

## Challenges to the Vision and Mission of Lifelong Learning in Sub-Saharan Africa

Akpovire Oduaran

*School for Teacher Education and Training, North-West University,  
Mafikeng Campus, Mmabatho, South Africa, 2735*  
*Contacts: + 27-3892208/2362, Mobile: +27-710212784, Fax: +267-3185096*  
*E-mail: Akpovire.oduaran@nwu.ac.za, Akpovire@hotmail.com*

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**ABSTRACT** Lifelong learning has become a fashionable term that is being much talked about by politicians, occasional reviewers of development policies and academicians who are constantly exploring ways of breaking down all barriers to learning so that the doors to learning can be opened for individual, communities and nations. These days nations are constantly seeking to make lifelong learning the major philosophical framework that must guide the provision of national education. It might not be possible to get the best gains possible from applying the concept unless it is properly applied, monitored and evaluated. Fortunately, the concept itself has been accepted and actually applied to education policies in Sub-Saharan Africa (hereinafter SSA) with particular reference to the three countries selected for research. Achieving the goal of lifelong learning in the Sub-Continent has been constrained by many serious challenges. This paper explores two major challenges to the vision and mission of lifelong learning in SSA, and why the sub-continent must commit to inclusive education.

### INTRODUCTION

Africa was recently described by Schulman (2010) as “a lost continent”. To recover itself, it needs to embrace fully the visions and missions for lifelong learning, among other available options. That is why many Sub-Saharan Africa (hereinafter, SSA) countries have incorporated lifelong learning in their educational policies and practices, but they still have a lot to learn from other countries that are in hot pursuit of competitive edge. I refer to the pursuit of competitive edge to imply the present attempts nations are making to become more efficient, effective and relevant in competing successfully with global economic and social resources. The end product of such pursuits has been the elimination or reduction of unemployment, poverty, hunger, illiteracy and diseases. In doing so, lifelong learning by all has provided the main framework for ensuring that education policies and systems continuously play the role of setting the tone for the provision of modern and relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes, aptitudes, interests and values for different nations.

In the present paper, lifelong learning is conceptualized as a unifying concept that brings together informal, formal and non-formal learning in a kind of framework seeking to make mul-

ti-ple provisions for everybody, whether young or old, and using all resources within society that serve educational purposes in a sub-continent such as ours that is diverse in terms of language, cultures, socio-economic and political systems, but with profound commonalities. Further, because of this diversity, it might only be possible to select just three countries as our context, and these are Botswana, Nigeria and South Africa which may not adequately represent the Sub-Continent. Even so, it might be argued that the choice of the three countries was informed by the fact that their current policies are focusing on purely mechanistic, scaffolding qualification dimensions or skills that relate to work. But the policies should be taking a more holistic view (as per the African tradition) which can then engage more holistically with the problem of illiteracy by making literacy learning linked to social issues like HIV and AIDS. This kind of problem probably encourages Africans to embrace more tenaciously the purpose for continuing learning. But even this argument could be strengthened by saying that there are other demanding issues such as crime, corruption, public participation in democracies etc – all of which can only be addressed through fully literate societies and a more holistic policy framework for lifelong learning. In South Africa, for

an example, there is a recent white paper that is endeavouring to do this in a small way by providing community based- learning centres.

Botswana has its Vision 2016 official document that features lifelong learning as the bedrock of its educational provisions. Botswana has also included the major principles of lifelong learning in its national education policy that was revised and approved by Parliament in April, 1994. On its part, Nigeria has chosen to express its own vision and mission for lifelong learning within the philosophical objectives of her education policy. South Africa, on the other hand, enunciates its vision and mission of lifelong learning expressed in national educational outcomes and standards in education policy statements and acts. So then, in all three countries, there are visions and missions of lifelong learning, but implementation is a different matter altogether, and that is why a paper in this direction with a clear focus on analysis is very timely, especially because the literature on the subject in the African context remains weak, thin and largely ignored. To achieve that purpose, the analysis proceeds from a brief historical review of the development of policy initiatives through a theoretical framework, and analysis of the two major challenges to the vision and mission of lifelong learning in all three selected countries. It highlights basic professional and research response, and advances reasons why Sub-Saharan Africa (hereinafter, SSA) must commit to lifelong learning in a more effective, coherent and organized manner. Some recommendations have been made for the expansion and improvement of lifelong learning.

