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Right to Education as an elementary Human Right
From Thinking to Living it

The situation of education in general, and of higher education in particular, is not considered as a priority in developing countries. Unfortunately, all development depends on a good education. Many countries suffer not only of the absence of quality education, but also from a lack of accessibility for its citizens. Many of them suffer from not being able to study.

The exercise of citizenship must allow everyone to become an actor of society. To be an actor requires a good understanding of the role, the place and the rights be recognized by everyone. To be an actor means to be responsible in a social and democratic framework relying on values and references shared by all. «The practice of citizenship relies on participation spaces open to all. Otherwise, in many developing countries, as the level of education is very low, citizens do not consider themselves actors of their country's development. »¹ They block the progress of their country and create other problems in security, the economy, politics, social issues and above all in an increase in unemployment. Indeed, a large part of the population is active, but instead of creating jobs, it is looking for employment. Thus, if everyone looks for a job, the number of openings is small. This has a negative impact on the resources of the State. «The challenges of contemporary societies are mostly characterised by complexity and are part of a global interdependence. In the face of globalization, the education of people to be good citizens must widen its scope from local, regional and national levels to a global dimension ».²

According to the document (UNESCO, 2014) UNESCO Education Strategy 2014-2021, approximately 774 million adults, of which two thirds are women, could neither read, nor write in 2011. More than 50% of this adult illiterate population lived in South and West Asia and a quarter approximately in sub-Saharan Africa; 10 countries alone represent 72% of the total. In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of illiterate adults has, in fact, increased by 37% these last twenty years to reach 182 million in 2011. According to these forecasts, the world total will still be of 743 million in 2015, a reduction of only 16% as against the number in 1985-1994 with regard to data on illiteracy (UNESCO, 2014b). It is the aim of education for all (EFA) which is the most difficult to reach.

Although illiteracy is mostly concentrated in the developing and highly populated countries, the problem continues to be pervasive. Developed countries also present large pockets of poverty, in which evaluations show that no less than one adult on five, in other words 160

¹ Education à la citoyenneté mondiale : <https://www.education21.ch/fr/edd/approches/education-a-la-citoyennete-mondiale>

² http://www.globaleducation.ch/globallearning_fr/pages/BA/BA_Re.php

million persons, have very low literary competencies, being unable to read, write and calculate in daily life (UNESCO, 2012).

Literacy, beyond being a basic competency, is also a prerequisite to access to all forms and all levels of apprenticeship all along life, as well as a base enabling quality education for all.

Being deprived of basic literacy competencies is a factor that leads to being excluded from many aspects of existence, and it covers important dimensions of gender and poverty. Governments and lending institutions are often insufficiently concerned with illiteracy. In the same manner, less than 3% of the national education budget is devoted to literacy and adult education programmes.

Education and life-long training

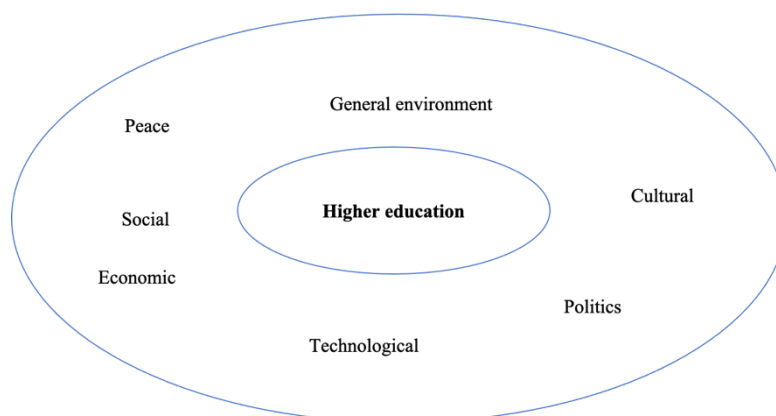
Education and life-long training are key elements of a strong and reasoned strategy which have become a powerful weapon in a dynamic world obsessed by competitiveness. The way we see our neighbours is also part of our worries when we are looking to be inspired by tools and policies that they develop for continuous qualitative and quantitative improvement, of our educational systems, that will lead to a social integration and cohesion of nations (Newgreen, 2002).

