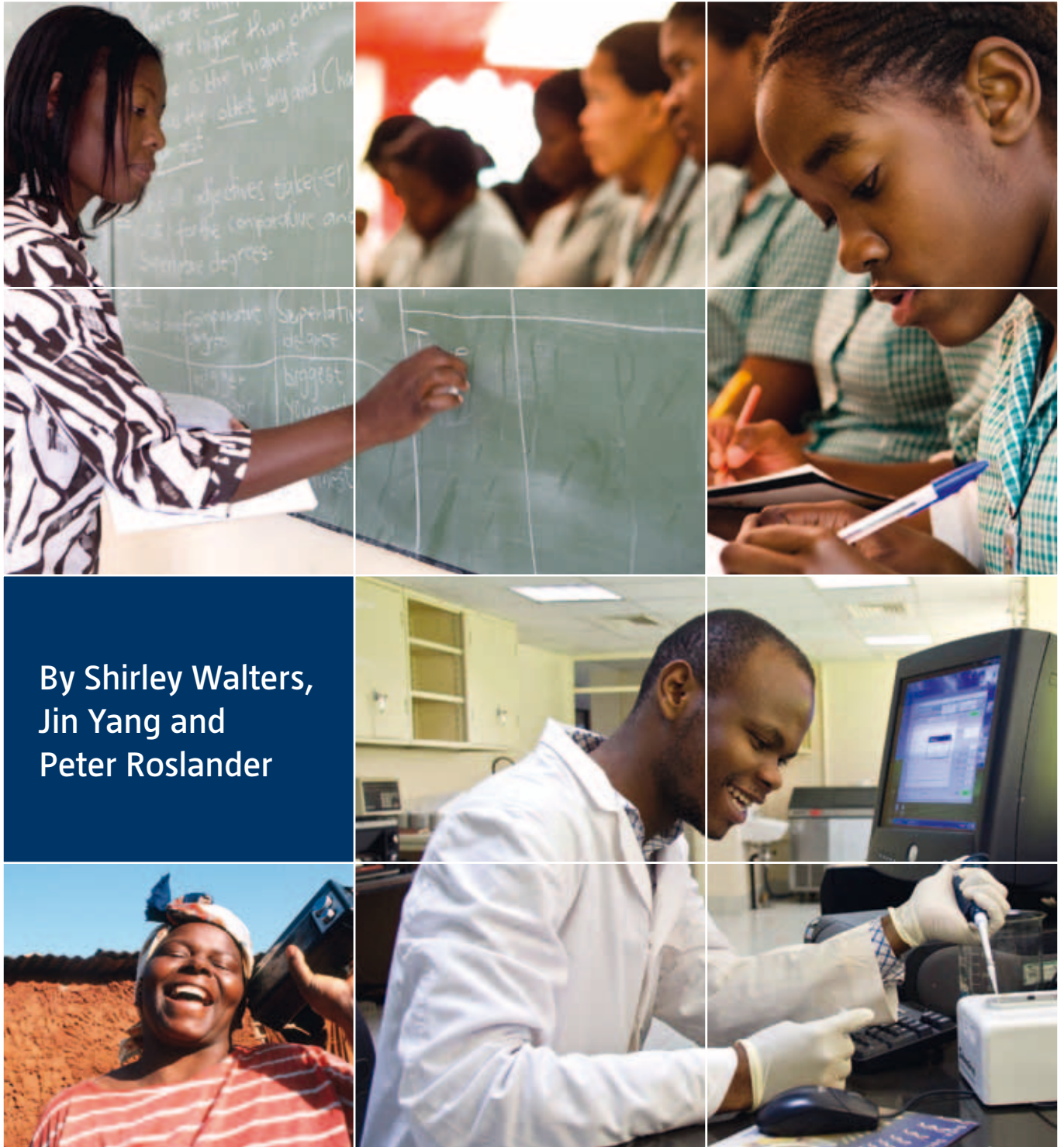


Key Issues and Policy Considerations in Promoting Lifelong Learning in Selected African Countries:

Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and Tanzania



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IMPRINT

PUBLISHED IN 2014 BY

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
Feldbrunnenstrasse 58
20148 Hamburg,
Germany

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DESIGN & LAYOUT: Teresa Boese, Hamburg (www.titrobonbon.de)

LANGUAGE EDITING: Paul Stanistreet

COVER PHOTOS: © Sergio Santimano UNESCO, Star for Life, Swathi Sridharan, World Bank

ISBN: 978-92-820-1190-4

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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



FOREWORD

The idea of learning throughout life is not new; it has always been an essential feature of human development and is deeply embedded in all cultures and civilizations. Based on its potential to assist communities in achieving sustainable socio-economic development, UNESCO has for a long time promoted lifelong learning as the *organizing principle* for educational reform. Recent developments underscore the relevance of lifelong learning. These include an increasingly globalized world, the introduction of new technologies, the changing nature of information, demographic shifts, social transformations, climate change, urbanization and the constant need to upgrade competencies to meet labour market demands. To respond to these challenges, governments must develop inclusive systems and strategies that allow citizens to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to live long, happy and productive lives.

Increasingly, UNESCO Member States have embraced the concept of lifelong learning and made strides to build lifelong learning systems. However, there is still a discrepancy between policy-makers' acceptance of the principle of lifelong learning and lack of workable policies and strategies. Research on effective policies and good practices can be used as evidence to advocate for the operationalization of lifelong learning.

As UNESCO's centre of excellence for lifelong learning, UIL, in collaboration with its partners, conducts research on inclusive lifelong learning systems. The findings of this research are now being presented in a new publication series on Lifelong Learning Policies and Strategies. The aim of this series is to analyse the changing contexts and key issues, and identify which policies, strategies and practices have been most effective.

This first title in the series shares experiences from five African countries – Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, and Tanzania – that are on track to operationalize lifelong

learning systems. This study was first conceived as a follow-up to UIL's pilot Capacity-building Workshop on Building Lifelong Learning Systems in UNESCO Member States (Hamburg, 2010), and as one of UIL's contributions to the ADEA Triennale Meeting held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in 2012.

Based on desk research and field work, the study discusses progress and challenges in the five countries relating to the development of formal education, non-formal education, and informal learning. It reflects on the porous boundaries that exist between these sectors and highlights six key issues that affect the operationalization of lifelong learning: conceptual understandings of lifelong learning; recognition of learning achievements; the role of counselling and guidance; teachers and facilitators; financial resources and infrastructure; and coordination among stakeholders. The lessons learned from the study are summarized in ten concrete recommendations for further action and reform. If adapted to local contexts, these recommendations can be implemented, fully or partly, in many other countries.

It is our hope that this series will support the work of policy-makers, education experts and other stakeholders in their efforts to build fully-fledged lifelong learning systems for all in the international community.

Arne Carlsen
Director, UIL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication was originally prepared as a UIL contribution to Sub-theme 1 of the ADEA Triennale (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 2012): Common core skills for lifelong learning and sustainable development in Africa – *Promoting critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for sustainable development in Africa: How to design and implement an effective response through education and training systems*. The study team was composed of two professional staff members of UIL and an external consultant from the University of the Western Cape, and was funded by UIL and ADEA. The team is particularly grateful to ADEA for its financial support for the fieldwork, which was organized by the five country teams. We would especially like to thank Jean-Marie Ahlin Byll-Cataria and Hamidou Boukary for their generous advice and cooperation. We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the thematic coordinators – Wim Hoppers and Amina Yekhlief – for their valuable feedback on the first draft of the report.

The team extends its sincere thanks to the five country teams in Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and Tanzania for organizing and conducting the fieldwork, arranging and facilitating interviews, and assisting UIL colleagues during their missions to their countries.

In Ethiopia: Dessalegn Samuel Abiy, General Education Program Coordinator in the Ministry of Education; and Genet Gelana Kabeta, Lecturer at Bahr Dar University. In Kenya: Irreuous Kinara Nyabwari, Deputy Director of Adult and Continuing Education, Ministry of Education; Karanja Wa Kang'ethe, Officer in charge of Continuing Education and Special Programs, Ministry of Education; Salim Mungai, Officer in charge of Curriculum Support Materials Development, Ministry of Education; and Janet C Rotich, Provincial Director of Adult Education, Nairobi. In Namibia: Julia Jeremiah, Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education; and Martin Sinvula Kasokonya, Senior Education Officer, Ministry of Education.

In Rwanda: Wenceslas Nzabwirwa, Dean, Faculty of Education, Kigali Institute of Education; Solange Mukayiranga, Upper Secondary Expert, Ministry of Education; Bizimana Barthelemy, Tutorial Assistant, Faculty of Education, Kigali Institute of Education; and Benegusenga Alphonse, Tutorial Assistant, Faculty of Education, Kigali Institute of Education. In Tanzania: Basilina Modest Levira, Principal Education Officer, Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT); and Elinami Veraeli Swai, Dean, School of Curriculum and Teacher Education, University of Dodoma.

We would like to thank all interviewees and the learners who participated in the interviews during the fieldwork.

We would also like to extend our special thanks to Vibeke Jensen, Min Jeong Kim and Jennifer Alima Kotta at the UNESCO Office in Dar es Salaam, Paul Mpayimana at the UNESCO Office in Addis Ababa, Yayoi Segi-Vltchek and Subramaniam Venkatraman at the UNESCO Office in Nairobi, Jeanine Marengo and the entire MINEDUC-UNESCO CapEFA team in Rwanda, and Arnaldo Valente Nhavoto, Akemi Yonemura, Patience Awopegbaand, and Awol Endris Adem at the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) for facilitating the fieldwork and practicalities pertaining to the study.

At UIL, we would like to sincerely thank Adama Ouane, Arne Carlsen, Carolyn Medel-Añonuevo, Madhu Singh, Ulrike Hanemann, Rika Yoroza, Raúl Valdés-Cotera, Christine Glanz, Anna Bernhardt and other colleagues for their advice and support. We would also like to thank Virman Man, Head of Publication at UIL (2008 to 2012), for copy-editing the report and providing valuable feedback, and his successor, Stephen Roche, for updating the report and seeing it through to publication.

The three authors take full responsibility for any misinterpretation of qualitative data in this study.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The concept of lifelong learning has been extensively developed since the term was first introduced in the Faure Report of 1972. Learning: the Treasure Within, the 1996 report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century, chaired by Jacques Delors, was a landmark in the conceptualisation of lifelong learning as a guiding principle for educational reform. It is now widely recognised that lifelong learning has the potential to assist people, countries and regions in achieving sustainable socio-economic development.

In line with the objectives agreed under sub-theme 1 of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa's (ADEA) 2012 Triennale (Common core skills for lifelong learning and sustainable development in Africa), this cross-national study focuses on key issues and policy considerations in promoting lifelong learning in Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda and Tanzania (the five African countries that took part in a pilot workshop on 'Developing Capacity for Establishing Lifelong Learning Systems in UNESCO Member States' at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning in 2010). The methodology used in the study is inspired by grounded theory, which involves the use of systematized data collection and analysis procedures to generate, develop and derive inductively contextualized theory about a phenomenon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Through desk research and fieldwork, the study team has selected examples of lifelong learning policy and programmes in the five countries.