### **Brief Historical Overview**

In the African society, it is part of traditional life that after the days' work, children, youth and adults, organise themselves into series of learning processes under the moonlight. The adults, for example, engage themselves in the acquisition of knowledge that might lead to the development of the community with the traditional head facilitating the process. Their young ones under the coordination of a chosen elder engage children and youth with folklores, proverbs, stories, riddles and jokes. Folklores are rich in content and use animated stories to impart honesty, diplomacy and values, while stories of great leaders, successful rulers and warriors are

relayed to the children not only for the benefit of knowing them but to propel their life pattern. Babs Fafunwa quoted in Omolewa (1981) had observed that "if by intellect we mean the ability to integrate experience and if by intellectualisation we mean the ability to reason abstractly, traditional African education provided a forum for intellectual growth and development".

Lifelong learning in traditional Africa had responded to the general quest for harmonious co-existence, peace and improved quality of life. The destiny of man was an important issue for the traditional Africans, and steps were taken to ensure that lifelong learning responded adequately to the need for everyone to ascertain their locus in the spiritual realm (Omolewa 2006; Preece 2009; Amutabi and Okech 2009). Learning was broad-based, effective, enjoyable, challenging and equitable from the preliminary stages until old age and beyond. In essence, the foundation of lifelong learning practices and programme was reflective of the challenges facing by the people.

The scope of lifelong learning in traditional and modern SSA placed strong emphasis on individual personal development and fulfilment as a pre-requisite for community and societal development. The focus of lifelong learning could be said to be comprehensive in the sense that it was directed at the spiritual, cultural, social, economic, and political development of the individual and their communities. For example, Africans elected to specialise in a profession, vocation, or trade to invest their time, energy and resources.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Lifelong learning features the core argument that life is meaningful and perhaps more rewarding if people learn throughout their lifetimes. The popular Jacques Delors Report (1996) had argued that learning throughout life would promote the idea of how people should learn to live together and that became the basic foundation for education all over the world, SSA inclusive. And that explains why education policies in SSA are largely based on this principle. Now, the principle has been expanded to also include three pillars of learning to know (this is understood to imply the need to combine sufficiently broad general education with the possibility of engaging in an in-depth study of selected subject content), learning to do (understood to imply the

need to have everyone acquire the relevant competence and skills to deal with a variety of situations) and learning to be (understood as implying the need for everyone to exercise greater independence and judgement in combination with a stronger sense of personal responsibility such that the process of attaining common goals become possible) (Delors 1996). These conceptions are still popular today and also demonstrate utilitarian (to know and to do) vis-a- vis liberal/social purpose (to be and to live together) dimensions that are observable in the countries selected for discussion in this paper. These ideas had long remained central to previous positioning on the discourse of what should constitute good education in every society.

For centuries, different societies have tried to put emphasis on the importance of learning based on a number of theories, but the two major theories that seemed to have emerged are: the mechanistic and liberalist theories.

There has been a constant contestation between the utilitarians and liberalists as to what learning is for. We do not have the liberty to examine all the points and counter points that have been tendered by the opposing parties or group of scholars within the limits allowed. The worry is over the definition of relevance and goal in learning.

The utilitarians also known as the “vocationalist” or “professionalists” argue that all learning ought to be practical, especially in the advancement of commerce and industry. In this sense, for learning to be relevant, it must have a utility value placed on it failing which it may be wasteful and unplanned budgetary allocations. Today, the debate over the centrality of utility or relevance as the focal point in learning programmes is still raging, and very fiercely too (Boshier 2006). On the surface, and judging from the contemporary emphasis of the knowledge economy being foisted on Africa by agents of globalization, it would seem that the utilitarians have won the debate (Martin 2001). If they have not won the debate, it is possible that their eloquence, resources base and propaganda are so intricately enormous that their opponents seem to be “feeble”. Feeble because the main justification that is being tendered for learning in Botswana, Nigeria and South Africa today, so it seems, is “learning for

employment” or what one might term as “meal ticket” learning as if all everyone needs is to learn is how best to meet physiological needs.

Mechanistic education and learning has remained on the agenda for educational philosophies and policies, provisions and practices in Botswana, Nigeria and South Africa. The reasons for this obvious reality are not far-fetched. Their economies are still largely contending with so many challenges, some of which are self-imposed and others imposed upon them by the global micro- and macro- economic systems. Consequently, emphasis has continued to be laid on professionalism together with skills acquisition. One fall-out of this reality is that most young people who engage in learning do so mostly and primarily for the purpose of acquiring skills that will make them become employable. Apart from employment considerations Botswana, Nigeria and South Africa are confronted with the challenges induced by globalization together with its skills-based orientations.

