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**Promoting critical knowledge, skills and  
qualifications for sustainable development in  
Africa: How to design and implement  
an effective response  
through education and training systems**

**Sub-theme 1**

**Common core skills for lifelong  
learning and sustainable  
development in  
Africa**

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**Study on Key Issues and Policy Considerations in Promoting  
Lifelong Learning in Selected African Countries  
Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and Tanzania**

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**Working Document**

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

<b>ABE</b>	Alternative Basic Education
<b>ACE policy</b>	National Adult and Continuing Education Policy (Kenya)
<b>ADLI</b>	Agricultural-Development-Led Industrialization
<b>ADRA</b>	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
<b>AUC</b>	African Union Commission
<b>COBET</b>	Complementary Basic Education (Tanzania)
<b>CONFINTEA VI</b>	Sixth International Conference on Adult Education
<b>DESD</b>	Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
<b>EAC</b>	East African Community
<b>ECCE</b>	Early Childhood Care and Education
<b>EDPRS</b>	Education Development Sector Strategic Plan (Rwanda)
<b>ESDP</b>	Education Sector Development Program
<b>ETP</b>	Education and Training Policy (Tanzania)
<b>ETSIP</b>	Education and Training Sector Improvement Program (Namibia)
<b>FAL</b>	Functional Adult Literacy
<b>FDC</b>	Folk Development Colleges (Tanzania)
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GNP</b>	Gross National Product
<b>GTP</b>	Growth and Transformation Plan (Ethiopia)
<b>ICBAE</b>	Integrated Community Based Adult Education (Tanzania)
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>ISCED</b>	International Standard Classification of Education
<b>IWEP</b>	Integrated Women’s Empowerment Program (Ethiopia)
<b>MINEDUC</b>	Ministry of Education (Rwanda)
<b>MoEVT</b>	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (Tanzania)
<b>NEPAD</b>	African Union’s New Partnership for Africa's Development
<b>NFE</b>	Non Formal Education
<b>NLPN</b>	National Literacy Program in Namibia
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualifications Framework
<b>NSGRP</b>	National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (Tanzania)
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>TVET</b>	Technical, Vocational, Education and Training
<b>UIL</b>	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNECA</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Program

## 1. ABSTRACT

1. Lifelong learning was conceptually introduced in the *Faure Report* in 1972 and has been further developed since then. Lifelong learning can potentially assist people/countries/regions towards sustainable socio-economic development and through different life stages, across different parts/sectors of society. This cross-national study focuses on key issues and policy considerations in promoting lifelong learning in Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, and Tanzania. Based on an overview of the national socio-economic development contexts and conceptual clarifications, the study reviews progress and challenges, identifies concrete examples of solutions and lifelong learning strategies for sustainable development in the five countries.

2. The five countries have undergone rapid quantitative expansion of formal education in recent years and quality remains a major challenge. The rapidly-changing socio-economic realities in the countries demand non-formal and adult education, but they are still of low priority. Although informal learning has been a tradition and has outstanding features, it is hardly mentioned in policy documents in the five countries. The study also explores six cross-cutting issues that underpin lifelong learning: conceptual understandings of lifelong learning; recognition of learning achievements; the role of counseling and guidance; teachers and facilitators; financial resources and infrastructure; and coordination among stakeholders.

3. The study concludes that there is a need for the five countries to embrace a lifelong learning paradigm for sustainable socio-economic development. It makes ten policy recommendations, from developing national overarching policy frameworks and guidelines to cascading effective capacity-building to regional and local levels.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4. There have been many developments in the concept of lifelong learning since it was introduced in the Faure Report in 1972. Learning: the Treasure Within in 1996 constituted a landmark publication for the further conceptualisation of lifelong learning as a guiding principle for educational reform. Lifelong learning has the potential to assist people/countries/regions in sustainable socio-economic development.

5. In line with the objectives of sub-theme 1 of the 2012 ADEA Triennale (*Common core skills for lifelong learning and sustainable development in Africa*), this cross-national study focus on key issues and policy considerations in promoting lifelong learning in Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, and Tanzania. (These five countries had taken part in a Pilot Workshop on Developing Capacity for Establishing Lifelong Learning Systems in UNESCO Member States at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning in 2010.) The key methodology of the study is inspired by a Grounded Theory Approach, i.e. the use of systematized procedures to generate, develop, and derive inductively contextualized theory about a phenomenon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Through desk research and fieldwork, the study team has found examples of lifelong learning policy and programs in the five countries.

6. The chapter on *Development contexts* gives an overview of six socio-economic development areas in the five countries that have created a particular demand for lifelong learning:

- 1) Economic growth and poverty reduction: the five countries have experienced considerable economic growth in recent years and are aiming, through their respective development plans, to become knowledge-based economies and to transform themselves into middle-income countries;
- 2) Rapid population growth and urbanization: in the five countries these are creating significant challenges in terms of health, housing, infrastructure, job creation and crime prevention;
- 3) Democracy and governance: decentralized governance is favored by the five countries with the hope of facilitating greater participation at local levels of government;
- 4) Social cohesion and gender equality: given the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual characteristics of the five countries, social cohesion is actively promoted by the governments;
- 5) Mass media and ICT: the mass media are important instruments for national integration, cultural self-identity and socio-economic modernization. Particularly in countries with strong oral and story-telling traditions, the radio constitutes an important medium to reach rural and isolated communities. At the same time, new ICT infrastructure has been developing rapidly both in general terms and in the educational context of the five countries; and
- 6) Regional integration: regional integration mechanisms (SADC and EAC) are creating new opportunities towards regional lifelong learning qualification frameworks to facilitate cross-border labor mobility.

7. The chapter on *Conceptual clarifications* provides the framework for the study and elucidates the following concepts:

- 1) *Sustainable development*, which is generally thought to have three components: environment, society, and economy. Although the relationship between education and sustainable development is rather complex, research shows that education is a key feature to a country's ability to develop and achieve sustainability.
- 2) *Core skills, competences and capabilities* for sustainability: the study uses *core skills* and *competences* more in the sense of *capabilities*, which have more breadth, ambition, and sense of agency. *Core skills, competences, and capabilities* enhance people's ability to exercise a degree of control over their own lives; to take part with others in decisions that affect the

contexts of their lives; and to envisage an alternative future for themselves and for their families.

- 3) *Lifelong learning* is multi-dimensional and can be used to organize all education and training throughout life to nurture individuals' and societies' *core skills* and *competences*. Lifelong learning hence reflects all contexts from a life-wide, life-deep and lifelong perspective. It includes learning behaviors, obtaining knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values, and competences. All these are required for personal growth, spiritual, social, and economic well-being, democratic citizenship, cultural identity, and employability. Lifelong learning takes at least three forms (formal education, non-formal education and informal learning).
- 4) *The learning society*: this concept is an effective approach to embodying lifelong learning and making learning part of citizens' everyday lives. It can apply to a country as a whole, but also to communities, regions, provinces, and villages.

8. The chapter *Towards a lifelong learning system: progress and challenges* is based on concrete evidence on progress and challenges in developing lifelong learning in the five countries. The five countries have undergone a rapid development and expansion in *formal education* in recent years. In the five countries, it is furthermore widely recognized that *non-formal and adult education* can respond particularly well to the demand for flexible education and training systems at all levels that are relevant and adapted to the rapidly-changing socio-economic realities of individuals, communities and societies. Despite all their advantages, non-formal and adult education are still of low priority in the five countries, especially in terms of investment. Governments' budgets allocated to non-formal and adult education remain minimal. Adapting curricula to learners' needs and the lack of adequate staff training are major additional challenges for policy and programs, with regard to both *formal* and *non-formal education*. *Informal learning* constitutes a considerable part of a person's lifetime development and there is a long-standing tradition of learning deeply-embedded in the communities throughout the five countries. However, there is hardly any mention of facilitating informal learning in policy documents in the five countries.

9. The chapter *Key cross-cutting issues supporting lifelong learning systems* deals with issues that particularly underpin lifelong learning:

- 1) Conceptual understandings of lifelong learning, which is sometimes referred to only as adult education, and is still not fully operationalized in the five countries.
- 2) Recognition of learning achievements: the inter-dependence between all forms of learning has not yet been satisfactorily understood or developed. National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) in the five countries are sometimes fragmented and not necessarily able to connect all the major components of education and training. Given the increasingly fluid cross-border labor markets, there is an increased demand for sub-regional qualification frameworks.
- 3) The roles of counseling and guidance, which are a major issue requiring further development as they can assist individuals in making the right choices, based on an analysis of socio-economic, communal and personal needs and requirements as well as on the available learning opportunities.
- 4) Teachers and facilitators: while increased efforts in the five countries are being made to address the issues of insufficient initial training, scarce remuneration, and teachers' and facilitators' poor working conditions, these issues still constitute major challenges, particularly in non-formal education.
- 5) Financial resources and infrastructure: although there has been a sizeable increase, the shortage of financial resources is hampering the expansion of formal and non-formal education in both quantitative and qualitative terms. All the five countries are currently making considerable investments in improving infrastructure, including ICT, in the education sector but the shortage of infrastructure facilities is ubiquitous.
- 6) Coordination among stakeholders: collaboration at all levels and networking/clustering within and across economic and knowledge sectors is important to avoid overlaps and make

concerted efforts in delivery leading to more relevant learning opportunities in the communities.

10. The final chapter *Conclusions and policy considerations* concludes that there is a need for the five countries to embrace a lifelong learning paradigm for sustainable socio-economic development. It then presents the following ten policy recommendations, based on examples of lifelong learning strategies for sustainable development from the five countries:

**Recommendation 1:** *Develop a holistic overarching national policy framework to promote lifelong learning for all and develop clear guidelines for implementation at all administrative levels (local, regional and national).*

**Recommendation 2:** *In addition to expanding access and improving equity, enhance the quality and relevance of formal education by improving understanding of and responding to the demands for individual, community and societal core skills and competences, and by adopting a competence-based approach in curriculum reform within a lifelong learning framework.*

**Recommendation 3:** *Prioritize the development of adult and non-formal education in the lifelong learning system and strengthen this sub-sector through recognition of the intimate link between formal education and the adult and non-formal sub-systems, by creating more community learning opportunities (including NFE schools) and improving the relevance of curricula to meet learners' needs.*

**Recommendation 4:** *Adopt the approach to building a learning society family by family, community by community, district by district through tapping into the long, existing tradition of community learning and convert national policy guidelines into sustainable actions at local levels.*

**Recommendation 5:** *Strengthen linkages between formal education, non-formal education and informal learning through the development and implementation of national and cross-border mechanisms for recognizing outcomes of all forms of learning and improving national and regional qualification frameworks.*

**Recommendation 6:** *Improve human and financial resources for both formal and non-formal education and, in particular, upgrade the status and remuneration of teachers/facilitators and provide more financial resources for equipment and facilities for non-formal and adult education.*

**Recommendation 7:** *Promote the use of mass media and ICT in teaching and learning, and provide information, guidance and counseling for learners of all ages on learning opportunities through mass media, telephone help-lines, community centers, faith-based organizations, civil society organizations and workplaces.*

**Recommendation 8:** *Recognize the importance of a research orientation in developing and implementing lifelong learning policy at regional, national, and institutional levels, in order to acknowledge deep shifts in pedagogical and organizational philosophies and approaches that are needed for lifelong learning to move from rhetoric to action for sustainability, and encourage strong research relationships among university-based researchers and others in government and elsewhere.*

**Recommendation 9:** *Improve coordination among various stakeholders through establishing and strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration mechanisms among governmental departments and between government and NGOs, civil society organizations and the private sector, at national, regional and local levels, and in tandem with decentralization, cascade effective capacity-building to regional and local levels.*

**Recommendation 10:** *Prioritize lifelong learning in cross-border integration through, for example, SADC and EAC, which identify coordinating mechanisms like regional qualification frameworks, to enhance mobility and recognition between countries.*

11. In summary, there is a need for the five countries to embrace a lifelong learning paradigm for sustainable socio-economic development. The development of lifelong learning systems takes political courage, long-term commitment, and social transformation within a framework of sustainable development. It is about continuity and change, as it must both tap into traditional and local wisdom, and enable risk-taking and adaptation to new conditions.

### 3.1. Background to the study

12. The *Faure Report* of 1972, *Learning to Be*, recognized that education was no longer the privilege of an elite, or a matter for only one age group. Instead, it should be both universal and lifelong. The *Delors Report* of 1996, *Learning: The treasure within*, saw learning throughout life as the ‘heartbeat’ of a society which builds on four pillars – *learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together* and *learning to be* – and envisaged a learning society in which everyone can learn according to his or her individual needs and interests, anywhere and anytime in an unrestricted, flexible and constructive way. The *Dakar Framework for Action* (2000: 18) subsequently recognized that ‘Education, starting with the care and education of young children and continuing through lifelong learning, is central to individual empowerment, the elimination of poverty at household and community level, and broader social and economic development’. The Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) has stressed the importance of lifelong learning to develop core skills for sustainable living and survival in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The *Belém Framework for Action* adopted by the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) held in Belém do Pará in Brazil in December 2009, affirmed that the role of lifelong learning is critical in addressing global educational issues and challenges. Lifelong learning has been accepted by UNESCO’s Member States as the *organizing principle* towards a viable and sustainable future (UIL, 2010: 37).

13. In reality, however, understanding of the concept of lifelong learning and its importance to sustainable socio-economic development is still limited, comprehensive policy frameworks for promoting lifelong learning remains patchy and actions in implementing a holistic vision of lifelong learning are weak. This situation is in stark contrast to the socio-economic, political and cultural demand for high-quality skilled, educated people and active citizens across the African continent. It is therefore imperative to incorporate the vision and practice of lifelong learning into overall national policy frameworks and embed lifelong learning into the national education and training systems of African countries. In the ADEA 2006 Biennale on Education in Africa, Medel-Añonuevo (2006) emphasizes that people should stop asking if the vision of lifelong learning is relevant for Africa and instead consider how lifelong learning, if operationalized, could be a means for eradicating poverty, for ensuring universal primary enrolment, ensuring women’s empowerment and prevention of HIV. Hasan (2010: 26) furthermore argues that lifelong learning is even more relevant in the context of developing countries than in OECD countries, for three main reasons: (1) lifelong learning is well-matched to the requirements of the overall socio-economic development process; (2) it is useful in fundamental system-wide educational reform; and (3) there is an overwhelming need to strengthen the demand side of the educational system.

