

Concept Note for the Analytical Work on the Theme of the 2012 ADEA Triennale

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

CONCEPT NOTE FOR THE ANALYTICAL WORK ON THE THEME OF THE 2012 ADEA TRIENNALE

Introduction

Why this concept note has been produced

- To provide guidance for the contributions that will be channeled into the discussions on the theme of the 2012 Triennale;
- To clarify the conceptual framework and methodological principles that will shape the contributions;
- To provide a framework in which the different issues to be dealt with can be brought together and coordinated with the objectives of the Triennale.

For whom has this note been produced and for what purpose?

- The ADEA Secretariat, so that it can approve the guidance and content with respect to the goals set for the next Triennale;
- The coordinators of the preparatory work, who should use it as an agreed reference framework for assessing the relevance of proposals for contributions, possibly for making adjustments to them and for determining the shape of the thematic and general reports;
- The research teams and other actors involved in the exercise, to ensure their contributions meet agreed expectations.

Contents

This concept note thus seeks to clarify and outline:

1. The history and context of the 2012 Triennale
2. The theme and objectives of the Triennale
3. Definition of the key concepts underlying the theme
4. The issues and paradigm shifts raised
5. The methodology for analytical work, discussions and action to bring about change
6. The framework, approaches and expected results of the various contributions
7. The preparatory process and organization of the work

1. Background and context

The Biennale, a high point of ADEA's activities, is held for the purpose of encouraging and promoting frank and open dialogue on a theme that is essential for the development of education in Africa. This policy dialogue is enriched by analytical work based on studies and contributions made by African countries and their technical and financial partners. Research networks in Africa and other regions of the world as well as the ADEA working groups and inter-country quality nodes also participate in the analytical work. The discussions that take place within ADEA and during the Biennales have always been characterized by a professional and developmental approach that allows the participants to learn from one another through the documentation and pooling of successful experiences. Such collegial discussions promote shared understanding that favors dynamic and productive partnerships.

Since the first meeting in 1993, each Biennale has focused on a theme that is crucial for the development of education in Africa. The themes explored in past Biennales are as follows:

1993	Improving the implementation of education projects (Angers, France)
1995	Formulating educational policy (Tours, France)
1997	Partnerships for capacity building and quality improvements in education in Africa (Dakar, Senegal)
1999	What works and what's new in education: Africa speaks! (Johannesburg, South Africa)
2001	Reaching out, reaching all: sustaining effective policy and practice for education in Africa (Arusha, Tanzania)
2003	The quest for quality: learning from the African experience (Grand Baie, Mauritius)
2006	More and better education: what makes effective learning in schools and in literacy and early childhood development programs? (Libreville, Gabon)
2008	Beyond primary education: challenges and approaches to expanding learning opportunities in Africa (Maputo, Mozambique)

After the last Biennale, held in Maputo, the ADEA Steering Committee decided that it would in future hold this forum every three years, hence the term Triennale. The first Triennale will take place in February 2012, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. While it is consistent with past Biennale meetings, it also seeks to take a new look at the issues examined and processes used, thus ensuring the involvement of a wider range of stakeholders.

The 2012 Triennale is taking place at a time when great progress is being made in the education sector in Africa. The faster pace of change since 1995 has enabled all levels of education to sharply increase gross enrolment rates: there has been a 20% increase in primary education, about 15% in secondary education and the rate has doubled in higher education. It is interesting to note that this progress coincides with Africa's relatively strong and stable average growth rate of 5.6%.

However, even though repetition and drop-out rates have also declined over the same period, several challenges remain:

- *The stock of educated people is still too small to maintain the cycle of sustainable economic growth: on average, adults have spent less than four years in education;*
- *Furthermore, this stock is unequally distributed, undermining development with discrimination against women (60% of illiterate people) and, even more so, rural and poor people;*
- *The mediocre quality of education has a negative impact on systems' internal and external efficiency: about half of all schoolchildren have basic educational skills (reading, writing and arithmetic), according to the PASEC and SACMEQ evaluations;*
- *Learning within the system, bearing in mind the history of education in the continent, does not always demonstrate its purpose and usefulness in African environments.*
- The lack of coordination between education, apprenticeship, vocational training and higher education systems, which is characterized by: i) the absence of any pathways permitting any real interaction between the different systems, ii) the absence of any appropriate mechanisms for meeting the needs of schoolchildren who lack the motivation required or have no possibility to continue academic and theoretical studies in general education, and iii) the use of inefficient remedial solutions to counter the phenomenon of early school leaving (schools for specific occupations, traditional apprenticeship)

The current process of globalization is characterized by the dominance of economies and societies that are underpinned by knowledge and technological innovation. The stock and level of knowledge, which in view of the rapid pace of change must be acquired on a lifelong basis, are becoming crucial sustainable development factors. But how exactly can Africa meet its challenges by developing the necessary critical skills?