The liberalists typified by the Victorian Age Cardinal John Henry Newman and John Stuart Mills continue to make the counterpoint that the pursuit of “utility” or “relevance” in learning may be good but that is hardly enough. In particular, Newman (1901) posited that: “...*useful is not always good, but good is always useful.*” Whilst these arguments continue to dominate the literature, it is possible to argue about what matters most to any learner is the value of what is being learned. For example, the learner might want to ask what value is added to his or her life by engaging in the process and pursuit of learning.

The pursuit of utility in learning and education is strangely constrained. It is even more constrained if it is tethered to strictly vocational education systems. It limits the human potential to learn newer and newer things not only during the years of formal schooling but beyond that in life and living after schooling. This is a much grander, attractive and challenging learning that can undo the obnoxious bands of exclusivist education.

This is where literacy is crucial. The much progress that SSA has made in terms of fighting against illiteracy is undoubtedly the product of the many years of advocacy. The struggle has been intense and those who were at the forefront of the struggle have aged or are ageing. As

adult education begins to be “pushed aside” by those who do not understand that after the battle has been won against illiteracy, there are other concerns like lifelong learning and continuing and distance education as serious professions and callings that must be developed.

This issue is HIV and AIDS. This epidemic has had a devastating effect on teaching and learning, and this has been very visible at the tertiary education level in SSA. Many theories have been propounded on why the epidemic remains almost intractable and unstoppable in the universities in SSA. Among others, it has been argued that stigmatization is getting on the way to dealing with the epidemic and many ideas have therefore been proposed as to how best to go about dealing with the scourge (Cooper and Dickinson 2013; Kunnuji et al. 2013). The link between education and knowledge and prevention of HIV and AIDS is continually being explored by scholars, and it has been proposed that effective public education campaign may well be one of the most effective strategies for dealing with the epidemic (Posse and Baltussen 2013; Gummerson 2013). These and other ideas would be explored much further in the efforts aimed at further expanding the pool of scholarship on the subject of this discourse.

## OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

### The Two Major Challenges

As far as the challenges to the vision and mission are concerned, there are contingents of coterminous ones that are far too many to cover within the short space allowed, but it would be useful to identify the two most dominant factors in the context of this paper, and these are adult illiteracy and HIV and AIDS.

#### *Adult Illiteracy*

Literacy is the foundation for lifelong learning. Whether learning is linked to its utilitarian or liberal dimensions, the individual must in the first place be literate enough to make the right judgment as to what is most useful for him or her to take away from education that is provided by society. For both, children and adult persons, literacy is very important. But our emphasis in this discourse is on adult literacy.

By adult illiteracy we refer to the inability of the individual to read, write and compute with

understanding in any given language to an appreciable level. The triumph of adult illiteracy could in SSA, it be argued, may have been the result of the tolerance of exclusionism. By exclusionism we mean the confinement of education to certain age groups or certain people by reasons of imposing, knowingly and unknowingly, barring others who deserve to learn. In our context, we can cite the cases of the illiterate adults, the poor, the so-called street children and the isolated and/or confined populations-prisoners, women in purdah (a religious tradition that requires married woman to be confined to the homes of their husbands), refugees, and lepers as well as the physically challenged, the minorities and migrant populations as having been excluded. The prevalence of child, youth and adult illiteracy in our region contravenes Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which our nations have subscribed.

Article 26, rightly titled as *The Right to Education*, clearly states in its paragraph one that:

*Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be generally available, and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit... (UNESCO 1976).*

It is true that a significant majority of the world's young people now attend schools and enrolment and participation in formal education at the secondary and post-secondary levels have expanded (UNESCO 2010). In spite of the advances so far made towards a fully literate world, the picture is not actually clear as to how much concrete achievements that could be correctly claimed. We cannot correctly ascertain how much the world has achieved in literacy in qualitative terms.