14. In order to increase the capacity of policy-makers and leading researchers to develop national policies and strategies to establish lifelong learning systems and make lifelong learning for all a reality, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) organized a ‘Pilot Workshop on Developing Capacity for Establishing Lifelong Learning Systems in UNESCO Member States’ in 2010. Policy-makers and researchers from five African countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, and Tanzania) participated in this workshop with their colleagues from five Asian countries. It offered a unique opportunity for policy-makers, advocates and academics to share experience and achievements, and to debate the crucial issues facing lifelong learning now and in the future. Most importantly, country teams strove to identify critical issues in developing a national lifelong learning policy framework.

15. This study is the outcome of a follow-up activity to the workshop, and is aligned with one of the objectives of the 2011 ADEA Triennale. It sought to lay the foundations of an approach which may be defined as the transition from the concept of instruction/teaching to that of learning, and from a compartmentalized vision of education and training sub-systems to an integrated lifelong learning vision. It focuses on key issues and policy considerations in promoting lifelong learning in selected African countries.

## 3.2. Objectives of the study

16. One of the biggest socio-economic development challenges in any society is its ability to work across different sectors in order to achieve a more integrated approach. As society is necessarily structured to cater effectively for particular needs like health, agriculture, education, and environment, institutional structures often end up functioning largely in isolation from one another. To avoid fractured, piecemeal approaches in personal, social and economic development, societies need various mechanisms, approaches and strategies to re-connect the different parts to achieve more integration for effective and sustainable development. Lifelong learning as an *organizing principle* can potentially assist this integration process so that people/countries/regions have learning opportunities and support through different life stages, across different parts/sectors of society. The assumption is that lifelong learning, as an integrative concept, can contribute to sustainable development for Africa.

17. The study did not start with a ‘clean slate’. We did not adopt a deficit model of lifelong learning but assumed that lifelong learning has already been informing approaches, in uneven ways, to education, training and living over many years. In fact, the study builds on what societies are doing and aims to find creative examples and leading practices towards lifelong learning from the five countries, which can be shared and used to support learning from one another.

18. The objectives of the study were:

- 1) To analyze the demand for knowledge, skills and competences for sustainable social and economic development;
- 2) To review existing education policies and progress towards lifelong learning systems;
- 3) To identify priority areas and leading practices, structures and mechanisms which could be used as exemplars and inspiration for other countries; and
- 4) To develop key recommendations for an integrated lifelong learning framework.

## 3.3. Methodology

19. Taking note of ADEA’s evaluation of contributions to the previous Biennales that have left ‘many areas of education reform under-explored in terms of actual significance, policy implications, systems reform or actual implementation on the ground’, and to make a relevant contribution to the 2011 ADEA Triennale, the key methodology of the study was inspired by a *Grounded Theory Approach*, i.e. the use of systematized procedures to generate, develop and inductively derive contextualized theory about a phenomenon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Through (a) desk research and (b) fieldwork the team (Shirley Walters, Jin Yang and Peter Roslander) envisaged being able to find examples of what is possible in moving towards lifelong learning policy and practice frameworks in the five countries.

20. The study built on a longer-term process that was started by UIL, to build lifelong learning systems, working alongside the country teams. These country teams spent two weeks at the Pilot Capacity-Building Workshop in Hamburg with a team of experts on lifelong learning. The selection of the African countries to participate in this study was made pragmatically and linked to those who had participated in the Workshop.

21. Two members of the research team, Jin Yang and Peter Roslander, working with the country teams, spent three to five days in each country interviewing key informants. The findings of the study are primarily based on qualitative data collected through a process of semi-structured one-to-one or focus-group interviews with policy-makers, policy-researchers, practitioners (providers of formal and non-formal educational opportunities), managers in the private sector, including agriculture, as well as leaders of civil society organizations and a sample of learners from each of the five countries (a list of interviewees is provided in appendix 1). Semi-structured questions for the interviews were developed

in conjunction with the consultant to the team, Professor Shirley Walters, and provided to the interviewees in advance (the semi-structured questions for the field work are provided in appendix 2). The topics of the leading questions for the interviews included: the perceived demands for particular knowledge, skills and competences; existing understandings and definitions of lifelong learning; application of lifelong learning to transforming formal and non-formal education, leading practices/programs; and recommendations on essential solutions and strategies towards a clearly-articulated policy framework for lifelong learning. The methodology of the study therefore generated contextualized information about solutions, strategies, opportunities, and insights towards lifelong learning.

### 3.4. Limitations

22. The study is limited in size and scope. Restrictions of time and resources meant that engagement within the countries was brief. Only a small number of people could be interviewed in each country. It was not possible to triangulate the data sufficiently; more in-depth research would be needed to verify and validate the data. As mentioned already, the primary data was based on either one-to-one or focus-group interviews from mainly in and around the capital cities of the five countries, although the team tried to capture information and perspectives from both rural and urban environments in each country. This study is therefore *suggestive* rather than *exhaustive* and should not be read as a comprehensive assessment of the state of lifelong learning policies and practice in these countries. It should rather be seen as an attempt to identify concrete practices and recommendations to promote lifelong learning. Furthermore, the countries were located in eastern and southern Africa and the findings can only be interpreted as a partial reflection of the situation in Africa.

## 4. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXTS

23. The need for sustainable social and economic development in the five countries has created particular demands for knowledge, skills and competences. In order to situate the development of lifelong learning policies and strategies, we present some basic data on the five countries. These have been identified as being relevant to understandings of lifelong learning for the development of core skills or capabilities for sustainability.

### 4.1. Economic growth and poverty reduction

24. Achieving broad-based, accelerated and sustained economic growth so as to eradicate poverty has been the key objective of the five countries' governments. As shown in Table 4.1, they have generated relatively good economic growth in recent years. The average GDP growth rates in Sub-Saharan Africa were 6.3 per cent in 2005 and 5.0 per cent in 2010 (International Monetary Fund, 2011). In three of the five countries – namely, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania – the real GDP growth rates were higher than these average rates. In Ethiopia, during the five-year financial period from 2005/06 to 2009/10, the economy grew at 11 per cent per annum on average. In 2010, the government formulated the five-year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) (2010/11 to 2014/15) which aims to maintain at least an average annual real GDP growth rate of 11 per cent in the next five years. Rwanda's economy has registered remarkable growth since 1994 and it is one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa. Rwanda has resolved through its Vision 2020 to build a knowledge-based economy and to transform the country into a middle-income country. In recent years, Tanzania has achieved one of the most impressive rates of growth for a non-oil-producing sub-Saharan African country. According to *The Economist*, Tanzania, together with Ethiopia, will be among the world's ten fastest-growing economies for the five years 2011-2015 (*The Economist*, daily chart, 6 January 2011).

**Table 4.1: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in the five countries, 2005-2010**

	Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010	2005	2010
GDP per capita (US \$)	165	365	579	888	3,709	5,454	287	569	377	542
Real GDP Growth Rates (%)	12.6	8.8	5.9	5.0	2.5	4.2	9.0	7.4	7.4	6.8

Source: International Monetary Fund, 2011

25. Another feature of the countries' economic development is that, with the exception of Namibia, as shown in Table 4.2, value added by agriculture remains a sizeable portion of GDP. In Ethiopia, for example, agriculture contributes 51 per cent of GDP. The government plans to modernize agriculture and improve its efficiency and productivity, ensure food security, create employment opportunities and enhance the country's foreign exchange earnings. According to the Education Sector Development Program IV (2010/2011-2014/2015) (ESDP IV), Ethiopia's development strategy is summarized as the Agricultural-Development-Led Industrialization (ADLI). In Kenya, several interviewees emphasized that there is "no economic development without rural development". In fact, a special Ministry for Rural Development of Northern Kenya has been created to address these issues. In Tanzania, to reduce the rural-urban development gap, the government has been promoting an 'agriculture first strategy' and a 'better life for everyone strategy'.

**Table 4.2: Agriculture value added as % of GDP in 2009**

Ethiopia	Kenya	Namibia	Rwanda	Tanzania
51	23	9	34	29

Source: World Bank, 2011

26. The relatively strong economic performance in these countries has not resulted in satisfactory social development outcomes (UNECA and AUC, 2010). For example, as shown in Table 4.3, poverty rates still remain very high. One of the interviewees in Ethiopia highlighted: “Poverty has been the reason for conflict and we must do our best to reduce poverty.” Although GDP in Namibia is significantly higher than in the other four countries – nearly six times that of the next highest – this masks the great inequities in society. As shown in Table 4.3, 32.8 per cent of the population in Namibia lives on less than US\$1 per day. In Rwanda, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) 2008-2012 plans to tackle extreme poverty through improved food security and targeted schemes of job creation and social protection. It is particularly urgent to create new employment opportunities for young people who are just entering the labor market.

**Table 4.3: Population living on less than US\$1 per day in the five countries (%)**

Ethiopia	Kenya	Namibia	Rwanda	Tanzania
39.0	19.7	32.8	57.0	88.5
(2005)	(2005)	(2004)	(2006)	(2000)

Source: African Economic Outlook, 2011

27. It is encouraging to note that at national policy level, the importance of sustainable development has become more pronounced in recent years in the five countries. Most of the interviewees are aware of the importance of sustainable development. For example, one policy-maker in Ethiopia commented: “Development is not only for today, it is also for the future, and development is a continuous process. Therefore, development needs to be maintained in a sustainable manner and education has to promote sustainable social and economic development.” A counterpart in Tanzania expressed the view that sustainable development is related to health, education and economic development: “We have adopted curriculum to link sustainable development with HIV and AIDS, right skills to life, to help people to understand family life and sexuality, the reduction of poverty, to provide farmers with life skills, farming, fishing and animal husbandry skills.”

## 4.2. Population growth and urbanization

28. Population dynamics, including growth rates, age structure, life expectancy, and migration, influence every aspect of human, social, and economic development. As shown in Table 4.4, four common features can be identified in the demographic projections of the five countries, namely high growth rate, large proportion of young population, increasing life expectancy, and urbanization.

29. With the exception of Namibia, the population growth rate in 2010 is higher than 20 per thousand. According to UN estimates, between 2010 and 2020, the rate will drop slightly in Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia and Rwanda, while in Tanzania the rate will increase to 31 per thousand. This rapid increase will create greater unemployment and under-employment, environmental degradation and housing shortages, and worsen living standards. In order to change population growth into a positive factor for social and economic development, education has an indispensable role to play.

30. In four of the five countries, in 2010, the proportion of the population aged 0-24 is higher than 60 per cent, the exception being Namibia, in which the rate is 57.6 per cent. According to estimates, in the next ten years the rate will drop only slightly. For the large young population to be economically and socially active citizens, these countries must provide sustainable livelihoods which include more education and learning opportunities, healthcare and family-planning services.

31. It is encouraging to note in Table 4.4 that life expectancy is growing in all five countries. As life expectancy grows, this economically vital unit drives the economy by working, saving and investing. Longer life expectancy causes fundamental changes in the way that people live. Attitudes about education, family, retirement, the role of women and work all tend to shift. Healthier children, in turn, tend to experience greater cognitive development per year of schooling than their less healthy

counterparts. The result of this educational investment is that the labor force as a whole becomes more productive, promoting higher wages and a better standard of living. Women and men therefore tend to enter the workforce later, partly because they are being educated for longer, but they are likely to be more productive once they start working (Bloom, 2002).

**Table 4.4 Demographic profile of the five countries**

	Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
Population (000s)	82,950	101,046	40,513	52,564	2,283	2,672	10,624	14,042	44,841	61,081
Proportion aged 0-24 (%)	62.7	56.7	63.3	60.7	57.6	52.6	63.4	61.3	64.6	64.0
Population growth rate (%) <sup>1</sup>	2.21	1.88	2.58	2.52	1.87	1.47	2.87	2.66	2.88	3.10
Life expectancy at birth (years) <sup>2</sup>	57.2	61.8	55.0	59.7	61.1	62.5	55.1	58.7	55.4	62.1
Percentage urban (%)	16.7	19.3	22.2	26.6	38.0	44.4	18.9	22.6	26.4	31.8

**Source:** Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, World Population Prospects, 2010

32. Although all the countries have a predominantly rural population, they will witness a sizeable increase in their urban population in the next ten years. Some policy-makers and experts feel their countries are on the verge of a major demographic transition, including rapid urbanization, as economic activities in urban areas have a much higher yield than those in rural areas. In Kenya, for example, small companies and the informal sector have been reported to be mushrooming, with the general attitude towards self-employment changing in a positive direction. A policy-maker in Tanzania observed that rural-urban migration and urbanization is gathering momentum, and that the cities and towns, even small towns, are growing. For urbanization to develop in a coordinated manner, education as well as other social services and employment opportunities must keep pace. A policy-maker in Kenya commented that to reap the benefits of urbanization, “massive investment is needed to support the pressure of an increasing urban population, in housing and infrastructure, job creation, and crime prevention”.

### **4.3. Democracy and governance**

33. While the democratic process has taken different turns in different countries and with different levels of progress, it seems that all five countries are in a process of strengthening democratic governance. One of the interviewees in Ethiopia emphasized that the country had a long history of feudal monarchy, and had also experienced military dictatorship: “Our new generation must have the traits of understanding difference and living in peace. Ethiopia cannot stand as a country if we cannot develop democracy and a tolerant culture.” In Rwanda, good governance is considered to provide an anchor for pro-poor growth by building on the country’s reputation as a country with a low incidence of corruption and a regional comparative advantage in soft infrastructure (EDPRS, 2007: i), i.e. an enabling environment and an efficient regulatory framework for economic activities (EDPRS, 2007: 24).

34. Progress to democracy and good governance is occasioned by well-informed citizens. Education has a big role to play in this respect. In Tanzania, for example, adult and non-formal education promotes civic education for adults, to promote the multi-party system of democracy, to help people to appreciate peace and tolerance. Adult learning centers reach out to the masses and inform them of the

<sup>1</sup> The 2010 datum is the mean of the five years from 2005 to 2010; the 2020 datum is the mean of the five years from 2015 to 2020.

<sup>2</sup> The 2010 datum is the mean of the five years from 2005 to 2010; the 2020 datum is the mean of the five years from 2015 to 2020.

role of party, government and citizens, rules and regulations, and help them to register for elections. In Ethiopia, through a school subject *Civics and Ethical Education*, the new curriculum addresses the basic mechanisms of democratic governance and the need for moral and ethical values within society.

35. Decentralized governance is increasingly being favored in the five countries with the hope that this process will facilitate greater participation at local levels of government. Communities are encouraged to be more involved in problem analysis, project identification, planning, implementation and oversight – which in turn will increase feelings of ownership and promote sustainability. The 2010 Constitution of Kenya envisages a process of decentralization and Ethiopia has already put in place an extensive decentralized government structure. Rwanda’s decentralization policy has established participatory governance structures at even the lowest level of governance and contributes to improvements in the quality of service delivery in areas such as health, education and social protection (UNDAF Rwanda, 2007: 11).

