

Needs Assessment of Education and Recommendations for German Cooperation: The Case of Morocco

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I. RECEPTION AND THE IMPLICATION OF THE AHDR2003

I.1 Introduction

The Arab Human Development report 2003 (AHDR2003) is the second of a planned four-part series which deals with the issues of freedoms and political institutions, gender imbalance and the empowerment of women in the 22 Arab states. While the first Report (AHDR2002) addressed the most important development challenges facing the Arab states at the beginning of the third Millennium, the second report (AHDR2003) was specifically dedicated to the analysis of the current state of education, scientific research, the media, the publishing industry, culture and its religious component, intellectual heritage and the Arabic language in the Arab states. In particular, regarding the questions pertaining to education and knowledge (which have been the focus of much of the contributions), the second report identified several serious gaps, shortcomings, and failures of Arab countries, in comparison with similar benchmark countries, that include substantial and technological arenas, social biases in the areas of education, and the failure of most Arab states to confront the challenge set by the emerging society of knowledge.

Drafted by a group of renowned Arab scholars and opinion leaders (nearly 40 authors and 30 advisers, and peer reviewers that included prominent Arab development thinkers and practitioners drawn from academia, intelligentsia, civil society, the media and the private and public sector), the report is at once descriptive and prospective, and provides recommendations for change, hence its relevance to educational policy in Morocco.

Issued on October 20, 2003 by the United Nation's Development Program the AHDR2003 drew a bleak picture of the educational scene in the Arab world and called on Arab states to act quickly to bridge a growing knowledge gap by investing heavily in education and promoting open intellectual inquiry. This important report confirmed the existence of a nagging problem that many Arab states, including Morocco, had identified as a major obstacle to economic and human development.

Yet in Morocco, the findings as well as the overall diagnosis of the second report broke no new ground; this report was merely another indication that Morocco needed to launch a dramatic reform of its educational system—a rather old challenge with complex ramifications.

The need to overhaul the Moroccan educational system had already been dramatized by a highly critical World Bank report that was prepared and published in 1993. The late King Hassan II agreed with the conclusions of this report that recommended a thorough transformation the Moroccan educational system and made a commitment to address the matter. In the fall of 1994 King Hassan II appointed a Parliamentary Commission to study the issue and to propose innovative solutions to pressing educational and social needs, and recommend an educational policy that Moroccans would adopt, but when this parliamentary commission failed to submit a coherent and credible reform project because of the inability of its members—unions, members of parliament and government officials—to engage in a meaningful dialog with one another, His Majesty disbanded it and called on

the government departments in charge of education and vocational training to audit their educational systems. The Ministry of Education, for example, was asked to carry out an objective evaluation of the nation's educational system and to evaluate problems not mentioned in the World Bank report. This Ministry had to devise a reform plan that would transform the educational system from the bottom up, and introduce experimentation as an innovation tool. The Ministry of Education produced two major reports in 1998,¹ while similar projects were undertaken by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research and the department in charge of vocational training, yielding several (unpublished) working papers and internal reports.

The World Bank report that first drew attention to the crisis of the Moroccan educational system provided a quantitative analysis of its shortcomings, while the two reports produced by the Ministry of Education in 1998 provided a qualitative analysis of the system and identified the issues that had to be vigorously addressed such as the need to set the language of instruction to be used in schools, and the need of quality in teaching and appropriate evaluation tools and procedures to ensure quality of teaching, learning and system management.

The reports produced by the various departments provided a candid, yet very careful assessment of the situation, both in terms of content and effectiveness, and made proposals to upgrade the existing educational systems. They also strived to build a national consensus over the type of educational system Morocco should adopt, a task that proved tedious and time consuming.

To build such a consensus Hassan II appointed a *Commission Spéciale Education Formation* (COSEF)² headed by M. Abdelaziz Meziane-Belefkah, Advisor to the King, to draft a *National Charter for Education and Training*. This Charter was approved in October 1999 and a series of bills implementing its various recommendations were voted into law by the Moroccan parliament in 2000. These laws translated the Charter into programmatic measures designed to upgrade and reform the various components of the Moroccan educational system, in all areas and at all levels, a process which is still ongoing.

In addition to these governmental efforts to reform the Moroccan educational system various NGOs organized conferences and workshops to discuss the National Charter. On the Arab world level, AMIDEAST organized an international symposium about "Higher Education in the Arab World: Preparing for the Global Marketplace" in Marrakech in March 2002. This conference gave a number of Moroccan decision makers another opportunity to discuss educational reform issue and to sensitize various stakeholders.