Apart from the qualitative inadequacies being pointed out, illiteracy among persons aged 15 and over continues to be a significant worry for the world, SSA, Botswana and South Africa (to a lesser extent) and, more critically, Nigeria. For example, in the year 2010, UNESCO hinted that there are still 21 million out-of-school adolescents as at 2007, and this equivalent to 38% of the lower secondary school age group (UNESCO 2010). This situation is disturbing when we consider the fact that those who are illiterate youths today would become adult illiterates tomorrow, and therefore further compound

the problem of illiteracy. The 2007 report by UNESCO has also revealed that there were 153 million adults who lacked the basic literacy and numeracy skills needed in everyday living (UNESCO 2010). The report shows that Sub-Saharan Africa still ranks as one of the worst performing continents in the world in terms of improving literacy rates.

UNESCO (2010) suggests that whereas Botswana has achieved an adult literacy rate of 83% as at 2007 with a projection of 87% by 2015, is still harbours close to 211, 000 adult illiterates with 50% of them being females. That is the situation that Maruatona (2003) had drawn attention to in the mid-term review of adult learning in Botswana. For Nigeria, the adult literacy rate noted was 72% as at 2007 with a projection of 79% by 2015. South Africa on the other hand has recorded adult literacy rate of 88% as at 2007 with a projection of 91% by the year 2015. Even being so, we cannot rest on our oars as the data still show that while Nigeria still harbors about 23 million adult illiterates with 65% of them being females, South Africa on other hand is still harbouring approximately 4 million adult illiterates with 55% of them being female.

South Africa has launched its mass literacy campaign appropriately tagged as “The Kha ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign” in February, 2008. Kha ri Gude which is Tshivenda phrase for “Let us learn” has been planned to ensure that between 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2008 and the end of 2012, South Africa is totally rid of its burden of 4.7 million adult illiterates (Khari Gude 2010).

### *HIV and AIDS*

Recent and relevant research seem to suggest that SSA has halted and/or has begun to reverse the HIV and AIDS epidemic as that fewer people were now infected with HIV and that fewer people were now dying from AIDS (UNAIDS 2010a; Gummerson 2013; Shabazz-El 2010; Hannah Dawson 2013; Lesi et al. 2014). Indeed, it has also been suggested that the 2011 UN Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS is seemingly having effect on the spread of the epidemic in the region. UNAIDS (2012, 2013) reports that the Declaration sets the targets and elimination commitments towards reaching the goal of Zero infection by the year 2015. The goals have been expressed as follows:

1. Reduction of sexual transmission by 50% by 2015
2. Reduction in the rate of transmission of HIV among people that inject drugs by 50% by 2015
3. Elimination of new HIV infections among children by 2015, and substantial reduction of AIDS-related maternal deaths
4. Reaching substantially 15 million people living with HIV with lifesaving antiretroviral treatment by 2015
5. Reduction of the rate of tuberculosis deaths in people living with HIV by 50% by 2015
6. Closing the global AIDS resource gap by 2015 and reach annual global investment of US\$ 22-24 billion in low- and middle-income countries
7. Eliminating gender inequalities and gender-based abuse and violence and increase the capacity of women and girls to protect themselves from HIV
8. Eliminating stigma and discrimination against people living with and affected by HIV through the promotion of laws and policies that guarantee the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms
9. Eliminating HIV-related restrictions on entry, stay and residence and
10. Eliminating parallel systems for HIV-related services to strengthen the integration of the AIDS response in global health and development efforts.

What is being implied in these reports and the enunciation of strategic goals is that new infections and AIDS related deaths are on the decline. It has been noted that between 2009 and 2011, the number of children newly infected with HIV in SSA fell by 24% with Burundi, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Togo and Zambia recording between 40% and 59% decline (UNAIDS 2013). Moreover, it has been reported that HIV testing and treatment in the region has increased among adults in 14 countries between 2004 and 2011 and that Kingdom of Lesotho recorded 42%, for example, and this should be good news to all Africans (UNAIDS 2013).

The reports coming from UNAIDS (2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c) have continued to imply that the world stands a chance of keeping HIV and AIDS at bay following upon recent breakthroughs in the different prevention experiments

being done in several laboratories and now there is a new microbicide gel that could be used by women which holds out much promise (Cohen et al. 2011). Political breakthroughs are becoming more real as more countries have begun to abolish discriminatory practices following upon the initiation of a new law commission, and Treatment 2.0—a breakthrough that could preserve the life of an additional 10 million people (Grant 2010; UNAIDS 2010b; Karim 2010; Schwartländer 2011; Hirschall and Schwartländer 2011).