#### 4.4. Social cohesion and gender equality

36. The fact that all five countries are multi-ethnic, multi-religion and multi-lingual countries accentuates the importance of promoting social cohesion. Tanzania has achieved social integration to the point where there is limited evidence of ethnic or religious division. In Kenya’s new constitution provides for affirmative action to address inequities/disparities. The National Cohesion Commission has been formed with the mandate of ensuring that there is a balance/mix in the ethnic composition of the civil service and that the education sector takes cognizance of ethnicity issues. A policy-maker in Kenya commented that the “more learning that is taking place throughout the society the less is the risk that Kenya again will re-experience a clash and conflict between different communities, and the more people are learning and activated the better are the chances that they avoid crimes and drugs”.

**Table 4.5: Seats in national parliament held by women in 2008 (%)**

Ethiopia	Kenya	Namibia	Rwanda	Tanzania	World average
21.4	9.8	26.9	50.9	30.4	16.2

Source: UNDP. 2010. Human Development Report

37. The five countries have made admirable progress in gender equality. As shown in Table 4.5, in four of the five countries (with the exception of Kenya), the proportion of seats in the national parliament held by women is higher than 20 per cent, well above the world average of 16.2 per cent. Rwanda has continuously updated its laws on gender equality since 1994 (Rwanda Vision 2020: 18). One of the interviewees put it: “Rwanda has also one of the best and most advanced laws in the world against gender based violence.” In Tanzania, a National Council for Economic Empowerment of Women was established and every government agency is required to have a gender policy. In employment, Tanzania strives to provide equal opportunities for women and men, and the country has planned a national program to train women entrepreneurs. There are, of course, many challenges ahead in empowering women and creating substantive gender equality. In Rwanda, for example, a policy-maker revealed: “Many women are now in decision-making positions in particular at the local level government, but they are sometimes illiterate. So there is a need for capacity-building, both with regard to functional literacy and other capacities for the position so that they can contribute fully and perform the required tasks.”

#### 4.5. Mass media and ICT

38. In the African contexts, mass media, including radio, television and newspapers, have been important instruments for national integration, cultural self-identification and socio-economic modernization (Musau, 1999). Radio and television have played active roles in public education, entertainment and information. In Tanzania, for example, in as early as the 1970s, radio was widely used in the adult literacy campaign. In recent years, it is recognized that ‘old’ information and

communication technologies such as radio and television alongside ‘new’ digital ones play an important role in moving towards a learning society. Particularly in countries with strong oral and story-telling traditions, the radio constitutes and will remain a very important medium, especially to reach rural and isolated communities. In other words, ‘old’ and ‘new’ information technologies are not substitutable but complementary (UNESCO: 2005). A Rwandan policy-maker emphasized that “to be accessible and provide equal opportunities to all learners, learning institutions must be well connected to the road network, electricity and ICTs”.

39. ICT infrastructure has been developing rapidly in the five countries. In Ethiopia, the team learned from the interviewees that the Government has made investment in ICT infrastructure, especially at secondary school level. In Kenya, ICT infrastructure has now taken root in the country and is quickly spreading out to rural and semi-arid regions, and attention has been paid to capacity-building for teachers in ICT integration in schools. The Ministry of Energy has made deliberate efforts in rural electrification with a central focus on schools. In Namibia, some interviewees felt that mobile infrastructure is very well provided, and understood that it is possible to use mobile phones to send learning messages, to communicate health issues, to dispatch election information and to operate bank transactions. In Tanzania, every district has been connected by optical fiber, and has access to the internet. Rwanda has placed information and communication technology at the core of its education programs. Besides teaching, the “one laptop per cluster” program provides schools with computers to promote ICT. In general, however, many challenges remain in the wide application of ICT in Africa, including the five countries, but there is a significant potential for growth. According to ITU (2010), in the African region, mobile cellular penetration rates reached an estimated 41 per cent at the end of 2010 (compared to 76 per cent globally); internet user penetration reached 9.6 per cent, far behind both the world average (30 per cent) and the developing country average (21 per cent).

## 4.6. Regional integration

40. Against the backdrop of globalization, the African Union’s New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) is embraced as a credible and relevant continental framework. NEPAD assigns a significant role to the regional economic communities, emphasizes regional and sub-regional approaches, and encourages African countries to pool resources to enhance growth prospects and to build and maintain international competitiveness. For the five countries in this study there are two regional communities worthy of mention: the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC).

41. SADC, with Namibia and Tanzania among the 15 member states, has the vision of a common future within a regional community that will ensure economic well-being, improvement in standards of living and quality of life, freedom and social justice, and peace and security for the people of Southern Africa. In education and training, SADC seeks to promote a regionally-integrated and harmonized educational system especially with regard to issues pertaining to access, equity, relevance and quality of education interventions (SADC, 2011).

42. The EAC is the regional inter-governmental organization of five countries including three of the countries in this study (Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda). Although Ethiopia is not a member of the EAC, it is understood that intense political and commercial discussions are ongoing and the future entry of Ethiopia into the EAC is likely. To enhance labor mobility, the EAC established a policy that allows nationals from member states to travel within the region without a visa. Aspiring to achieve growth and development, and more importantly sustain it, the EAC acknowledges that education is a must and strives to enable its citizens to acquire knowledge so that they are capable of ‘putting one’s potentials to maximum use’. As labor market demands have changed over the years, and as free movement of people is allowed across countries within the region to facilitate regional integration, the EAC Partner States have identified the harmonization of education curricula, standards, assessment and evaluation of education programs as a priority issue (EAC, 2011).

43. These regional integration mechanisms have created new opportunities for education reform and development in their member states. For example, a senior policy-maker in Tanzania commented that the progress made by the EAC has opened up national borders with neighboring countries such as Uganda and Kenya in terms of trade and labor mobility. That means Tanzanians have to compete with their counterparts in other countries for employment. In addition, the EAC launched a discussion on developing a lifelong learning qualifications framework which facilitates further labor mobility.

44. To conclude, the brief overview of the socio-economic contexts reveals that the five countries have made encouraging progress in socio-economic development in recent years, but there are still many challenges ahead. For conditions to change and for people to enhance their well-being, one of the key factors is to create supportive and enabling environments for lifelong learning. As Lukalo-Munoko (2010: 159) points out: “The vulnerability of Africa’s economic position, its geopolitical situation and growing younger population are the major drives behind the educational reforms of many countries. The challenges lie in African countries failing to utilize optimum potential of its workforce and development of values (organizational, national, societal and personal) that give impetus and drive to lifelong learning.” One of the interviewees in Ethiopia also highlighted: “We have to build the capacity of our young generation in order to compete in the globalized world.”

## 5. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

45. Further to the thematic of Sub-theme 1: Common Core Skills for Lifelong Learning and Sustainable Development in Africa of the ADEA Triennale 2011, this study focuses on the concepts of sustainable development, core skills or capabilities, lifelong learning and learning society. This chapter clarifies these concepts and frames the study.

### 5.1. Sustainable development

46. Sustainable development is a continually-evolving concept. One of the original descriptions of sustainable development is attributed to the Brundtland Commission: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987: 43). Sustainable development is generally thought to have three components: environment, society, and economy, and sustainability is considered to be a paradigm for thinking about a future in which environmental, societal, and economic considerations are balanced in the pursuit of development and improved quality of life (UNESCO, 2006: 10). Culture is sometimes suggested as a fourth component of sustainable development, referring to ethical values and respect for human rights and diverse cultures as an important foundation for sustainable development (UNEP, 2004). The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (UNEP, 1992) lists 18 principles of sustainability, including people’s entitlement to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature; a need to limit poverty and reduce disparities in living standards in different parts of the world; a need for better scientific understanding; and the full participation of women.

47. The relationship between education and sustainable development is complex. Generally, however, research shows that education is key to a nation's ability to develop and achieve sustainability targets (UNESCO, 2006). Education and training can improve productivity, enhance the status of women, reduce population growth rates, and enhance environmental protection. When education levels are low, economies are often limited to resource extraction and agriculture. In many developing countries, the current level of education is so low that it severely hinders development options and plans for a sustainable future. Education and training are acknowledged to be central in improving the quality of life the educational attainment of the next generation, thereby raising the next generation's chances for economic and social well-being (UNESCO, 2006).

48. The 2009 Bonn Declaration for Education for Sustainable Development, adopted at the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, re-affirms that through education and lifelong learning we can achieve economic and social justice, food security, ecological integrity, sustainable livelihoods, respect for all life-forms and essential values that foster social cohesion, democracy and collective action. The Conference also underlined the importance of learning from local cultures, along with new ideas and technologies, to find solutions in support of sustainable development. However, simply expanding the quantity of education and lifelong learning opportunities will not be sufficient to advance sustainable societies. The quality of education and training, including relevance, must be enhanced. To achieve this, education and training must be reoriented to address sustainability and to give more focus to skills, values, and perspectives that encourage active participation for sustainability by all citizens. This leads to the question of *core skills, competences* and *capabilities* for sustainability.

## 5.2. Core skills, competences and capabilities for sustainability

49. *Core skills, competences and capabilities* can and have been defined in many different ways, and ultimately countries are themselves responsible for what types and what combinations best work within their socio-political and development contexts. The word *skill* is often interpreted in a very narrow way to mean ways of doing; it can be seen only as instrumental. Broader than *core skills*, according to Jorgensen (1999: 4), quoted from (Illeris, 2009: 84), *competences* refers to a person being qualified in a broad sense, which is not merely that a person masters a professional area, but also that the person can apply this professional knowledge, and apply it in relation to the requirements inherent in a situation which may be uncertain and unpredictable. In this study, we use *core skills* and *competences* more in the sense of *capabilities*, which have more breadth and ambition and sense of agency.

50. Amartya Sen's (1999) concept of *capabilities*, reduced to its simplest terms, constitutes the capacity to achieve well-being – it refers both to people's potential to achieve and their actual ability to do so. Sen's fundamental capability to achieve well-being can be generally disaggregated under five headings: (1) communication, language and literacy capabilities; (2) cognitive skills; (3) personal development and life capabilities; (4) social capabilities; and (5) work-related capabilities.

51. All individuals and groups should have the opportunity, not only to realize their full potential, but also to raise their aspirations. Sen's deep concern with reducing inequalities in societies stresses the obstacles to achieving capabilities which different individuals and groups encounter. Sen's approach gives the edge needed to go beyond current potential, with the challenge of recurrently uncovering and developing further potential. His perspective links capabilities directly to freedom. Aspiration is a part of freedom, and will take diverse forms. This may appear to be philosophical and abstract but it speaks directly to the evidence and experience that we have found in this study. We found that there is impressive work being done on the ground, in a host of different contexts, which aims to realize potential, raise aspirations and reduce inequalities.

52. As quoted in Schuller and Watson (2009: 167) we agree that Raymond Williams' analysis of the roles of lifelong learning in a period of rapid change is a relevant complement to Sen's concept of capability. Williams identifies three key and different ways in which learning helps people:

- (i) To *make sense of change*, by acquiring information, ideas, knowledge and a critical and challenging mind;
- (ii) To *adapt to change*, by making the most of it, capturing and applying knowledge;
- (iii) To *shape change*, being agents of change rather than its victims, navigating risk and uncertainty as part of the democratic project.

53. The combination of these three fits well with the notion of capability as something that enables agency and action as well as understanding. Drawing on Schuller and Watson (2009: 167), *core skills, competences and capabilities* are ones which enhance people's ability to exercise a degree of control over their own lives; to take part with others in decisions that affect the context of their lives; and to envisage alternative futures for themselves and their families. These open up space for creative, aesthetic, spiritual and other essential dimensions of personal development and growth.

54. The urgent emphasis on sustainability offers important suggestions as to the *core skills, competences and capabilities* for required knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. Relevant areas can include: a positive attitude to learning throughout life, environmental consciousness with protection, preservation and care for natural resources, the value of indigenous knowledge and traditions, entrepreneurship, and the importance of acknowledging and celebrating people's differences across

beliefs, cultures, gender, age, social class, or abilities. Sustainability emphasizes both continuities and change – people both individually and collectively need enabling environments which encourage their capabilities to understand, adapt and shape change, which can paradoxically, and importantly, encourage the sustaining of or returning to certain traditional cultural practices.

### 5.3. Lifelong learning

55. It is important to emphasize that lifelong learning is not new; in fact, it has existed throughout human existence as it is part of social reproduction and is deeply embedded in all cultures and civilizations. However, it has not been used systematically as a paradigm to organize all education and training throughout life. Lifelong learning incorporates dimensions of life-wide and life-deep learning too – so it is multi-dimensional. *Life-wide* signals the breadth of learning across, for example, family, cultural settings, communities, work and leisure; life-deep learning relates to contemplative, meditative, spiritual learning practices; and *lifelong* relates to the four stages of life, which are described by Schuller and Watson (2009). Stage one includes children and young people who are dependent; the second stage is when people sustain productivity and prosperity; the third stage includes older people who still want to be active and engaged; the fourth stage is when people become dependent due to old age or ill-health. The definition of these stages in terms of precise ages is difficult as it is so dependent on socio-economic, political, cultural and personal contexts. But moving from one stage to the other signals key transition points, each requiring people to have access to advice and guidance about life planning and adaptation.

56. As lifelong learning reflects all contexts in life from a life-wide, life-deep and lifelong perspective, it includes learning behaviors, obtaining knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and competences for personal growth, social and economic well-being, democratic citizenship, cultural identity and employability. *Learning: the Treasure within* (1996) defines lifelong learning as a continuous process based on the following four pillars: *learning to do, to know, to be and to live together*. It has been suggested that an additional pillar can be added – *learning to change and to take risk* (Ouane, 2008).

57. The change of emphasis from *education (lifelong education)* to *learning (lifelong learning)*, has been widely debated since the 1970s and focus has gradually moved towards the latter, as learning occurs both through systematized, formal interventions and informally, in the ways people make sense of experiences and knowledge. There is increasing recognition of the porous boundaries between different forms of education and learning, therefore in highlighting these terms we do not suggest a rigid separation between them (Cooper and Walters, 2009). Lifelong learning encapsulates at least three forms:

#### 5.3.1. Formal education

58. Formal education is “the highly institutionalized, chronologically graded and hierarchical ‘education system’, spanning early childhood development, lower primary school to the upper reaches of the university” (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974: 8). In the **International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 1997**, UNESCO defines formal education as “education provided in the system of schools, colleges, universities and other formal educational institutions that normally constitutes a continuous ‘ladder’ of full-time education for children and young people, generally beginning at age five to seven and continuing up to 20 or 25 years old”. The limitation of this definition is that the formal education of adults throughout their lives is omitted.