Chapter four, on development contexts, provides an overview of six areas of socio-economic development in the five countries that have created a particular demand for lifelong learning:

- 1) Economic growth and poverty reduction: the five countries have experienced considerable economic growth in recent years and are aiming, through their respective development plans, to become knowledge-based economies and to transform themselves into middle-income countries.
- 2) Rapid population growth and urbanization: in all five countries these two factors are creating significant challenges in terms of health, housing, infrastructure, job creation and crime prevention.
- 3) Democracy and governance: decentralized governance is favoured by the five countries, with the aim of facilitating greater participation at local levels of government.
- 4) Social cohesion and gender equality: given the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual characteristics of the five countries, social cohesion is actively promoted by each government.
- 5) Mass media and ICT: the mass media are important instruments of national integration, cultural identity and socio-economic modernization. Radio constitutes an important medium for reaching rural and isolated communities, particularly in countries with strong oral traditions. At the same time, new ICT infrastructures have been developing rapidly, both generally and in the context of education, in all five countries.
- 6) Regional integration: regional integration mechanisms, such as the South African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC), are creating new opportunities for the development of regional lifelong learning qualification frameworks to facilitate cross-border labour mobility.

Chapter five, on conceptual clarification, sets out the conceptual framework for the study and clarifies the following four concepts:

- 1) Sustainable development, which is generally thought to have three components: environment, society and economy. Although the relationship between education and sustainable development is complex, research shows that education is a key contributor to a country's ability to develop and achieve sustainability.
- 2) Core skills, competences and capabilities for sustainability: the study uses the terms core skills and competences in the sense of capabilities, which have more breadth and ambition, and imply a sense of agency. Core skills, competences and capabilities enhance people's ability to exercise control over their own lives; to take part with others in decisions that affect their lives, and to envisage an alternative future for themselves and for their families.
- 3) Lifelong learning is a multi-dimensional concept that can be used to organize all education and training

throughout life to nurture individuals' and societies' core skills and competences. Lifelong learning, therefore, includes learning behaviours, the gaining of knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values, and the development of competences. All these are required for personal growth, spiritual, social, and economic well-being, democratic citizenship, cultural identity, and employability. Lifelong learning takes at least three forms (formal education, non-formal education and informal learning).

- 4) The learning society: this concept is an effective way of embodying lifelong learning and making learning part of citizens' everyday lives. It can apply not only to a country as a whole, but also to communities, regions, provinces and villages.

Chapter six, *Towards a lifelong learning system: progress and challenges*, is based on concrete evidence of progress and challenges in developing lifelong learning in the five countries. All five have undergone rapid development and expansion in formal education in recent years, and the role of non-formal and adult education is now more widely recognised, particularly as a way to address the demand for flexible education and training systems that are relevant and responsive to the rapidly-changing socio-economic realities. However, despite growing recognition of these benefits, non-formal and adult education remain of low priority in the five countries, especially in terms of investment. Government budgets for non-formal and adult education are minimal. At the same time, the need to adapt curricula to learners' needs and the lack of adequate staff training pose major additional challenges for policy and programmes, with regard to both formal and non-formal education. Informal learning contributes significantly to a person's lifetime development and builds upon a tradition of learning that is deeply embedded in the five countries. However, there is little mention of facilitating informal learning in policy documents in any of the five countries.

Chapter seven, *Key cross-cutting issues supporting lifelong learning systems*, deals with issues that particularly underpin lifelong learning, namely:

- 1) Conceptual understandings of lifelong learning, which

is sometimes thought of only as adult education, and is still not fully operationalized in the five countries.

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

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

RECOMMENDATION 1:

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

RECOMMENDATION 2:

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

RECOMMENDATION 3:

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

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Adopt the approach of building a learning society family by family, community by community, district by district, by tapping into existing traditions of community learning, and by converting national policy guidelines into sustainable actions at local levels.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

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

RECOMMENDATION 6:

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

RECOMMENDATION 7:

Promote the use of mass media and ICT in teaching and learning, and provide information, guidance and counselling on learning opportunities for learners of all ages, using mass media, telephone help-lines, community centres, faith-based organizations, civil society organizations and workplaces.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

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

RECOMMENDATION 9:

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

RECOMMENDATION 10:

Prioritize lifelong learning in cross-border integration with, for example, SADC and EAC, which identify coordinating mechanisms such as regional qualification frameworks, to enhance mobility and recognition between countries.

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



3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. Background to the study

Learning to Be, the Faure Report of 1972, recognized that education should no longer be the privilege of an elite, or a matter for only one age group. Instead, it should be both universal and lifelong. In 1996, *Learning: The treasure within*, the report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century, chaired by Jacques Delors, described learning throughout life as the 'heartbeat' of a society built on four pillars – *learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be* – and envisaged a learning society in which everyone can learn according to his or her individual needs and interests, anywhere and any-time, in an unrestricted, flexible and constructive way. The *Dakar Framework for Action* (2000, p. 18) subsequently recognized that "Education, starting with the care and education of young children and continuing through lifelong learning, is central to individual empowerment, the elimination of poverty at household and community level, and broader social and economic development." The United Nations' Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014) has stressed the importance of lifelong learning in developing the core skills required for sustainable living and survival in the 21st century. The *Belém Framework for Action*, adopted by the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) in Belém do Pará in Brazil in December 2009, affirmed that the role of lifelong learning is critical in addressing global educational issues and challenges. Lifelong learning has been accepted by UNESCO's member states as the *organizing principle* for a viable and sustainable future (UIL, 2010, p. 37).

In reality, however, the understanding of the concept of lifelong learning, and its importance for sustainable socio-economic development, remains limited. Throughout Africa, there are few comprehensive policy frameworks for promoting lifelong learning, and actions to implement a holistic vision of lifelong learning tend to be weak. This is in stark contrast to the demand for highly skilled, educated and active citizens. It is therefore imperative that we incorporate the vision and practice of lifelong learning into national policy frameworks and embed lifelong learning in the education and training systems of African countries. During the 2006 ADEA Biennale on Education in Africa, Medel-Añonuevo (2006) argued that people should stop debating whether lifelong

learning is relevant to Africa and, instead, consider how lifelong learning, if operationalized, could be a means of eradicating poverty, ensuring universal primary-school enrolment, promoting women's empowerment and combatting the HIV pandemic. Hasan (2010, p. 26), furthermore, argues that lifelong learning has particular relevance in the context of developing countries, for three main reasons: (1) lifelong learning is well-matched to the requirements of the overall socio-economic development process; (2) it is useful in fundamental system-wide educational reform; and (3) there is an overwhelming need to strengthen the demand side of the educational system.

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

This study is the outcome of a follow-up activity to the workshop, and is aligned with one of the objectives of the 2012 ADEA Triennale. It sought to lay the foundations of an approach which may be defined as the transition from the concept of instruction/teaching to that of learning, and from a compartmentalized vision of education and training sub-systems to an integrated lifelong learning vision.

3.2. Objectives of the study

One of the biggest socio-economic challenges in any society concerns its ability to achieve greater coordination between different sectors in order to ensure a more integrated approach. As society is necessarily structured to cater effectively to various needs such as health, agriculture, education and the environment, institutional structures often end up functioning largely in isolation from one another. To avoid fractured, piecemeal approaches to personal, social and economic development, societies need mechanisms, approaches and strategies to connect the different sectors and achieve greater integration for

effective and sustainable development. Lifelong learning as an *organizing principle* can potentially assist this integration process so that people, countries and regions have learning opportunities and support through different stages of life, and across different sectors of society. The assumption of this study is that lifelong learning, as an integrative concept, can contribute to sustainable development for Africa.

The study did not start with a 'clean slate'. We did not adopt a deficit model of lifelong learning but assumed that lifelong learning already informs approaches, in uneven ways, to education, training and, indeed, to life more generally. The study built on what societies are already doing and aimed to find examples of leading practice in lifelong learning from the five countries.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY WERE:

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

3.3. Methodology

Taking note of the concern expressed by contributors to ADEA's earlier Triennales that they have left "many areas of education reform under-explored in terms of actual significance, policy implications, systems reform or actual implementation on the ground", the key methodology of the study was inspired by grounded theory, which uses systematized procedures to generate, develop and inductively derive contextualized theory about a phenomenon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Through desk research and fieldwork the authors found examples of what is possible in moving towards lifelong learning policy and practice frameworks in the five countries.

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

Two members of the research team, Jin Yang and Peter Roslander, spent between three and five days in each country interviewing key informants. The findings of the study are primarily based on qualitative data collected through a process of semi-structured one-to-one or focus-group interviews with policy-makers, policy researchers, practitioners (providers of formal and non-formal educational opportunities), managers in the private sector (including agriculture), leaders of civil society organizations, and a sample of learners from each of the five countries (a list of interviewees is provided in Appendix 1). Open questions for the semi-structured interviews were developed with the consultant to the team, Professor Shirley Walters, and provided to the interviewees in advance (the questions for the fieldwork are provided in Appendix 2). The topics raised in these questions included perceived demand for particular knowledge, skills and competences, existing understandings and definitions of lifelong learning, the application of lifelong learning to transforming formal and non-formal education, leading practices and programmes, and recommendations on solutions and strategies to develop a clearly articulated policy framework for lifelong learning. The methodology of the study therefore generated contextualized information about solutions, strategies, opportunities and insights related to lifelong learning.

3.4. Limitations

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

4. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXTS

The need for sustainable social and economic development in the five countries has created demand for particular knowledge, skills and competences. In order to situate the development of lifelong learning policies and strategies, we present some basic data relevant to understandings of lifelong learning for the development of core skills or capabilities for sustainability, drawn from each of the five countries.

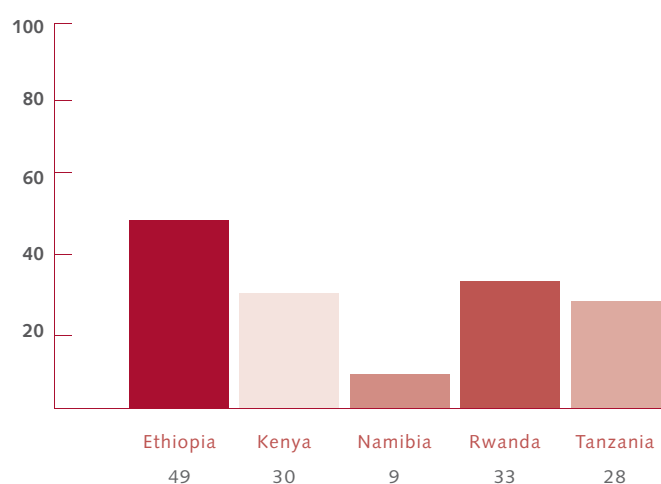
4.1. Economic growth and poverty reduction

Achieving broad-based, accelerated and sustained economic growth so as to eradicate poverty has been the key objective of the five countries' governments. As Table 4.1 shows, they have generated relatively good economic growth in recent years. The average GDP growth rates in Sub-Saharan Africa were 6.6 per cent in 2005 and 5.1 per cent in 2013 (International Monetary Fund, 2014). In three of the five countries – Ethiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania – the real GDP growth rates were higher than these average rates (though Rwanda's growth rate fell below average in 2013). In Ethiopia, during the nine-year financial period from 2005 to 2013, the economy grew at 10.9 per cent per annum on average. In 2010, the government formulated a five-year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) (2010/11 to 2014/15) which aimed to maintain an average annual real GDP growth rate of at least 11 per cent. Rwanda's economy has registered remarkable growth since 1994 and is one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa. It has resolved, through its Vision 2020, to build a knowledge-based economy and to transform Rwanda into a middle-income country. In recent years, Tanzania has achieved one of the most impressive rates of growth for a non-oil-producing sub-Saharan

African country. In 2011 *The Economist* predicted that Tanzania, together with Ethiopia, would be among the world's 10 fastest-growing economies for the five years between 2011 and 2015 (*The Economist*, 2011). This prediction has been borne out so far, though growth has decelerated somewhat in recent years.