Both challenges can very well be dealt with as SSA puts in place an effective and inclusive strategy for lifelong learning.

### Needed Commitment

The advocacy for inclusionism has remained unwavering because SSAs believe that exclusionism in education and training is not only a costly mistake but an aberration in the modern world. It is believed that the economic costs of exclusionism are almost unquantifiable. But you can imagine the costs to economic returns on investment of the prevalence of the incidence of having an illiterate work force in an era of knowledge economy. Its social costs are equally appalling for exclusionism can very easily induce feelings of rejection, anomie and withdrawal. At some point in time this may further fan the embers of overt or covert social rebellion against exclusionism. The political costs of exclusionism are perhaps quite obvious. It may palpably induce ineffectiveness or non-participation in politics and political processes.

Exclusionism in education and learning manifests in the continuous locking up of hidden human resource treasures. For how would individuals function maximally when their capabilities for generating knowledge are not given any stimulation? Excluded persons may have immense potentials for educational and learning endeavors. They may have in their hands, according to Delors et al. (1998), situations of locked up wisdom, locked up for knowledge, locked up skills, and locked up attitudes and aptitudes. In short, the sphere of influence and participation of those who have been excluded is constrained.

In spite of the criticisms leveled against this nascent interpretation of lifelong learning by Bagnall (1990) and Martin (2006), one is of the opinion that applying the maximalist philosophy to the provision of learning opportunities

has immense potential for promoting inclusionism in all its ramifications. When inclusionism is applied to education and learning, all segments of society are equitably and equally provided for. To this end, the maximalist philosophy seems to be making a strong case for the inclusion of everyone in the process of learning, whether it is liberal or mechanistic learning.

It can be argued that lifelong learning alone cannot guarantee the firm entry of SSA, in general, and Botswana, Nigeria and South Africa, in particular, into the global geo-political and economic mainstream where the nations can have any meaningful voice. However, remaining a region that is developing very slowly or even stagnant in some instances cannot augur well for Africa. It may be true that the region had experienced some increased growth rate since the mid-nineties probably due to increased demand for export commodities like natural oil and gold with higher prices by China and India and then other rapidly developing countries. But countries in the region have also been net importers of commodities and services and have therefore been hurt by the higher prices charged by the developed world. The net effect of imbalances in exportation and importation with the latter gaining the upper hand is that SSA has remained a major concern. Why? As the Becker-Posner concluded:

*Levels of education and health are very low in SSA countries; life expectancy is low and is actually declining; productivity is very low; fertility though declining remains very high; poverty of course is widespread; ethnic conflict (often violent) and political violence are common; corruption is endemic; opportunities for women are meager (The Becker-Posner Blog 2010).*

For these reasons, inclusionism is being proposed as the guiding theory for the advocacy for lifelong learning in Botswana, Nigeria, South Africa and, indeed, SSA because it cuts across both mechanistic and liberal dimensions, and indeed the issue of social inclusion has also been core in lifelong learning in Europe.

The world economy is on the drive for efficiency that features computer-based production processes like computer-aided design, computer-aided manufacturing and just-in-time inventory systems that have made corporate downsizing and layoffs easy. Yet, the drive for efficiency has remained the new catechism of businesses. Now, if anyone wants a stable career,

that person must be ready to acquire marketable skills, which must at the same time be constantly upgraded. People are now living to learn new ways of creative thinking. If anyone refuses to think creatively, that person must be ready to be left behind in a world in absolute hurry. The private sector is getting ever engrossed in downsizing so as to remain competitive. Competitiveness is characterized by open markets, lean government spending, low taxes, flexible labour markets, effective judiciary and stable political systems (Ryan 2002) and everyone is expected to learn how to understand these economic clichés.

Learning systems are being asked to be innovative in developing competencies that would enable people to live together in multicultural settings where no race is looked upon as inferior to the other. That means that people would have to acquire new sets of social structures and values that would enable them to deal with primitive prejudices and stereotypes that impede the process of living together. Beyond that, people would have to learn to understand conflict and difference in order to be able to cultivate the value of peace, peaceful relationships and felicitous interactions and exchanges. These have not been items that schools consider as important but which must be the centre stage in a rapidly shrinking global community (Torres 2003).

Culture is not a static item in society. The changes taking place in the world demand Botswana, Nigerians and South Africans must learn to understand, appreciate and be ingrained in the emerging culture flow, global emergence of a new global hegemony which is hegemony of structures and not of content. To survive, Africans must learn in a sustainable manner the key aspects of their cultural contents that need development. This is the only way they can make sense of the world with its new universal categories and standards in an intelligent manner.