#### 5.3.2. Non-formal education

59. Non-formal education is “any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the

population, adults as well as children” (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974: 8). Non-formal education can provide an alternative for learners (children, youth and adults) who have dropped out (or ‘stepped out’) from formal education or who have never had the opportunity to access formal schooling. Its advantage can lie in its flexibility to orient the curriculum towards the specific needs and conditions of the learners to improve their chances of being more functional in their respective communities (Ouane, 2008). In Africa, non-formal education is very significant in promoting lifelong learning and in reaching the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups (Atchoarena and Hite, 2001: 208). Internationally, there is a growing consensus that formal education cannot reach all children and so there is a growing market for non-formal education that is adjusted to local needs and circumstances (Hoppers, 2006: 105).

### 5.3.3. Informal learning

60. Informal learning is “the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences and exposure to the environment [...] Generally, informal education (i.e. learning) is unorganized and often unsystematic; yet it accounts for a great bulk of any person’s total lifetime learning – including that of even a highly ‘schooled’ person” (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974: 8). Informal learning is closely associated with *incidental learning* “that is entirely unplanned, unintended (and often unconscious) and is the casual by-product of other activities”. It is learning *en passant* (Dohmen, 1996: 36).

61. Formal education, non-formal education, and informal learning are of course fluid with, for example, informal and non-formal education able to occur within formal programs. Hoppers (2006: 21) furthermore underlines “the difficulties in drawing a line between what is formal and what is non-formal, when so many initiatives show characteristics belonging to both” and suggests simply referring to various programs of basic education or lifelong learning. More significantly, there was already in the 1970s a common understanding that all countries and communities, regardless of socio-economic development, should move towards lifelong learning systems whereby all potential in formal, non-formal and informal education/learning be tapped and synergized. Coombs and Ahmed (1974: 9) argue that “there is a growing agreement that, ideally, nations should strive to evolve ‘lifelong learning systems’ designed to provide every individual with a flexible and diversified range of useful learning options throughout his or her lifetime. Any such system obviously would have to synthesize many elements of informal, formal and non-formal education”. In the context of Africa, the ADEA 2008 Biennale in Maputo called for the integration of different learning areas or types of competences so that they can be brought together or converged within the same learning program (ADEA, 2009).

62. In recent years there have been moves towards recognizing the interdependence and interpenetration of all forms of learning, wherever they occur, through (for example) the recognition of prior learning. The importance of relevant learning from any context, and the need for recognition in formal systems for mobility and efficiency, has been emphasized with the development of National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs). The recognition of this interpenetration has also been occurring in different ways, at program, curricula and institutional levels (Ouane, 2008; Singh, 2008).

63. In summary, lifelong learning is an *organizing principle*. It has major implications for reflecting realities on the ground, and for transforming education and training policy and practice in educational institutions, workplaces, communities, to enhance sustainable socio-economic development. This has become particularly apparent with regard to the rapid social, economic, political, and environmental transformation that individuals, communities, countries and regions are experiencing. These complex realities and contexts inevitably put a lot of pressure on both societies and individuals, requiring more and different learning opportunities for children, youth and adults based on constantly-evolving and emerging needs and demands. The systematic development of lifelong learning has become necessary to meet these needs and demands (Torres, 2004).

## 5.4. Learning society

64. In 1972 the *Faure Report* appealed to UNESCO Member States to reorganize their educational structures on two basic premises: first, that a learning society is one in which all agencies become providers of education; and second, that all citizens should be engaged in learning, taking full advantages of the opportunities provided by the learning society (Ahmed, 2002). We live in a complex and fast-changing social, economic and political world to which we need to adapt by increasingly rapidly acquiring new skills, competences and capabilities in a wide range of contexts. An individual will not be able to meet life challenges unless he or she becomes a lifelong learner, and a society will not be sustainable unless it becomes a learning society.

65. The characteristics of a *learning society* (Walters, 2009) provide a framework to capture the existing policies and leading practices in the countries studied which are consistent with lifelong learning as *organizing principle*. This enables us to highlight these policies and practices and, later in this paper, to make suggestions about what can be learned from what is being done and what more it may be possible to do.

66. The concept of a *learning society* can apply to a nation as a whole, communities, regions, provinces or even villages. In fact, a learning nation would comprise a range of learning societies at all levels, down to the smallest community and even a household. Evidence for some countries shows that building a learning region/city/community can be an effective approach to embodying the philosophy of lifelong learning and making learning part of citizens' everyday lives (Yang and Valdés-Cotera, 2011). A learning community consciously enables conditions for learning in which potential (both social and individual) can be converted into capabilities.

67. The two fundamental pillars of a *learning society* (Walters, 2009) are economic growth and social cohesion. In the countries we have studied there is a general understanding of the significance of these twin pillars, contained within the overarching objective of sustainable development. The importance of social cohesion has been emphasized by the recent history of some of these countries – economic growth can be shattered if there is inadequate social cohesion. Equally, social cohesion cannot thrive on ideology alone – the greater the material disparities in a society, the fewer possibilities there are for social cohesion. In more practical terms, a learning society has the following seven broad characteristics (Walters, 2009):

- *Education*: Excellent education and training systems at all levels, with high participation rates;
- *Partnerships and networking*: High levels of collaboration, networking and clustering within and across economic and knowledge sectors, especially around areas of innovation;
- *Information*: Excellent systems for collection, analysis, management and dissemination of information;
- *Out of the silos*: A constant challenging of traditional knowledge categories and forms of organization to suit rapidly-changing social and economic realities;
- *Accessibility*: Providing learning opportunities that are increasingly accessible for all and ensuring that citizens are aware of them;
- *Lifelong learning valued*: High value placed on formal, non-formal and informal learning throughout life; that value is expressed in tangible improvements in the learner's employment and community situations; and
- *Social cohesion*: Learning supports high levels of social cohesion (across social class, ethnicity, gender, ability, geography and age) within a society of limited social disparities.

68. The characteristics of a *learning society* are not static. They have emerged in a historical period sometimes characterized as the *information age* or *knowledge society*, which privileges the acquisition and distribution of knowledge in a way which no previous period in global history has done. The characteristics will continue to evolve as the current knowledge economy evolves. There are those

who argue that the existence of an effective information and knowledge infrastructure is as important today as the development of transport infrastructure was in the 19th and 20th centuries. In this context the organization of societies needs to adapt and their priorities to change. Indeed the publication *Towards Knowledge Societies* (UNESCO, 2005: 60) points out: “By definition, a learning society cannot be just an information society. In the face of the potential excesses that the rise of a global information society is likely to generate, the notion of learning reintroduces a critical dimension, allowing our societies to face the possibility of assimilating the incredible amount of new knowledge that they regularly produce.” Crucially, the development of learning opportunities needs to be multiplied, and access to those opportunities facilitated. From these characteristics it becomes clear that lifelong learning is not simply about adding learning events and processes. It is also about reshaping attitudes and restructuring societies.

## 6. TOWARDS A LIFELONG LEARNING SYSTEM: PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

69. In this chapter, based on concrete examples in the five countries, we are going to identify progress and challenges with regard to key issues and policy considerations for lifelong learning. Although our fieldwork was limited both in terms of size and scope, the findings are suggestive of the state of lifelong learning policies and practices in the countries. This chapter is divided into three sections. We will discuss reported progress and challenges relating to the development formal education, non-formal education, and informal learning, bearing in mind the porous boundaries that exist between them (as mentioned in Chapter 5).

### 6.1. Development of formal education

70. The five countries have undergone rapid development and expansion of formal education in recent years. The countries have paid a lot of attention to *access* and *equity* and have made a lot of progress in these two dimensions. However, *quality* remains a major challenge.

#### 6.1.1. Progress

71. As shown in Table 6.1, there is a clear trend in the five countries that all levels of formal education from early childhood care and education (ECCE) to secondary have undergone expansion in terms of access in recent years. Most notably, in Ethiopia the net primary enrolment rate, and in both Rwanda and Ethiopia the gross secondary enrolment rates have more than doubled. In Kenya the ECCE provision has improved as a result of the government's efforts to incorporate it into the system of basic education.

**Table 6.1: Statistic data of formal education in the five countries**

Country		Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
Year		1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009
Pre-primary enrolment % (gross)	Total	1	4	42	51	34	31	3	17	...	33
	Male	1	4	42	52	31	31	3	17	...	33
	Female	1	4	42	51	36	31 <sup>3</sup>	3 <sup>4</sup>	17	...	34
Primary enrolment % (net)	Total	36	83	62	82	88	89	75	96	49	96
	Male	43	85	62	82	85	87	75	95	48	96
	Female	30	80	63	83	91	91	76 <sup>5</sup>	97 <sup>6</sup>	50	97
Secondary enrolment % (gross)	Total	13	34	38	59	58	65	10	27	6	27
	Male	16	39	39	62	55	60	10	27	7	31
	Female	11	30	37	56	61	70 <sup>7</sup>	10	26	5	24

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

72. In addition to basic education, expansion has also been achieved in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education. A Namibian policy-maker reported efforts to

<sup>3</sup> 2006 figure

<sup>4</sup> 2000 figure

<sup>5</sup> 2001 figure

<sup>6</sup> 2008 figure

<sup>7</sup> 2007 figure

transform TVET to reach out to and train more learners to become more competitive in the labor market. Table 6.2 provides available enrolment data in tertiary education in the five countries. In a group interview in Rwanda with three researchers it was indicated that evening courses in the national universities in particular have broadened the possibilities to reach more part- and full-time learners. In Ethiopia the team learned that the number of universities has increased from two in 1994 to 33 in 2011. In Rwanda, a policy-maker pointed out that to compete effectively in the global economy, “increasing access to higher education has become a key governmental priority”.

**Table 6.2: Statistic data of tertiary education in the five countries**

Country		Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
Year		1999	2007	1999	2007	1999	2006	1999	2005	1999	2007
Tertiary enrolment % (gross)	Total	0.9	3	...	3	...	6	...	3	0.6	1
	Male	1.4	4	...	4	...	7	...	3	1.0	2
	Female	0.3	1	...	3	...	6	...	2	0.3	1

Source: Global Monitoring Report, 2011

73. In all five countries, expansion in formal education has been accompanied by efforts to ensure equitable access by broadening learning opportunities for the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in society. In Tanzania a policy-maker reported that the Primary Education Development Program was developed in 2001 not simply to expand overall primary education enrolment but also to ensure that primary education reached all children. For those who did not complete primary school education, a complementary primary education program has been developed to provide a second chance. In 2006, Ethiopia’s Ministry of Education developed the Special Needs Education Program Strategy and launched a national campaign to bring physically disabled children to school. Kenya’s abolition of primary school fees in 2003 has had a major impact in increasing net enrolment. In Kenya one policy-maker mentioned how “formal and non-formal schools are successfully working in parallel to reach the most marginalized and disadvantaged children”.

74. In promoting equal access to formal education, the five countries have paid particular attention to gender equality. In Tanzania, a senior expert explained, “the universities offer special scholarships to girls, and secondary education offers extra help for girls to learn science. We also want educational materials to reflect positive discrimination to the advantage of girls.” In Ethiopia a Girls Education Strategy was developed in 2010 which includes approaches such as private tuition and counseling for girls, boarding schools for girls in pastoral areas, financial support for girls, making schools girl-friendly, giving priority to girls in school meals and rewarding girls for good results. As a result of various efforts in the education system, gender equality has reached a new level. In Kenya gender parity was reported almost to have been achieved in ECCE, primary school and secondary school. Some of the incentives at this level have included provision of sanitary towels to girls to boost retention and participation.

75. Policy documents in the five countries are in the course of developing key core skills, competences and capabilities for individuals and groups to be able fully to realize their potential and aspirations, as reviewed in Chapter 4. For example, the Curriculum Framework for Ethiopian Education (2010: 9-10) stipulates as key competences the following: life skills (e.g. ability to listen actively, recognize different points of view, and share ideas); basic skills (literacy and numeracy); higher-order skills (critical and creative thinking); active participation in the learning process and community life; independent thinking; adapting to change; and time management competences. The Kenyan Implementation Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2008: 6) emphasizes the task for education of giving people the critical knowledge and skills to be creative and find new solutions to social, economic and environmental issues. The Namibian Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (2007: 19) envisages more relevant learning outcomes in primary and secondary education as a result of two parallel processes: (1) the definition of core competences and (2) the revision of curricula. This would involve mainstreaming ICT; strengthening English, mathematics, natural sciences & entrepreneurship training; HIV/AIDS orientation; and environmental

learning. Rwanda’s (2010) Education Sector Strategic Plan (2010-2015) puts emphasis on child-friendly schools and repeatedly argues that the shift towards more learner-centered pedagogical approaches will support the development of individuals’ communication, problem-solving, teamwork, creative and critical thinking skills. In Tanzania, the team learned that the government has redesigned the curriculum from a content approach to a competence approach, thus including life-skills and entrepreneurial skills.

### 6.1.2. Challenges

76. It is evident that in each of the five countries, access to primary education for all is still a challenge, despite the rapid expansion of enrolment in primary schools as analyzed above. Table 6.3 shows that considerable numbers of primary school-aged children in the five countries still remain out of school. In Ethiopia, Kenya and Namibia the rates of out-of-school children are still relatively high. It was indicated by learners in Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania that poverty, the need to work, the cost-sharing policy and hidden fees, early marriage and pregnancy, loss of parents due to AIDS, and long distances to school are some of the main reasons why some primary school-aged children still cannot attend school regularly or at all. There is regional variation in the extent that children attend school. In Ethiopia, for example, pastoralist areas had suffered a long period of neglect and marginalization in the past. Consequently, basic infrastructure and social services, including education and training, in these areas are meager. In spite of conditions created that are conducive for pastoralist education, there are many hurdles to overcome.

**Table 6.3: Proportion of primary school-aged out-of-school children in the five countries**

Country		Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
		1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009
Out-of-school children %	Total	63	16	37	17	11	10	25	4	51	3
	Male	57	14	37	17	14	12	25	5	51	4
	Female	70	19	36	16	8	8	24 <sup>8</sup>	3 <sup>9</sup>	50	3

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

77. Most importantly, while all five countries have expanded their formal education systems over the last years and made progress in their policies to develop core skills, competences and capabilities, it is clear from the fieldwork that educational quality and relevance remain major issues. Rapidly-changing social and economic realities demand flexible education and training systems at all levels that are relevant and able to adapt to the needs of individuals, communities and societies. In Namibia one policy-maker and several managers reported that “the current education curriculum does not provide relevant skills such as productive and entrepreneurial skills”. In Tanzania, a recent study shows that one in five primary school-leavers cannot read Standard 2-level Kiswahili, half the children who complete primary school cannot read in English, and only seven in ten primary school leavers can do Standard 2 level Mathematics (UWEZO, 2010).