2. The themes and objectives of the Triennale

The choice of theme for the next Triennale will focus on efforts to find answers to the following question:

Promoting critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for sustainable development in Africa: how to design and implement an effective response by education and training systems?

In dealing with this theme, the Triennale is seeking to involve a wide range of stakeholders (ministries, development agencies, civil society, communities, enterprise, etc.) in a participatory and collaborative process of analysis, reflection, deployment, discussion, sharing and action focusing on the reforms and innovations will drive the reforms sought. These reforms focus on the following areas:

- A realistic view of Africa's future.
- The pursuit of new education and training policies and strategies designed to achieve this goal through the effective targeting and consideration of economic, social and cultural demand, to enhance and release sustainable development potential and assets in different African countries.
- The emergence of new diversified and integrated education and training systems and schemes which, within the context of lifelong learning, are developing a mass of critical skills for this purpose.

3. Working definition of the key concepts underlying the theme

It is thus important for everyone involved in the analytical work to have a shared understanding about the working definitions of the key concepts:

- **Knowledge and skills**

For the purposes of our work, skill is a **combinatory form of knowledge that makes use of theoretical, procedural and environmental knowledge, or learning, know-how and life skills, to solve problems, make decisions, carry out plans, etc.**

- **Skills and qualifications**

The concept of skill comes from the world of organizations, business and work, rather than from the school system, and as such, it is linked to an occupation or a specified complex task. A skill is seen as a set of capacities, knowledge, know-how, experiences and behaviors that are drawn on in the practice of a job/occupation, in order to accomplish a specific function or activity. Qualification, in contrast, results from the validation of specified skills in an occupational field and their certification through a diploma.

The critical skills concept

The critical skills concept is widely used in the context of corporate policies and practices to designate the specific skills that constitute a company's strength.¹ They may be skills that are crucial to the company's survival and that need to be preserved and transmitted within the company, or emerging critical skills that must be acquired as quickly as possible in order to respond to emergency situations or future challenges.

In relation to the theme of the Triennale, this approach to the critical skills concept leads to at least two lines of analysis and action:

- How to define and build education and training systems that develop skills that are crucial to the survival and development of certain sectors that contribute substantially to national wealth production (agriculture, skilled trades, etc.)?
- How, at the same time, to plan skills that can be used to anticipate future changes and notably to promote the emergence of sectors and occupations that are of strategic importance for the future of African countries and the continent as a whole?

- **The sustainable development concept**

To grasp the concept of sustainability in its broader sense, we need to take into account the conceptual shift that has taken place: "*Sustainability began as a concept that was primarily associated with the environment, according to which nature was to be used in a way that harmed neither its productivity nor its resilience. This concept has since expanded to encompass the social and economic infrastructure that determines a society's capacity to maintain itself in a rapidly changing global context*" (Paul Cappon). Also, "society's capacity to maintain itself", particularly in the African context, currently requires a fourth cultural and ethical dimension with regard to the causes of intolerance, globalization and conflict that pose a danger to fundamental human rights and peace.

The sustainable development concept thus encompasses four inseparable and complementary dimensions: a) the protection and preservation of the environment, particularly efforts to tackle climate change; b) the development of a model of sustainable economic growth based on the

¹ This is the definition used by Entreprise et Personnel, a French business organization that has many large companies among its members and that engages in constant monitoring and analysis of change in the field of human resources.

rational exploitation and conservation of natural resources; c) the construction of inclusive societies founded upon effective efforts to alleviate poverty and tackle all sorts of discrimination and marginalization; and d) the strengthening of mutual knowledge and cultural and spiritual understanding between groups, societies and peoples to foster solidarity and peace.