More recently, In July 2003, King Mohammed VI appointed a commission headed by M. Abdelaziz Meziane-Belefkah, Advisor to the King, which set a scientific commission chaired by Mr. Rachid Benmokhtar, President of Al Akhawayn University, to draft a

¹ Ministère de l'éducation nationale, *Analyse diagnostique du système éducatif* (Rabat : MEN), January 1998, typescript, 49 pp, and *Projet de réforme du système d'éducation et de formation : stratégie d'action pour le développement de l'enseignement fondamental et secondaire*, (Rabat : MEN), January 1998, typescript, 81 pp.

² <http://www.cosef.ac.ma>

“Report on 50 Years of Human Development in Morocco, 1955-2005, and Perspectives 2005-2025”. Due in July 2005, this report is designed to produce a historical database of past experiences in human development, and help establish future human development programs in Morocco. This report will probably underscore the critical contribution of education and knowledge to human development and economic prosperity.

It is clear then that the publication of the AHDR in October 2003 came at a time when Moroccan decision makers at all levels had spent almost a decade developing policies and programs to deal with the shortcomings of the educational system. Indeed, the World Bank report, the sectorial reports published by the different departments in charge of education and training, and the National Charter for Education and Training drafted by the COSEF had given Moroccan decision makers and intellectuals many opportunities to debate the educational issues at hand and to develop programs to upgrade the Moroccan educational system.

The modest impact of the AHDR2003 in Morocco can be accounted for by the fact that for a decade Moroccan decision makers had addressed educational reform issues and had succeeded in developing appropriate strategies to reform the system. The additional issues of human development themselves had also been debated by various political and social actors

The publication of the AHDR2003 coincided with the enactment of a liberal Family Law designed to empower Moroccan women and to upgrade their rights that was hailed by many as a major legal breakthrough. On the human rights front much had been done to turn a new page in Moroccan history, and create an environment where human rights would be better protected, and where more would be done to improve the human development index. It is important in this respect to highlight His Majesty Mohammed VI's deep commitment to human development in Morocco and to the special role he personally plays in this field.

I. 2. Extent of Knowledge Among Ministries

Various observations, indications, and data show that the Moroccan government has been in fact aware of the AHDR2003 and its conclusions. This is particularly true for Ministries directly involved with educational matters (National Education, Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Vocational Training, etc.) whose decision makers are familiar with its main recommendations

Yet it is safe to state the AHDR2003 was perceived merely as *another* contribution to the debate concerning the need to upgrade the national educational system, though it may have here and then brought a few innovative and/or original information or interpretative perspectives. In other words, while its knowledge by relevant Moroccan Ministries was extensive, the report on the whole failed to initiate the kind of debate its authors had hoped for or anticipated.

I. 3. Extent of Knowledge Among Intellectuals

The publication of the AHDR2003 only in Arabic and English has certainly prevented many francophone readers from acquiring a deeper understanding of this important document. It is therefore likely that a sizeable number of intellectuals have no intimate knowledge of the content of the report. Most Moroccan intellectuals have gained second hand knowledge of the AHDR2003 through the national and international printed and online media. Media coverage of the Report has been extensive enough to catch the attention of Moroccan intellectuals.

It is also important to point out that the topics addressed by the Report have been central in several cultural events that took place immediately after its publication. A number of leading Moroccan intellectuals formally debated the contents of the Report and the methodological approaches that underlie it. Some of these debates took place, for instance, during international conferences organized by major Moroccan universities:

- (i) Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane (AUI) organized a conference in collaboration with the Central European University in Budapest in the period December 11-14, 2003. Placed under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, the seminar brought together 47 participants from Egypt, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, USA, Saudi Arabia and Syria and representatives of both the civil society and International research and educational foundations such as ISESCO and SSRC.
- (ii) Cadi Ayyad University in Marrakech (the Center for Constitutional and Political Studies) organized, in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in April 16-17, 2004, a seminar that brought together 27 participants from Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia. And
- (iii) Mohammed V University in Rabat (the Institut d'études et de recherches pour l'arabisation), organized a seminar which discussed ways to turn the Arabic language in a tool of development.

A perspective on the intellectuals' reaction to the AHDR2003 conference can be gained through a summary report of the conference organized by Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane. This document points to the limitations of the report, to the debate on diagnosis and perspectives, the cognitive paradigm that Arabs need to adopt and the means to disseminate and promote a convenient paradigm of change.³

Most Moroccan intellectuals found fault with the AHDR. Some blamed it for its sweeping generalizations and built-in methodological shortcomings, charging that the Report overlooked national and regional specificities, while others saw it merely as another report that justifies America's implementation of its Greater Middle East Initiative; a home-produced report that serves no real purpose except that of paving the way for America's domination of the Arab world!