Another feature of the countries' economic development is that, as shown in Table 4.2, excepting Namibia, value-added agriculture remains a sizeable portion of GDP. In Ethiopia, for example, agriculture contributes to 49 per cent of GDP. The government plans to modernize agriculture and improve its efficiency and productivity, ensure food security, create employment opportunities and enhance the country's foreign-exchange earnings. According to the Education Sector Development Programme IV (2010/2011 to 2014/2015), Ethiopia's development strategy can be described as agricultural-development-led industrialization. In Kenya, several interviewees emphasized that there is 'no economic development without rural development'. In fact, a special

Table 4.2: Agriculture value added as % of GDP in 2012



Source: World Bank, 2014

Table 4.1: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in the five countries, 2005–2013

Country Year	Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
	2005	2013	2005	2013	2005	2013	2005	2013	2005	2013
GDP per capita (US \$)	164	517	638.5	1316.6	3708.8	5636.1	291.1	703.8	376.2	719.3
GDP growth rates (%)	12.6	9.7	5.5	4.6	2.5	4.3	9.4	4.7	7.4	7.0

Source: International Monetary Fund, 2014

Ministry for Rural Development of Northern Kenya has been created to address these issues. In Tanzania, to reduce the rural-urban development gap, the government has been promoting an ‘agriculture-first strategy’ and a ‘better life for everyone strategy’.

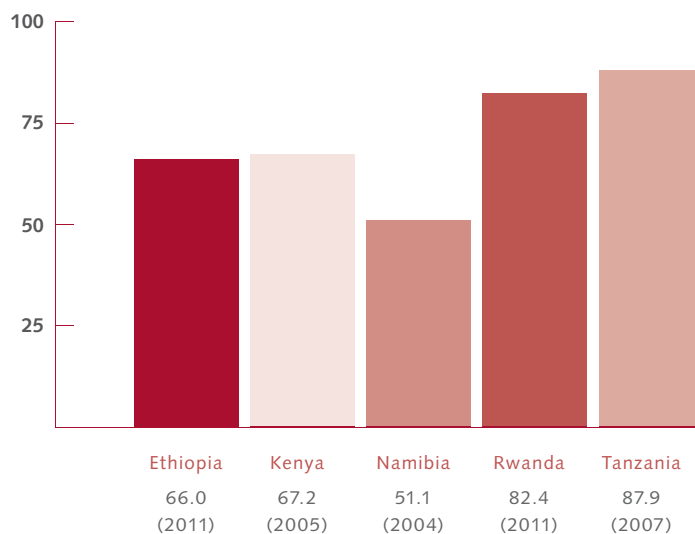
The relatively strong economic performance in these countries has not resulted in satisfactory social development outcomes (UNECA and AUC, 2010). For example, as Table 4.3 illustrates, poverty rates remain very high. One of the interviewees in Ethiopia commented: “Poverty has been the reason for conflict and we must do our best to reduce poverty”. Although per-capita GDP in Namibia is significantly higher than in the other four countries – more than four times that of the next highest – this masks great inequities in Namibian society. Table 4.3 shows that 51 per cent of the population of Namibia lives on less than US \$2 per day. In Rwanda, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2008–2012 aims to tackle extreme poverty through improved food security and targeted schemes of job creation and social protection. There is a particularly urgent need to create new employment opportunities for young people who are just entering the labour market.

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

4.2. Population growth and urbanization

Population dynamics, including growth rates, age structure, life expectancy and migration, influence every aspect of human, social and economic development. As

Table 4.3: Population living on less than US \$2 per day in the five countries (%)



Source: African Economic Outlook, 2014

Table 4.4 shows, four common features can be identified in the demographic projections of the five countries: a high growth rate, a large population of young people, increasing life expectancy, and urbanization.

With the exception of Namibia, the population growth rate in 2010 was higher than 20 per thousand. According to UN estimates, between 2010 and 2020, the rate will drop slightly in all of the five countries. Population growth is likely to create greater unemployment and under-employment, environmental degradation and housing shortages, and worsen living standards. If population growth is to become a positive factor for social and economic development, education must play an essential role.

In four of the five countries, the proportion of the population aged 24 or under was higher than 60 per cent in 2010, the exception being Namibia, where the rate was 59.3 per cent. Estimates suggest that rates will drop only slightly over the next 10 years. For the large population of young people to be economically and socially active citizens, these countries must provide sustainable livelihoods which include more education and learning opportunities, healthcare and family-planning services.

It is encouraging that, as Table 4.4 shows, life expectancy is growing in all five countries. As life expectancy increases, this economically vital group assumes more responsibility for driving the economy, by working, saving and investing. Longer life expectancy causes fundamental change in the way people live. Attitudes to education,

family, retirement, work and the role of women all tend to shift. Healthier children, in turn, tend to experience greater cognitive development per year of schooling than their less healthy counterparts. The result of this educational investment is that the labour force as a whole becomes more productive, promoting higher wages and a better standard of living. Women and men therefore tend to enter the workforce later, partly because they are educated for longer, but they are likely to be more productive once they start working (Bloom, 2002).

Although all the countries have a predominantly rural population, there will be a sizeable increase in their urban populations over the next 10 years. Some policy-makers and experts feel their countries are on the verge of a major demographic transition, including rapid urbanization, as economic activities in urban areas have a much higher yield than those in rural areas. In Kenya, for example, small companies and the informal sector have been mushrooming, with the general attitude towards self-employment changing in a positive direction. A policy-maker in Tanzania observed that rural-urban migration and urbanization were gathering momentum, and that cities and towns, even small towns, were growing. For urbanization to develop in a coordinated manner, education must keep pace, as must other social services and employment opportunities. A policy-maker in Kenya commented that in order to reap the benefits of urbanization, “massive investment is needed to respond to the pressure of an increasing urban population, in housing and infrastructure, job creation, and crime prevention.”

4.3. Democracy and governance

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

Progress to democracy and good governance depends on a well-informed citizenry. Education has a major role to play in this respect. In Tanzania, for example, adult and non-formal education promotes civic education for adults, which, in turn, helps to promote multi-party democracy and an appreciation of peace and tolerance. Adult learning centres reach out to the masses and inform them of the role of party, government and citizens, explain rules and regulations, and help them to register for elections. In Ethiopia, a school subject, *Civics and Ethical Education*, helps the new curriculum address the basic

Table 4.4 Demographic profile of the five countries

	Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
Population (000s)	87,095	111,521	40,909	52,906	2,179	2,609	10,837	14,123	44,973	60,385
Proportion aged 0–24 (%)	64.6	60.5	63.2	59.8	59.3	53.5	64.3	61.3	64.5	63.4
Population growth rate (%)	2.55	2.39	2.67	2.47	1.87	1.73	2.74	2.56	3.02	2.88
Life expectancy at birth (years)	63.3	65.9	61.6	63.1	64.3	65.3	63.6	66.0	61.4	63.1
Percentage urban (%)	17.3	21.8	23.6	27.9	41.6	51.3	24.0	33.5	28.1	35.1

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations: World Population Prospects, 2012 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: 2014 Revision The 2010 figure represents the mean of the five years from 2005 to 2010; the 2020 figure represents the mean of estimates for the five years from 2015 to 2020.

mechanisms of democratic governance and the need for moral and ethical values within society.

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

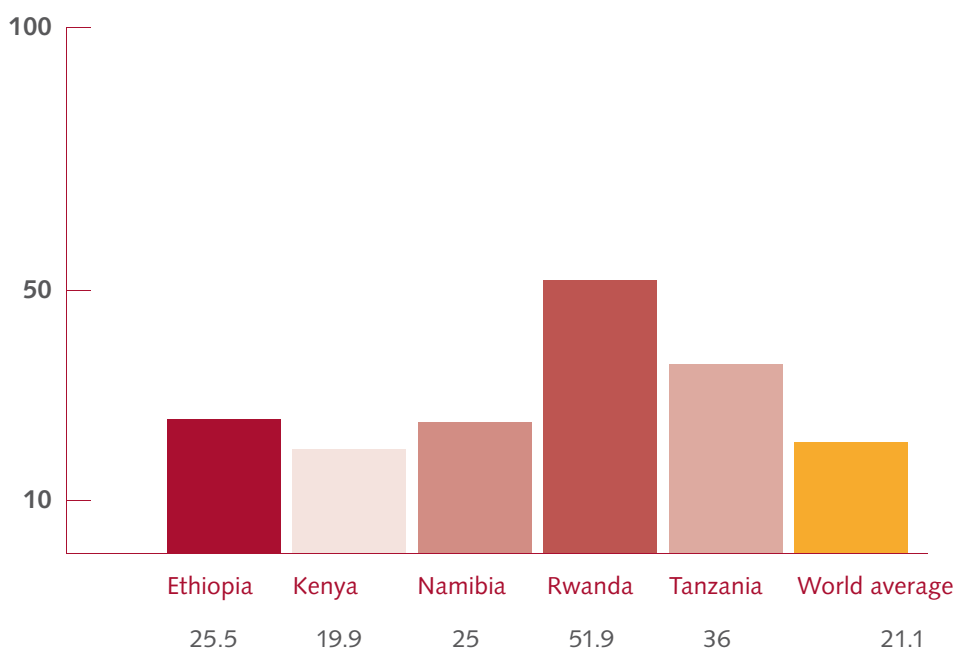
4.4. Social cohesion and gender equality

The fact that all five countries are multi-ethnic, with multiple religions and languages, accentuates the importance of promoting social cohesion. Tanzania has achieved social integration to the point where there is little evidence of ethnic or religious division. Kenya’s new constitution includes provision for affirmative action to address inequities and disparities. The Kenyan National Cohesion

Commission has been set up to ensure an ethnic balance in the civil service and that the education sector takes account of ethnicity. A policy-maker in Kenya commented that “the more learning that is taking place throughout the society the less is the risk that Kenya again will re-experience a clash and conflict between different communities, and the more people are learning and activated the better are the chances that they avoid crimes and drugs.”

The five countries have made admirable progress towards gender equality. As Table 4.5 shows, in four of the five countries (with the exception of Kenya), the proportion of seats in the national parliament held by women is at 25 per cent or higher, well above the world average of 21.1 per cent. Rwanda has continuously updated its laws on gender equality since 1994 (Rwanda Vision 2020, p. 18). According to one of the interviewees, “Rwanda has also one of the best and most advanced laws in the world against gender-based violence.” In Tanzania, a National Council for Economic Empowerment of Women was established and every government agency is required to have a gender policy. In terms of employment, Tanzania strives to provide equal opportunities for women and men, and the country has planned a national programme to train women entrepreneurs. There are, of course, many challenges ahead in empowering women and creating substantive gender equality. In Rwanda, for example, a policy-maker revealed: “Many women are now in decision-making positions, in particular at the

Table 4.5: Proportion of seats in national parliament held by women (%) in 2013



Source: UNDP. 2014. Human Development Report

local level government, but they are sometimes illiterate. So there is a need for capacity-building, both with regard to functional literacy and other capacities for the position so that they can contribute fully and perform the required tasks."

4.5. Mass media and ICT

In the African context, mass media – including radio, television and newspapers – have been important instruments for national integration, cultural self-identification and socio-economic modernization (Musau, 1999). Radio and television have played active roles in public education, entertainment and information. In Tanzania, for example, as early as the 1970s, radio was widely used in adult literacy campaigns. In recent years, it is recognized that 'old' information and communication technologies, such as radio and television, alongside 'new' digital ones, play an important role in moving towards a learning society. Radio remains a very important medium, particularly for countries with strong oral and story-telling traditions and for rural and isolated communities. In other words, 'old' and 'new' information technologies are not competing but complementary (UNESCO, 2005). A Rwandan policy-maker emphasized that "to be accessible and provide equal opportunities to all learners, learning institutions must be well connected to the road network, electricity and ICTs."

