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WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM EDUCATIONAL REFORM?

This book is a complementary volume to *Vocalisation of Secondary Education Revisited*, (Lauglo MacLean, 2005). That book looks particularly at the progressive interaction between Secondary and Vocational Education. This book is of particular relevance to the Asia-Pacific Region and also to Africa since it is in these regions where the major reforms in education are occurring simultaneously with major population growth. There is therefore an opportunity to avoid the situation which exists in the developed countries where inequalities have become an established part of their societies. In Asia and in the Pacific countries it is urgent to consider now the issues of educational reform, which appear in one form or another in all countries, and to assess the nature of lessons from reform from which they can learn.

1. EDUCATION REFORM AS A RESPONSE TO CHANGE

1.1. *Curriculum and Community as Central Concerns*

Change in key aspects of living is a central concern for every country and its pace and variety affects almost every aspect of living. Developing the economy; building and maintaining peace and security; preserving the environment; easing ethnic and religious tensions; using and adjusting to the growth of technology: these are some of the common concerns. Those concerns have been made more complex for individual societies because they have occurred in a time of continuing global disruption. The period since 1945, when people hoped the last war had been fought, has been one of unending conflict. Since that time more than 150 conflicts have erupted throughout the five continents, resulting in more than 20 million deaths and 60 million casualties, of whom over 80% were civilians. There are now more than 20 million refugees and another 30 million displaced persons. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and cyclones have added their disruptive impact, aided by man-made disasters such as floods and desertification brought about by abuse of our natural resources. In facing such a catalogue of problems the role of education may not appear as crucial, given such immediate short-term needs as security and food. Yet the nations facing these urgent issues have identified education as a key means of resolving or of coping with them. Their resolve has been translated into policies by the United Nations, particularly through its own organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, and related bodies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, IMF.

In the efforts of the individual countries and the policies of the international organizations to cope with urgent issues education plays an important role. Yet, even as its

role is recognised in preparing people to face urgent changes, its shortcomings are also very apparent, both in what education can achieve for those who attend and who make good use of their opportunities and for its failure to reach large groups of people. Given the challenges from these varied sources most countries are working to reform their education systems as a means of adjusting to changes and helping their people to do so.

Central to this book is the examination of the movements occurring in these reforms in many parts of the world. The book will give particular attention to curriculum reform. Education reform is a wide topic but one special emphasis here is that at the heart of all such processes is the reform of the curriculum, the process whereby intentions are translated into reality. It is central to this area of curriculum that the values behind change are made explicit. There are many aspects of reform in education: organization and administration; teacher education and supply; finance; school buildings and facilities; the place of technology; school-size and class-size; the list can expand indefinitely. Given all this range of areas of concern it is in the curriculum that the purposes of reform are most strongly featured, whether explicit or implicit. The sense in which the term curriculum is used here includes the plan for the teaching program, its stated and its implicit values, its content, its pedagogy, its processes for assessment of students and its means of evaluation and further development. The curriculum is the statement of intent, the proclamation of purpose, together with the means of achievement. The other aspects of reform are essentially means towards achievement of curriculum reform. This emphasis in reform on the curriculum arises because it provides the most direct area in which education can respond to change. The field of our concern is world-wide and thus this book includes the contributions of educators who have been involved in education in every continent and whose ideas have been formed from experience.

1.2. *The Community as a Major Influence*

The curriculum, however, does not occur in a vacuum but in distinct and powerful social settings. Thus, in dealing with curriculum attention must also be directed towards the community in which schools operate. A further major theme for this book is the interaction between the school and its supporting community, an interaction which ensures that joint attention must be given to these two aspects.

Community, not curriculum, is where many of our improvement efforts now need to be focused. One of the most common causes of secondary school dropout is pupils' feelings that there is not one adult who really knows or cares for them (Hargreaves, Earl, & Ryan, 1996). England is trying to solve a massive block in performance as children move from primary school to secondary school, by making improvements to the curriculum (DfES, 2001). But the curriculum is not the main problem. Kathryn Riley and her colleagues' research shows that pupils who do badly in the early years of secondary school experience incredible fragmentation in their lives—between different parents and families, and

constantly changing homes (Riley & Rustique-Forrester, in press). They are denied what is called social capital (Fukuyama, 2000; Coleman, 1988).

Hargreaves, 2005.