78. In addition, socio-economic demands for skills and competences are evident. A Kenyan policy-maker called for learning that is functional, and which takes day-to-day realities into account. An Ethiopian interviewee spoke about the development of a fundamental capability i.e. a sustainable, peaceful life. The need to upgrade the quality of TVET was frequently mentioned by interviewees in all five countries. It was reported that learners’ and community members’ attitudes towards TVET remain negative although TVET often provides an avenue to employment. A Kenyan policy-maker mentioned that while many people aspire to higher education, this does not always result in work and sustainable livelihoods. In a group discussion, Namibian managers and learners reflected that “the universities need to make more effort to keep abreast of the needs and demands of individuals,

<sup>8</sup> 2001 figure

<sup>9</sup> 2008 figure

communities and societies”. The Namibian government is in fact currently undertaking two studies on the skills requirements for the labor market to assess the present higher education curriculum and ensure that it is more on a par with the actual skills required by the job market (Republic of Namibia, 2011: 81).

## 6.2. Development of non-formal education

79. Globally there is a trend among governments to pay increasingly more attention to non-formal education and initiate and administer directly non-formal education systems and programs to reach specific marginalized groups such as out-of-school children (Hoppers, 2006: 24). In the five countries, non-formal education for youth and adults has been part of the education system and it is recognized that non-formal education can correspond to rapidly-changing social and economic realities for individuals, communities and societies; it can contribute to tangible improvements both for individuals’ lives and socio-economic development.

### 6.2.1. Progress

80. Substantial progress of non-formal and adult education has taken place in the five countries at policy level. Non-formal and adult education policies increasingly take socio-economic sustainable development into consideration and underline the crucial importance of adult education and functional literacy in reaching the countries’ broad development goals. Box 6.1 provides a panorama of the main non-formal and adult education policies and main programs in the five countries.

81. First, the five countries have attached importance to the development of non-formal and adult education over a long period. In Tanzania, the role of adult basic education in national development was emphasized by President Nyerere: “First, we must educate adults. Our children will not have an impact on our development for five, ten, or even twenty years. The attitudes of the adults, on the other hand, have an impact” (United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar, 1965). Nyerere’s (1973) educational philosophy emphasized adult education for self-reliance. Learning, according to Nyerere, did not have a beginning or an end, and he argued that living is learning/working and learning/working is about trying to live better: “Learning must become an integral part of working; and people must learn as and where they work” (Nyerere, 1973: 300). During the 1970s, Tanzania organized a mass literacy campaign and literacy classes were conducted in all possible locations. In 1973, UNESCO awarded a literacy prize to the Literacy Project of the West Lake Region of Tanzania. In Ethiopia, interviewees reported that the first adult education institution was established in 1948 by the former Ethiopian emperor (Haile Selassie). The institution was established to produce a better-trained workforce. The Ethiopian emperor (Haile Selassie) later consulted the UN in 1967 and got international support to launch a major national literacy program. In 1979, the Ethiopian Co-ordinating Committee for the National Literacy Campaign won a UNESCO award.

82. Second, in recent years, all five countries have developed policies for non-formal and adult education. The following common features can be observed in these policies: (1) alignment of non-formal and adult education to overarching national socio-economic development plans, particularly with regard to poverty reduction, democratic participation, social cohesion and national unity (for example, the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) in Ethiopia, Vision 2030 in Kenya and Namibia, Vision 2020 in Rwanda, and Vision 2025 in Tanzania), as well as education development plans in these countries; (2) in line with universal primary education, attention has been paid to alternative basic education for out-of-school children and youth; (3) literacy or functional literacy continues to be the priority program area of non-formal and adult education; and (4) literacy programs have become more and more combined with income-generation skills and sustainable community development.

### **Box 6.1: Panorama of non-formal & adult education policies and main programs in the five countries**

#### *Ethiopia*

In 2008 the Ministry of Education released a fourth Education Sector Development Plan for 2010/2011 to 2014/2015, with the goal of producing democratic, efficient, effective, knowledgeable, inspired and creative citizens who are able to contribute to the realization of Ethiopia's strategic vision of becoming a middle-income economy (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2010: 86). It targets a renewal of non-formal and adult education with a specific focus on (1) Alternative Basic Education, which provides primary education-equivalent programs for out-of-school children and youth, mostly in rural communities, and (2) Functional Adult Literacy for illiterate adults, which is a two-year program of literacy and livelihoods skills, ensuring the active participation of the newly-literate population in social and economic development.

#### *Kenya*

The National Adult and Continuing Education Policy (ACE policy) and the Policy for Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training from 2009 have been elaborated in line with Kenya's development goals as stipulated in its Vision 2030. Kenya Vision 2030 argues for national unity and envisages a highly-literate adult population which can contribute to socio-economic development and fully participate in national, provincial and local democratic processes. The ACE policy encompasses basic and post-literacy (fully recognizing that illiteracy remains a major national challenge for sustainable development), functional education and training in various areas of development, continuing education, and TVET. The Policy for Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training mainly targets marginalized and out-of-school children, youth and adults through alternative provision of basic and continuing education. The government remains the main provider of adult literacy and livelihood training, while supporting a strong coalition with civil society organizations, faith-based organizations and other stakeholders in the provision of adult and continuing education.

#### *Namibia*

The National Policy on Adult Learning from 2003 set the following goals: (1) economic growth and development; (2) equitable social development and poverty reduction; (3) sustainable environmental development; (4) participatory democratic development; and (5) personal development and empowerment. The Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) was established in 2005 to strengthen the policy, legal and institutional frameworks to support equitable access to high quality and responsive adult learning. The establishment of national standards for adult educators was emphasized in the ETSIP mid-term review in 2011 as a major achievement. The National Literacy Program in Namibia (NLPN) has enrolled 30,000 to 40,000 adult learners per annum since its inception in 1992. In recent years the literacy program has diversified to include (1) Adult Skills Development for Self-Employment; (2) Community Learning and Development Centers; and (3) Family Literacy.

#### *Rwanda*

The government of Rwanda considers literacy a critical means for sustainable development and is committed to increasing literacy to 85 per cent among men and 80 per cent among women by 2012 (Republic of Rwanda, 2007: 34) from 75 per cent among men and 66.8 per cent among women respectively in 2009 (Table 4.3). The government is currently preparing a national adult literacy policy aimed at building a literate Rwanda through basic literacy and continuing adult education programs, supported by the creation of a conducive literate environment. Over 30 faith-based organizations, international NGOs, national NGOs, and community-based organizations are putting significant emphasis on adult education and functional literacy at program level.

#### *Tanzania*

From 1995 the Education and Training Policy (ETP) has been the basis of all education programs in the Tanzanian mainland and the delivery of non-formal and adult education as an integral part of this policy, focusing on the following areas: (1) increasing enrolments, (2) quality improvements, (3) equitable access, and (4) utilization of available resources. The National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) targets the achievement of literacy for at least 80 per cent of adults by 2015. In addition, a policy on Vocational Training with a special emphasis on out-of-school children, youth and adults was adopted in 2007. There are three major programs in the country: (1) the Integrated Community Based Adult Education (ICBAE); 2) Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET); and 3) Open and Distance Learning for Secondary Education. In addition, the Folk Development Colleges play a very important role in helping youth and adults to gain post-literacy knowledge and technical and vocational skills.

Sources: CONFINTEA VI national reports and field visits

83. Third, the most vulnerable and marginalized groups are increasingly reached through non-formal education in the five countries. Both a policy-maker and a manager in the private sector in Rwanda emphasized that agriculture is still the backbone of the Rwandan economy (90 per cent of the population are farmers) and argued that through relevant non-formal education, agriculture can increase its productivity considerably. A practitioner working with prison inmates and migrants in Kenya reported that the attitude among policy-makers in the country towards non-formal education has changed over the last years; decision-makers are taking greater care for marginalized groups: “You do not rehabilitate somebody by locking her/him up and throwing away the key – prisoners and immigrants need learning – otherwise more frustration and social unrest will increase in Kenya which would be detrimental to the entire society.” In Ethiopia, the country team visited a primary school in Addis Ababa which has two shifts: during the daytime it is an ordinary primary school, and in the evening it becomes an adult education center. The center operates two programs: Alternative Basic Education (ABE) and Functional Adult Literacy (FAL). In Rwanda it was reported that the government seeks to provide literacy training to 500,000 adults every year. A Kenyan policy-maker reported that particularly in the slum areas of Nairobi many children attend and benefit from non-formal education schools which are more attractive than the formal schools “as all children are welcome with or without school uniforms”.

84. Fourth, adult and non-formal education can be diverse, flexible and responsive to socio-economic demands for skills and competences. The National Adult and Continuing Policy of Kenya “instils knowledge, technical and vocational skills; values and positive attitudes. It helps the citizenry to participate effectively in the management of their resources, conservation of environment, natural resources and cultural heritage. It also enables them to participate in the democratic processes”. The policy thus acknowledges the importance of adult education for people’s agency in tackling crucial livelihood issues such as (1) agricultural and economic productivity, (2) health, (3) democratic participation, (4) social and gender equality, and (5) environmental protection (Republic of Kenya, 2010: 15-17). The Kenyan Policy for Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training (2009) also places a strong focus on the skills and competences of individuals who have been unable to access education through the formal system.

85. Another example of a national policy taking a clear stance in support of individuals’ and communities’ personal, social and economic development is given by the Tanzanian Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of Adult and Non-formal Education Programmes (2006). It suggests a curriculum not only encompassing basic literacy and numeracy but also skills such as personality-building, communication skills, vocational skills and general knowledge/life skills (2006: 42-43). At program-level, in Tanzania, the complementary basic education centers have implemented a three-year program for out-of-school children which combines the objective of literacy with poverty reduction and HIV and AIDS education. The integrated community education program has helped learners to become more self-reliant and empowered, and has succeeded in poverty reduction; and the Folk Development Colleges are helping youth and adults to acquire knowledge and skills for self-employment and to improve their lives. These examples corroborate the observation made by Oxenham *et al.* (2002: 35-36) that adult education programs in general and adult literacy programs in particular need to be well-adapted to the interests, conditions and needs of learners, especially in terms of livelihood and income-generating activities.

86. In addition, in the five countries, there are many governmental and NGO providers of non-formal education. In Kenya, interviewees pointed out that almost every ministry has education programs. In Tanzania, the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children is in charge of the Folk Development Colleges, the Ministry of Labor and Youth Development offers youth and employment training programs. The Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health also offers training programs. In Ethiopia, NGOs play very important roles in providing functional adult literacy and alternative basic education, and are concerned with women’s empowerment, mostly in the pastoral regions of the country. DVV International, in a bilateral agreement with the government, has implemented the

Integrated Women’s Empowerment Program (IWEP) which has benefited 31,000 women in more than 20 districts. In Rwanda the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is a faith-based organization focusing on Functional Adult Literacy (FAL), special needs education, and livelihood training/TVET. ADRA is active in 17 out of 30 districts and is closely affiliated to the government of Rwanda.

## 6.2.2. Challenges

87. Although literacy for youth and adults has been the prime component of non-formal and adult education in all the five counties (as shown earlier in Box 6.1) the available data provided in Tables 6.4 and 6.5 show that adult and youth literacy rates have not been enhanced substantially in recent years.

**Table 6.4: Adult and youth literacy rates in the five countries**

Country		Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
Year		1994	2005	2000	2009	2001	2009	2000	2009	2002	2009
Adult literacy rate (%)	Total	27.0	29.8	82.2	85.0	85.0	88.5	64.9	70.7	69.4	72.9
	Male	36.0	41.9	87.5	86.8	86.8	88.9	71.4	75.0	77.5	79.0
	Female	18.5	18.0	77.9	83.5	83.5	88.1	59.8	66.8	62.2	66.9
Youth literacy rate (%)	Total	33.6	44.6	92.5	92.7	92.3	93.0	77.6	77.2	78.4	77.4
	Male	39.3	55.9	93.3	91.9	91.2	91.1	78.5	77.0	80.9	78.5
	Female	28.1	33.3	91.9	93.6	93.5	94.9	76.9	77.4	76.2	76.4

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

**Table 6.5: Total numbers of illiterates**

Country		Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
Year		1994	2005	2000	2009	2001	2009	2000	2009	2002	2009
Total numbers (millions)	Total	21.9	28.9	3.05	2.96	0.17	0.16	1.50	1.69	6.03	6.55
	Male	9.45	11.8	1.10	1.08	0.07	0.07	0.58	0.67	2.20	2.51
	Female	12.4	17.1	1.96	1.88	0.09	0.08	0.93	1.00	3.83	4.05

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

88. From the fieldwork outcomes, the team made the following observations:

89. In comparison with formal education, non-formal education is of lower priority in the five countries. Hoppers (2006: 94) observes that in the international community, non-formal education is often regarded as an add-on to the formal school system rather than an equally important part of the education system in a country. This is corroborated by the findings in the five countries. Some of the interviewees in Namibia pointed out that while non-formal education is well-articulated in existing policies, there is still a need to translate the existing policies into practice. In Ethiopia, some experts commented that non-formal education has not been emphasized enough. In terms of investment, the government budget has been very minimal and there is no concrete evidence that the government has substantially increased funding for non-formal education. In all five countries it is difficult to get precise data on non-formal education’s share of the total education budget.

90. A policy-maker in Ethiopia acknowledged that many states and local governments are not yet fully sensitized to the important role and benefits of non-formal education. Most learners are women and the participation of men is still very low – they need to be motivated by various incentives otherwise it is difficult to attract them. A Rwandan researcher drew attention to the fact that the country has established inheritance legislation that stipulates equal distribution of family legacies between men and women, and legislation against gender-based violence. However, men and women, particularly in rural communities, are not always aware of the existence and implementation of these two laws. Non-formal education was mentioned by the same researcher as a potentially effective channel for changing attitudes and raising awareness about legal rights and obligations.

91. A policy-maker in Kenya underlined that the government needs to pay more attention to provision of programs for out-of-school youth and adults in the urban slums. In addition, interviewees in Namibia and Rwanda stated that adult education should embrace TVET programs and be more job-oriented. An Ethiopian policy-maker pointed out: “Literacy is not the aim per se – it must be useful to help people to improve their lives; to protect the environment; to help people educate their kid; to improve health; and to help women to play more active roles in the society.”