³ Mohamed Berdouzi and Khadija Al Arkoubi, "Human Development Report in the Arab World: Final Report and Operational Perspectives," Unpublished report, [January 2004]

In conclusion it might be safe to say that most Moroccan intellectuals took a dim view of the value of this report, charging that it merely rehearses well known shortcomings that are hard to overcome because of the impressive military, economic and cultural pressures that conspire to hamper Arab efforts to develop and improve their human development indices. They point out that American and Israeli aggressions leave little room or money for development or growth thus aggravating the existing deficits in the areas of economic development, liberties and human rights.

I. 4. Extent of Knowledge Among Civil Society

The strong relationship between the Civil Society movement and Moroccan intellectuals has helped disseminate the AHDR2003 conclusions among a number of Moroccan NGOs. Most members of the Civil Society, who have worked hard to improve political and social conditions in Morocco over the past two decades, have been aware of the publication of the AHDR2003. Its conclusions have comforted many NGO leaders in the relevance of their programs, although they paid more attention to the UNDP 2003 Report on Human Development Index in *Morocco* because of its immediate relevance to their daily concerns than to AHDR2003. This probably accounts for the fact that only the Rabat Rotary Club organized a formal debate around the AHDR2003.

I. 5. Media Coverage

The interest in the AHDR2003 has resulted in a number of articles that were published by a wide selection of Moroccan Arabic and French language dailies and weeklies⁴. A total of 20 articles and reports were published by 13 daily and weekly papers and the Maghreb Arab Press, the Moroccan official news agency between October 22, 2003 and May 18, 2004. This press review includes two articles published in Saudi papers, one of which is published in Casablanca, the second paper reported on a conference dealing with the AHDR2003 that was held at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco. A total of 10 articles and reports were published in French; and 10 in Arabic. Over 50% of the articles were published within two months of the publication of the AHDR in Amman, Jordan.

As a general rule these articles provided informative abstracts of the AHDR and pointed out that the Arab countries have to rise up to the formidable challenge of dealing with the crippling problems identified by the report. The articles that agreed with the drafters of the report were often written by professional journalists and published mainly in the French language dailies. Most of the articles that were critical of many aspects of the AHDR report were published in the Arab language dailies and were very often authored by university professors. But the majority of these articles did not question the methodology or the conclusions of the AHDR. Only three articles published in *Al Alam*, *Al Hayat* and *Attajdid* questioned the methodology used by the writers of the report or argued that the AHDR is not simply another institutional report that proposes recipes for development, but is in fact a real call for the domination of the Arab world, a pamphlet that provides valuable live ammunition to the Bush administration as it attempts to conquer the Arab middle east.

⁴ For a detailed media coverage analysis see the attached Annex 1: "Media Coverage of the AHDR2003 in the Moroccan Media"

The reports about the conferences dealing with the AHDR2003 provide an intellectual investigation of the issues raised by the report. One conference uses one of the recommendations of the report to call for a profound language reform that would put Arabic at the center of an important educational and cultural program. The AHDR brings encouraging arguments to those who support more use of Arabic, and who view the increasing use of English as an attempt to displace Arabic, and prevent it from playing the vital role mother tongues are said to play in the development of essential cognitive skills and the integration of knowledge in social and economic systems.

I. 6. Formulated Policies on AHDR Results

It is safe to say that no policies were formulated on the basis of the AHDR2003 as such although such policies may have been initiated independently from the recommendations of the report itself. As indicated earlier Moroccan decision makers had been grappling with most of the issues raised in this report for about a decade, and had therefore developed national approaches and programs to reform the Moroccan education system, to increase freedom, liberties and human rights and to empower women. The AHDR seems to have been perceived merely as another document that stresses the critical nature and urgency of the need to implement reforms that had been identified quickly.

The AHDR2003 has been perceived more as a threat than a mere call for reform. Although the Report makes a strong and valid case for reforms it has been often portrayed as an external challenge to introduce quick reforms, even if reform means loss of cultural specificities and a watering down of identity. Despite this, most agree that the AHDR2003 allows for benchmarking, which can help towards the improvement of the Arab educational systems, the bridging of the knowledge gap and the upgrading of freedom and social indexes.

II POLICY PROCESS

II. 1. Main Official Actors in Educational Policy and their Mandates

As can be seen from the figures below, the size of the public school system is considerable enough to render any attempts to upgrade it a tough undertaking.