The concept of community impacts on the school in two separate senses. One is the concept of the school itself as a community, an idea explored by both Nancy Sizer and Deborah Meier in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively. The other is the realisation from much recent research that the broader community is important to the nature of the school and to the power of the school to effect change. This will be dealt with in later chapters and particularly in the final chapter with reference to the work of Robert Putnam (Putnam, 2000).

The search for a sense of community is in contrast to and sometimes in conflict with the general move to globalisation. This search is sometimes based on religion as with the Arabic world or Ireland, sometimes on ethnic identity, as in Rwanda and Kosovo, sometimes on a reaction to global influences as in the protests on free trade, sometimes in reaction to impersonal urbanization. The wish for a group identity, for a sense of belonging, grows more powerful, and sometimes more violent, as the pressures on individuals grow for global uniformity. This search for group identity provides a pressure towards local uniqueness in education reform which is in contrast to the other universal factors identified. This search for community can be positive or negative. If we build communities which are based on hostility to others we increase the risk of hostility and violence to ourselves. As Hargreaves points out, the concept of community is particularly important in the early secondary years.

The educational answer to the angst of early adolescence is mainly to be found not in more curriculum, but in stronger community. Especially at this point in young people's education, improving achievement, especially among those most at risk, is not secured by concentrating on achievement alone. At a time when adolescents are assailed by so many other influences in their life, focusing their minds exclusively on achievement is futile. Achieving at learning also demands intellectual and emotional engagement with schooling and all the relationships it contains. Our secondary schools are undermining our capacity to hold the knowledge society together—and the excessive and exclusive emphasis on achievement alone is largely responsible.

Hargreaves, 2005.

This concept is explored in many ways in this book. Malcolm Skilbeck deals with the large-scale aspects of reform, particularly through major bodies such as UNESCO whose work covers all five continents. Ian Hill emphasises a wide dimension, also, through the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) which works deliberately on the development of community as an important task for schools. IBO involves over 1300 schools in more than 100 countries in an agreed program, including curriculum and assessment development, teacher training and other services. The

purposes include not only intellectual rigour and high academic standards but also strong emphasis on international understanding and responsible citizenship. Nancy Sizer and Deborah Meier speak of a particular setting, the USA, and focus on the aspect of reform in individual schools. Denis Lawton is concerned also with a particular setting in the United Kingdom and its long battle to establish a national curriculum. Joanna Le Metais returns to a wide canvas in her treatment of education reform in Europe. Barry McGaw deals with the contributions to be made to policy development in education by the use of recent programs for student assessment which apply internationally.

1.3. *The Pressures of Change*

One major concern about preparing for change is the feeling that we do not know where it will lead us, that its many forms are still taking shape and are building quite new realities. The Czech President and playwright Vaclav Havel expressed this feeling.

Today, many things suggest we are going through a transitional period when it seems that something is on the way out and something else is painfully being born. It is as if something were crumbling, decaying and exhausting itself, while something else, still indistinct, were arising from the rubble.

Havel, 1994.

This feeling of uncertainty is strong but our societies do not have the luxury of waiting for certainty. The people who face these changing realities can not defer their present or the need to prepare for their future.

In addition to unpredictability, other noticeable factors about the changes which preoccupy many countries are their breadth of occurrence and their rapidity. Most obvious among the changes are the technological and socio-political advances which have altered the world in an unprecedented way in the past 50 years. No individual country and so far no combination of countries can control those changes. The unpredictability of social and political changes has sometimes been very dramatic. Even more unpredictable are the technological changes, many of which are unforeseen even by the specialists in the field. This unpredictability means that many responses can only be made after the event. Education, by its very nature, must prepare its clients to cope with current realities but it must also be able to deal with unforeseen changes to those realities.

Striking as is the impact of these individual changes, schools are increasingly expected to prepare students to deal with them even though they includes such a wide range: our vocations, our role as citizens of a country and, increasingly citizens of the world, our growth as individuals when we are required to make decisions in so many different areas. Gene Carter, reporting to the American Society for Curriculum Development, pointed out the growing consensus on the need for change.

"We are at a critical juncture in education. Our youth are growing up in a world where globalization, technological innovation, economic

competition, racial and ethnic diversification, and political change are transforming societies and creating vast challenges and opportunities. To meet these challenges, today's students need an education that will help them succeed in a rapidly changing world. Recent polls indicate that more and more U.S. citizens want their children to be well versed in civic responsibility as well as in academics. The national media echo the public's concern with student achievement, character building, and school safety. By engaging in meaningful community-based work, students can strengthen their academic skills, build their confidence, prepare themselves for the workforce, and forge a commitment to civic participation."