92. In the five countries, it is common practice for non-formal education centers for youth and adults to affiliate with primary schools. This is, of course, a cost-efficient arrangement, but some adults may feel discouraged to go to children’s schools and the facilities there cannot necessarily attract adult learners. A learner in Kenya pointed out: “The kids are wondering what an old man like me is doing here. Adult education centers need to be separated from primary schools.” This example points to the need to engage learners in the development of educational strategies.

### **6.3. Tap into traditional, informal learning**

93. As already mentioned in Chapter 6, informal learning constitutes a considerable part of a person’s total lifetime learning. It has been acknowledged that learning in traditional African societies, mostly informal in nature, was communal and viewed as a holistic process, part-and-parcel of culture and for life and work. It has taken place in every imaginable place and was considered to be behind every skill (Fafunwa and Aisiku, 1982). Amutabi (2009) also reaffirms that the history of lifelong learning in Africa has been preserved through oral traditions, memory, through dance, songs, poems, rituals, ceremonies and other cultural pursuits. The traditional wisdom and informal knowledge that exist constitute an immense resource and treasure that contribute towards socio-economic activities, and towards strengthening moral values which can support social cohesion and mutual understanding amongst people. The fieldwork outcomes in the five countries concur with these statements.

#### **6.3.1. Rich tradition**

94. Traditional, informal learning reveals a long-standing tradition of learning which is deeply embedded in the communities throughout the five countries. As shown in Box 6.2, all of the countries in the study have proverbs or traditional sayings which indicate in some way or another that learning is a permanent part of life.

95. One Ethiopian researcher remarked upon the long tradition of informal learning, especially in Ethiopian rural communities. The family and community take major responsibility for inculcating certain morals or cultural values in the children. Skills such as farming, crafts and traditional medicine were also mentioned as examples of informal learning or incidental learning taking place at community or family level. In Namibia policy-makers, practitioners and local community leaders confirmed that traditional learning and informal learning exist in the communities: “During our time, every evening elderly people used to tell us stories and of course some of them were scary. The scary stories were lessons designed to discourage unacceptable behaviors... We were also taught to rescue our brother or friend when attacked by a crocodile when swimming or pythons while looking after cattle.”

96. In Namibia policy-makers, researchers, practitioners and local community leaders also mentioned family learning and inter-generational learning as a particularly successful practice and factor contributing towards increased participation in adult education programs, including increased enrolment rates of schoolchildren in formal education. A Rwandan policy-maker drew attention to the fact that formal education was brought in by the colonizing countries and to some extent partly damaged the traditional and informal learning culture: “Before that time the main learning took place informally in the local communities and sustainability was and remains a key word in traditional learning.” In Tanzania, a policy-maker urged practitioners to reach the people in the communities and

motivate them; to make them aware; and to show them the real potential of lifelong learning through helping people improve their lives.

**Box 6.2: Proverbs pertinent to lifelong learning in the five countries**

*Ethiopia:*

‘timihirt ina daget iyarefu new’

(One can learn the whole of his/her life by taking rest in between)

*Kenya:*

‘If you are not taught by your mother you will be taught by the world’

‘What an adult person can see whilst seated a child cannot see whilst standing’

*Namibia:*

‘You are never too old to learn and you can learn even from the old horse’

‘Tuto ki tebe’

(Education is a shield – When you are well-educated, your education will protect you and it will open many opportunities)

*Rwanda:*

‘Kwiga ni uguhozaho’.

(Learning is a process that never stops)

‘If you grow up without inquiring you will get old without knowing’

*Tanzania:*

‘Elimu haina mwisho’

(Education does not have an end)

‘Kuishi ni kujifunza’ (Living is learning) ‘We accumulate useful experiences as we live’

Source: Field visits in the five countries

### 6.3.2. Challenges

97. Some experts have the view that indigenous education has been marginalized by the entrenchment of western learning models, and the African traditional values of relevance, functionalism and communalism have been eroded, leading to some Africans undermining the value of their own learning systems (Lekoko and Modise, 2011: 6). One Namibian researcher expressed concern that bonds within communities and families are weaker today and that the same informal learning does not take place to the same extent as before.

98. Although informal learning has been a tradition in Africa and has some outstanding features, in the five countries’ education policy documents there is hardly any mention of facilitating informal learning and creating literate environments. As a result, the potential of informal learning is not adequately valued and tapped. In fact, some interviewees in the five countries alluded to the fact that faith-based organizations are often alone in promoting traditional wisdom and informal knowledge, especially in rural and marginalized communities. The challenge ahead will be to develop policies to value, use, recognize and validate knowledge and wisdom in communities and families.

99. To sum up this Chapter, more learners, including the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, are being brought into formal education, and action has been taken in some places to provide greater access for girls and disabled children to school, and access to TVET has been expanded. In non-formal education, there is a trend towards more participation in functional literacy and other basic education programs for adults. However, adapting the quality and relevance of curricula to learners’ needs, particularly in rural communities, and the lack of adequate staff training, remain major challenges for policy and practice for both formal and non-formal education. Although traditional wisdom and informal knowledge are widely recognized in the communities as important resources for income-

generating skills and in deepening moral values, supporting social cohesion and mutual understanding amongst individuals and groups, they have not so far been given due priority and recognition by official levels.

100. Before we make concrete policy recommendations for implementation of lifelong learning systems (Chapter 8) we will discuss some key cross-cutting issues which are crucial to underpin such systems.

## 7. KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES SUPPORTING LIFELONG LEARNING SYSTEMS

101. In this Chapter, we highlight six cross-cutting issues which underpin lifelong learning systems, namely (1) conceptual understandings of lifelong learning, (2) recognition of learning achievements; (3) the role of counseling and guidance; (4) teachers and facilitators; (5) financial resources and infrastructure; and (6) coordination among stakeholders.

### 7.1. Conceptual understandings of lifelong learning

102. Lifelong learning encapsulates formal education, non-formal education and informal learning. However, there is a general, limited understanding of lifelong learning in the five countries, where lifelong learning refers only to adult education. A Namibian policy-maker described lifelong learning as “undervalued”. A policy-maker in Tanzania confirmed that “some colleagues only feel lifelong learning is about adult and non-formal education and it is far from using lifelong learning as an *organizing principle* to transform the education system”. In Kenya policy-makers reported that that “the notion of lifelong learning is slowly gaining currency in the country and it is important that people are able to see the importance of lifelong learning outside adult and non-formal education”. These observations concur with the observations of Aitchison and Alidou (2009) that in many African countries lifelong learning is framed largely in terms of adult literacy development.

103. Although the role of lifelong learning is reflected in national development and education policies in the five countries, there is still a lack of concrete strategies for effective implementation. A key policy-maker in Ethiopia stressed that although there is no national definition of lifelong learning it is now time to use the concept of lifelong learning to build linkages between different sectors in the education system with the aim of serving the country’s social and economic development. A Rwandan manager stated that if lifelong learning was well understood by national decision-makers there would be more initiatives for effective coordination to facilitate continuing education and learning.

104. However, harmonization of the various policies in the formal and non-formal sectors, across education and training institutions, levels, and socio-economic sectors, remains a major challenge in all five countries. The Ethiopian interviewees mentioned the “absence of legitimate and coherent institutional systems that monitor activities and implementation of lifelong learning throughout the country, especially at local levels”.

### 7.2. Recognition of learning achievements

105. In Chapter 5 we referred to the global trend towards recognizing all forms of learning. It is evident that many learners want recognition, validation and accreditation of their learning achievements or outcomes. For example, a policy-maker in Kenya said: “In our society certificates are very important especially for employment – salaries and awards are based on certificates.” A Kenyan adult learner was very clear when she said that she wants “my skills and competences to be recognized and certified. I want to show what I have learned”. In responding to social demands, the development of National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) has begun in the five countries. Interviewees in Rwanda mentioned that separate qualifications frameworks have been put in place for higher education and formal schooling (primary and secondary schools), and a qualifications framework is currently being elaborated for TVET.

106. However, the NQFs in the five countries are far from being fully-developed and operational. One Kenyan researcher reported the current shortcomings in recognition, validation, and accreditation. In Namibia a policy-maker pointed out that the current NQF is inadequate as the “possibilities of recognition, validation and accreditation of prior non-formal and informal learning achievements still are very limited”. Interviewees in Rwanda reported that the future challenge in the country will be to establish a NQF which also includes non-formal education, informal learning, adult education, and literacy, and link the different frameworks to achieve one integrated NQF. It was further suggested that Rwanda eventually should harmonize a regional qualifications framework with the other East African countries or create a sub-regional qualifications framework as the job-markets are becoming increasingly porous in the region.

107. NQFs and cross-national qualifications frameworks can play important roles in coordinating and communicating across different education, training, development and work sectors, and thus enhance possibilities for a more coordinated education and training system and facilitate learners’ opportunities to strive and fulfill their aspirations (Parker *et al.*, 2008). NQFs highlight the importance of research to understand the complex interactions between vocational and general knowledge, and the different sectors and settings where learning occurs.

### **7.3. The role of counseling and guidance**

108. A learning society (Chapter 5) is not possible without ensuring that learners are aware of the available learning opportunities, and the importance of learning throughout life. In reality, however, insufficient counseling and guidance was mentioned in all five countries as a major challenge in the provision of lifelong learning. Counseling and guidance assist individuals in making the right choices, based on an analysis of the socio-economic, communal and personal needs and requirements as well as on the available learning opportunities. An expert in Rwanda stated: “It is not enough to construct schools it is also equally important to sensitize the community-members to the importance of allowing the children to go to school.” A Rwandan policy-maker underscored the particular importance of counseling and career guidance in TVET and entrepreneurship. In Namibia a policy-maker reported that many learners, especially youth, have a negative attitude towards forms of learning other than formal schools and higher education.

109. In a learning society, the learning needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups in particular must be addressed. Counseling and guidance play a specific role in this respect. A practitioner in a primary-school in Kenya pointed out that many students come from the slums and are having problems at home. The major reasons for drop-out from school are early pregnancy, drug abuse, theft, and peer pressure. Hence, learner-, family- and community-oriented counseling are necessary to keep those students in school. Teachers and headmasters have to be trained and prepared to provide quality counseling and guidance about very sensitive issues.

### **7.4. Teachers and facilitators**

110. Teachers and facilitators are central to attaining a lifelong learning system. In Ethiopia one policy-maker reported on the development of an innovative curriculum to train teachers/facilitators and an accreditation and certification system for them. It was additionally reported that efforts are being made to improve teachers’/facilitators’ remuneration will make their salaries higher than those of civil servants. In Tanzania a teacher management and development strategy has been developed and implemented. Plans are underway to give incentives to primary school teachers to work in rural and remote areas, including extra pay, housing, and furniture.

111. As shown in Table 7.1, the pupil : teacher ratio in four of the five countries remains very high. This reflects an insufficient number of teachers. It was also reported that teachers are inappropriately trained, under-paid, and work under difficult conditions. In Tanzania a policy-maker reported that the

recruitment and training of secondary teachers has not kept pace with the expansion of enrolment. In Ethiopia, it was reported that there is an urgent demand for teachers of science, math and languages. There is also a need to re-orient teachers to shift from a teacher-centered approach to a learner-centered approach, to put all learners (whether children or adults) at the center of teaching and learning approaches, to maximize their opportunities for personal and intellectual development.

**Table 7.1: Pupil : teacher ratio in primary schools in the five countries**

Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
2000	2009	2000	2009	2000	2009	2000	2009	2000	2009
67	58	34	47	32	30	54	68	41	54

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

112. During the fieldwork, the lack of adequate staff training in non-formal education was identified as a particularly urgent shortcoming. In all five countries interviewees drew attention to the problem that teachers/facilitators in non-formal education earn very little and are poorly trained; as a result there is de-motivation and absenteeism. Shortages of trained administrative staff as well as teaching staff in non-formal education were reported. A policy-maker in Ethiopia reported that in the capital city each sub-city's education bureau has only one officer in charge of adult education. Most of these officers are not trained in non-formal education.

113. In addition to teachers and facilitators, other personnel are also very important. Trained and motivated education officers are a key professional support for teachers. In Ethiopia it was reported by both policy-makers and practitioners that capacities in the education sector are considerably more developed at central level than at regional and local levels. As the federal government is committed to decentralization – giving each region some autonomy accompanied by fiscal decentralization – the capacity of regional and local education officers becomes crucial in implementing policies. In reality, however, some interviewees admit that “the capacity dwindles down the stream” in areas away from the larger urban areas. Physical and human resources are critical to the development of lifelong learning systems.

## 7.5. Financial resources and infrastructure

114. In terms of financial resources, as shown in Table 7.2, public spending on education has increased substantially, with the exception of Namibia. Table 7.3 indicates that Namibia's public expenditure on education as a proportion of total government expenditure has remained high over the past ten years. However, it is clear that limited financial resources have always hampered the expansion of learning in both quantitative and qualitative terms in the countries. In a primary school the study team visited in a municipal district of Dar es Salaam, only one third of the pupils had desks. Two practitioners in Ethiopia confirmed that the government budget for adult education has been small. One said: “Adults are the active population and the key players in the immediate social and economic development of today, without providing them with lifelong learning, we cannot really achieve the socio-economic goals; and we cannot become a middle income country.” The worldwide, chronic lack of investment, particularly in adult education, was also emphasized in CONFINTEA VI.

115. In addition to the pressing financial challenges that adult education encounters, it is important to underline that sufficient funds for education and learning opportunities to serve citizens throughout life are required to ensure learning for all. In Tanzania, a policy-maker re-confirmed that the largest challenge to educational development in the country is the shortage of financial resources. Although the government spends 27.5 per cent of its national budget on education, it was reported by the same policy-maker that there is a major shortfall. The provision of facilities, equipment and teaching/learning materials are urgently needed in adult learning centers. A practitioner in Tanzania commented frankly, “For this to happen, the center must first of all be equipped with small labs, sewing machines, carpentry tools and food processing equipment.”

