Sustainability and Education for All

Partnership for Service in the Global Village
Structure of this presentation

I. UNESCO and its system of Chairs
II. Elements of personal history
III. The EFA and ESD movements
IV. The agenda ahead
I. UNESCO: What it is, and how it works

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Established 1945

Headquartered in Paris
and with a global network of cluster offices, national offices, regional bureaus and institutes
UNESCO national commissions in each country, in most cases located in the Ministry of Education

Network of NGOs and other professional bodies

Including the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES)
“UNESCO’s attempts [in 1945] to accommodate a multi-actor, multi-polar world were incredibly prescient in anticipating the debates raging in global governance during our own time”

J.P. Singh 2011
The system of UNESCO Chairs

- Launched in 1992; all dimensions of UNESCO’s work
- In the education sector, Chairs in 74 of the 195 Member States

Conceived as “Think tanks” and “bridge builders” between the academic world, civil society, local communities, research and policy-making.
II. Elements of personal history with UNESCO

1980s

- **Consultant** (China, Malta, Papua New Guinea, Sudan…)
- **author** (double-shift schooling; small states…)

1990s

- **Consultant** in additional countries (Bhutan, Indonesia, Mexico, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam…)
- **author** on additional themes (privatisation;; community financing; shadow education…)

2000s

- **Director of IIEP**, 2006-2010
Created in 1963, with its own Governing Board

Headquartered in Paris

Branch in Buenos Aires
Three main domains of IIEP work

Training

Policy advice

Research

Working integrally with other parts of UNESCO
As my period in II EP drew to a close, one question was what I could bring back …

... and how both sides could benefit.

The UNESCO Chair was part of the answer.
III. Two UNESCO Flagship Programmes

Education for All (EFA)

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)
The EFA Movement

Origins: **1990** World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, Thailand

Reaffirmed: **2000** World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal

Target **2015** to achieve goals
Six EFA Goals

1. Expand and improve *early childhood care and education*

2. Ensure *free and compulsory primary education*

3. Meet the learning needs of all *young people and adults*

4. Achieve 50% improvement in levels of *adult literacy*

5. Eliminate *gender disparities*

6. Improve the *quality of education*
The six EFA goals dovetail with the United Nations’ eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education by 2015
Progress and challenges

1. Much achieved
2. But problem that EFA reduced to UPE
3. Seen as irrelevant to many states
High-level expert meeting, UNESCO Regional Office (Bangkok) 
8-11 May 2012

to discuss the EFA goals beyond 2015

Conclusion

1. Must complete the unfinished (broad) EFA agenda
2. Renewed global vision needed, while recognising local contexts
Core concern of both the original (existing) EFA agenda and the future one: Equity
One element of the HKU research agenda

The shadow education system of private supplementary tutoring
Scale of Shadow Education

- **Hong Kong**
  - 54% Form 3
  - 72% Form 6

- **China (Mainland)**
  - 29% lower secondary

- **UK**
  - 12% primary
  - 8% secondary

- **France**
  - 25% lower secondary
  - 33% upper secondary

- **India**
  - West Bengal, 57% primary
  - Kerala, 72% secondary

- **Japan**
  - 16% Primary 1;
  - 65% Secondary 3

- **Korea**
  - 88% elementary
  - 72% middle
  - 60% high
Issues

- Consumes household resources
- May reduce stress on students, but may also increase it
- Can undermine as well as support the schools
- Inadequate indicators of quality
- Exacerbates social inequalities
A developing research agenda

1999-2003-2006

1999

2003

2006

2009

English

Urdu

Spanish

Sinhala

Russian

Polish

Nepali

Mongolian

Korean

Hindi

Georgian

French

Chinese

Bangla

Azerbaijani

Armenian

Arabic
Two regional studies

Europe (June 2011)

The challenge of shadow education:

Private tutoring and its implications for policy makers in Europe

Asia (May 2012)

Shadow Education
Private Supplementary Tutoring and Its Implications for Policy Makers in Asia

Mark Bray and Chad Lykins
Further research in Hong Kong

Forms 3 and 6

- 16 schools
- 1,720 student questionnaires
- 105 student interviews
- 68 teacher interviews

And collaborators elsewhere: Cambodia, Dubai, Jamaica, Mainland China, Philippines....
Education for Sustainable development

Another domain in which UNESCO is the lead agency

2005-2014: Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD)
Sustainable development means:

development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Brundtland 1987
UNESCO (2005):

More basic education as it is currently taught will not create more sustainable societies.

The conundrum remains that the educated nations leave the deepest ecological footprints, using most resources and energy to support their lifestyles.

Creating a more sustainable future will not occur simply by increasing the amount of education; instead it is an issue of content and relevance.
The DESD pursues a global vision:

A world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from quality education and learn the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation.
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<tr>
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<th><strong>EFA</strong></th>
<th><strong>ESD</strong></th>
<th><strong>MDGs</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Values</strong></td>
<td>Human rights values</td>
<td>Values of ESD (including human rights)</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
<td>Vocational basic skills</td>
<td>Skills in critical thinking, systems thinking and future’s thinking</td>
<td>MDG7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td>Literacy, numeracy</td>
<td>Relevant and appropriate, local and global issues, Links between environment and development</td>
<td>MDG 1, 2, 3, 7</td>
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<td>Focus on girl’s education and on disadvantaged groups</td>
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Ross & Parker. *EFA-ESD Dialogue*, UNESCO
IV. The agenda ahead

for HKU

UNESCO

and partners
HKU: Teaching & Learning

- Undergraduates
- Taught postgraduates
- Research-degree students

Within and across the curriculum
Within and beyond the classroom
HKU and Joint Research

A broad agenda on:

- Quality education for all
- Education for sustainable development
Knowledge Exchange

Learning from and with each other:

locally

nationally

globally

regionally
A collective sense of global citizenship

Teaching & Learning

EFA ↔ ESD

Knowledge Exchange

Research

Government personnel
Principals
UNESCO National Commissions
UNESCO Officers
Teachers
Students
Two Core Conclusions

1. Pertinent vision:
   - Quality education for all, with a sustainable focus

2. Social significance:
   - Equity and social justice in an interdependent world
Which leads to …

awareness of the need for partnership
and ... time for some further perspectives in community dialogue