	# of Students	Classrooms	Teachers
Primary school	4,070,177	89,788	135,569
Junior High School	1,161,319	25,889	55,397
Senior High School	603,321	14,408	34,717
Total	5,834,817	130,085	225,683

On the other hand, Moroccan public and private higher education institutions have enrolled in 2003-04 a total of 345,261 students, 80% of whom attend public universities, 8% teacher training schools, 7% engineering schools, and 5% private universities. In the same year public universities have enrolled 277,428 students served by a teaching staff of 14,413 of

whom 24% are women. Only 8.9% (24,571 students) of all public universities students are enrolled in schools with special admission requirements.

The Moroccan educational system includes both private and public schools. The latter cater to the educational needs of the overwhelming majority of the students. Most government ministries provide some form of education in their own institutions, but over 90% of all the students attend schools and universities run by the Ministry of Education. Until very recently there were four main official actors in educational policy, each one in charge of one of the four main units that are entrusted with specific educational missions:

- Primary, secondary and technical education referred to as National Education system;
- Higher education; training and scientific research;
- Vocational training;
- Literacy and non-formal education.

Currently, the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education, Training and Research is directly in charge of the first two units; additionally this ministry oversees the work done by a Secretariat of State, which is attached to it and is in charge of Literacy and Non-Formal education. Vocational Training is under the supervision of the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, thus separated from the former department.

Higher education is also provided in a number of schools of engineering and technology run by other government departments such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Mining, Telecommunications, Planning, Fisheries, Public Administration, etc.

II.1.1 Elementary and secondary education

- Kindergartens are of two types: Quranic schools and modern kindergartens prepare children aged four and five for the elementary school. They are privately run, but are required to follow official educational guidelines.
- Fundamental Schools provide elementary education that lasts six years and caters to students aged six to eleven and junior high schools level education that lasts three years and caters to students aged 12 to 14. Compulsory, and free, fundamental education is provided in elementary and secondary schools to children aged 6 to 16.
- Senior high schools offer specialized curricula designed to prepare students for further training at university. The majority of students are enrolled in general education classes while technical schools attract only a handful of students.
- Post-secondary education is also provided to students planning to enroll either in schools of engineering or business administration, or in technical schools.
- Some foreign cultural missions have set up schools where they provide education similar to the one available in their home countries complemented by courses in

Arabic and Arab and Islamic civilization and culture. The overwhelming majority of the 16,000 students, mostly Moroccans, attend French Mission schools, while a handful attend Spanish, American and Saudi schools

The Ministry of National Education, Higher Education, Training and Research develops curricula and programs, oversees the production of school textbooks and provides initial and further training for teaching and administrative staff. It also supervises private schools and universities to ensure their compliance with current regulations.

School curricula are produced in collaboration with a Standing Committee on Curricula Development and Update that includes 23 members drawn from among educators, administrators, businessmen, artists, scientists and engineers.

Educational policy is implemented by 16 regional *académies*: Regional Academy for Education and Training (AREF). AREFs are public institutions with administrative and financial autonomy whose mission is to manage educational institutions, including the human resources, within its region.

II.1.2 Higher education, training and research

The mission of higher education is to train people needed to contribute to the scientific, technical, economic, social and cultural development of the country.

Higher education is provided primarily by the 14 public universities, in which over 277,000 students are currently enrolled in schools providing the most common fields of knowledge. Up to 2003 this system was modeled on the traditional French type of schooling in which schools enjoyed a large degree of autonomy. Starting in 2001 a major institutional reform was launched to develop an educational system centered on a more proactive university structure that is more the sum of its various schools. Educational leadership is vested in this new institution that relies on evaluation, accreditation and self governance. The traditional curricula and structure are being phased out and are expected to be replaced by a new system by 2007 when the educational system provided by the 14 public universities will be organized in cycles, units and modules:

- *Licence:* *Baccalauréat* + 3 years leading to a Bachelor's Degree
- *Master:* *Baccalauréat* + 5 years leading to a Master's degree
- *Doctorat:* *Baccalauréat* + 8 years leading to a Ph.D.

One exception to this system is Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane whose educational model rests on the standard American credit system leading to the bachelor's degree, master's degree, and the Ph.D. degree. Al Akhawayn University has its own charter (*Dahir Sharif*) and is not under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education; it has its own governing bodies, Academic Council and financial autonomy.

These public institutions are organized in schools and institutes, enjoy administrative and financial autonomy, and operate within a regulatory framework that includes coordination, evaluation and control mechanisms to ensure quality.

The University Council ensures good university governance and approves new educational and administrative reforms, creation of new schools, programs and curricula and accreditation of new programs. This council is made up of national and regional educational, social and business leaders, as well as representatives of faculty and students.