Carter, 2002.

Given this breadth of demands on schools, to what extent is it reasonable to think of reform as a common process, similar in a range of countries? All countries have their own unique characteristics. Some reforms would be expected to reflect that uniqueness, being idiosyncratic to the particular setting. Other reforms will be responses to factors which are universal in nature, even though the nature of the responses may differ according to the setting. The concern of this book is to determine to what extent both aspects of reform provide lessons for those who are open to learn from the experiences of others.

The study by Rupert Maclean, *Setting the Context: An Overview of Secondary Education Reform with Particular Reference to the Asia-Pacific Region* shows clearly that these very diverse countries, spread over a vast region, demonstrate the impact of a core of common factors in addition to their specific needs (Lauglo and Maclean, 2005). It is to these commonalities that our attention will be directed.

2. REFORM AS AN IDIOSYNCRATIC EVENT

Reform is occurring everywhere because the factors mentioned above affect all societies. Yet, at the most obvious level, many reforms are idiosyncratic, tailored to the needs of individual countries. Uniqueness seems to predominate.

- In Oman the primary schools are introducing co-education as from Grade 4. This may not seem like a startling innovation except that it occurs in a Muslim society where male and female students have traditionally been educated separately. Neighbouring Arab countries have expressed their concern at the move.
- China with its vast population of over 1 billion has succeeded in the massive task of introducing universal primary education, UPE, for the first 6 years of schooling. It is now moving to implement 9 years of compulsory education, bringing a massive increase of 33 millions of students and an additional 1+ million teachers into the schools.
- In England, as the chapter by Denis Lawton indicates, the education system is reconsidering the long-established pattern for the last years of secondary education, moving from the specialisation which has been a feature of English education,

possibly to a four-year diploma which is more comprehensive. During 2005 English schools have also been considering radical changes to the way that science is organised and presented in the senior secondary years.

- In Africa Ian Hill points out the problems set for education both by the shortage of teachers and the lack of proper training in many instances. In some instances teachers are not paid for several months at a time and have no alternative but to take time off from teaching to undertake jobs elsewhere; the children either go home or remain in the school yard for those lessons for which there is no teacher. AIDS has also caused heavy loss of life, including within the teaching profession, in a number of African countries.
- A UNICEF program in Liberia indicates the problems met as countries try to recover from the losses and bitter divisions caused by civil war. Since the launch of UNICEF's Back to School program in November 2004, 600,000 students have returned to school, 591,000 pupils in eight counties of Liberia have benefited from educational supplies and 8,000 teachers have been re-trained. UNICEF is now supplying exercise books, reading material, mathematics equipment and pencils. However, resources remain in desperately short supply, with the education system virtually destroyed by 14 years of civil war. Liberia is one of the few countries in Africa where parents are more likely to know how to read and write than their children. Schools lack benches, chairs, chalk and blackboards, and teachers frequently work without pay (UN IRIN, 2004).
- In the countries of Eastern Europe, fifteen of which have recently been admitted to the European Union, the collapse of communism has left an ideological vacuum and preparation for living in a democracy takes on new meaning. The schools which had a highly prescriptive and politically controlled curriculum are now seeking new methods to match their new purposes.
- Saudi Arabia is seeking to implement universal primary and secondary education, recognising that the wealth from oil is not everlasting. They recognise the impact of science and technology and that these areas must play a major role in the curriculum but have to reconcile this need with their strong intent to emphasise the features of an Islamic culture which currently takes up to 55% of the curriculum.
- In countries as separate as Kosovo and Ruanda, people who recently were on opposing sides in a conflict, often intent on killing one another, have to find ways of learning together and living together.
- In Australia, the Business Council of Australia has expressed concern that up to 35,000 students leave education every year without completing any qualification. This group is massively disadvantaged in finding employment. They lose opportunities themselves and become a substantial cost to the community (BCA, 2003).
- In Cambodia, recovering from massive social disruptions and bitter internal violence, and endeavouring to achieve Education for All, one of the major projects under way is to improve the quality of the public examination system. Weaknesses in the administration and management of the examinations have brought them into disrepute so that the results are no longer trusted. The project seeks to establish publicly accountable methods of examining and administration (Va Vuthy, 2005).