When this understanding of the sustainable development concept is viewed from a different angle, another dimension emerges: that of the sustainability of learning achievements, which raises the cross-cutting issue of lifelong learning.

- **Skills and lifelong learning**

It is necessary to constantly adapt to a complex and rapidly-changing world, and the provision of continuous education is not enough. It needs to be underpinned by a diverse and integrated network of efficient schools, efficient and flexible vocational training courses, universities, higher education and research institutes focused on sustainable development, appropriate modes of training for adults and new models for sharing and collectively building knowledge and skills. According to the systemic paradigm, it will be necessary to have more complex and more diversified learning systems than exist at present in order to comprehend the world. However, the organization and management of diversified and integrated learning approaches and environments must be designed and developed in such a way as to enable everyone to learn about the world as it is now and how it will change. It is also necessary to promote a holistic and open learning culture and environment, for everyone, in all places, and in all fields of knowledge: an environment in which the challenge is not just to access knowledge, but to share and develop it.

- **The effective responses concept**

The introduction of the concept of effectiveness in the Triennale theme results in a significant change of purpose in the way education and training systems are defined and built in various countries. These systems must be assessed not only on the basis of their capacity to admit the many young people seeking education and training, but also on the basis of the performance they are capable of producing. Such results are to be assessed according to two parameters that define the effectiveness of a given system: internal efficiency and external efficiency.

- The first refers to the coefficient of efficiency, which calculates the ratio between i) the ideal number of student-years (i.e. without repetitions or dropouts) consumed to bring a certain number of students to the end of the cycle or to produce graduates and ii) the number of student-years actually consumed, due to repetitions and dropouts. Assessment of internal efficiency aims at maximizing the quality of learning, and hence of the skills developed, under the most cost-effective conditions possible. The internal efficiency of a system depends on several factors whose relative importance can vary according to opinions and contexts: quality of inputs, instructional processes, organizational procedures, the social or systemic environment, etc.
- The second parameter is external efficiency, which is concerned with the effects or impact of the training received by beneficiaries after they leave the education and training system. These effects may be economic and/or social, and the benefits they offer may be individual and/or collective. Monitoring of external efficiency primarily aims at ensuring the economic and social relevance of learning or, in other words, aligning the objectives and end results of training with those of the successful economic and social integration of those who come out of the system. External efficiency is concerned with the quality of the relationship of all curricular elements (choice of knowledge and skills to be developed, education/training/learning options and strategies, teaching and learning materials, assessment methods) to social and economic needs, challenges,

assets and processes in general, and to the labor market in particular, in a local, national and/or international context.

4. The issues and paradigm shifts raised by the theme of the Triennale

With a view to widening learning opportunities, the 2008 Biennale concluded that it is necessary to build open, diversified, integrated and fully-inclusive education and training systems in Africa through the mobilization of all resources and formal, non-formal and informal types of education. The Triennale theme both expands upon this idea and takes it further, focusing more specifically on the need to increase the effectiveness of learning to meet the current and future challenges posed by sustainable development in Africa. To do so, it will be necessary to build education and training into a program of social reform by building up a critical mass of:

- citizens who are not just informed and trained, but who are above all capable of using their achievements to bring about the economic, social, cultural and political changes required for sustainable development
- workers with job skills that exploit the potential and specific development assets of different African countries, raise labor productivity and boost economic growth, particularly through the use of new technologies
- highly qualified human resources capable of ensuring the home-grown production of scientific knowledge and technological innovation and offering Africa an opportunity to develop knowledge-based economies and societies as required by the current process of globalization

Meeting these challenges certainly raises the need to have a critical mass and thus extend and expand learning opportunities (Biennale 2008). However, it also and above all emphasizes the need to introduce reforms in education policies and systems, focusing on closely related questions such as:

What should be learnt? How to learn? With a view to doing what? Or for what purpose, use or effect?

