strategic plans for the development of their sector and to be well prepared when they engage in discussion with colleagues in the ministry of finance. Ministers should be able to justify their resource demands, especially for technical and vocational education where clear links should be made to the labor market.

To energize the discussion, the chair person engaged the ministers in a short role play, asking ministers of finance to act as ministers of education, justifying their demand for resources for education and training, and ministers of education to respond to these demands, acting as ministers of finance. While some ministers found it challenging to put themselves in the shoes of their colleagues, others underlined that they in their countries have developed a shared national vision on the role of education and have agreed national frameworks within which trade-offs between different sectors are made.

In their closing remarks, the representatives for the organizers underlined:

- The shared vision among conference participants about the important role played by education in national development and the imperative of preserving the education gains achieved over the last decade.
- The wide consensus on the need to combine continued progress towards UPE with increased and urgent attention to post-primary education, including higher education and TVET. This is essential to improving productivity and promoting growth. But sustainable policies will mean difficult trade-offs that need to be evidence-based and that will require strong political leadership to implement.
- The need to draw lessons from the discussion at the conference and propose follow-up. One action may be to create within ADEA a forum for reflections on the issues raised.

Invited by the Chair to make brief concluding remarks, the representative of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) stressed that she was impressed by the broad consensus among ministers on the need to maintain investment in education to stimulate economic growth. She assured ministers that civil society, and in particular teacher unions, will play their role as part of an inclusive development process.

Finally, Ms. El-Bakeri closed the conference by thanking the government of Tunisia for its hospitality, the ministers and representatives of development partners for attending, and the organizers for all the work put into the preparation and organization of the conference. She commended the organizers on the innovative modality of bringing together ministers of finance and of education to discuss education, and the participants on the high quality of the discussion.
APPENDIX 1

List of Participants

BENIN
S.E. M. Felicien Zacharie
Ministre de l’Enseignement Maternel et Primaire

M. Johnson Comlanvi Maoudi
Planificateur de l’Education,
Coordonnateur National Education Pour Tous du Bénin, Ministère des Enseignements Maternel et Primaire

M. Antonin S. Dossou
Directeur de Cabinet du Ministre d’Etat Chargé de la Prospective, du Développement, de l’Evaluation des Politiques Publiques et de la Coordination de l’Action Gouvernementale

BURKINA FASO
S.E. Mme Marie Odile Bonkoungou
Ministre de l’Enseignement de Base et de l’Alphabétisation (MEBA)

M. Habou Rémy
Chargé de programme Alphabétisation et Education non Formelle

Mme. Salou Marie Aubin
Directrice des Marchés Publics du MEBA Education

BURUNDI
S.E. M. Ernest Mberamiheo
Ministère de l’Enseignement Primaire et Secondaire

S.E. Mme Rose Gahiru
Ministre de l’enseignement des métiers, de la formation professionnelle et de l’alphabétisation

CAMEROON
S.E. Mme Youssouf Hadidja Alim
Ministre de l’Education de base

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Directeur de planification
Ministre de l’Education de base

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Ministre Délégué
Ministre des Finances

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Directeur Général du Budget

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Chargé d’Etudes Assistant

ETHIOPIA
Hon. Demeke Mekonnen
Minister of Education

S.E. M. Mekonnen Manyzewal
State Minister of Finance

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Ambassadeur
GABON  
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Ministre de l’Education nationale, de l’Instruction civique, chargé de l’Education primaire

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Conseiller du Ministre

M. Moussarou Mbina  
Expert, Communauté économique

KENYA  
Prof. Olweny Patrick Ayiecho  
Assistant Minister, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

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Hon. Dr. Mamphono Khaketla  
Minister of Education and Training

GHANA  
Hon. Alex Tettey-Enyo  
Minister of Education

Hon. Seth Emmanuel Terkper  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Finance

Aheto-Tsegah Charles Yaw  
Director of Planning Budgeting Monitoring and Evaluation

MALI  
S.E. Mme Ginette Bellegarde Siby  
Ministre des Enseignement supérieur et de la recherche scientifique

S.E. M. Sanoussi TOURE  
Ministre des Finances

GUINEA  
S.E. Mme Rougui Kaba Barrey  
Ministre de l’Education nationale et de la Recherche scientifique

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M. Moussarou Mbina  
Expert, Communauté économique

M. Moussarou Mbina  
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Elisio Nhantumbo  
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Deputy Minister of Education

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M. Traoré Sekou  
Coordonnateur Pool des conseillers
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Minister of Education

Mulindw Samuel
Director of Policy Planning

Baingana Elias
Director

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APPENDIX 2

Conference Agenda

Wednesday July 15, 2009

Opening ceremony
4:00 – 5:45 PM
Registration
5:45 – 7:00 PM
Welcome, Introduction and Keynote Address
Chair: Ms. Obiageli EZEWESILI, Africa Region Vice President, World Bank

- Goodwill remarks by the African Union, the Tunisian government, the European Commission, the FTI-Secretariat, UNESCO, and UNICEF
- Keynote address by Mr. Donald KABERUKA, President, AfDB on “Human Capital for Africa’s Long-Term Development: Sustaining Progress in Challenging Times”
- Concluding remarks by the chair

7:00 – 9:00 PM
Reception hosted by the African Development Bank

Thursday July 16, 2009

Morning theme: Political leadership for better alignment between education development and economic growth

Chair: H.E. A MOTSHEKGA, South Africa Minister of Basic Education

08:30 – 9:00 AM Distinguished Guest Speaker H.E. Tharman SHANMUGARATNAM, Singapore Minister for Finance on Investing in a Knowledge-Based Society: East Asia’s Experience

9:00 – 9:30 AM
African Ministers of Finance on “Country perspectives on leveraging education for growth and national development”