ICT infrastructure has been developing rapidly in the five countries. In Ethiopia, the team learned from interviewees that the government has invested in ICT infrastructure, especially at secondary-school level. In Kenya, ICT infrastructure has now taken root and is quickly spreading to rural and semi-arid regions, while attention has been paid to capacity-building for teachers in ICT integration in schools. The Ministry of Energy has made strong efforts in rural electrification, with a central focus on schools. In Namibia, some interviewees felt that mobile infrastructure was very well provided, and understood that it was possible to use mobile phones to send learning messages, to communicate health issues, to dispatch election information and to conduct bank transactions. In Tanzania, every district has been connected by optical fibre cables, and has access to the internet. Rwanda has placed information and communication technology at the core of its education programmes. Besides teaching, the 'one laptop per cluster' programme provides schools with computers to promote ICT. In general, however, many challenges remain in the wide application of ICT in Africa, including in the five countries, but there is significant potential for growth. According to ITU (2014), in the African region,

mobile cellular penetration rates reached an estimated 69 per cent at the end of 2014 (compared to 96 per cent globally), while internet user penetration reached 19 per cent, far behind both the world average (40 per cent) and the developing country average (32 per cent).

4.6. Regional integration

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

SADC, with Namibia and Tanzania among its 15 member states, envisages a common future within a regional community that will ensure economic well-being, improvements in standards of living and quality of life, freedom and social justice, and peace and security for the people of southern Africa. In education and training, SADC seeks to promote a regionally-integrated and harmonized education system, especially with regard to issues pertaining to access, equity, relevance and the quality of educational interventions (SADC, 1997).

The EAC is the regional inter-governmental organization of five countries, including three of the countries in this study (Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda). Although Ethiopia is not currently a member of the EAC, it is understood that intense political and commercial discussions are ongoing and the future entry of Ethiopia into the EAC is likely. To enhance labour mobility, the EAC established a policy that allows nationals from member states to travel within the region without a visa. Aspiring to achieve growth and development, and, more importantly, to sustain it, the EAC acknowledges that education enables citizens to acquire knowledge and put their potentials 'to maximum use'. As labour market demands have changed over the years, and as the free movement of people is allowed across national borders within the region, the EAC partner states have identified the harmonization of education curricula, standards, assessment and evaluation as a priority issue (EAC, 2011).

These regional integration mechanisms have created new opportunities for education reform and development



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among member states. For example, a senior policy-maker in Tanzania commented that the progress made by the EAC had opened up national borders with neighbouring countries such as Uganda and Kenya in terms of trade and labour mobility. That means Tanzanians have to compete with counterparts in other countries for employment. In addition, the EAC has begun discussions on the development of a lifelong learning qualifications framework to facilitate further labour mobility.

To conclude, this brief overview of socio-economic context reveals that while the five countries have made encouraging progress in socio-economic development in recent

years, there are still many challenges ahead. One of the key challenges is to create supportive and enabling environments for lifelong learning. As Lukalo-Munoko (2010, p. 159) points out: "The vulnerability of Africa's economic position, its geopolitical situation and growing younger population are the major drives behind the educational reforms of many countries. The challenges lie in African countries failing to utilize the optimum potential of its workforce and development of values (organizational, national, societal and personal) that give impetus and drive to lifelong learning." One of the interviewees in Ethiopia also stated: "We have to build the capacity of our young generation in order to compete in the globalized world." ■

5. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Further to the objective of sub-theme 1 of the ADEA's 2012 Triennale – *Common Core Skills for Lifelong Learning and Sustainable Development in Africa* – this study focuses on the concepts of sustainable development, core skills or capabilities, lifelong learning and the learning society. This chapter clarifies these concepts and frames the study.

5.1. Sustainable development

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

The relationship between education and sustainable development is complex. Generally, however, research shows that education is key to a nation's ability to develop and achieve sustainability targets (UNESCO, 2006). Education and training can improve productivity, enhance the status of women, reduce population growth rates, and increase environmental protection. When education levels are low, economies are often limited to resource extraction and agriculture. In many developing countries, the level of education is so low that it severely hinders development and plans for a

sustainable future. Education and training are acknowledged to be central in improving the quality of life and the educational attainment of the next generation, thereby raising their chances of economic and social well-being (UNESCO, 2006).

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

5.2. Core skills, competences and capabilities for sustainability

Core skills, *competences* and *capabilities* can be, and have been, defined in many different ways. Ultimately, countries are themselves responsible for what types and what combinations work best within their socio-political and development contexts. The word *skill* is often interpreted in a very narrow way to mean *ways of doing*. It can be seen as only instrumental. Broader than *core skills*, according to Jorgensen (1999, p. 4), quoting from Illeris (2009, p. 84), *competences* refers to a person being qualified in a broad sense, meaning not merely that he/she has mastered a set of professional skills, but also that they can apply these, even in situations that may be uncertain and unpredictable. In this study, we use *core skills* and *competences* more in the sense of *capabilities*, to imply more breadth and ambition, and a sense of agency.

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

All individuals and groups should have the opportunity not only to realize their full potential but also to raise their aspirations. Sen's deep concern with reducing inequalities in societies stresses the obstacles to achieving capabilities which individuals and groups encounter. Sen's approach provides the means to go beyond *current* potential, with the challenge of recurrently uncovering and developing *further* potential. His perspective links capabilities directly to freedom. Aspiration is a component of freedom, and takes diverse forms. This speaks directly to the evidence and experience highlighted in this study. We found that there is impressive work being done on the ground, in a host of different contexts, which aims to realize potential, raise aspirations and reduce inequalities.

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

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

The combination of these three fits well with the notion of capability as something that enables agency and action as well as understanding. Drawing on Schuller and Watson (2009, p. 167), *core skills*, competences and *capabilities* enhance people's ability to exercise a degree of control over their own lives; to take part with others in

decisions that affect the context of their lives; and to envisage alternative futures for themselves and their families. These open up space for creative, aesthetic, spiritual and other essential dimensions of personal development.

The urgent emphasis on sustainability also has important implications for required knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. These include a positive attitude to learning throughout life, environmental consciousness with regard to the protection, preservation and care for natural resources, the value of indigenous knowledge and traditions, entrepreneurship, and the importance of acknowledging and celebrating people's differences as to belief, culture, gender, age, social class or ability. Sustainability emphasizes both continuity and change. People, individually and collectively, need enabling environments which encourage their capabilities to understand, adapt to and shape change, and which can, paradoxically and importantly, encourage the sustaining of, or return to, certain traditional cultural practices.

5.3. Lifelong learning

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

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

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

5.3.1. Formal education

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

5.3.2. Non-formal education

Non-formal education refers to “any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types

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

5.3.3. Informal learning

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

Formal education, non-formal education and informal learning are, of course, fluid; informal and non-formal education occurs within formal programmes, and formal courses have informal and non-formal elements. Hoppers (2006, p. 21) emphasizes “the difficulties in drawing a line between what is formal and what is non-formal, when so many initiatives show characteristics belonging to both”, and suggests referring simply to programmes of basic education or lifelong learning. Already in the 1970s there was a common understanding that all countries and communities, regardless of their level of socio-economic development, should move towards lifelong learning systems in order to tap into and synergize the potential of formal, non-formal and informal

education and learning. Coombs and Ahmed (1974, p. 9) argue that “there is a growing agreement that, ideally, nations should strive to evolve ‘lifelong learning systems’ designed to provide every individual with a flexible and diversified range of useful learning options throughout his or her lifetime. Any such system obviously would have to synthesize many elements of informal, formal and non-formal education.” In the context of Africa, the ADEA 2008 Biennale in Maputo called for the integration of different learning areas or types of competences so that they can be brought together or converged within the same learning programme (ADEA, 2009).

In recent years there have been moves towards recognizing the interdependence and interpenetration of all forms of learning, wherever they occur, through, for example, the recognition of prior learning. The importance of relevant learning from whatever context, and the need for formal systems to recognize mobility and efficiency, has been emphasized in the development of national qualification frameworks (NQFs). Recognition of this interpenetration has occurred in different ways, at programme, curricula and institutional levels (Ouane, 2008; Singh, 2008).

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

5.4. Learning society

In 1972 the Faure Report urged UNESCO member states to reorganize their educational structures based on two premises: first, that a learning society is one in which all agencies become providers of education; and, second,

that all citizens should be engaged in learning, taking full advantage of the opportunities provided by the learning society (Ahmed, 2002). We live in a complex and fast-changing social, economic and political world to which we need to adapt by increasingly rapidly acquiring new skills, competences and capabilities in a wide range of contexts. An individual will not be able to meet key life challenges unless he or she becomes a lifelong learner, and a society will not be sustainable unless it becomes a learning society.

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

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

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



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1. EDUCATION:

excellent education and training systems at all levels, with high participation rates.

2. PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKING:

High levels of collaboration, networking and clustering within and across economic and knowledge sectors, especially around areas of innovation.

3. INFORMATION:

Excellent systems for collection, analysis, management and dissemination of information.

4. OUT OF THE SILOS:

A constant challenging of traditional knowledge categories and forms of organization to suit rapidly changing social and economic realities.

5. ACCESSIBILITY:

Providing learning opportunities that are increasingly accessible for all and ensuring that citizens are aware of them.

6. LIFELONG LEARNING VALUED:

High value placed on formal, non-formal and informal learning throughout life, with that value expressed in tangible improvements in the learner's employment and community situations.

7. SOCIAL COHESION:

Learning supports high levels of social cohesion (across social class, ethnicity, gender, ability, geography and age) within a society of limited social disparities.

The characteristics of a *learning society* are not static. They have emerged in a historical period, sometimes characterized as the *information age or knowledge society*, which privileges the acquisition and distribution of knowledge in a way which no previous period in history has done. The characteristics will continue to change as the current knowledge economy evolves. There are those who argue that the existence of an effective information and knowledge infrastructure is as important today as the development of transport infrastructure was in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this context, the organization of societies needs to adapt and their priorities must change. Indeed, as the UNESCO World Report *Towards Knowledge Societies* (UNESCO, 2005, p. 60) points out: "By definition, a learning society cannot be just an information society. In the face of the potential excesses that the rise of a global information society is likely to generate, the notion of learning reintroduces a critical dimension, allowing our societies to face the possibility of assimilating the incredible amount of new knowledge that they regularly produce." Crucially, the development of learning opportunities needs to be multiplied, and access to those opportunities facilitated. From these characteristics it becomes clear that lifelong learning is not simply about adding learning events and processes. It is also about reshaping attitudes and restructuring societies. ■

6. TOWARDS A LIFELONG LEARNING SYSTEM: PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

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

6.1. Development of formal education

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

6.1.1. Progress

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

In addition to basic education, expansion has also been achieved in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education. A Namibian policy-maker reported efforts to transform TVET to reach out to and train people to become more competitive in the labour market. Table 6.2 shows available enrolment data in tertiary education in the five countries.

Table 6.1: Enrolment rates in formal school education in the five countries

Country		Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
Year		1999	2011	1999	2011	1999	2011	1999	2011	1999	2011
Pre-primary enrolment % (gross)	Total	1	5	43	52	33	n/a	3	52	n/a	35
	Male	1	6	43	52	31	n/a	3	52	n/a	35
	Female	1	5	43	52	35	n/a	3	52	n/a	34
Primary enrolment % (net)	Total	36	86	62	83	87	85	78	99	49	n/a
	Male	43	89	62	82	84	83	78	n/a	48	n/a
	Female	30	83	62	83	90	87	78	n/a	50	n/a
Secondary enrolment % (gross)	Total	13	38	38	60	57	n/a	10	36	n/a	36
	Male	16	40	39	63	54	n/a	10	35	n/a	35
	Female	11	35	38	57	61	n/a	10	37	n/a	37

Table 6.2: Enrolment in tertiary education in the five countries

Country		Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
		1999	2011	1999	2011	1999	2011	1999	2011	1999	2011
Tertiary enrolment % (gross)	Total	1.0	8	3	4	7	n/a	0.9	7	0.6	4
	Male	2.4	11	4	5	8	n/a	n/a	8	1.0	5
	Female	0.4	5	2	3	6	n/a	n/a	6	0.3	3

Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2014

Researchers in Rwanda indicated in a group interview that evening courses in the national universities had been particularly successful in engaging both part-time and full-time learners. In Ethiopia, the team learned that the number of universities had increased from two in 1994 to 33 in 2011. In Rwanda, a policy-maker pointed out that, in order to compete effectively in the global economy, 'increasing access to higher education has become a key governmental priority'.