The National Commission for Coordination of Higher Education has been established within the department in charge of Higher Education to serve as an accrediting body and make recommendation concerning the creation of new schools within the university, the definition of criteria and procedures for the evaluation of programs and their accreditation, and the definition of criteria for student admission, enrolment and evaluation. This commission works to promote scientific research and excellence and the development of computer networks between universities. The NCCHE includes representatives of the University Councils, the Coordination Council of Institutes of Higher Education not part of the university, and the Coordination Committee of Private Education and Private and Public Universities.

The Coordination Council of Institutes of Higher Education not part of the regular Moroccan university system provides advice on the creation of new institutes of higher education, internal policies and regulation and tries to develop synergies between public and private institutes of higher education.

II.1.3 Literacy and non formal education

Literacy and non-formal education programs are developed and implemented by a Secretariat of State attached to the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education, and Research. These programs include

- a general program implemented out in Ministry of National Education facilities under the supervision of Ministry of National Education educators and administrators;
- a program carried out in partnership with NGOs specialized in literacy programs;
- a program carried out by public and private businesses designed to upgrade human resources in various sectors through programs designed to improve their functional literacy;

The national program of non-formal education is designed to provide education for all and contribute to the eradication of illiteracy through the insertion of its “students” either in the school system, in vocational schools or in the work force. This program is carried out in partnership with governmental and non-governmental organizations, local government structures, and various socio-economic institutions. Non formal education programs target mainly:

- rural and city outskirts children and girls in particular,
- working children and
- children in precarious conditions.

The length of these programs varies from one to three years, and the weekly load between 6 and 24 to suit beneficiaries' needs. The curricula are designed to meet the training needs of the students and to empower them, facilitate their integration in society and prepare them for the job market.

This program aims to bring illiteracy levels down to 20% by 2010. Special efforts are made to bring this level down to 10% for workers and eradicate illiteracy among children aged 8 to 16.

In addition to these efforts an ambitious literacy program has been launched recently by the Ministry of Religious Affairs through a network of participating mosques.

II.1.4 Vocational education

Vocational training programs are currently organized by the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training. Designed to provide needed skilled workers, middle level and advanced technicians, these programs are developed in collaboration with business leaders to ensure their relevance to market needs. The current sectorial policies seek to promote the training and retraining of employees and technical staff, to increase investment in the development of human resources, and partnerships.

The current educational reform has two main objectives:

- Promote vocational training in the workplace, encourage business people to invest in staff training and develop partnerships
- Encourage practical training in the educational process and reorganize vocational training in a four-level pedagogical structure: (1) specialization at the end of the junior high school level, (2) professional qualification built in the senior high school curricula, (3) a technical and professional curriculum leading to a high school diploma and (4) a university-level program open to technical and professional high school diploma holders.

Vocational training programs are provided by the OFPPT (Office of Vocational Training and the Promotion of Employment)⁵ that was founded in 1974 and by private schools. Vocational training programs are supervised by the National Commission for Vocational Training and Employment that was set up in 1978. This sector was reformed in 1984 and 2000 to increase its effectiveness and the scope of its programs.

⁵ www.ofppt.org.ma

II.2. Extent of Coordination Among their Reform Activities

The implementation of educational reform in Morocco is supervised by two national coordination bodies:

- The COSEF, chaired by one of His Majesty's Advisors, supervises the implementation of the educational reform by the various government departments on the basis of the National Charter for Education and Training and makes recommendations to the various departments.
- The CISREF, the Inter-ministerial Commission for the Implementation of the Education Formation Reform, chaired by the Prime Minister, whose mission is to coordinate the efforts of the government to implement the reform.

King Mohammed VI has recently announced the establishment of the Higher Council for Education which will certainly be the highest coordination and evaluation council of our educational and vocational training programs. Set up in fulfilment of the provisions of the Moroccan Constitution the Higher Council for Education will very likely replace the existing coordination commissions such as the COSEF.

At the level of the MEN coordination efforts involve:

- Meeting of the commissions in charge of planning and implementation of Charter recommendations.
- Programmed coordination meetings attended by the heads of MEN directorates, *académies* and *délégations*.
- Annual campaigns designed to involve the different actors in the active promotion of the school system among parents, and to facilitate the implementation of the reform.
- Social mobilization campaigns conducted at the regional level and designed to involve local government bodies in the implementation of the reform.
- Educational fora organized at the *académie*, *délégation* and school levels designed to involve the largest number of actors in discussions about the objectives of the reform and the benefits that can be derived from its rapid implementation.

II.3. Societal Groups Interested in Educational Reform

Societal groups interested in educational reform include major political parties, NGOs, and trade unions most of which were associated in the inception of the National Charter for Education and Training and the drafting of laws that gave a legal framework to the implementation of the reform and the definition of the new statutes for teachers and schools.