- H.E. Ephraim KAMUNTU, Uganda Minister of State for Finance, Planning and Economic Development
- H.E. Abdoulaye DIOP, Senegal Minister of State for the Economy and Finance

9:30 – 10:30 AM
Panel discussion on “Country perspectives on aligning education to economic and national development goals”

Chair: Ms. Obiageli EZEWESILI, Africa Region Vice President, World Bank

Panelists: H.E. Minister KAMUNTU, H.E. Minister DIOP and H.E. Minister SHANMUGARATNAM

Dialogue: Question and answer session with audience
Concluding remarks by the Chair

10:30 – 11:00 AM
COFFEE AND TEA BREAK

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11:00 – 12:30 AM  
*Mutual accountability of ministers of finance and of education for educational progress in Africa*

Chair: Ms. Zeinab EL-BAKRI, Vice President, AfDB

- H.E. Athanase MATENDA KYELU, DRC Minister of Finance
- H.E. Marie-Odile BONKOUNGOU, Burkina Faso Minister of Education

Dialogue: Question and answer session with audience

Concluding remarks by the Chair

12:30 – 2:00 PM  
*Lunch hosted by the World Bank*

**Afternoon theme: Education priorities in a challenging environment**

2:00 – 3:30 PM  
*Progress and Challenges in Meeting the EFA 2015 Goals in a Changing Environment*

Chair: H.E. Geraldine NAMIREMBE BITAMAZIRE, Uganda Minister of Education

- *Highlights of the 2009 GMR and meeting the six EFA Goals*, Kevin WATKINS, Director of the Global Monitoring Report (GMR)

Comments from ministers of education on “Perspectives from the trenches of implementation”

- H.E. Ambroise ZAWA, Central African Republic Minister of Education
- H.E. Jorge de BOM JESUS, Sao Tome and Principe Minister of Education
- H.E. Daphrosa GAHAKWA, Rwanda Minister of Education

Dialogue: Question and answer session with audience

Concluding remarks by the Chair

3:30 – 4:00 PM  
*COFFEE AND TEA BREAK*

4:00 – 6:00 PM  
*Skills development for economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa*

Chair: H.E. Sanoussi TOURE, Mali Minister of Finance

- *Economic growth and the role of skills*, Shahid YUSUF, World Bank
- *Skills development for youth employment and productivity growth in the informal sector: What are the options?*, Boukary SAVADOGO, AfDB
- *Report from the ADEA 2008 Biennale*, Richard WALTHER

Comments from ministers on the challenges of skills for growth

- H.E. Mwinyihaji MAKAME, Zanzibar Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs
- H.E. Ms. Rose GAHIRU, Burundi Minister of Vocational Training and Literacy
- H.E. Ato Demeke MEKONNEN, Ethiopia Minister of Education

Dialogue: Question and answer session with audience

Concluding remarks by the Chair

*Dinner for Ministers hosted by President KABERUKA, AfDB*
### Friday July 17, 2009

**Morning theme: The potential for and challenges of strategic partnerships**

8:30 – 10:00 AM  
**Pan-African Cooperation in Education and Training: What is the scope and what are the barriers?**

Chair: H.E. Mamphono KHAKETLA, Lesotho Minister of Education and Training

- Regional Cooperation in Education and Training: what are the benefits and is enough being done to harness them? Mamadou NDOYE, Consultant
- Strengthening African tertiary education through regional collaboration: successes, challenges and options for the way forward, Njabulo NDEBELE, President, Association of African Universities and ex-VC of University of Cape Town

#### Comments by ministers

- H.E. Alex TETTEY - ENYO, Ghana Minister of Education

Dialogue: Question and answer session with audience  
Concluding remarks by the Chair

10:00 – 10:30 AM  
**COFFEE AND TEA BREAK**

10:30 – 12:00 AM  
**Priorities for education finance and external aid to support Africa’s development in the coming years**

Chair: Dzingai MUTUMBUKA, ADEA Chair

- Strategic policies for holistic, efficient and sustainable development of education in Sub-Saharan Africa, Michel JACQUIER, Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
- External aid for education and the challenge of enhancing its catalytic impact, Birger FREDRIKSEN, consultant, World Bank

#### Responses from ministers of Finance and of Education

- H.E. Mekonnen MANYZEWAL, Ethiopia State Minister of Finance

Dialogue: Question and answer session with audience  
Concluding remarks by the Chair

12:00 – 12:45 PM  
**Pressing on amidst the Global Crisis: next steps to sustain Africa’s education and economic momentum**

Chair: Mr. Shantayanan DEVARAJAN, World Bank, Chief Economist  
Africa Region

- Reflection on practical steps to sustain Africa’s educational and economic progress: H.E. Maker MWANGA FAMBA, DRC Minister of Education

Concluding remarks by conference co-organizers

- Ahlin BYLL-CATARIA, ADEA
- Yaw ANSU, World Bank
- Thomas HURLEY, AfDB

Conference summing up by the Chair

12:45- 1:00 PM  
Vote of thanks: Zeinab EL-BAKRY, Vice-President, AfDB

**End of conference**

*Lunch hosted by ADEA*
Eco-Audit

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Forty-four African ministers of finance and of education from 28 countries met in Tunis at a July 2009 conference on “Sustaining the Education and Economic Momentum in Africa amidst the Current Global Financial Crisis.” The conference attendees discussed why and how they must exercise joint political leadership during the current global economic crisis to protect the educational development achieved during the past decade. They acknowledged that educational reform is an agenda for the entire government and that strong leadership to foster cross-ministry collaboration, coordination, and mutual accountability is required to ensure that education and training investments are effective in advancing national development and economic progress.

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