In the new 'techno-scientific' era, Botswana, Nigeria and South Africa must not continue to fit into a mould once described by Usher et al. (1997) as the core-periphery labour market where those who do not have the modern skills, cultural capital, and access to information or market power should expect to live and work only on the margins. If Africans expect to be treated with respect and as partners in the global race for advancement, there would be an urgent need to build their own structures that would cultivate the learning societies.

Many scholars argue that millions of illiterate adults in SSA must be afforded the opportunity to acquire the skills of literacy and numeracy. Besides their learning needs to be geared towards community development, professional development, environmental issues, life after retirement, earning, employment, peace education, computer applications and conscientization (Bown 2000).

In advocating the development of different aspects of our specialization, it may be observed that research inputs have been rather too theoretical, weak, peripheral, and highly inadequate. It might be necessary, therefore, to demand for much more empirical research than we are presently engaged in. In directing research and scholarship in those few but crucial areas, many scholars have not been unaware that policy issues related to learning in particular and to such presently hotly debated topics like globalisation, gender, HIV and AIDs, access and poverty alleviation also need equal attention (Preece 2009). If Botswana, Nigeria and South SSA can institute actions in these directions, we would be in the mainstream of helping peoples to achieve the goals of well scrutinised and desirable change and that of cultivating self-awareness, self-directedness, self-empowerment, and these should enable them to engage profitably in the four pillars of education prescribed by Jacques Delors as follows: Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to Live Together, and Learning to be (Delors 1998). These four pillars represent the centrality of preparation for life, functionality, unity and peace and futuristicism. To that extent, one agrees with the long known maxim put forth by Aristotle when he said: "All men by nature desire to know".

To effectively arrive at that point, one would like to tender a few suggestions for creating enduring societies in Botswana, Nigeria and South Africa by the adoption of lifelong learning.

## CONCLUSION

The present paper argues that in the age of new knowledge and liberated economy it is unethical, unfair, wasteful and anachronistic to limit learning to space, time and age. Further the paper examines the different contestations that have inundated the discipline of education as characterized by the debates between the mechanistic education proponents and the liberalist

counterpoints. Against the background of the Universal declaration of Human Rights and the need for the sub-continent to get into mainstream of development and existence instead of sitting on the edge in terms of policy and action, the paper advanced reasons in favour of lifelong learning as the real and only equitable way to guarantee the survival of Africans. The paper took the view that although lifelong learning should be a major tool for accelerating the growth of the sub-continent, it has been constrained in its usefulness by the challenges posed by adult illiteracy and HIV and AIDs.

Notwithstanding, the paper made a number of recommendations for ensuring that lifelong learning is understood, planned and deliberately managed such that it could help in accelerating the entry of the sub-continent into the modern economy that has eluded it for a long time. To be able to do that the main task remains that of formulating and implementing policies and programmes that would ensure that every citizen learns continuously and to make that clearly the prerogative of governments in Botswana, Nigeria and South Africa, the three SSA countries used as the context of this paper.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In support of the recent global CONFINTEA VI conference and Belem (Brazil) Framework for Action, one would propose that the present bureaucratic and political inertia to allow for equitable allocation of resources to the non-formal sector of education must be jettisoned. It is also proposed that the political and bureaucratic systems must be more proactive in responding to the need for equitable re-distribution and creation of more open access to opportunities for learning.

Moreover, there is need to reject for the remainder of this century the practice of defining education in the straight jackets of experts, planners and local priorities only, as the world is shrinking in space and time daily. We must stop denying education the possibility and need to be innovative in practice such that people can move away from the traditional methods, strategies and value of adult education to the more ebullient field of inter-generational lifelong learning philosophies and practices.

It is recommended that need for the three selected countries was to promote more inten-

sively and broadly, including education and learning for profound policy framework, adequate budgeting and prompt allocation. Botswana, Nigerian and South African governments have embraced democracy as the way to peace, justice and national development, and they must move ahead to promote as well active participative social learning that can quickly resolve the problems of gender inequalities, poverty, illiteracy and more urgently HIV and AIDs.

These three countries that are naturally endowed with resources should judiciously invest them such that their people are privileged to have cheap and unhindered access to learning and to the new information and communication technologies.

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