Professional associations involved in education and vocational training fields such as:

- Associations of inspectors
- Associations of school principals
- Associations of teachers
- Associations of private schools and kindergartens

Parent Teacher Associations held a number of nation-wide meetings to take a more active part in the implementation of the reform.

The involvement of a number of NGOs in the implementation of the reform has resulted in a number of partnerships with Zakoura Foundation,⁶ Association Ait Iktel⁷ and Bayti⁸ among many others.

II.4. Existing System of Societal Communication with Policy Makers on Educational Reform

Communication with various social groups concerned by the reform is need based. A case in point was the study day organized by the Teachers' Union to communicate its concerns to policy makers.

The Communications Department of the Ministry of National Education (MNE) publishes reports and documents dealing with the reform and makes this information available on the MNE website⁹.

II.5. Existing System Linking Industry's Needs and Concerns to the Educational Policy Process

Coordination with the business sector occurs during the meetings of the boards of the AREFs and the universities. The assumption is that business leaders who are members of these boards will express industry and business concerns and spell out their training needs. The COSEF is designed to provide a framework for the establishment of linkages between industry and schools.

Professional associations also link industry's needs to technical and vocational education, and often play a significant role in the definition of both curricula and needs. This had led some to argue that this involvement is not always a source of strength because it is believed to discourage innovation causing the system to operate in a closed circuit that

⁶ www.zakourafondation.org

⁷ www.southbazar.com/infos/acteurs/ait_iktel.htm

⁸ www.bayti.net/index.php

⁹ <http://www.dfc.gov.ma> and www.men.gov.ma

produces trained personnel for ministries and some trades who in turn determine curricula and training programs.

Coordination also takes place through educational programs that involve internships in business and industrial workplaces.

II.6. The Interconnection of Problems in Primary, Secondary, Vocational and Higher Education and Existing Ideas to Link Solutions

The creation of a single government department in charge of education in July 2004, the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education, Scientific Research and Training, is more than a formal reorganization of the educational sector; it is a strategic decision stemming from the recommendation of the COSEF and designed to promote more integration, increase system efficiency and establish effective links between the different components of the Moroccan education system.

III DISCOURSE ON EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

III.1. Analysis of Documents Often Cited by Ministries, Intellectuals and NGOs Interested in Education

The most commonly cited documents are the following:

- Speeches of His Majesty King Mohammed VI¹⁰
- National Charter for Education and Training and other COSEF documents¹¹
- Documents produced by the various departments in charge of education
- Relevant documents produced by international organizations such as the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, IEA, etc.
- Research papers published by Moroccan and International authors

III.2. Major Problems with Primary, Secondary, Vocational and Higher Education

III.2.1 Primary and secondary education

The primary and secondary school sector has suffered from the inexistence of a clearly established educational policy to guide educational programs and achieve long term national objectives. Instead, a number of principles such as generalization, Arabization,

¹⁰ <http://www.mincom.gov.ma/english/generalities/speech/index.htm>

¹¹ www.cosef.ac.ma

Moroccanization, unification and tuition free were promoted as founding principles for the Moroccan educational system. The ongoing debate about such principles may help determine their validity and the level of their usefulness in determining an educational policy based on high flying ideals. It is fair to ask whether generalization of education is an end in itself regardless of its content; whether the choice of the language of instruction should rest solely on affective considerations regardless of other objectives; whether unification of the educational system does not hamper innovation and opportunity and finally whether a tuition-free school actually promotes social or educational justice.

This system that has prevailed until very recently gave little importance to the processes needed to successfully implement the curricula. Priority was given to physical aspects of the educational program (classrooms, schools, number of administrative and teaching staff, textbooks, system fluidity) rather than to qualitative aspects such as the acquisition of learning and competencies and skills). The overall structure of the system favored planned and controlled growth through a quota system rather than merit, and did very little to connect general education, technical and vocation education.

Another major problem was represented by the existence of a plethora and archaic administrative structure incapable of good governance, weakened by widespread absenteeism and characterized by a crippling lack of

- personnel trained to manage education,
- efficient management of human resources procedures,
- an efficient evaluation body,
- adequate management procedures, and
- reliable information gathering system.

Research in education was never promoted as a solution to existing problems, and no pilot schools were established to experiment new methods and programs, which meant that the school system relied on blatantly inadequate programs that were little adapted to the learner's environment.