- In Japan, a concern for the social and moral behaviour of young people has caused a new emphasis on moral education that aims to impart values which will contribute to social harmony. An emphasis on increased individualism has been only too successful in the judgement of many Japanese (NIER, 1999).
- The South and East Asia Regions, with their 22 countries, are in the midst of a major effort to increase school attendance. This has succeeded to such an extent that more children than ever before are in school but there are still more than 46 million children outside school with large numbers dropping out before the completion of the primary phase (UNESCO, 2004a).

All these places are involved in developing new approaches in their education systems. They are responding to the needs experienced in their own environment. Yet they are also responding to factors which are common to all. Their responses may be unique to their settings but many of them are to factors which all countries experience. To what extent can we learn from their successes (and their failures), even though they occur in specific settings? The international agencies, with their commitment to assist reform processes everywhere clearly have lessons to learn. So, too, does each individual setting engaged in reform. All need to look carefully at the differing solutions which are used and at the results of their use. There are enough difficult problems for us to resolve in education reform without repeating the errors of others or failing to take note of their successes.

3. REFORM AS A RESPONSE TO COMMON FACTORS

While unique and local factors are often the trigger for reform, increasingly it is to common factors that we must all respond. The nature of those factors determines to a considerable degree the ways for responses. The following chapters identify many common factors, including the importance of knowledge as a key resource in the modern world; globalization and its converse, the search for community. A further powerful common factor is the commitment of all nations, confirmed by the UN Millennium Goals and UNESCO as outlined by Malcolm Skilbeck, to provide an effective basic education to every person. This goal is an expression of the value of every individual but its achievement has still to be effective in any society, including the most advanced. The final chapter summarises the common issues for reform.

The moves towards reform must be viewed in the context of the fundamental changes brought about by technological advances and the consequent impact on the nature of work, the ecology and the building of peace and security. Technology and communication are only just beginning to make the mark on education appropriate to their power. Schools have been slow in using the major resources now available. In the past 50 years we have moved from a handful of computers, world-wide, to a stage where there are millions of computers with much greater power and widely available for individual access. This growth opens up links across continents and seas enabling information to pass and interactions to occur between formerly inaccessible points. Our location no longer limits our influence or our sources of information. Now an

increasing pattern of usage of technology in schools is beginning to make major contributions.

Schools are also still adjusting to changes in the nature of work. 150 years ago industrialisation brought mass production. Our ongoing information revolution has changed production to a skilled process, requiring not only knowledge but the capacity to continue to learn. Areas such as vocational education are changing to meet these new possibilities but the field of general education is still to make appropriate adjustments. At the secondary level in particular current adjustments are slow and inadequate since the growing phenomenon of universal secondary education has brought challenges that remain unanswered.

The environment is a further common issue for reform to take into account. The massive scale of development and the correspondingly heavy use of resources endangers the health of our planet. None of the countries can separate themselves from others. What happens in the rain forests of one country or the industrial processes of another increasingly affects the climate in others.

A similar effect from globalisation applies to the issues of peace and security. The interactive and interdependent world society and the nature of weapons of mass destruction make it necessary to develop harmonious patterns of living together, within countries and between them. This is true at the national level. It is equally true at the personal level. The development of the power to make good choices is important in many spheres: to develop as a person, to be healthy, to be a constructive citizen, to be creative and innovative, to make spiritual choices. The Report of the International Commission on Education for the 21st century emphasised these aspects in its definition of the "four pillars" on which education should be built: Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to live together, and, Learning to be.

"Education throughout life is based on four pillars: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be."

Delors, 1996, p. 96.

Learning to Know is a restatement of the aim adopted earlier, of "basic education for all", a "passport to lifelong education", as the report describes it. Essentially it is a generalisation of the concept of literacy. Just as literacy is the key to language, so there is a literacy for productive living, a way of access to employment, and equally to better health, to more informed decisions, to further personal development, and, crucially, to continued learning. Learning to know lays the foundations for choices for living.

The second is Learning to Do, an essential complement to learning to know. This is the competence which comes from applying knowledge in a variety of situations, expected and unexpected. It includes the capacity to work effectively with others, teamwork. This implies the need to learn in a variety of settings, in work and in the community. These two pillars embrace much of what we hold to be a traditional education, adding perhaps an additional practical emphasis. Stopping there would be understandable, for with these demands we already have a tough agenda, one which no country is currently meeting for all its young people. But, the report adds two others.