Skills development is an aspect of the analysis and the development of strategic and operational resources that may be mobilized with a view to ensuring that current and future challenges are successfully met, in a given context and comparative advantage with regard to assets and performances. It does not therefore take place as a result of academic concerns to build up a capital of qualified people. Several paradigm shifts are implicitly necessary in this debate:

WITHIN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

DECONTEXTUALISED SCHOOL LEARNING (WITH NO LINK TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES)	→ ACTIVITIES TO BE DEVELOPED IN ORDER TO TAKE DECISIONS, RESOLVE PROBLEMS, DEVELOP PROJECTS (SKILLS)
TEACHING-BASED APPROACH (TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE BY THE TEACHER)	→ LEARNING-BASED APPROACHES (CONFRONTING LEARNERS WITH CHALLENGES SO THAT THEY DEVELOP THEIR OWN SKILLS IN ORDER TO MEET THESE CHALLENGES)
QUALITY OF INPUTS (THE INTRODUCTION OF QUALITY THROUGH INPUTS TAKES PLACE AT THE LEVEL OF STANDARDS OR BELIEFS ABOUT WHAT IS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO ENSURE QUALITY)	→ QUALITY = RESULTS (THE INTRODUCTION OF QUALITY THROUGH OUTPUTS ANALYSES, IDENTIFIES AND ESTABLISHES AN ORDER OF PRIORITY FOR THE FACTORS WHICH HAVE AN IMPACT ON LEARNING IN ORDER TO THEN DETERMINE THE SHAPE OF EFFORTS AND INVESTMENTS)
TRADITIONAL BUDGETARY APPROACH (THE BUDGETS MADE AVAILABLE ARE SUBJECT TO THE STANDARDS SET OUT BELOW)	→ EFFORT TO ENSURE COST-EFFECTIVENESS (BUDGETS ESTABLISH AN ORDER OF PRIORITY BASED ON ANALYSIS OF THE COST AND IMPACT FOR EACH FACTOR)

OUTSIDE THE SECTOR

ISOLATED SECTORAL APPROACH (EDUCATION IS CONSIDERED AS A SECTOR THAT IS CUT OFF FROM OTHER SECTORS)	→ INTERSECTORAL APPROACH (EDUCATION FLOURISHES THROUGH INTERACTION WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENT SECTORS)
SUPPLY-BASED APPROACH (PROGRAMMES RESPOND TO THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM)	→ DEMAND-LED APPROACH (PROGRAMS MEET THE NEEDS OF THE ECONOMY, SOCIETY AND COMMUNITIES)
STATE MONOPOLY GOVERNANCE (THE EDUCATION MINISTRY MANAGES THE SECTOR ON ITS OWN)	→ GOVERNANCE ENTAILING PARTICIPATION OF PARTNERS (THE EDUCATION MINISTRY CONSULTS, DELEGATES, DECENTRALISES AND MANAGES WITH OTHER SECTORS, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, CIVIL SOCIETY AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES)
SOLE COMPETENCE OF DECISION-MAKERS AND EDUCATION ACTORS (DECISION MAKERS AND EDUCATIONAL PLAYERS ARE THE ONLY PEOPLE QUALIFIED TO DEAL WITH EDUCATION ISSUES)	→ DIALOGUE BETWEEN ACTORS AND DECISION-MAKERS FROM EDUCATION AND OTHER SECTORS (CONSULTATION AND NEGOTIATION MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO INVOLVE ALL EDUCATION PARTNERS IN THE DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF POLICIES)
NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH QUALIFICATIONS (THE SUCCESS OF AN EDUCATION SYSTEM IS MEASURED IN TERMS OF THE NUMBERS OF QUALIFICATIONS OBTAINED)	→ EVALUATION OF THE CRITICAL MASS OF SKILLS THAT CAN REALLY BE DRAWN UPON IN ORDER TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT (A SYSTEM'S SUCCESS IS MEASURED IN TERMS OF QUALITY AND THE NUMBER OF SKILLS DEVELOPED, AND ITS ABILITY TO MEET DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES EFFECTIVELY)

The main issue arising here is the matter of how certain reforms and innovations that have already been tested or are being developed succeed in bringing about these paradigm shifts and how to learn from their success in order to boost efforts to develop education and training for sustainable development.

5. Methodology of the analytical work, discussions and action to bring about change

Put in another way, the work to develop the participatory process for preparing the Triennale and the debates at the event itself must answer this fundamental question:
How, in the current and future context of reforms, can African countries design and develop innovations that transform education and training systems so that they efficiently produce a mass of critical skills for sustainable development?