Education and higher education are fundamental elements. They allow each individual to build his life, not only on a private basis, but also professionally, and also to contribute to the economic, political, and social aspects of the country in which they live.

To be effective, higher education demands, as a fundamental element, time, a certain slow pace, stability, tranquillity and even a minimum of comfort. Education is one of the most important levers in development. It is also, one of the most efficient mechanisms to guarantee peace and stability of a country. «We live in a rapidly evolving world, increasingly interdependent, in which knowledge and innovation are major development factors ».³

³ Stratégie de l'UNESCO : L'éducation 2014-2021.

Stakeholders in the general environment of higher education



According to Burrige *et al*, education and higher education are as important as water to ensure life. In light of our research, we have noticed that all the economic, political, and social development of a country depends in large part to education that will impact the general environment of that country, and thus of the entire region. Obviously, education takes its roots at primary school, but we have limited our research to higher education.

In the framework of our research, we have identified certain stakeholders such as the citizens who are directly impacted by war. A well-educated society, capable of distinguishing good from bad, will attempt to avoid certain conflicts so as to live in peace. The Afghan population suffers from a lack of education and this opens the possibility for certain rebel groups to convince young men to undertake acts that are contrary to peace.

Education is one of the important factors in the social and economic development of a country. All the actors of social and economic life, who are stakeholders, suffer the consequences of the absence of penetration of higher education, at best a very low penetration, as outlined by several reports, such as those of the World Bank, UNESCO, and what we also observe in our empirical experience.

All the stakeholders, in the private and public sectors, feel the low use or the near-absence of technological development, which, however, is an absolute need today so as to avoid an important delay in productivity and thus, competitiveness. The different educational levels feel the absence of means to train students in the use of basic technology. We have not identified a theory which outlines the fact that societies in developing countries must remain unchanged. «In the competitive and dynamic environment of the modern economies of knowledge, the educational policies occupy a central place and, if needed, can fulfil the functions that are normally traditionally part of investment such as policies of social protection ».⁴

The emergence of the notion of ‘Life competencies’

« The four pillars of a quality education as defined by UNESCO (2000) allows to put the basis of a strategy that could assist to raise this challenge. Unfortunately, this is not the case in Afghanistan and in many developing countries.

1. **Learning to know :** education must assist students to acquire the instruments of knowledge, in other words, the necessary tools of communication and oral expression, reading, arithmetic and the art of problem resolution, to possess both a solid general culture and the deep knowledge of a few fields, to understand what are the rights and responsibilities and, above all, to learn to learn.
2. **Learning to do :** education must assist students to acquire the know-how and the social and psychological competencies that will allow them to make informed decisions in diverse situations, to manage social relations and relations at work, to access local and global markets, use technological tools, satisfy fundamental needs and improve quality of their life and the life of others.
3. **Learning to be:** education must contribute to the flourishing of individual personality and allow them to act with more autonomy, of judgement, of critical thought and of personal responsibility. It must develop all the aspects of a person’s potential such as, for instance, memory, reasoning, esthetical values, spiritual values, physical capabilities and the art of communication. It must encourage a healthy lifestyle, the liking of sports, of leisure, of the appreciation of one’s own culture, the respect of ethical and moral code, the art of making oneself valuable and of defending oneself, and the capacity of rebounding.”
4. **Learning to live together:** education must reinforce the know-how at students and the aptitudes likely to help them to accept mutual interdependence ».⁵

⁴ <http://www.eenee.de/fr/eeneeHome/Economics-of-Education.html>

⁵ Colloque international Education, violences, conflits et perspectives de paix en Afrique, Yaoundé, 6 au 10 mars 2006, Milène Trabelsi et Jean-Luc Dubois

Result:

According to the recommendations of the Organisation of the United Nations (UN), the international responsibility of governments and political leaders regarding the exercise of the right to education is to find a rapid and lasting solution to this challenge so as to better integrate the international community which check the effective exercise of the right enumerated which check, on the one hand, the application and the conformity with the «United Nations Pact relating to economic social and cultural rights» and on the other «the United Nations Pact relating to civil and political rights.» «One can state that facing the uncertain future and the multiple challenges that post-conflict States experience that have led to irreversible, and often permanently damaging, consequences, education must bring a final advantage to re-establish, through freedom and social justice, the conditions of preventive and balanced management of conflicts. This allows it to progress, while respecting the conditions of sustainable development, towards the expected peace ideals. »⁶

« The knowledge generated by the economy of education may thus assist the governments to optimize their policies through better informed choice, thus contributing the attainment of the objective of a sustained and equitable growth that mobilises all the citizens.»⁷

According to UNESCO's *Education Strategy 2014-2021*, the political leaders must study to better exploit the potential of information technologies and communication (TIC) in education. The presence of sustainable infrastructure and financing issues, of the content of quality-insurance, represent, in this field, key issues, just like the question of available means to develop and put in place pluri-dimensional policies in matters of online security and ethics.

Education to citizenship allows to acquire new knowledge that will directly impact the economic, political and social life of the country. «The first function of education is to transmit an inheritance and to teach the ethical principles and the framework of law (national and international) that determines communal living. However, society today more than ever, faces rapid changes and challenges in embedded in complex global challenges. These challenges require societal changes to which a citizen should be able to participate. However, transmission and education are insufficient on their own: the education for citizenship must

⁶ Colloque international « ducation, violences, conflits et perspectives de paix en Afrique, Yaoundé, 6 au 10 mars 2006, Milène Trabelsi et Jean-Luc Dubois

⁷ <http://www.eenee.de/fr/eeneeHome/Economics-of-Education.html>

allow the exercise of new competencies: to enter into complexity, to manage uncertainty, to position oneself, to imagine new solutions and to participate in their realization. »⁸

The general experience of life and the ordinary unfolding of things show that when citizens who live and work in a given society are very well educated, there are less conflicts, for they are able to resolve their problems by discussion, dialogue, and common understanding. The example of countries in which social dialogue is the main governance vector, such as Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, etc, is more than welcome.

A well-educated society can only be a democratic society because it constantly counts on the capacity and the behaviour of its citizens; and each citizen feels important for his country.

If we take the case of Afghanistan today, it is a rich country with considerable natural resources, but the country finds itself in extreme poverty. Our analysis brings two explanations for this situation: the poverty of knowledge, first of all, that does not allow citizens to contribute to the development of the country and to correctly use their competencies and their rights; the poverty of the leadership, on one hand, that concentrate themselves exclusively on the acquisition of power instead of concentrating on the best manner to help the population. As a backdrop, one can see a situation in which the political leaders take advantage of the naivety and low educational level of their fellow citizens to stay in power and to profit from their advantages.

The conclusions of our research show that it is impossible to develop a country without prioritising education. To illustrate our working methodology, we have developed a competency matrix to helps Afghanistan become a stable state by developing a distance learning system.

⁸ Charly Maurer, L'éducation à la citoyenneté, Fondation Éducation et Développement, 2008, 4