The third pillar is Learning to Live Together. Not difficult to understand, living in understanding and harmony, resolving conflicts peacefully. Is this an unreal hope?

"Utopia—but—a necessary Utopia, indeed a vital one if we are to escape from a dangerous cycle sustained by cynicism, or by resignation."

Delors, 1996.

It is hard to disagree. Indeed success in the other two pillars only adds to the importance of the third. As Schumacher said:

"At the moment there can be little doubt that the whole of mankind is in mortal danger, not because we are short of scientific and technological know-how, but because we tend to use it destructively, without wisdom."

Schumacher, 1974.

The fourth pillar, Learning to Be, is equally a mixture of idealism and practicality. In one sense this is the essence of the Delors Report for UNESCO, the "treasure within", that buried treasure which consists of the undeveloped talents in every person. The report describes the richness of human personality, memory, reasoning, imagination, physical ability, the aesthetic sense, the moral and spiritual senses. It emphasises again the importance of considering the whole person in education, not only the worker or consumer.

4. REFORM AS AN INTERNATIONAL CONCERN

As mentioned earlier, it has become an article of faith that education can be a major weapon in the fight to free the world of poverty, violence, hunger and discrimination. For these reasons, governments have made it a major priority to increase participation in education. A significant influence was the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 in which education is included as a basic human right. This has been a major basis for UNESCO in its education programs particularly Education for All, EFA, which has been in operation for over 50 years and the organization is still actively seeking the achievement of that goal. The chapter by Malcolm Skilbeck describes the most recent occasion at Dakar where the international organizations came together in 2000 to set a new date of 2015 for that achievement (Dakar 1, 2000).

Universal primary education, UPE, as the foundation for participation in society did not become a common goal until the beginning of the 20th century when it had been achieved in only a few countries. By the mid-point of the century UPE became an international as well as a national goal. International bodies such as UNESCO, the United Nations International Childrens' Education Fund, UNICEF, and the United Nations Development Project, UNDP, took this aim as central to their charters. At Jomtien in 1990 the recognition of the remoteness of that target brought a new commitment from the 200 nations and the international bodies for achievement of the EFA goal by 2000. The countries meeting at Dakar identified issues which would need to be addressed if the target of EFA by 2015 is to be met: access and equity; quality,

relevance and effectiveness; sharing responsibility; mobilising resources; movement towards a new knowledge base. Given the problems to be overcome within the time period, it will be a massive task to achieve real progress, even with the will to succeed. They are not just issues for developing countries. All countries face the same issues to a greater or lesser extent and we can all learn from these experiences. However, it is the less developed countries which have the most difficult task. Almost all the world population growth is in those countries and the proportion of school aged children in those countries is high. Malcolm Skilbeck outlines the Framework for Action decided at Dakar in his chapter (Dakar 2, 2000). Also in a paper presented at Dakar, Malcolm Skilbeck identified five issues which have to be faced and resolved in moving ahead.

- *Access and equity.*
- *Quality, relevance and effectiveness.*
- *Sharing responsibility.*
- *Mobilising resources.*
- *Towards a new knowledge base.*

Skilbeck, 2000.

There is a growing acknowledgment by international bodies that education is an essential element for the achievement of their aims, even where education was not one of the initial priorities. One index of the growing importance of education internationally is in the changes to the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD. As the name indicates the original concern of OECD was entirely to coordinate economic development in the partner states, originally Western Europe, the United States, Canada and Australia. In the early period the organization noted the importance of preparation for work in developing the economy and set up a small section to deal with vocational education. It soon became apparent that primary, secondary and higher education were also key elements in development and OECD gradually extended its work in these areas. It was not until 2001, however, that OECD established a full division on education.

The chapter by Barry McGaw, first Director of the Education Division of OECD, deals with the work that OECD is directing in the use of international student assessment data by international bodies and individual countries to establish "evidence-based policy in education" as a means of avoiding the many failures of innovation in education. The chapter outlines the types of decisions which may be influenced in this manner.

OECD is just one of the organizations to amend its priorities in this way seeing its relevance not just to economic development but to a wide range of social and political concerns. The World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, UNICEF and the European Union are just some of the bodies which play an international role in education and particularly in reform. UNESCO organised a series of meetings, commencing in 1998, to seek to develop a common set of goals for reform for these bodies, each of which has major programs affecting education in developing countries (UNESCO, 2004b).