There are two ways of seeking an answer to this question:

- a) **Identification and analysis of policies and experiences that may provide relevant new knowledge that can drive the target reforms and innovations;**
- b) **Integration of this knowledge into the design and delivery of policies and experiments with change in order to develop the critical skills in question.**

The dialectic interconnection between these two levels defines the methodology of the process as that of a **strategic action research activity** which is effective in combining analysis of the process of producing knowledge with the changed situation brought about by the activity. It must guide the decisions of stakeholders and direct the analysis and work at different levels. It also determines the process of preparing and organizing the Triennale up to the inclusion of the results in the action to be undertaken in the post-Triennale phase. This sort of methodology is dependent on the commitment of stakeholders from the two sides – research and action – to a collective change project. It is by nature participatory and collaborative. The composition and organization of action research teams should reflect the diversity of the stakeholders and ensure their necessary interaction in the collegial search for solutions to a problem situation. In the specific case of the Triennale theme, the two sides – research and action – must involve those concerned in the field of education and from other sectors of sustainable development (in particular community and economic leaders and actors) to allow the group to have the best chance of tackling the problem situation it is faced with: ie, overcoming the current inability of education and training systems to create a critical mass of skills required in Africa to help countries embark upon the process of sustainable development.

The field of investigation and action focuses on the links between skills acquisition and lifelong learning and sustainable development. The underlying assumption is that appropriate reforms of education and training policies and systems focused on generating this critical mass of skills to promote lifelong learning will enable Africa to start building knowledge-based economies and societies as part of a sustainable development process.

For an action research activity to be well-coordinated and productive, it is vital for the teams involved in the process to work together in setting up an action research project of a strategic nature:

- clarification of the issue and conceptual field;
- identification of experiences, innovations and reforms that have been successful or are promising or effective with regard to the target changes;
- definition of the analytical work and discussions to be undertaken in close coordination with the objectives and methods of strategic action research projects;

- organization of the group work and allocation of responsibilities and tasks;
- framing of the issue and analysis of policies and practices identified and/or effective with a view to producing the new knowledge sought;
- sharing knowledge and thoughts about how to integrate acquired knowledge into activities aimed at perfecting, reforming or rebuilding systems, taking the specific context into consideration;
- experimentation and assessment of the changes implemented.

When put into a long-term perspective, this process is of a spiral nature when considered in the ongoing process of progressive change of education and training systems, which determines the purpose and character of the ADEA Biennales and Triennales.

1) The framework, approaches and expected results of the various contributions

The contributions, be they studies with case reports or analysis of the consultations or meetings, must respond to the main question, which is to highlight how certain types of innovations that have already been tested or are being developed succeed in bringing about these paradigm shifts and how to learn from their success in order to boost efforts to develop education and training for sustainable development. The target reforms and innovations should be placed and implemented within a systemic perspective, which grasps the interdependencies and transitions binding the various levels as well as the pathways and synergies between the various resources, strands and modes of normal, non-formal and informal delivery of education and training. This systemic approach, which is central to the Triennale theme and cuts across different issues, and which should at no time in the process be forgotten, is divided into three sub-themes and can be analyzed from thirteen perspectives, to ensure that the contributions taken together cover the specific objectives and cross-cutting issues of education and training systems.

The three sub-themes focus on the major objectives of these systems, depending on the corresponding skills to be developed:

- **sub-theme 1:** the essential and effective fulfillment of the right to basic education for all means there needs to be a set of common core skills for all, or non-exclusive training for citizens who are not just informed and trained, but also capable of exploiting their achievements in order to continue to learn and in order to exercise other fundamental, economic, social, cultural and political human rights, so they can ensure their personal development and participate actively in the promotion of sustainable development. Having everyone acquire this common core can be achieved through the formal, non-formal and informal education sectors and this concerns compulsory education as well as basic education, literacy schemes for adults and young people and early childhood development.
- **sub-theme 2:** the extensive effort to help people participate in society and enter employment requires, within a diversified and flexible approach to training that draws on and incorporates various learning resources and means, the development of critical professional and technical skills in order to realize the potential and tap into the development opportunities of the formal and informal sectors in each country. The development of these skills must seek to meet the current and future needs and requirements of the economy and society, raise labor productivity, enhance entrepreneurial capacity and create job opportunities, to boost economic growth in the framework of sustainable development, in particular through efforts to use new technologies, conserve natural resources and protect the environment. This means that the development of job skills and technical skills entails various processes, which greatly overlap with the traditional TVET system. It combines knowledge with experience within a joint approach to carrying out an activity (using the knowledge acquired in doing the activity) and reflection (separating activities carried out from the knowledge that can be transferred to other situations). Within this context, the shift from technical education and

vocational training towards technical and vocational skills development needs to be analyzed and understood both at strategic level and as far as its operational arrangements and implications are concerned.