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

In promoting equal access to formal education, the five countries have paid particular attention to gender equality. In Tanzania, a senior expert explained "the universities offer special scholarships to girls, and secondary education offers extra help for girls to learn science. We also want educational materials to reflect positive discrimination to the advantage of girls." In Ethiopia, in 2010, a Girls' Education Strategy was

developed with a focus on interventions such as private tuition and counselling for girls, boarding schools for girls in pastoral areas, financial support for girls, making schools girl-friendly, giving priority to girls in school meal programmes and rewarding girls for good results. As a result of these and other efforts in the education system, gender equality in Ethiopia has reached a new level. According to reports from Kenya, gender parity has almost been achieved in ECCE, and at primary and secondary school. Some of the incentives at this level have included provision of sanitary towels to girls to boost retention and participation.

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

(2010) Education Sector Strategic Plan (2010–2015) puts emphasis on child-friendly schools and repeatedly argues that the shift towards more learner-centred pedagogical approaches will support the development of individuals' communication, problem-solving, teamwork, creative and critical thinking skills. In Tanzania, the team learned that the government has redesigned the curriculum so it emphasizes competence rather than content, with a focus on life skills and entrepreneurial skills.

6.1.2. Challenges

It is evident that, in each of the five countries, ensuring access to primary education for all is still a challenge, despite the rapid expansion of enrolment in primary schools reported above. Table 6.3 shows that considerable numbers of primary school-aged children in the five countries still remain out of school. In Ethiopia, Kenya and Namibia the rates of out-of-school children are still relatively high. Learners in Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania told the team that poverty, the need to work, the cost-sharing policy and hidden fees, early marriage and pregnancy, loss of parents due to AIDS, and long distances to school are among the main reasons why primary school-aged children cannot attend school regularly or, indeed, at all. There is regional variation in the extent that children attend school. In Ethiopia, for example, pastoralist areas have long been neglected and marginalized. Consequently, basic infrastructure and social services, including education and training, are meagre in these parts of the country. Although conditions have been created that are conducive to education in agricultural areas, there remain many hurdles to overcome.

While all five countries have expanded their formal education systems in recent years, and made progress in the

development of policies to improve core skills, competences and capabilities, it is clear from the fieldwork that educational quality and relevance remain major issues. Rapidly changing social and economic realities demand flexible education and training systems that are relevant and adaptable to the needs of individuals, communities and societies. In Namibia, one policy-maker and several managers reported that "the current education curriculum does not provide relevant skills such as productive and entrepreneurial skills." In Tanzania, a recent study showed that one in five primary school leavers cannot read Standard 2 level Kiswahili, half the children who complete primary school cannot read in English, and only seven in 10 primary school leavers achieve Standard 2 level in mathematics (UWEZO, 2010).

In addition, the socio-economic demand for skills and competences is evident. A Kenyan policy-maker called for learning that is functional, and which takes day-to-day realities into account. The need to upgrade the quality of TVET was frequently mentioned by interviewees in all five countries. It was reported that learners' and community members' attitudes towards TVET remain negative, although TVET often provides an avenue to employment. A Kenyan policy-maker said that while many people aspire to higher education, this does not always result in work and sustainable livelihoods. In a group discussion, Namibian managers and learners reflected that "the universities need to make more effort to keep abreast of the needs and demands of individuals, communities and societies." The Namibian government is, in fact, currently undertaking two studies on labour market skills requirements in order to assess the present higher education curriculum and ensure that it is more on par with the actual skills required by the job market (Republic of Namibia, 2011, p. 81).

Table 6.3: Proportion of children of primary school age who are out of school in the five countries

Country	Year	Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
		1999	2006	1999	2009	1999	2012	1999	2010	1999	2008
Out-of-school children %	Total	63.7	31.3	37.0	17.0	12.3	11.5	17.9	11.4	50.7	2.2
	Male	57.3	28.2	37.6	17.5	15.3	13.0	17.3	12.8	51.5	2.0
	Female	70.2	34.4	36.7	16.5	09.2	09.9	18.4	10.1	49.9	2.4

6.2. Development of non-formal education

Globally, governments are paying increased attention to non-formal education, initiating and directly administering non-formal education systems and programmes to reach specific marginalized groups, such as out-of-school children (Hoppers, 2006, p. 24). In the five countries, non-formal education for young people and adults forms part of the education system. It is recognized that non-formal education can help individuals, communities and societies respond to rapidly changing social and economic realities, and that it can contribute to tangible improvements to individuals' lives and to socio-economic development.

6.2.1. Progress

Improved policy-making in the area of non-formal and adult education is apparent in all five countries. Non-formal and adult education policies increasingly take socio-economic sustainable development into consideration and underline the crucial importance of adult education and functional literacy in reaching the countries' broad development goals. Box 6.1 provides a panorama of the main non-formal and adult education policies and leading programmes in the five countries. Some of the main cross-cutting themes are summarised below.

First, the five countries have attached importance to the development of non-formal and adult education over a long period. In Tanzania, the role of adult basic education in national development was emphasized by the country's first president Julius Nyerere: "First, we must educate adults. Our children will not have an impact on our development for five, ten, or even twenty years. The attitudes of the adults, on the other hand, have an impact" (United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar, 1965). Nyerere's (1973) educational philosophy emphasized adult education for self-reliance. Learning, according to Nyerere, did not have a beginning or an end, and he argued that living is learning and working, and learning and working is about trying to live better: "Learning must become an integral part of working; and people must learn as and where they work" (Nyerere, 1973, p. 300). During the 1970s, Tanzania organized a mass literacy campaign and literacy classes were conducted in all possible locations. In 1973, UNESCO awarded a literacy prize to the Literacy Project of the West Lake Region of Tanzania. In Ethiopia,

interviewees reported that the first adult education institution was established in 1948 by the former Ethiopian emperor, Haile Selassie. The institution was established to produce a better-trained workforce. Selassie consulted the UN in 1967 and secured international support to launch a major national literacy programme. In 1979, the Ethiopian Co-ordinating Committee for the National Literacy Campaign won a UNESCO award.

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

Third, the most vulnerable and marginalized groups are increasingly reached through non-formal education in the five countries. A policy-maker and a manager in the private sector in Rwanda both emphasized that agriculture is still the backbone of the Rwandan economy (90 per cent of the population are farmers) and argued that, through relevant non-formal education, agriculture can increase its productivity considerably. A practitioner working with prison inmates and migrants in Kenya reported that the attitude among policy-makers in the country to non-formal education had changed in recent years, with decision-makers paying greater attention to marginalized groups: "You do not rehabilitate somebody by locking her/him up and throwing away the key – prisoners and immigrants need learning – otherwise more frustration and social unrest will increase in Kenya, which will be detrimental to the entire society." In Ethiopia, the country team visited a primary school in Addis Ababa which, during the evening, becomes an adult education centre. The centre operates two programmes, in alternative basic education (ABE) and functional adult literacy (FAL).

Box 6.1: Overview of non-formal and adult education policies and main programmes in the five countries**ETHIOPIA**

In 2008 the Ministry of Education published a fourth Education Sector Development Plan for the period 2010/2011 to 2014/2015, with the goal of producing democratic, efficient, effective, knowledgeable, inspired and creative citizens able to contribute to the realization of Ethiopia's strategic vision of becoming a middle-income economy (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2010, p. 86). It targets a renewal of non-formal and adult education with a specific focus on (1) alternative basic education, which provides primary education-equivalent programmes for out-of-school children and young people, mostly in rural communities, and (2) functional adult literacy for illiterate adults, a two-year programme of literacy and livelihoods skills, which aims to ensure the active participation of the newly-literate population in social and economic development.

KENYA

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

NAMIBIA

The 2003 National Policy on Adult Learning set the following goals: (1) economic growth and development; (2) equitable social development and poverty reduction; (3) sustainable environmental development; (4) participatory democratic development; and (5) personal development and empowerment. The Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) was established in 2005 to strengthen policy, and the relevant

legal and institutional frameworks, to support equitable access to high-quality and responsive adult learning. The establishment of national standards for adult educators was emphasized in the ETSIP mid-term review in 2011 as a major achievement. The National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN) has enrolled between 30,000 and 40,000 adult learners per annum since its inception in 1992. In recent years the literacy programme has diversified to include (1) adult skills development for self-employment; (2) community learning and development centres; and (3) family literacy.

RWANDA

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

TANZANIA

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

In Rwanda it was reported that the government seeks to provide literacy training to 500,000 adults every year. A Kenyan policy-maker reported that, particularly in the slum areas of Nairobi, many children attend and benefit from non-formal education schools which are more attractive than the formal schools “as all children are welcome with or without school uniforms”.

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

Another example of a national policy taking a clear stance in support of individuals’ and communities’ personal, social and economic development is Tanzania’s Guidelines for the Establishment and Management of Adult and Non-Formal Education Programmes (2006). It suggests a curriculum not only encompassing basic literacy and numeracy but also skills such as personality-building, communication skills, vocational skills, and general knowledge and life skills (2006, p. 42–43). At programme level, in Tanzania, the complementary basic education centres have implemented a three-year programme for out-of-school children which combines the objective of literacy with poverty reduction and HIV/AIDS education. The integrated community education programme has helped learners to become more self-reliant and empowered, and has succeeded in reducing poverty, while the Folk Development Colleges are helping young people and adults to acquire knowledge and skills for self-employment and to improve their lives. These examples corroborate the observation made by Oxenham et al. (2002, pp. 35–36) that adult education programmes in general, and adult literacy programmes in particular, need to be

well-adapted to the interests, conditions and needs of learners, especially in terms of livelihood and income-generating activities.

In addition, in all five countries, there are many governmental and NGO providers of non-formal education. In Kenya, interviewees pointed out that almost every ministry has education programmes. In Tanzania, the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children is in charge of the Folk Development Colleges, while the Ministry of Labour and Youth Development offers youth and employment training programmes. The Ministries of Agriculture and Health also offer training programmes. In Ethiopia, NGOs play very important roles in providing functional adult literacy and alternative basic education, and are concerned with women’s empowerment, mostly in the agricultural regions of the country. DVV International, in a bilateral agreement with the government, has implemented the Integrated Women’s Empowerment Programme (IWEP), which has benefited 31,000 women in more than 20 districts. In Rwanda the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is a faith-based organization focusing on functional adult literacy, special needs education, and livelihood/vocational training. ADRA is active in 17 out of 30 districts and is closely affiliated to the government of Rwanda.

6.2.2. Challenges

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

FROM THE FIELDWORK OUTCOMES, THE TEAM MADE THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS:

In comparison with formal education, non-formal education is of lower priority in the five countries. Hoppers (2006, p. 94) observes that in the international community, non-formal education is often regarded as an add-on to the formal school system rather than as an equally important part of the country’s education system. This is corroborated by findings from the five countries. Some of the interviewees in Namibia pointed out that while non-formal education is well-articulated in existing policies, there is still a need to translate these policies into practice. In Ethiopia, some experts commented that non-formal education has not been emphasized enough. In

terms of investment, the government budget has been very minimal and there is no concrete evidence that the government has substantially increased funding for non-formal education. In all five countries it is difficult to get precise data on non-formal education's share of the total education budget.