The National Charter for Education and Training developed by the COSEF has spelled out the founding principles of a coherent educational policy designed to correct the weaknesses of the existing systems. This Charter provides for the regionalisation of educational management through the creation of 16 regional academies whose mission is to plan and oversee the implementation of educational policy in their area. The Charter also provides for an independent evaluation body whose mission is to measure the performance and the efficacy of the system. The implementation of the Charter has spawned a number of laws that translate its principles into operational tools and provides a legal framework for the new educational reform¹².

Although it is too early to assess the impact of the reform on the quality of the Moroccan educational system, the time has come to seek answers to questions such as the following:

¹² <http://www.dfc.gov.ma> and www.men.gov.ma

- Have new educational principles replaced the old ones?
- Have the Charter principles been successfully translated into action plans?
- Has an independent and credible evaluation body been set up?
- Is education promoted as a developmental process?
- Has the impact of recent salary raises on system productivity been assessed?

An answer to these questions will certainly be provided by the Fifty Year Report on Human Development in Morocco that is currently under preparation.

III.2.2 Vocational education

Vocational education is currently managed by the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training. A serious attempt was made in 1984 to reform vocational education programs through increased student enrolment, improved and diversified training programs, and increased involvement of industry through membership in sector councils, internships and further training for at least 50% of the industrial workforce.

The second attempt to upgrade vocational education was made by the National Charter for Education and Training. Two measures were taken to link more closely vocational training and industry needs through the development of on the job training requiring a greater private sector involvement in vocational training. There is a clear attempt to disconnect vocational education from national education programs to concentrate on job market needs instead of looking for ways to retrain school drop outs.

As a result of these reforms much progress was made over the past decade as can be seen from the table below¹³

Year	Qualification Level				TOTAL
	Qualified Technician	Technician	Qualification	Specialization	
1964-65					19.400
1984-85	---	21.050	23.320	30.401	74.780
1989-90	---	37.892	40.659	29.678	108.229
1994-95	3.375	40.208	49.432	27.374	120.389
1999-00	9.004	42.371	53.046	24.275	128.700
2003-04	23.966	52.948	51.570	34.511	162.995

Vocational training is currently provided to over 191,000 trainees in 2,132 centers. The number of trainees enrolled in private vocational schools has jumped from 15% in 1984-85 to 40% in 2003-04.

Despite these achievements vocational education still suffers from a number of problems:

- Little vocational education is provided in industrial settings;

¹³ Driss El Yacoubi, "La formation professionnelle au Maroc de 1984 à 2004 : éléments d'analyse des réformes et des résultats" Unpublished paper, September 12, 2004, p. 9.

- on the job training and retraining is still provided only to a handful of employees;
- there are very few viable connections between vocational schools and other schools;
- there is little effective involvement of industrial partners;
- the educational dimension of internships is often missing.

III.2.3 Higher education

Moroccan higher education was overtaken by problems arising from a changing socio-economic and demographic environment in which the system had grown in the nineteen sixties and seventies. These problems were aggravated by acute

- Socio-economic constraints represented mainly by dwindling job opportunities in the public administration sector, the difficulty to identify the needs of a rapidly changing job market, the problematic insertion of university graduates in business and industry,
- Institutional constraints represented by a massive enrollment of students in free access schools, with less than 9% of the total student population attending professional schools, a standard curriculum providing little opportunities for diversification encouraging a high drop out rate and considerably lowering system performance. This rigid educational system provides very few short-term training programs that prepare for the job market; it favors instead long term educational programs, and allows no transfer between major fields of knowledge.
- Pedagogical constraints represented by lengthy procedures needed to develop new curricula and syllabi and require government decrees, pedagogical and teaching methods that do not help students develop their own personality, studies taking far longer than planned (students need an average of 9 years to earn a BA degree instead of 4!), high school graduates with work habits that are totally different from those required by higher education environments.

Many attempts to reform the system were made over the past two decades, but on the whole they addressed only the demographic dimension of higher education, the main preoccupation being how to train qualified professionals for a handful of technical sectors. This led to the creation of a segregated higher education system where over 90% of all the *baccalauréat* holders enrolled in schools with no admissions requirements beyond the high school diploma, while the top 9% enrolled in well staffed, well equipped schools that had stringent admissions requirements.

These attempts created islands of excellence in a sea of mediocrity which led to the delinquency of the system, the deterioration of the educational environment that has sapped the morale of all the actors of this educational drama: students, faculty and staff. The result is that over 90% of the university is overcome by a profound sense of disillusionment and helplessness.

Objectives of the Current Educational Reform

- To provide students wishing to enroll in second cycle university studies with the required knowledge and skills;
- to provide students with skills that facilitate their insertion in the workplace;
- to improve system productivity and fulfill the needs of socio-economic sectors;
- to develop students' language, communication and methodological skills;
- to set up an evolving orientation system;
- to prepare for the insertion of university graduates in the job market and
- to develop fundamental cultural values.