- **sub-theme 3:** the training of highly qualified people in education systems that are diversified, differentiated and increasingly focused on skills development requires the development of home-grown scientific and technological skills and the dissemination of knowledge and innovation, in order to respond and adapt to technological change as part of a continuous effort to be responsive and complementary to education and higher education systems. The development of these skills also requires higher education and research systems which cater to the social and economic requirements of communities and businesses and which can contribute effectively to the development of knowledge-based economies and societies, to ensure Africa's competitiveness in the context of ongoing globalization.

Contributions coming specifically under one of these three sub-themes are called **thematic** contributions.

Considered from the perspective of the different dimensions of the reforms to be examined, and which cut across all the sub-themes, the analytical framework focuses on:

1. **The inclusion of lifelong learning**, which should be dealt with extensively in all the sub-themes as far as both guidance and organizational matters are concerned
2. **The development of knowledge and skills in national strategy plans:** current and future socio-economic development needs, the labor market, supply and creation of jobs in relation to the goals and objectives of training policies and schemes
3. **Education and training system reforms to promote the acquisition of critical skills:** curricular reforms to promote life skills, work skills and social development skills, teaching manuals and materials, learning options and approaches, vocational training and development for teachers/trainers and other people involved in directing, managing, supervising and evaluating schemes
4. **The use of learning technologies to strengthen the capacity of all education and training stakeholders:** the inclusion of learning technologies as a component of critical skills development: the innovative educational potential of learning technologies; the ability of different stakeholders to take them on board, production of suitable content, shelf-life issues
5. **The promotion and evaluation of the effectiveness and relevance of learning:** policies, strategies and evaluations dealing with external efficiency
6. **Validation and certification of skills, regardless of how they have been acquired:** systemic and integrated approach to skills development, national and/or regional frameworks for accrediting learning and qualifications, pathways between different formal, non-formal and informal sectors of education
7. **The promotion of a wide range of partnerships:** governance and promotion of participatory and collaborative approaches: multi-partner arrangements for consultations and dialogue, decision-making, implementation and auditing; decentralization policies and practices of decentralization and efforts to promote subsidiarity; developing the establishments' independence; contractual arrangements for delegating/devolving responsibilities or tasks, including to the private sector and local communities
8. **Close links between financing and costs, efficiency and sustainability:** innovative methods of financing, efforts to improve cost efficiency formula, adaptation of costs to available and deployable resources
9. **Inseparable links between efficiency, fairness (equity) and gender:** efficient inclusion strategies for marginalized groups, especially rural populations, nomads, disabled people, child soldiers, displaced people and refugees
10. **The development of life skills:** skills for healthy living (efforts to tackle malaria and HIV/AIDS, hygiene standards, ways of life, etc.) and personal development (including social integration, etc.)

11. **The promotion and enhancement of human values:** the promotion and integration of social values and home-grown knowledge, African languages and multilingual education, the human values and dimensions of sustainable development
12. **Building and strengthening peace and solidarity in fragile states:** education in mutual knowledge and comprehension, peace, solidarity and national integration: education for (post-conflict) reconstruction, education for conflict prevention, advocacy of all aspects of coexistence
13. **Regional integration and cooperation in the educational, vocational, scientific and technical field:** regional and African programs, schemes, networks and approaches for skills development, regional centers and virtual networks of excellence, regional research projects

The studies on these issues that cover several sub-themes are called **cross-cutting**.