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

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

In the five countries, it is common practice for non-formal education centres for young people and adults to affiliate with primary schools. This is, of course, a cost-efficient arrangement, but some adults may feel discouraged at the thought of going to classes in a school. As a result, it is not always easy to attract adult learners. A learner in Kenya pointed out: "The kids are wondering what an old man like me is doing here. Adult education centres need to be separated from primary schools." This example points to the need to engage learners in the development of educational strategies.

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

Country		Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
Year		1994	2007	2000	*2007	1991	*2007	2000	*2010	2002	*2010
Adult literacy rate (%)	Total	27.0	39.0	82.2	72.2	75.8	76.5	64.9	65.9	69.4	67.8
	Male	36.0	49.1	87.5	78.1	77.8	74.3	71.4	71.1	77.5	75.5
	Female	18.5	28.9	77.9	66.9	74.0	78.4	59.8	61.5	62.2	60.8
Youth literacy rate (%)	Total	33.6	55.0	92.5	82.4	88.1	87.1	77.6	77.3	78.4	74.6
	Male	39.3	63.0	93.3	83.2	85.7	83.2	78.5	76.7	80.9	76.5
	Female	28.1	47.0	91.9	81.6	90.4	90.6	76.2	72.8	76.2	72.8

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014 *UIS estimates.

Table 6.5: Total numbers of illiterates

Country		Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
Year		1994	2007	2000	*2007	2001	*2007	2000	*2010	2002	*2010
Total numbers (millions)	Total	21.5	26.7	3.0	6.0	0.17	0.30	1.6	2.0	6.0	7.9
	Male	09.3	11.0	1.1	2.4	0.10	0.20	0.6	0.8	2.2	3.0
	Female	12.1	15.7	2.0	3.6	0.10	0.10	0.9	1.2	3.8	4.9

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014 *UIS estimates

6.3. Tapping into traditional, informal learning

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

6.3.1. Rich tradition

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

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

In Namibia, policy-makers, researchers, practitioners and local community leaders also mentioned family and inter-generational learning as particularly successful practices and factors contributing to increased participation in adult education programmes and increased enrolment rates among schoolchildren in formal education. A Rwandan policy-maker drew attention to the fact that formal education was brought in by the colonizing countries, which, to some extent, damaged the traditional informal learning culture: "Before that time the main learning took place informally in the

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

ETHIOPIA:

'Timihirt ina daget iyarefu new'
(One can learn the whole of one's life by taking rest in between)

KENYA:

'If you are not taught by your mother you will be taught by the world'
'What an adult person can see while seated a child cannot see while standing'

NAMIBIA:

'You are never too old to learn and you can learn even from the old horse'
'Tuto ki tebe'
(Education is a shield – When you are well educated,

your education will protect you and it will open up many opportunities)

RWANDA:

'Kwiga ni uguhozaho'.
(Learning is a process that never stops)
'If you grow up without inquiring you will grow old without knowing'

TANZANIA:

'Elimu haina mwisho'
(Education does not have an end)
'Kuishi ni kujifunza' (Living is learning)
'We accumulate useful experiences as we live'





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local communities and sustainability was and remains a key word in traditional learning.” In Tanzania, a policy-maker urged practitioners to reach the people in the communities and motivate them, to make them aware, and to show them the real potential of lifelong learning to improve their lives.

6.3.2. Challenges

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

Although informal learning has a long tradition in Africa, there is hardly any mention of facilitating informal learning or creating literate environments in the education policy documents of any of the five countries. As a result, informal learning is not adequately valued and its potential is not being fully realised. In fact, some interviewees in the five countries alluded to the fact that faith-based organizations are often alone in promoting traditional wisdom and informal knowledge,

especially in rural and marginalized communities. The challenge ahead will be to develop policies to value, use, recognize and validate knowledge and wisdom in communities and families.

To summarise this chapter, more learners, including people from the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in society, are engaging in formal education, and action has been taken in some places to improve girls' and disabled children's access to school, and to expand TVET access. In non-formal education, there is a trend towards more participation in functional literacy and other basic education programmes for adults. However, adapting the quality and relevance of curricula to learners' needs, particularly in rural communities, and the lack of adequate staff training, remain major challenges for policy and practice for both formal and non-formal education. Although traditional wisdom and informal knowledge are widely recognized in communities as important resources for income generation and in deepening moral values, supporting social cohesion and mutual understanding among individuals and groups, they have not, so far, been given due priority and recognition at official levels.

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

7. CROSS-CUTTING FACTORS SUPPORTING LIFELONG LEARNING SYSTEMS

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

7.1. Conceptual understandings of lifelong learning

Lifelong learning encompasses formal education, non-formal education and informal learning. However, there is a more limited understanding of lifelong learning, prevalent in each of the five countries, which takes lifelong learning to refer only to adult education. A Namibian policy-maker described lifelong learning as 'undervalued'. A policy-maker in Tanzania said that "some colleagues only feel lifelong learning is about adult and non-formal education and it is far from using lifelong learning as an *organizing principle* to transform the education system." In Kenya, policy-makers reported that "the notion of lifelong learning is slowly gaining currency in the country and it is important that people are able to see the importance of lifelong learning outside adult and non-formal education." These observations concur with those of Aitchison and Alidou (2009), that in many African countries lifelong learning is framed largely in terms of adult literacy.

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

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

7.2. Recognition of learning achievements

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

However, the NQFs in the five countries are far from being fully developed and operational. One Kenyan researcher reported the current shortcomings in recognition, validation and accreditation. In Namibia a policy-maker pointed out that the current NQF is inadequate as the "possibilities of recognition, validation and accreditation of prior non-formal and informal learning achievements still are very limited". Interviewees in Rwanda reported that the future challenge for the country would be to establish an integrated NQF which includes non-formal education, informal learning, adult education and literacy. It was further suggested that Rwanda should, eventually, sign up to a regional qualifications framework

with the other East African countries or create a sub-regional qualifications framework, as the job-markets are becoming increasingly porous in the region.

NQFs and cross-national qualifications frameworks can play important roles in coordinating and communicating across different education, training, development and work sectors, thus enhancing the possibility of a more coordinated education and training system capable of creating opportunities for learners to strive towards and fulfil their aspirations (Parker et al., 2008). NQFs highlight the importance of research to understanding the complex interactions between vocational and general knowledge, and the different sectors and settings where learning occurs.

7.3. The role of counselling and guidance

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

In a learning society, the learning needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups in particular must be addressed.

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

7.4. Teachers and facilitators

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

As Table 7.1 shows, the primary-school pupil-teacher ratio (the number of pupils enrolled in primary school divided by the number of teachers) in four of the five countries remains very high. This reflects an insufficient number of teachers. It was also reported that teachers are inappropriately trained, under-paid and work under difficult conditions. In Tanzania, a policy-maker reported that the recruitment and training of secondary-school teachers have not kept pace with the expansion of enrolment. In Ethiopia, it was reported that there is an urgent demand for teachers of science, mathematics and languages. There is also a need to support teachers in shifting from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach, to put all learners (whether children or adults) at the

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

Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
1998	2012	1998	*2009	1998	2012	1998	2012	1998	2012
47	54	28	47	29	41	57	59	38	46

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014. *UIS estimate

centre of teaching and learning, in order to maximize their opportunities for personal and intellectual development.

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

Teachers and facilitators are not the only important education staff. Trained and motivated education officers are a key professional support for teachers. In Ethiopia, both policy-makers and practitioners reported that capacities in the education sector are considerably more developed at central level than at regional and local levels. As the federal government is committed to decentralization – giving each region some autonomy, accompanied by fiscal decentralization – the capacity of regional and local education officers becomes crucial in implementing policies. In reality, however, some interviewees admitted that “the capacity dwindles down the stream” in areas away from the larger conurbations. Physical and human resources are critical to the development of lifelong learning systems.

7.5. Financial resources and infrastructure

In terms of financial resources, public spending on education has increased substantially in four of the five countries, excepting Namibia, as Table 7.2 shows. Table 7.3 indicates, however, that Namibia's public expenditure on education, as a proportion of total government spending,

has remained high over the past 10 years. However, it is clear that limited financial resources have always hampered the expansion of learning, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, in the five countries. In a primary school visited by the study team in a municipal district of Dar es Salaam, only one third of the pupils had desks. Two practitioners in Ethiopia confirmed that the government budget for adult education was small. One said: “Adults are the active population and the key players in the immediate social and economic development of today. Without providing them with lifelong learning, we cannot really achieve the socio-economic goals; and we cannot become a middle-income country.” The chronic lack of investment worldwide in adult education was also emphasized at CONFINTEA VI.

In addition to noting the pressing financial challenges that adult education faces, it is important to emphasize that sufficient funds for education and learning opportunities to serve citizens throughout life are required to ensure learning for all. In Tanzania, a policy-maker confirmed that the largest challenge to educational development in the country was the shortage of financial resources. Although the government spends 18.3 per cent of its national budget on education, it was reported by the same policy-maker that there is a major shortfall. Facilities, equipment and teaching and learning materials are all in short supply in the country's adult learning centres. A practitioner in Tanzania commented frankly: “For this to happen, the centre must first of all be equipped with small labs, sewing machines, carpentry tools and food processing equipment.”

ICT is a major component of infrastructure in a learning society. As Chapter 4 showed, all five countries have made considerable investments in ICT infrastructure. In Rwanda, the aim is that every schoolchild should have a computer, and innovative solutions (e.g., solar energy) have been devised with the aim of providing electricity everywhere. Still, the uneven accessibility, and the lack of access to electricity, equipment and technical personnel, among other things,

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

Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
2000	2010	1999	2010	1999	2010	1999	2013	1998	2010
3.92	4.73	5.32	6.67	8.13	8.37	4.58	5.11	2.18	6.18

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014. Data drawn from government sources.

continue to be major challenges. In Ethiopia the development of ICT is focused on secondary education, while ICT for primary education and adult education is still scarce. In Kenya and Rwanda, some interviewees commented that solar energy and generators were needed to supply electricity to the ICT system, in both urban and rural areas. In Tanzania, at the moment, computers are often used in administration, but not widely used in programme delivery, and very few community learning centres have any computers at all.

7.6. Coordination among stakeholders

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

However, ministries and government agencies are often poorly coordinated within the overall government structure and it is difficult to incorporate other important stakeholders, such as civil society organizations and private enterprises, into one national structure. Effective coordination between ministries and government agencies, on the one hand, and with civil society organizations and private enterprises, on the other, is particularly important for effective implementation of policies in non-formal adult education, including literacy, as NGOs often shoulder a major responsibility for non-formal education.

Although the Rwandan Ministry of Education has put in place a national coordination network, one policy-maker reported that there was a lack of overall structure and coordination throughout the national educational system, especially with regard to education and learning organized by other ministries and among NGOs:

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

In summary, before we can develop lifelong learning systems, we must first clarify what we mean by the term. Guidance and counselling, plus advocacy for learning, can support individuals, communities and societies to make the right choices in their learning careers. The inter-dependence of all forms of learning has not yet been satisfactorily understood or developed in either policy or practice; emergent NQFs are often fragmented and not necessarily able to connect all the major components of education and training. Infrastructure and human and financial resources are particularly important to open up access to learning for all individuals. Coordination at all levels, and between all stakeholders, is crucial to avoid overlaps, to identify gaps in delivery and to increase efficiency.