**Table 7.2: Total public expenditure on education as proportion of GDP (%)**

Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
2000	2007	2000	2010	2000	2008	2000	2010	1999	2008
3.9	5.5	5.2	6.9	7.9	6.4	4.1	4.7	1.9	6.8

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

**Table 7.3: Public expenditure on education as proportion of total government expenditure (%)**

Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
2000	2007	2000	2010	2000	2008	2000	2007	2000	2008
9.7	28.5	28.2	21.3	21.0	22.4	...	29.5	...	27.5

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011

116. ICT is a major component of infrastructure in a learning society. As shown in Chapter 4, all the five countries have made considerable investments in ICT infrastructure. In Rwanda the aim is that every schoolchild should have a computer, and innovative solutions (e.g. solar energy) towards providing electricity everywhere have been put in place. Still, the uneven accessibility, the lack of access to electricity, equipment and technical personnel, among other things, continue to be major challenges. In Ethiopia the development of ICT is focused on secondary education, while ICT for primary education and adult education is still scarce. In Kenya and Rwanda, some interviewees commented that solar energy and generators were needed to supply electricity to the ICT system, in both urban and rural areas. In Tanzania, at the moment, computers are often used in administration, but not widely used in program delivery and very few community learning centers have any computers at all.

## 7.6. Coordination among stakeholders

117. Partnerships and networking are exceptionally important to enable a vibrant learning society to develop (Chapter 4). It includes, for example, high levels of collaboration at all levels (including legislation), and networking and clustering within and across economic and knowledge sectors. Coordination at all levels and between all stakeholders is important to avoid duplication and to encourage cooperation. Effective coordination can be cost-effective and can lead to more relevant learning opportunities in the communities. In Ethiopia and Rwanda, coordination mechanisms between the Ministry of Education and other ministries have been put in place. In Kenya, most notably, a coordination mechanism between the government and civil society organizations exists.

118. However, ministries and government agencies are often poorly coordinated within the overall government structure and it is difficult to incorporate other important stakeholders such as civil society organizations and private enterprises into one national structure. Effective coordination between ministries and government agencies, on the one hand, and with civil society organizations and private enterprises, on the other, is particularly important for effective implementation of policies in non-formal adult education, including literacy, as NGOs often shoulder a major responsibility for non-formal education. Although the Ministry of Education has put in place a national coordination network, a Rwandan policy-maker reported that there is a lack of overall structure and coordination throughout the national educational system, especially with regard to education and learning which take place in other ministries and amongst NGOs. It was said:

All line-ministries need to be coordinated if education is really going to have its value because it is not about the reading, writing and counting – it is about life in connection with family – if the family is not appreciating education the child will not attend school, if the child is not healthy she/he will not come to school, if the local authorities are not convinced about the importance of education then they will not encourage the community members to take their children to school – there is a big need for all stakeholders (government, civil society organizations and private

enterprises) to come together to address the issues of education as the foundation of sustainable development.

119. In summary, to arrive at lifelong learning systems, the conceptual understanding of what lifelong learning is needs to be clarified. Guidance and counseling, plus advocacy for learning, can support individuals, communities and societies to make the right choices in their learning careers. The inter-dependence between all forms of learning has not yet been satisfactorily understood or developed in either policy or practice; emergent NQFs are often fragmented and not necessarily able to connect all the major components of education and training. Infrastructure and human and financial resources are particularly important to open up access to learning for all individuals. Coordination at all levels and between all stakeholders is crucial to avoid overlaps, to identify gaps in delivery and to increase efficiencies.

120. Based on the key outcomes, we proceed to Chapter 8 to make concrete recommendations for the development of lifelong learning systems and a learning society.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

121. Chapters 6 and 7 have described the data collected in the fieldwork of the study and, in some cases, the data are triangulated by secondary literature. Inspired by grounded theory, this Chapter will draw some conclusions and generate relevant policy considerations for ways forward. In general, the evidence provided in previous Chapters suggests that there is a need for the five countries to embrace a lifelong learning paradigm for sustainable social and economic development. As a reminder, we identified in Chapter 5 the broad characteristics for the attainment of a learning society. We recognize that these characteristics are aspirational and they contain within them particular priorities and approaches which we need to remember in building lifelong learning systems.

### 8.1. Overarching policy framework and clear guidelines

122. From the findings of the fieldwork, there is consensus that lifelong learning is indeed a relevant concept in the five countries. For example, interviewees in both Kenya and Namibia called for a “paradigm shift from education and schooling to lifelong learning”. Furthermore, many education policy-makers in the five countries feel it is now the right time to clarify the concept of lifelong learning in the context of their countries, and to use the concept of lifelong learning to build linkages between different parts of the education and training system to attain sustainable socio-economic development. Several interviewees in the five countries underlined the need for more advocacy and clarification of the concept of lifelong learning, in order to move on from a narrow understanding that associates lifelong learning with adult and non-formal education only. Policy-makers in the five countries pointed out that at policy level, legislation is needed which provides clear guidelines to integrate all parts of the education and training system into one integrated lifelong learning system. Lifelong learning needs not only to be given prominence as a “rhetorical flourish” but also to be developed in detail. Most importantly, a policy framework presupposes the embrace of lifelong learning as the *organizing principle*. One Ethiopian policy-maker mentioned that,

Learning does not terminate after schooling, everyone is learning every day, and everyone is always a learner. Furthermore, everyone must be encouraged and helped to continue learning. As a country, we need to design a system that takes care of the learning needs of everyone, regardless of their religion, ethnicity, age, gender and the place they live. Everyone should have a fair share of benefits of the education system according to their needs.

123. In addition, to develop and implement this integrated policy framework with clear guidelines, it is necessary to involve – in a systematic, democratic and participatory manner – public authorities, civil society organizations, social partners, the private sector, organizations of learners and educators. Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 1:** *Develop a holistic overarching national policy framework to promote lifelong learning for all and develop clear guidelines for implementation at all administrative levels (local, regional and national).*

### 8.2. Formal education

124. As shown in Chapter 6, all five countries have witnessed rapid expansion of access to formal schooling. In particular, expansion of access to ECCE, primary education, secondary education,

TVET, and higher education are on the agenda. Meanwhile, equity issues in formal education have received considerable attention in recent years, and more affirmative action in favor of marginalized groups has been taken in the five countries, for example, school feeding programs in some regions, rescue centers for girls, and more orphanages for those who have lost family members to AIDS. Policy-makers in Kenya and Tanzania put it simply: “We have to improve school infrastructure, i.e. child-friendly and girl-friendly environments where the children feel happy and want to come and stay in school.” The quality and relevance of formal education have now become huge challenges and are not yet located within a lifelong learning framework. More specifically, many policy-makers in the five countries pointed out that the curricula of formal education must respond to social and economic demand for core skills and competences. In this regard, two studies appear to be inspiring examples in improving the relevance and quality of formal education systems in the five countries. One study, in Namibia, assesses how the present higher education curriculum can be in step with the actual skills required by the job-market. The other looks at the competence-based approach adopted in Ethiopia in its Curriculum Framework for Education to promote critical thinking and problem-solving. Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 2:** *In addition to expanding access and improving equity, enhance the quality and relevance of formal education by improving understanding of and responding to the demands for individual, community and societal core skills and competences, and by adopting a competence-based approach in curriculum reform within a lifelong learning framework.*

### 8.3. Non-formal and adult education

125. Despite the fact that non-formal and adult education have existed in the five countries for some time, as shown in Chapter 6, they are still considered a low priority. Their current status remains inferior to that of formal education in many aspects, although they contribute significantly to socio-economic development, particularly for marginalized groups and communities. Calls for improvement in non-formal and adult education are manifest. For example, an interviewee in Rwanda stated: “We cannot bring all of our people to go to school, so we need to develop adult and non-formal education. The time is right to start talking about adult and continuing education especially to address the pressing needs of women and men in the rural areas and the agricultural sector.” Chapter 6 also showed that Kenyan non-formal schools could be more attractive to children and youth than formal schools. In prioritizing the development of adult and non-formal education, from the evidence provided in Chapter 6, a variety of measures need to be adopted. First of all, the intimate link between the formal and non-formal systems must be recognized. Second, more community-learning activities need to be created, including NFE schools to meet fully the needs of learners, wherever they are. Third, people are motivated to learn if their needs are being met. For example, a senior researcher in Tanzania pointed out that “adult and non-formal education should be pegged to the immediate social and economic needs of each community, so that we exploit the opportunities for poverty reduction, eradication of disease, and increasing income.” Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 3:** *Prioritize the development of adult and non-formal education in the lifelong learning system and strengthen this sub-sector through recognition of the intimate link between formal education and the adult and non-formal sub-systems, by creating more community learning opportunities (including NFE schools) and improving the relevance of curricula to meet learners’ needs.*

### 8.4. Learning districts/communities

126. From the evidence in Chapter 6 and 7, it is plausible to suggest that the African traditions and practices of community-based learning align with the concept of a learning society, as reviewed in Chapter 5. It is recognized that before the existence of schools and education systems in Africa, the need for lifelong learning, from childhood and continuing through adolescence, youth, middle and old

age, was understood and acted upon, albeit in an informal way (Omolewa, 2009). People were motivated to learn in order to acquire relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes, aptitudes and values that would help them to lead long, valuable and active lives as participants in the process of individual and community development. Self-initiated community-based programs have, in fact, been particularly successful in African rural settings (Atchoarena and Hite, 2001: 206). This is, of course, no coincidence given that the traditional African communal way of life expressed in ubuntu (I am because we are; I can only be a person through others) promotes a sense of belonging and active participation in family and community affairs (Nafukho *et al.*, 2005).

127. A country is, after all a sum of its regions, cities, districts and communities, and a learning society can only be built district by district, community by community, family by family. An expert in Ethiopia stated:

Like other African countries, Ethiopia has a long history of community life. We have our own way to solve the problems in the community, based on common sense to relate different factors. The approach is very much family- and community-based. A learning community could be an effective initiative, in which all kinds of learning opportunities can be facilitated; elders to share whatever knowledge and experience they have; and use whatever resources are available.

128. In the case of Kenya, an interviewee stated: “There is so much knowledge in the communities yet to be tapped and documented. This kind of knowledge is closer and more relevant to people’s lives.” Another interviewee added: “Learning must be geared towards sustainability and the daily lives of the people. We need to open up the horizon towards local-centered learning.” As shown in Chapter 5, education for sustainable development encompasses a new vision of education that seeks to empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating and enjoying a sustainable future. This vision can only be realized if it is embedded in the structure and life of the local communities, as community- or locally-oriented approaches can be more educational. They encourage communal methodologies and are more egalitarian in organizing and responding to needs of disadvantaged people (Connolly, 2010). These elaborations suggest that to be effective, a national policy of building a learning society needs to be embedded in the structures and lives of local communities. Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 4:** *Adopt the approach to building a learning society family by family, community by community, district by district through tapping into the long, existing tradition of community learning and convert national policy guidelines into sustainable actions at local levels.*

## **8.5. Linkages between formal education, non-formal education and informal learning**

129. Strong linkages between formal education, non-formal education and informal learning systems are necessary for sustainable development to ensure participation by citizens in current social, economic and political life. As reviewed in Chapter 7, all five countries have in recent years begun to develop some kind of National Qualification Framework, but in most cases it is only limited to certain sectors within education and training. From the perspective of lifelong learning, the development of a more inclusive National Qualification Framework is necessary, which provides linkages between formal, non-formal and informal learning; between general and vocational education and training; and between workplace learning and formal educational institutions. In Ethiopia, a policy-maker mentioned that “we have to develop an Ethiopian National Qualification Framework to promote the practice of recognizing prior learning”. In addition, more effort can be made to implement more fully existing qualifications frameworks. In view of greater regional integration and increasing migration, articulation and equivalency across national borders need to be deepened, with closer relationships between different national qualification frameworks. Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 5:** *Strengthen linkages between formal education, non-formal education and informal learning through the development and implementation of national and cross-border mechanisms for recognizing outcomes of all forms of learning and improving national and regional qualification frameworks.*

## 8.6. Human and financial resources

130. As shown in Chapters 6 and 7, the insufficient number of teachers for both formal and non-formal education remains a challenge for all five countries and the lack of adequate training of staff in non-formal education is particularly pressing. In fact, after many years of development, all five countries still rely on volunteers to serve as teachers/facilitators for non-formal and adult education, earning very little and poorly trained. In prioritizing the development of non-formal and adult education as recommended above, it is imperative to upgrade the status and remuneration of educators in adult and non-formal education, and to provide them with continuing professional development. An expert in Tanzania commented that “at the same time when training teachers for school education, we should also think of how to train facilitators for adult literacy programs”.

131. Although the total public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP has increased in four of the five countries, as shown in Chapter 7, the inadequacy of financial resources remains ubiquitous for both formal and non-formal education in all five countries. As a result of the lower priority of non-formal and adult education in the education system, public budgetary financing for non-formal and adult education remains scarce. In many cases, it is left to NGOs and faith-based organizations. In addition to the problem of low remuneration of teachers/facilitator in non-formal education as elaborated above, there is a severe shortage of basic equipment and facilities, deemed imperative in developing learners’ skills and competences. It is plausible to conclude that the implementation of non-formal and adult education programs in the five countries has been hampered by inadequate resources. Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 6:** *Improve human and financial resources for both formal and non-formal education and, in particular, upgrade the status and remuneration of teachers/facilitators and provide more financial resources for equipment and facilities for non-formal and adult education.*

## 8.7. Modern media, information, guidance and counseling

132. Appropriate use of electronic media can extend access to learning significantly, including complementary use of mobile phones, radio, TV and ICT (i.e. both ‘old’ and ‘new’ technologies). Several interviewees in the five countries proposed to promote the use of ICT and take advantage of its rapid expansion, as it can be a very useful in organizing teaching and learning more effectively into an open learning system. For example, a policy-maker in Kenya commented: “ICT is very important to reach learners in rural areas, and it will be great if teachers can communicate with the learners via radio or internet. As mobile phones become very popular, we should also examine the possibility of using mobile phones in adult literacy and non-formal education programs, and to facilitate informal learning, especially in the rural and pastoral areas.” It was suggested by a policy-maker in Rwanda that radio and television should have a clear mandate from the government to play a major role in informing and opening-up learning opportunities as these media reach across the entire country.