5. COMMON EMPHASES OF REFORM

In spite of many differences in the patterns of reform between countries there are common emphases which are relevant to all. It is a major argument of this book that these aspects must be taken into account in all reforms. These will be dealt with in the final chapter, as well as through the contributions in the intermediate chapters. They include: the need for and the commitment to a universal basic education; the diminution in the power of national boundaries; the changed role of knowledge; the key roles of assessment and evaluation; the necessity of values formation; the powerful interaction of the roles of teachers and parents/carers; and the significant interaction between the school and the community.

6. REFORM AS A PROCESS FROM WHICH WE CAN LEARN

6.1. *Case Studies of Reform*

This book considers case studies of reform in various individual countries and through international bodies such as the International Baccalaureate Organisation, IBO, UNESCO and OECD. In the case of individual countries the emphasis is to provide information on relevant innovations, with their reasons for success and failure. Given that we can rarely take a pattern directly from one setting to another, we can still learn greatly from detailed studies of what is happening and how and why the results emerge as they do in the particular circumstances. Often accounts of reform deal exclusively with their perceived successes. These are helpful but equally useful are the accounts of failures, especially where they are analysed with care and in sufficient detail to give some ideas as to the causes of failure.

IBO is a unique organization in that it has carefully devised programmes and these operate in schools in a variety of countries and thus the accounts of the results in the chapter by Ian Hill are of particular interest, dealing as they do with both success and failure.

6.2. *Information from International Sources*

As emphasised by Barry McGaw in his chapter the contribution to the understanding of reform from OECD is of a different kind. OECD does not operate schools or systems or even develop educational programmes but provides quantitative data to countries and systems to assist in the formation of education policy. OECD produces information from international assessments such as the Program for International Student Achievement, PISA, which gives data on mathematical, scientific and reading literacy to provide evidence for countries to make their own assessments on progress. Education policy can be influenced by a variety of factors and it is very important that those factors are balanced by soundly based evidence.

UNESCO, with its world-wide contacts is in a unique position to supply information and provide opportunities for connections and visits between centres with mutual interests. The chapter by Malcolm Skilbeck shows the magnitude of the efforts through UNESCO. From the reports made to UNESCO a variety of examples can be

drawn such as in Eastern Europe and also in Asia, where there is already a reservoir of experience which can be drawn upon. Countries such as China, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong all offer examples whose study is illuminating. There is much discussion as to which factors are universal in application and which are culturally bound. Without genuine exchange, such views are untested and of limited value.

The number and variety of international agencies which are involved in education reform in different countries has already been mentioned, emphasising that many of them have met to attempt to ensure that their efforts are at least compatible and, hopefully, mutually reinforcing. The need for such cooperation is only emphasised by the additional number of individual countries which have agencies involved in aid programs in developing countries: the US Agency for International Development, USAID, the British Council, the Canada Council, the Australian Agency for International Development, AusAID and Norwegian Aid, NORAID, are examples of the national bodies involved in this effort.

6.3. *Research on Reform*

A third source of information and possible approaches is in the research relevant to the process of reform. Such sources include bodies such as, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Centre of Educational Innovation for Development, ACEID, a network of 200 major institutions in 60 countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region and one which can harness substantial resources. In this task UNESCO also works in co-operation with major international bodies which have parallel interests and have built up their own knowledge and networks. These include the World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP and OECD (UNESCO, 2004b). Taken together, even in terms only of what already exists, these constitute an enormous resource. Given what continued effort can provide and the power of information technology to make interconnections, this resource can be even further enhanced. Research and the exchange of information on experiences has never been more important. There are many patterns of change being adopted in the search for reform. These include such concepts as:

- decentralisation of decision-making;
- community participation in the operation and/or policy of schools;
- re-engineering, that is, reconsidering the whole process of schooling;
- the implications of different organisational patterns;
- the learning characteristics of groups of different sizes and compositions;
- implications of school size;
- the effects of different patterns of school-community interaction;
- the evaluation-curriculum interaction;
- school quality.

These and other patterns for school improvement have persuasive arguments to back them but they lack a strong research validation. It is essential in the reform of secondary education to broaden the emphasis on increasing enrolments to offset the pressures from primary schools at one end and those unable to obtain employment at the other end. The need is to ensure the qualitative value of the reformed secondary education.

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