In Chapter 8 we make concrete recommendations for the development of lifelong learning systems and a learning society, based on our key findings. ■

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

Ethiopia		Kenya		Namibia		Rwanda		Tanzania	
1999	2011	1999	2011	1999	2011	1999	2011	1999	2011
11.3	25.4	25.8	17.2	22.3	22.4	21.9	17.2	n/a	18.3

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014

8. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

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

8.1. Overarching policy framework and clear guidelines

From the findings of the fieldwork, there is consensus that lifelong learning is indeed a relevant concept in the five countries. For example, interviewees in both Kenya and Namibia called for a “paradigm shift from education and schooling to lifelong learning”. Furthermore, many education policy-makers in the five countries feel it is now the right time to clarify the concept of lifelong learning in the context of their countries, and to use the concept to build linkages between different parts of the education and training system to attain sustainable socio-economic development. Several interviewees in the five countries

underlined the need for more advocacy and clarification of the concept of lifelong learning, in order to move on from a narrow understanding that associates lifelong learning with adult and non-formal education only. Policy-makers in the five countries pointed out that, at policy level, legislation is needed to provide clear guidelines to integrate all parts of the education and training system into one lifelong learning system. Lifelong learning needs not only to be given prominence as a ‘rhetorical flourish’ but also to be developed in detail. Most importantly, a policy framework presupposes the embrace of lifelong learning as the organizing principle. One Ethiopian policy-maker mentioned that:

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

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

RECOMMENDATION 1:

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



8.2. Formal education

As Chapter 6 shows, access to formal schooling has expanded rapidly in all five countries. In particular, expansion of access to ECCE, primary education, secondary education, TVET and higher education are all on the agenda. Meanwhile, equity issues in formal education have received considerable attention in recent years, and more affirmative action in favour of marginalized groups has been taken in the five countries, through, for example, school feeding programmes in some regions, rescue centres for girls, and more orphanages for those who have lost family members to AIDS. Policy-makers in Kenya and Tanzania put it simply: “We have to improve school infrastructure, i.e. child-friendly and girl-friendly environments where the children feel happy and want to come and stay in school.” The quality and relevance of formal education have now become huge challenges and are not yet located within a lifelong learning framework. More specifically, many policy-makers in the five countries pointed out that the curricula of formal education must respond to social and economic demand for core skills and competences. In this regard, two studies offer inspiring examples of improving the relevance and quality of formal education systems in the five countries. One study, in Namibia, assesses how the present higher education curriculum can be in step with the actual skills required by the job-market. The other looks at the competence-based approach adopted in Ethiopia in its Curriculum Framework for Education to promote critical thinking and problem-solving. Hence, we propose:

RECOMMENDATION 2:

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

8.3. Non-formal and adult education

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

RECOMMENDATION 3:

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

8.4. Learning districts / communities

From the evidence in Chapter 6 and 7, it is plausible to suggest that the African traditions and practices of community-based learning align with the concept of a learning society, as reviewed in Chapter 5. It is recognized that before the existence of schools and education systems in Africa, the need for lifelong learning, from childhood and continuing through adolescence, youth, middle and old age, was understood and acted upon, albeit in an informal way (Omolewa, 2009). People were motivated to learn in order to acquire relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes, aptitudes and values that would help them to lead long, valuable and active lives as participants in the process of individual and community development. Self-initiated community-based programmes have, in fact, been particularly successful in African rural settings (Atchoarena and Hite, 2001, p. 206). This is, of course, no coincidence given that the traditional African communal way of life, expressed in the Ubuntu philosophy (I am because we are; I can only be a person through others), promotes a sense of belonging and active participation in family and community affairs (Nafukho et al., 2005).

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

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

In the case of Kenya, an interviewee stated: "There is so much knowledge in the communities yet to be tapped and documented. This kind of knowledge is closer and more relevant to people's lives." Another interviewee added: "Learning must be geared towards sustainability and the daily lives of the people. We need to open up the horizon towards local-centred learning." As Chapter 5 shows, education for sustainable development encompasses a new vision of education that seeks to empower

people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating and enjoying a sustainable future. This vision can only be realized if it is embedded in the structure and life of the local communities, as community- or locally-oriented approaches can be more educational. They encourage communal methodologies and are more egalitarian in organizing and responding to the needs of disadvantaged people (Connolly, 2010). These elaborations suggest that, to be effective, a national policy of building a learning society needs to be embedded in the structures and lives of local communities. Hence, we propose:

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Adopt the approach of building a learning society family by family, community by community, district by district through tapping into existing traditions of community learning, and convert national policy guidelines into sustainable actions at local levels.

8.5. Linkages between formal and non-formal education and informal learning

Strong linkages between formal education, non-formal education and informal learning systems are necessary for sustainable development, to ensure participation by citizens in current social, economic and political life. As reviewed in Chapter 7, all five countries have in recent years begun to develop some kind of national qualification framework. However, in most cases it is limited to certain sectors within the education and training sector. From the perspective of lifelong learning, the development of a more inclusive national qualification framework is necessary, as it provides linkages between formal, non-formal and informal learning; between general and vocational education and training; and between workplace learning and formal educational institutions. In Ethiopia, a policy-maker stated that "we have to develop an Ethiopian National Qualification Framework to promote the practice of recognizing prior learning". In addition, more effort can be made to implement fully existing qualifications frameworks. In view of greater regional integration and increasing

migration, articulation and equivalency across national borders need to be deepened, with closer relationships between different national qualification frameworks. Hence, we propose:

RECOMMENDATION 5:

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

8.6. Human and financial resources

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

Although the total public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP has increased in four of the five countries, as shown in Chapter 7, the inadequacy of financial resources remains ubiquitous for both formal and non-formal education in all five countries. As a result of the lower priority accorded non-formal and adult education in the education system, public financing for non-formal and adult education remains scarce. In

many cases, it is left to NGOs and faith-based organizations. In addition to the problem of low remuneration of teachers and facilitator in non-formal education, there is a severe shortage of basic equipment and facilities, deemed imperative in developing learners’ skills and competences. It is plausible to conclude that the implementation of non-formal and adult education programmes in the five countries has been hampered by inadequate resources. Hence, we propose:

RECOMMENDATION 6:

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

8.7. Modern media, information, guidance and counselling

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

As shown in previous chapters, one of the main inhibitors to accessing learning in the five countries is the lack of adequate information regarding relevant learning opportunities. Effective communication and counselling systems are important at local level and in rural communities, for people of all ages. For example, a researcher in Rwanda commented that “radio and other available media can be a particularly effective avenue for information and awareness – people listen to the radio when they are working in the fields or in the workplace”. In a focus group discussion with practitioners from a faith-based NGO in Rwanda, the importance of counselling was further underlined, especially with regard to life-skills, moral education and the promotion of social cohesion. To improve counselling, all teachers and facilitators must be able to understand their learners’ backgrounds and be sufficiently confident to handle issues relating to sensitive issues such as drug abuse, violence, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, tribalism and racism. Teachers and facilitators also need to be better trained in acknowledging prior learning achievements and advising learners on their future. Counselling can be part of the teacher and facilitator training curriculum, as is the case in Rwanda. Hence, we propose:

RECOMMENDATION 7:

Promote the use of mass media and ICT in teaching and learning, and provide information, guidance and counselling on learning opportunities for learners of all ages, using mass media, telephone help-lines, community centres, faith-based organizations, civil society organizations and workplaces.

8.8. Research orientation

The adoption and development of a lifelong learning paradigm is not a simple matter. This is because it challenges strongly-held views and philosophical understandings of knowledge, of institutional power hierarchies, and of how education and training have been implemented over many years. For example, the relationships between learning at work and at formal education institutions are not

straightforward; the recognition and accreditation of informal and non-formal learning challenge traditional practices; and institutions have particular ‘pictures that hold them captive’ in how they do things. Therefore, during the fieldwork and from the desk research, the importance of a research orientation was emphasized as critical to being able to address the complex questions and issues which are raised in implementing a lifelong learning system. For example, practitioners from some NGOs in Ethiopia proposed the following: “We need to make a sound assessment on where we are, what the challenges are, and what should be done. This needs to be carried out by professionals who have profound knowledge and experiences of the education system. Based on this assessment, with the help of the professionals, we need to design a continuous learning system which can benefit the whole society.” In other words, we need to approach the challenges with a research orientation, which is necessary as we grapple with the many complex issues that a lifelong learning philosophy and approach elicit. Hence, we propose:

RECOMMENDATION 8:

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

8.9. Coordination and capacity-building

As Chapter 7 showed, there have been attempts in the five countries to coordinate policy and programme design and delivery among different ministries and other stakeholders. However, the call to improve coordination is manifest. An interviewee in Ethiopia commented: “Lifelong learning can only come to the fore if we are

able to mobilize all sectors of society, all levels of government, all communities, workplaces and families.” A researcher in Tanzania said: “We have adult education programmes everywhere, but we need to create a system to coordinate the efforts of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Community, Gender and Children, Ministry of Employment and Youth Affairs, etc.” The effectiveness of coordination is magnified if it happens at multiple levels, from national to regional and local levels. However, it is noteworthy that coordination at local levels of government is often undermined by an absence of capacity. In Rwanda, an interviewee reflected that “there is a strong need for more synergy, coordination and capacity-building of all learning activities, both across the different line-ministries, but more importantly between different providers (formal and non-formal), particularly at local levels”. It is worth noting that, as shown in Chapter 4, decentralized governance has increasingly been favoured in the five countries. However, evidence presented in Chapter 7 indicates that the capacity of local authorities in the five countries remains weak in terms of planning, programme design and implementation. Hence, we propose:

RECOMMENDATION 9:

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

8.10. Regional collaboration and integration

As shown in Chapter 4, cross-border integration mechanisms, such as NEPAD, SADC and EAC, have created new opportunities for education reform and development in their member states. Attempts have been made to construct a coordinated approach to lifelong learning.

In particular, the free movement of people across national borders within the region and outside of it has necessitated the harmonization of core competences, standards, assessment and evaluation of education programmes as a priority. In addition, inter-regional cooperation can be promoted between Africa and those in other parts of the world, where lessons on the implementation of lifelong learning at a substantive level can be shared. Hence, we propose:

RECOMMENDATION 10:

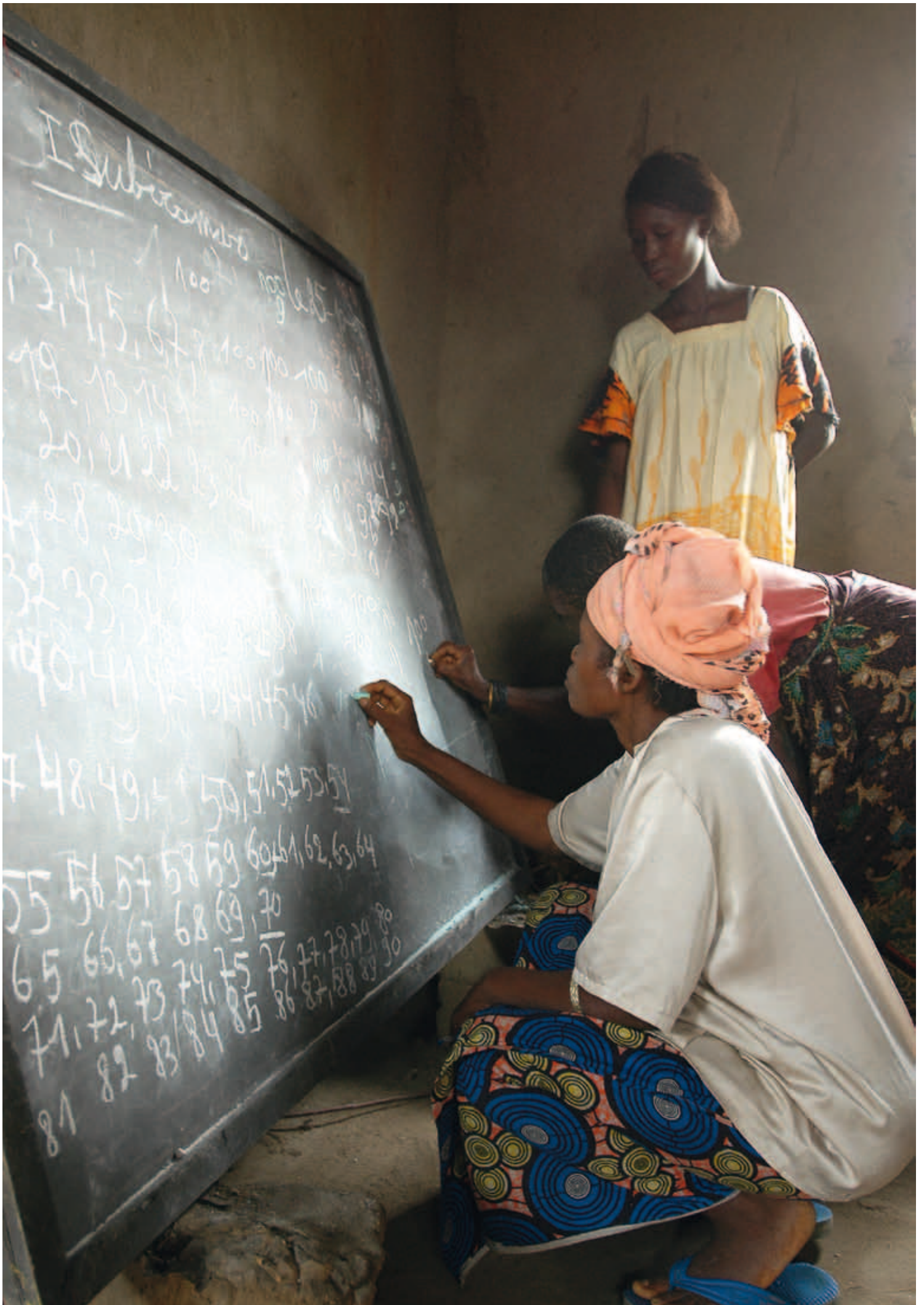
Prioritize lifelong learning in cross-border integration through, for example, SADC and EAC, which identify coordinating mechanisms such as regional qualification frameworks, to enhance mobility and recognition between countries.

Coda

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

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

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



9.1. APPENDIX I: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

9.1.1. Ethiopia:

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

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

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

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

Alebachew Mekonnen,
Director, Basic Education Network Ethiopia;

Dessu Wirtu,
Faculty of Education, Addis Ababa University;

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

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

Jember W Mariam,
Education Program Manager, Pact Ethiopia;

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

Temesgen Fereja,
Faculty of Education, Addis Ababa University;

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

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

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

Zewdu Desta,
Education Platform Director, Pact Ethiopia;

And Learners who participated in group interviews.

9.1.2. Kenya:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jacob Muriati,
Adult Education Officer, Central;
Johnson K Maundi, Administrator,
Father Grow's Welfare Project;

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

Stephen Ngiri,
Adult Education Officer, Central;

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

Zakariah Jared Ashubwe,
Deputy Principal, St Peter Clavers
Adult Education Centre;

And Learners who participated in group interviews.

9.1.3. Namibia:

- A. Awases, Director,**
Department of Planning, Ministry of Education;
Batseba Hengari,
Principal, Gammans Primary School;
- Happy Amadhila,**
District Education Officer, Khomas Education Region,
Lifelong Learning Division, Ministry of Education;
- Janet Wicks,**
Manager, Man on the side of the road;
- Josua Udjombala,**
Director, Khomas Education Region,
Ministry of Education;
- Kennedy Waliñetana,**
Education Officer, Kavango Education Region;
- Martin Ngodji,**
Lecturer, Training College for Pastors;
- Mike Mukete,**
Assistant, Bank of Namibia Governor,
Bank of Namibia;
- Medusalem Nakale,**
Director, Language Centre, University of Namibia;
- Ndeshi Afunde,**
Manager, Professional Development,
Namibia College of Open Learning;
- Nekongo Haveshe-Nielsen,**
Senior Lecturer, Centre for External Studies,
University of Namibia;
- Patrick Simataa,**
Deputy Director, Department of Youth Educational
Programs, Ministry of Youth;
- Paul Helmut,**
Local community leader;
- Victoria Amakali,**
District Education Officer, Khomas Education Region,
Lifelong Learning Division, Ministry of Education;

And Learners who participated in group interviews.

9.1.4. Rwanda:

- Alphonse Rutaganda,**
Director, Secrétariat National d'Enseignement
Catholique (SNEC);
- Beatrice Yangiziye,**
Director, Confucius Institute;
- Clarisse Ingabire,**
One Cow Program Director, Rwanda Animal Resources
Development Authority, Ministry of Agriculture and
Animal Resources;
- Côme Rutegamihigo,**
Deputy Legal Representative,
Pentecostal Church of Rwanda;
- Didier Munezero,**
Director, Partnership Building Department,
Rwanda Workforce Development Agency WDA;
- Eliphaz Bahizi,**
Permanent Secretary,
Rwanda National Commission for UNESCO;
- Erasme Rwanamiza,**
Director General, Ministry of Education;
- Evariste Karangwa,**
Director of Research and Consultancy,
Kigali Institute of Education;
- Gasimba François Xavier,**
Legal Representative of DUHAMIC-ADRI;
- James Vuningoma,**
Vice Rector Academic,
Kigali Institute of Education;
- Martin Rutazigwa,**
Deputy Planning and Program Director,
Adventist Development and Relief Agency,
ADRA Rwanda;
- Munanira Appollo,**
Human Capital and Institutional Development (RDB);
- Munyakyanza J. François,**
Director of CODEL, Kigali Institute of Education;
- Narcisse Musabeyezu,**
Inspector General, Ministry of Education;
- Ndayambaje Irene,**
Head of Tele-Education Program,
Kigali Institute of Education;

Niyomana Mico Emmanuel,

Director of Planning, Ministry of Education;

Sekigera Nduwayo Mathias,

District Education Officer, Kicukiro District;

Senyabatera Bosco,

Chargé des programs, Conseil de concertation pour les organisations d'appui aux initiatives de base;

Shirley K. Randell,

Director of Centre for Gender, Culture and Development Studies, Kigali Institute of Education;

Veronique Musabyimana Dean,

Faculty of Education;

And Learners who participated in group interviews.

Mikiaadi Azizi,

Expert, Education Office, Kinondoni

Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam;

Valentino Gange,

Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT;

And Learners who participated in group interviews.

9.1.5. Tanzania:

Selestine Gesimba,

Deputy Permanent Secretary, MoEVT;

Salum R. Mnjagila,

Director, Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT;

Basilina Modest Levira,

Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT;

Cuthbert J. Simbila,

Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT;

Enock B. Kayam,

Senior Education Officer, Department of Technical and Vocational Education, MoEVT;

Furaha Ntinekigwa,

Department of Adult and Non-formal Education, MoEVT;

Grace J. Rwiza,

Assistant Director, Primary Education Department, MoEVT;

Gresca M. Mgweno,

Assistant Director, Folk Development Colleges, Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children;

Lambertha Mahai,

Director, Institute of Adult Education;

Martin Mwanukuzi,

Director, Department of Policy and Planning, MoEVT;

Martha Joshua Kussasa,

Expert, Education Office, Kinondoni Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam;

9.2. APPENDIX II: SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONS FOR THE FIELD WORK

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

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

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

9.2.2. Learners

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

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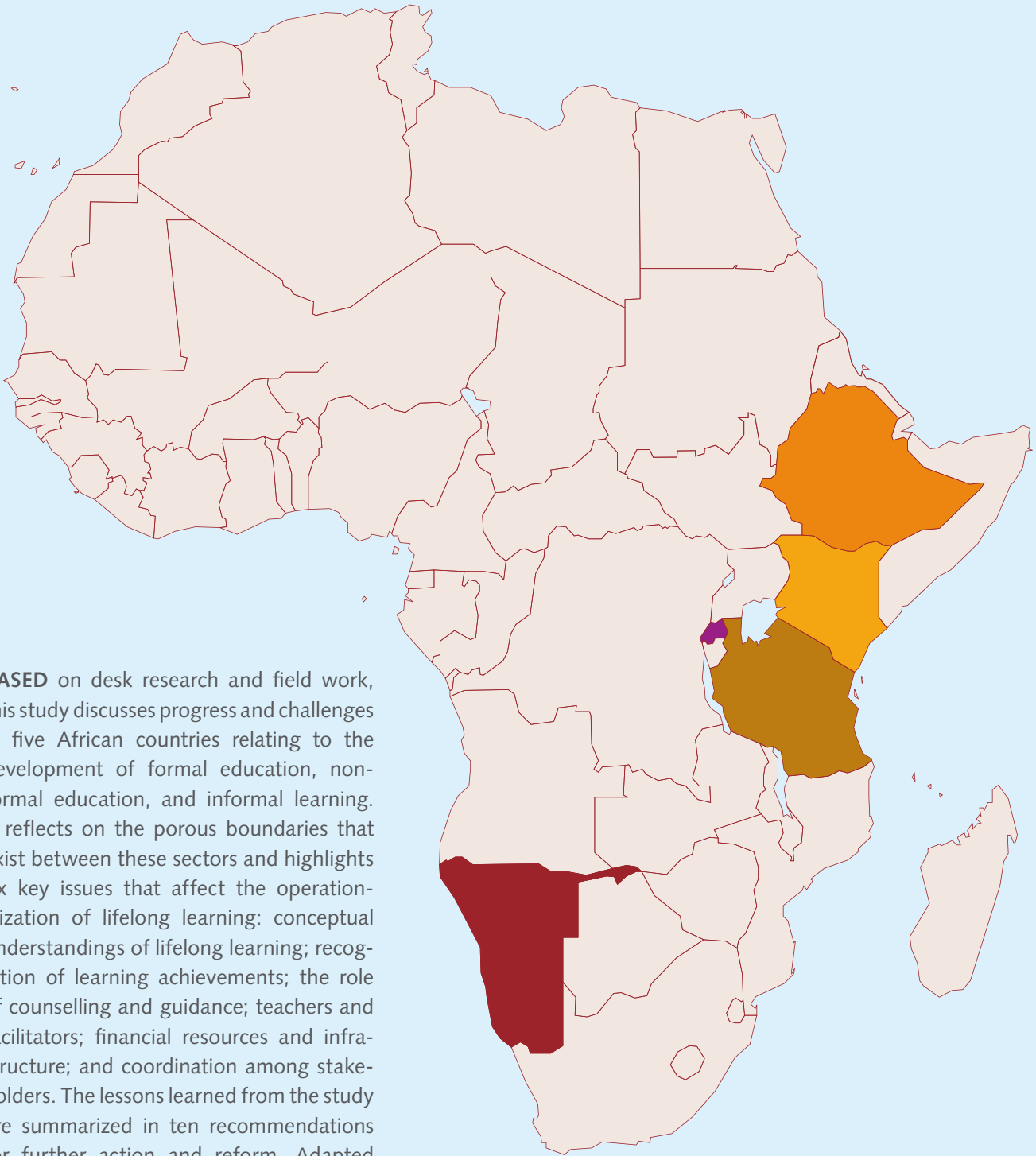
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BASED on desk research and field work, this study discusses progress and challenges in five African countries relating to the development of formal education, non-formal education, and informal learning. It reflects on the porous boundaries that exist between these sectors and highlights six key issues that affect the operationalization of lifelong learning: conceptual understandings of lifelong learning; recognition of learning achievements; the role of counselling and guidance; teachers and facilitators; financial resources and infrastructure; and coordination among stakeholders. The lessons learned from the study are summarized in ten recommendations for further action and reform. Adapted to local contexts, these recommendations can be implemented, fully or partly, in many other countries.