133. As shown in previous Chapters, one of the main inhibitors in the five countries to access to learning is the lack of adequate information regarding relevant learning opportunities. Effective communication and counseling systems are important at local level and in rural communities, for people of all ages. For example, a researcher in Rwanda commented that “radio and other available media can be a particularly effective avenue for information and awareness – people listen to the radio

when they are working in the fields or in the workplace”. In a focus group discussion with practitioners of a faith-based NGO in Rwanda, the importance of counseling was further underlined, especially with regard to life-skills, moral education and the promotion of social cohesion. To improve counseling, all teachers and facilitators must be able to understand learners’ background and be sufficiently confident to handle issues relating to sensitive issues such as drug abuse, violence, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, tribalism and racism. Teachers and facilitators also need to be better trained in acknowledging prior learning achievements and advising learners on their future. Counseling can be part of the teacher and facilitator training curriculum as is the case in Rwanda. Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 7:** *Promote the use of mass media and ICT in teaching and learning, and provide information, guidance and counseling for learners of all ages on learning opportunities through mass media, telephone help-lines, community centers, faith-based organizations, civil society organizations and workplaces.*

## 8.8. Research orientation

134. Adoption and development of a lifelong learning paradigm is not a simple matter. This is because it challenges strongly-held views and philosophical understandings of knowledge, of institutional power hierarchies, and of how education and training have been implemented over many years. For example, the relationships between learning at work and at formal education institutions are not straightforward; the recognition and accreditation of informal and non-formal learning challenge traditional practices; and institutions have particular ‘pictures that hold them captive’ in how they do things. Therefore, during the fieldwork and from the desk research, the importance of a research orientation was emphasized as critical to being able to address the complex questions and issues which are raised in implementing a lifelong learning system. For example, practitioners from some NGOs in Ethiopia proposed the following: “We need to make a sound assessment on where we are, what the challenges are, and what should be done. This needs to be carried out by professionals who have profound knowledge and experiences of the education system. Based on this assessment, with the help of the professionals, we need to design a continuous learning system which can benefit the whole society.” In other words, we need to approach the challenges with a research orientation which is necessary as we grapple with the many complex issues that a lifelong learning philosophy and approach system elicit. Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 8:** *Recognize the importance of a research orientation in developing and implementing lifelong learning policy at regional, national, and institutional levels, in order to acknowledge deep shifts in pedagogical and organizational philosophies and approaches that are needed for lifelong learning to move from rhetoric to action for sustainability, and encourage strong research relationships among university-based researchers and others in government and elsewhere.*

## 8.9. Coordination and capacity-building

135. As shown in Chapter 7, there have been some attempts in the five countries to coordinate policy and program design and delivery among different ministries and other stakeholders. However, the call to improve coordination is manifest. An interviewee in Ethiopia commented: “Lifelong learning can only come to the fore if we are able to mobilize all sectors of society, all levels of government, all communities, workplaces and families.” A researcher in Tanzania said: “We have adult education programs everywhere, but we need to create a system to coordinate the efforts of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Community, Gender and Children, Ministry of Employment and Youth Affairs, etc.” The effectiveness of coordination is magnified if it happens at multiple levels, from national to regional and local levels. However, it is noteworthy that coordination at local levels of government is often undermined by an absence of capacity. In Rwanda, an interviewee reflected that “there is a strong need for more synergy, coordination and capacity-building of all learning activities, both across

the different line-ministries, but more importantly between different providers (formal and non-formal), particularly at local levels”. It is worth noting that, as shown in Chapter 4; decentralized governance has increasingly been favored by the five countries. However, evidence presented in Chapter 7 indicated that the capacity of local authorities in the five countries remains weak in terms of planning, program design and implementation. Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 9:** *Improve coordination among various stakeholders through establishing and strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration mechanisms among governmental departments and between government and NGOs, civil society organizations and the private sector, at national, regional and local levels, and in tandem with decentralization, cascade effective capacity-building to regional and local levels.*

## 8.10. Regional collaboration and integration

136. As shown in Chapter 4, cross-border integration mechanisms, such as NEPAD, SADC and EAC have created new opportunities for education reform and development in their member states. Attempts have been made to construct a coordinated approach to lifelong learning. In particular, the free movement of people across countries within the region and outside of it has necessitated the harmonization of core competences, standards, assessment and evaluation of education programs as a priority. In addition, inter-regional cooperation can be promoted between Africa and those in other parts of the world, where lessons on the implementation of lifelong learning at a substantive level can be shared. Hence, we propose:

**Recommendation 10:** *Prioritize lifelong learning in cross-border integration through, for example, SADC and EAC, which identify coordinating mechanisms like regional qualification frameworks, to enhance mobility and recognition between countries.*

## Coda

137. To conclude, the suggestive findings of this study show that the promotion of lifelong learning in the five countries needs integrated and systematic approaches. We end with a quote from Fullan (1993: 3):

...the answer does not lie in designing better reform strategies. No amount of sophistication in strategizing for particular innovations or policies will ever work. It is simply unrealistic to expect that introducing reforms one by one, even major ones, in a situation which is basically not organized to engage in change will do anything but give reform a bad name.

138. Indeed, we have to acknowledge that adopting lifelong learning as an *organizing principle* takes political courage, long-term commitment, and social transformation within a framework of sustainable development. The building of lifelong learning systems is about continuity and change as it must both tap into traditional and local wisdom, and enable risk-taking and adaptation to new technologies and conditions.

## 9. APPENDICES

### 9.1. Appendix I: List of interviewees

#### 9.1.1. Ethiopia

H.E. Fuad Ibrahim Oumer, State Minister, Ministry of Education;

Abebayehu Yitayew, Non-Formal Education Expert, Education Bureau of the City Government of Addis Ababa;

Adane Mamd Tegene, Head of Adult and Non-formal Education Co-ordination, Ministry of Education;

Agneta Lind, former Regional Education Advisor, Swedish International Development Agency;

Alebachew Mekonnen, Director, Basic Education Network Ethiopia;

Dessu Wirtu, Faculty of Education, Addis Ababa University;

Fekadeselasie Mekura, Principal, Tsehay Chora Primary School, Addis Ababa;

Girma Alemayehu Dano, Director of Department of Curriculum Development, Ministry of Education;

Jember W Mariam, Education Program Manager, Pact Ethiopia;

Mohanned Abubeker, Director of Department of Special Support & Inclusive Education, Ministry of Education;

Temesgen Fereja, Faculty of Education, Addis Ababa University;

Theodros Shewarget, Director of Teacher and Education Leadership Development Directorate, Ministry of Education;

Sonja Belete, Program Manager, Regional Office East Africa/Horn of Africa, DVV International;

Zewdu Abaynek, Principal, Menelik II Preparatory School, Addis Ababa;

Zewdu Desta, Education Platform Director, Pact Ethiopia; and

Learners who participated in group interviews.

#### 9.1.2. Kenya

Agnes M Njugma, Head Teacher, St Peter Clavers primary school;

Agnes W Koori, Deputy Chief Economist, Central Planning and Monitoring Unit, Ministry of Education;

Karanja Wa Kang'ethe, Officer in charge of Continuing Education and Special Programs, Ministry of Education;

Linus Schousten, Coordinator, Father Grow's Welfare Trust;

Margaret W Thiongo, Senior Deputy Director, Basic Education, Ministry of Education;

Milton M Mokah, Deputy Director in charge of field services, Ministry of Education;

Isaac G Kamande, Chief Economist, Central Planning and Monitoring Unit, Ministry of Education;

Jacob Muriati, Adult Education Officer, Central;

Johnson K Maundi, Administrator, Father Grow's Welfare Project;

Salim Mungai, Officer in charge of Curriculum Support Materials Development, Ministry of Education;

Stephen Ngiri, Adult Education Officer, Central;

Tom O Onchari, Principal, Isinya Multi-Purpose Development Training Institute, Directorate of Adult and Continuing Education, Ministry of Education;

Zakariah Jared Ashubwe, Deputy Principal, St Peter Clavers Adult Education Centre; and  
Learners who participated in group interviews.

### **9.1.3. Namibia**

A. Awases, Director, Department of Planning, Ministry of Education;

Batseba Hengari, Principal, Gammans Primary School;

Happy Amadhila, District Education Officer, Khomas Education Region, Lifelong Learning Division, Ministry of Education;

Janet Wicks, Manager, Man on the side of the road;

Josua Udjombala, Director, Khomas Education Region, Ministry of Education;

Kennedy Waliñetana, Education Officer, Kavango Education Region;

Martin Ngodji, Lecturer, Training College for Pastors;

Mike Mukete, Assistant, Bank of Namibia Governor, Bank of Namibia;

Medusalem Nakale, Director, Language Centre, University of Namibia;

Ndeshi Afunde, Manager, Professional Development, Namibia College of Open Learning;

Nekongo Haveshe-Nielsen, Senior Lecturer, Centre for External Studies, University of Namibia;

Patrick Simataa, Deputy Director, Department of Youth Educational Programs, Ministry of Youth;

Paul Helmut, Local community leader;

Victoria Amakali, District Education Officer, Khomas Education Region, Lifelong Learning Division, Ministry of Education; and

Learners who participated in group interviews.

### **9.1.4. Rwanda**

Alphonse Rutaganda, Director, Secrétariat National d'Enseignement Catholique (SNEC);

Beatrice Yangiziye, Director, Confucius Institute;

Clarisse Ingabire, One Cow Program Director, Rwanda Animal Resources Development Authority, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources;

Côme Rutegamihigo, Deputy Legal Representative, Pentecostal Church of Rwanda;

Didier Munezero, Director, Partnership Building Department, Rwanda Workforce Development Agency WDA;

Eliphaz Bahizi, Permanent Secretary, Rwanda National Commission for UNESCO;

Erasme Rwanamiza, Director General, Ministry of Education;

Evariste Karangwa, Director of Research and Consultancy, Kigali Institute of Education;

Gasimba François Xavier, Legal Representative of DUHAMIC-ADRI;  
James Vuningoma, Vice Rector Academic, Kigali Institute of Education;  
Martin Rutazigwa, Deputy Planning and Program Director, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, ADRA Rwanda;  
Munanira Appollo, Human Capital and Institutional Development (RDB);  
Munyakayanza J François, Director of CODEL, Kigali Institute of Education;  
Narcisse Musabeyezu, Inspector General, Ministry of Education;  
Ndayambaje Irene, Head of Tele-Education Program, Kigali Institute of Education;  
Niyomana Mico Emmanuel, Director of Planning, Ministry of Education;  
Sekigera Nduwayo Mathias, District Education Officer, Kicukiro District;  
Senyabatera Bosco, Chargé des programs, Conseil de concertation pour les organisations d'appui aux initiatives de base;  
Shirley K Randell, Director of Centre for Gender, Culture and Development Studies, Kigali Institute of Education;  
Veronique Musabyimana, Dean, Faculty of Education; and  
Learners who participated in group interviews.

### **9.1.5. Tanzania**

Selestine Gesimba, Deputy Permanent Secretary, MoEVT;  
Salum R. Mnjagila, Director, Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT;  
Basilina Modest Levira, Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT;  
Cuthbert J. Simbila, Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT;  
Enock B. Kayam, Senior Education Officer, Department of Technical and Vocational Education, MoEVT;  
Furaha Ntinekigwa, Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT;  
Grace J. Rwiza, Assistant Director, Primary Education Department, MoEVT;  
Gresca M. Mgwen, Assistant Director, Folk Development Colleges, Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children;  
Lambertha Mahai, Director, Institute of Adult Education;  
Martin Mwanukuzi, Director, Department of Policy and Planning, MoEVT;  
Martha Joshua Kussasa Expert, Education Office, Kinondoni Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam;  
Mikiaadi Azizi, Expert, Education Office, Kinondoni Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam;  
Valentino Gange, Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT; and  
Learners who participated in group interviews.

## 9.2. Appendix II: Semi-structured questions for the field work

### 9.2.1. Policy-makers, policy-researchers, practitioners, managers, and leaders of local communities and civil society organizations

1. Is there any evidence to show that a paradigm shift from economic growth to sustainable development has taken place in your country?
2. Sustainable social and economic development in your country has created imperative demands for knowledge, skills and competences, in particular, in tackling challenges such as poverty and youth unemployment. Could you please give us some evidences for this statement?
3. What examples are there of approaches to education/learning for sustainable development?
4. How does the society rate with regard to ‘social cohesion’ – where are the differences, the inequities, the disparities? What are the indications of women’s participation in society? How is this encouraged or discouraged?
5. What is the ICT infrastructure like – how do people use mobile technologies – is it widespread?
6. Some experts say that the notion of lifelong learning in Africa is not new. It can be found embedded in African cultures and it has been part of African way of life for many generations. Do you accept this statement? And why? Are their idioms or proverbs in local languages which encourage a valuing of learning throughout life?
7. How is lifelong learning defined or embedded in the education policy of your country? Do you think that the concept of lifelong learning is well understood at both the policy-making and the operational levels? Are there approaches to budget allocation nationally which encourage integrated approaches to lifelong learning?
8. What are the coordination mechanisms to facilitate collaboration between different ministries, between government and NGOs as well as the private sector? What is your national structure to support communities, faith-based organizations, NGOs and civil society organizations in providing learning opportunities?
9. How has the lifelong learning discourse been applied in policies for developing and transforming formal schooling (from early childhood care and education to higher education)? What are the leading practices/programs? Please give us some evidence to show what has worked, what has not worked and what are the key insights obtained in your country.
10. How has the lifelong learning discourse been applied in policies for promoting non-formal and informal learning? What are the leading practices/programs in this regard? Is there an approach to family or parent education? How are the generations encouraged to participate in one another’s learning? Once again, please give us some evidence to show what has worked, what has not worked and what are the key insights obtained in your country.
11. What are the ways the citizens across generations navigate their way through learning? What is the state of guidance and counseling across the board? What is or would be the role of the National Qualification Framework in your country? How do you develop the mechanisms for the recognition, validation and accreditation as well as the transfer of learning outcomes in non-formal and informal settings?

12. What are the inhibitors/barriers to people at different stages of their lives accessing opportunities for lifelong learning? What are the challenges and opportunities in developing a policy framework for lifelong learning in your country?
13. What are your recommendations on priorities, essential solutions and strategies towards a clearly articulated policy framework for lifelong learning in your country? In order to measure the value of learning, what is the state of information data bases e.g. how can the national statistical survey be used to monitor the implementation of this framework?
14. If your country will eventually have a lifelong learning policy framework, what key things must be done in implementing the framework on the ground?

### **9.2.2. Learners**

1. What is your educational background? What qualification(s) do you have?
2. What are the most important factors for you to get an ideal job?
3. What essential knowledge, skills and competences do you need to find a job and to improve the quality of your life?
4. Do you feel that what you learned in school/college has helped you in improving your work and life in general? And why?
5. What aspects of the school/college you attended or are attending do you like the best?
6. What aspects of the training program you attended/are attending or any other learning experience you have obtained/are obtaining do you like the best?
7. Some of your peers dropped out from primary/secondary school. Do you know what the most common reasons were?
8. What thing(s) do you really expect to learn now? And why? How can you find out the information on available learning opportunities?
9. Are there idioms or proverbs in local languages which encourage a valuing of learning throughout life?
10. What are the factors in your work place or community or family which give you encouragement to continue learning?
11. What are the inhibitors/barriers to people at different stages of their lives accessing opportunities for lifelong learning?
12. If you have a chance to meet the Minister of Education of your country, what suggestions would you like to give to the Minister to improve the education policy?

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