Matrix of the competencies of a citizen

Competencies	Criteria	Situation	Tools	Evaluation
Active citizen	Positively participate in his individual development which will impact later, on different scales, such as family, clan, tribal, ethnic and national, and even in light of the entire country's development, instead of concentrating on his personal interests.	Live together and contribute together to one's own development as well as that of the country.	Education is the primary source to become an active citizen, positive and understanding.	Living together without conflict Societal progress.
Know one's own importance and values	Be capable of undergoing auto-evaluation, to understand its importance, oneself, one's values and those that still require development.	Use positive values for oneself and for one's family; allow all members of one's family to optimize their capabilities.	Schools, universities and the professional environment allow us to be with others and to understand well our values and those of others.	Non-violent communication. Personal evolution.
Know one's rights as well as those of others	Understand the importance of one's fundamental rights as well as those of others.	Mutual respect, whatever the age, gender and/or belief.	Education	Avoid violence and live in peace.
Capacity of expressing oneself	Aptitude to develop and defend oneself in a calm and legal manner.	Express oneself without wounding others and make the situation more complex.	Education	Respect others.
Consciousness of power	Understand one's own values as a citizen, as well as the importance of voting rights.	In exercising one's voting rights, elect deserving persons so as to stabilize the country's political and social situation.	Education	Appoint leaders according to their and competencies that have a positive impact on the country's management.
Equality and freedom	Understand the importance of equality as well as truly expressing his claims depending on the situation in which he finds himself.	Rule of law	Education Citizen's behaviours that can degrade or improve the situation.	Live in peace and in freedom. Express oneself without fear in the mutual respect.
The possibility of taking responsibilities	Assume responsibilities for one's family and in society and understand one's own contribution.	Be active in social, economic and political life when one wishes to do so.	Give the chance in equal proportions to all citizens without any exclusion.	Participate in socioeconomic developments.
Incidence on Human Rights	Distinguish between good and bad, and become conscious of one's acts against others.	Be capable of understanding sanctions and consequences when one breaks the rules of law.	Education and the application of laws in an equalitarian manner.	Respect of law and fundamental freedoms Avoid all sorts of conflicts.
Understand, in a basic way, at a small scale, the	Become conscious of the changes in other parts of the world.	Each country develops first of all because of the sum of	Ensure diversity of the country thanks to the contributions of	Understand the economic, political, social situation of

phenomena tied to globalisation.		individual actions.	different nationalities.	other countries, and apply to oneself the positive elements, if necessary.
Importance of the family	Understand that the family is very important and that women play an important role in the family well as in society.	Each member of the family plays an important role for himself as well as for economic, political and social development of the country.	Education	Respect the choices and the points of view of each family member to avoid conflicts and violence.
Use (tools) of the new technologies of information and communication (TIC) in an interactive manner (language, technology).	Instrumental competency.	Use, in one's activities, of adequate technologies to facilitate tasks; if necessary, transfer best practices.	Education	Faster and more efficient results.
Interact in heterogeneous groups.	Social competencies whatever the religion and (or) the beliefs. Transcend the differences.	Participate in social life in one's city, village, town, etc.	Education	Be capable of working in groups, whatever its origins and/or beliefs.
Act in an autonomous and consensual manner.	Personal competency for all that concerns the decisions of daily life.	Assume the responsibility of one's decisions.	Education	Work individually if necessary, with the proposed solutions.
Knowledge, know-how, social skills and life planning.	Know one's past, concentrate on the present and create one's future.	Concentrate on the future rather than concentrating on useless subjects.	Education	Have a life vision, according to one's capacities.
Exemplarity	Be an active and contributing citizen thanks to one's actions.	Motivate others so that they also become active in life.	Positive action of citizens.	Show to others the importance of citizens to one's country.

Conclusion:

We have noted that it is very difficult, and even impossible to respect the citizenship norms or the establishment of democracy or the respect of human rights in a country without putting the accent on the competencies of active and understanding citizens. We have observed that in many countries, there are conflicts between politicians (points of view on political ideology), but they manage to discuss, to negotiate and to obtain power through democratic rights, for they are citizens. The lack of reflection of citizens in the choice of their leaders and their policy in developing countries is the source of numerous conflicts, including civil wars. Hence the importance of insisting on the apprenticeship of citizenship, which allows populations to be in charge of their destiny by actively participating in the life of the nation. This is why education must prioritise the development of the citizen's competencies, such as the knowledge of oneself, of its importance and its values; the knowledge of the one's rights and those of others; the ability to express oneself; the knowledge of one's power; equality and freedom; the possibility of assuming one's responsibilities; the primacy of human rights; the understanding of the phenomena linked to globalization; the centrality of the family; the use of new technologies of information; the knowledge, know-how, social skills and life planning; empowerment and exemplarity.

Each of these elements include, criteria, situations, tools and parameters to evaluate the citizen's competency matrix which must serve as a learning tool of citizenship.

For a country to be able to develop economically, politically and socially, the political leaders must give priority above all else to an action plan on the competencies of citizens. This contribution will make it easier for the present and future leaders. If that is not the case, the government will transmit poverty from generation to generation.



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