All contributions must meet the central objective of developing new knowledge and ways to incorporate it into the qualitative changes sought by the Triennale. With this in mind, it is important for the structure and content of all contributions to take the following requirements into consideration:

- to present the problem situation that the policy or scheme analyzed has sought or is seeking to resolve as well as its links with the Triennale issues
- to frame this problem within the sectoral and multisectoral contextual data to shed light upon challenges and constraints such as the achievements, resources and opportunities that the specific environment presents
- to clarify and present the issue, the objectives, the assumptions and the methodology of the contribution
- to analyze the objectives, process and main characteristics of the design, planning, financing, implementation, management, evaluation, and readjustment of the policy or scheme analyzed
- present and evaluate results obtained by the scheme or policy, particularly in relation to target changes in terms of critical skills and lifelong learning for sustainable development
- to establish a link between the results and explanatory factors in order to identify the main elements of new knowledge to be learnt from them
- to formulate messages for the Triennale on policy guidelines and recommendations for the successful incorporation of this new knowledge into the implementation of the reforms required to bring about the paradigm changes recommended by the Triennale

2) The preparatory process and organization of the work

The principles of participation and collegial discussion must guide the preparatory process and create a forum for expression and dialogue for decision-makers and actors from education and other development sectors, representatives of communities and the economy, especially ministries, members of parliament, and representatives of workers, employer, the crafts sector, farmers, young people and civil society in general.

In the first phase, proposed contributions will be assessed in order to establish:

- the extent to which the contribution takes the achievements of the Triennale 2008 into account
- the importance of the link between the issue dealt with by the contribution and the theme of the Triennale
- the extent to which the contribution takes into account new perspectives opened up by the paradigm changes
- the usefulness of the methodology and approaches proposed by the contribution in relation to expected results
- the involvement of the various stakeholders targeted by the changes in the team responsible for the contribution

On the basis of these assessment and selection criteria, recommendations will be made on how to adjust the issue, objectives, field, methodology and/or the teams involved for each contribution. The group of coordinators must divide these tasks between them in accordance with the type of studies under consideration, with a view to drawing up the list of selected contributions.

In a second phase, it will be necessary to compose and organize the teams at the appropriate level (local, national, regional, etc.) and launch the contributions. The focal points or authors of the contribution proposal will be responsible for this. Coordinators will be able to provide advice, in particular concerning the involvement of economic and social stakeholders in these teams.

In a third phase, the coordinators will support the development of contributions using a monitoring system to evaluate progress made and the difficulties encountered, in order to give teams some feedback. This will make it necessary for the people in charge of contributions to provide progress reports on the work, achievements and problems. Consultations of the various stakeholders listed above will also be organized, in particular young people, the private sector and civil society organizations, who will thus have a forum to voice their opinion, talk about their experiences and express their thoughts on the issues raised. Similarly, discussion meetings between managers and stakeholders involved in studies exploring similar or related fields will be possible during this period. This third phase will end with the validation of the different contributions.

On the basis of the contributions received for sub-theme, in a fourth phase thematic reports will be drawn up further to a comparative analysis of the various studies and the results of consultations focusing on the same subject, which will identify:

- a general assessment of the contributions made;
- the main issues dealt with;
- converging and diverging approaches and conclusions;
- the main new knowledge that can be gleaned;
- ways and challenges for integrating this knowledge into change projects and activities;
- the main messages emerging regarding the theme for the Triennale;

These reports will be a responsibility and task for the thematic coordinators.

The cross-cutting studies and background papers not covered by the sub-themes and the thematic reports will contribute to the general report, which will focus on:

- analysis and evaluation of the analytical work as a whole;
- the main discoveries and related issues for the target reforms;
- the characteristics of and reasons for good policies and practices;
- the main lessons learnt during this exercise;
- challenges posed regarding implementation of new knowledge;
- the main messages directed at the Triennale.

This task comes under the responsibility of the general coordinators.

The ensuing Triennale discussions should seek to highlight goals, policy guidelines, concepts, methodologies, strategies and instruments to help develop a strategic framework for policies and partnerships regarding paradigm changes to promote critical skills acquisition and lifelong learning for sustainable development, in particular:

- identification and definition of EDUCATION AND TRAINING challenges and priorities related to sustainable development in Africa analysis of contexts and favorable opportunities
- analysis of skill needs and the range of options for their development
- strategic planning of skills development comprising sequences that are coordinated with

stages of economic and social development

- specific action plans for the implementation of reforms
- design and delivery of steering, management and evaluation instruments for skills in terms of human resources and knowledge
- regional and continental prospects for cooperation

It is hoped that the achievements of the Triennale will help to generate momentum that will encourage the countries and different categories concerned (ministers, professionals from education and other development sectors, and economic and social leaders and stakeholders) to implement the paradigm shifts and develop relations which will put the desired process of social change into practice.