The New Pedagogical System

This new system rests on a number of principles: the division of the academic year into two semesters of 14 to 16 weeks (a summer session may be organized whenever possible); the organization of curricula in semesters, *filières* and *modules*. The student semester workloads are set between 300 and 360 contact hours, depending on the *filière*.

The National Charter for Education and Training and the ensuing battery of laws organizing higher education have provided a legal framework for the reform of the system. The ongoing educational reform attempts to stem the tide of this rampant feeling of helplessness, but it must be pointed out that this blighted reform requires a great deal of political courage and a greater effort to secure the financial resources needed by such an ambitious program.

Political courage is needed to *set up* the necessary regulatory bodies and mechanisms that will do more than rubber stamp incompetence and inefficiency and to provide the necessary outside evaluation if the system is to be credible for both users and employers. Adequate funding is necessary to hire additional human resources, retrain the existing staff and provide necessary infrastructure (classrooms, labs, computers, copying facilities, computers, library space, etc.) The new system requires more qualified staff, more procedures, more classroom space, more access to learning resources in order to promote student centered learning; smaller groups are a must if meaningful student evaluation is to take place. Lack of adequate human and financial resources and infrastructures will make it difficult to upgrade the educational system. Merit must become the name of the game, and not just for students, but for teachers and administrators as well! Going through the motions will not do because no incantations can replace action!

III.3. General Issues of Language and Gender Disparity

III.3.1 Language

Arabic is the language of instruction in primary and secondary schools. In higher education French is the language of instruction in technical and scientific schools, whereas Modern Standard Arabic is used in non-scientific schools.

The choice of a language of instruction is a burning and hot issue that carries a heavy emotional content. It is almost politically incorrect to debate the issue on the basis of learning and educational objectives. The National Charter acknowledges the importance of this issue, but provides no solution. There is a growing awareness that the mother tongue should become the language of instruction in schools—for this reason Tamazigh has been introduced in a number of schools during the past two years—but when it comes to Arabic, it is assumed that Modern Standard Arabic is a mother tongue, when it is not! And yet no one has dared yet use it except in non-formal educational settings!

There is an urgent need to conduct a study to determine what language or languages should be used as teaching languages if desired educational objectives are to be met, and what educational methods, methodologies or didactic materials are needed in order to turn Arabic into a language of instruction for all subjects. It is necessary to investigate the possibility of using Moroccan Arabic as a language of instruction to effect a gradual transition towards Standard Moroccan Arabic.

The language issue also involves the strategic decision to reinforce the teaching of selected foreign languages for themselves and as languages of instruction of other subjects as well.

The language issue poses the problem of teaching training and retraining to raise teaching standards from the rather low point where they stand at present.

III.3.2 Gender disparity

The recent figures published by the Ministry of National Education indicate that gender disparity is rapidly disappearing thanks to the political will to bridge this gap and thanks to the contribution of donor agencies and a number of NGOs to the realization of this national priority.

This quantitative improvement should not, however, hide the problem represented by the high drop out rate that affects girls more than boys and the low quality education that is provided in schools. Indeed the school itself is part of the problem; it has to be reformed to adapt to the socio-economic environment of rural and peri-urban learners. The school should provide a total learning environment where studying and doing homework should co-exist to “free” children for other tasks that await them outside school!

Rural schools should become an agent of social reorganization built on the availability of water, electricity and other amenities; they should adapt to local conditions, and address the language of instruction issue more squarely than has been done so far.

A project called “**La Nouvelle Ecole**” (the New School) was designed in 1997 to fit with the socio-economic reality of the sub-urban areas. In this school, the scholarly day was divided in three periods of time: one for knowledge acquisition, one for practical learning and one for self study and homework. The objectives were to take into account the impossibility of

these students to do any homework when at home and to develop a team working process when coaching during the practice session and remediation periods done by NGO's volunteers. This project was however discarded.

Only solutions that take into account the social reality of the populations and the constraints of the environment like the project discarded above have a chance to bring a long lasting improvement to the education system.

III.4. The “Appropriate” Role of the State and that of the Market in Educational Reform

The Moroccan government organizes and finances almost the totality of the educational system in the country devoting over 30% of the national budget to this sector. The public educational sector which enrolls over 95% of all students in Morocco is tuition free. Tuition is paid to a host of educational institutions that range from kindergartens to institutes of higher education, both national and international that operate in the country. Tuition fees range from as little as five dollars a month charged by some informal kindergartens to \$ 300 a month.

The National Charter considers that it is desirable that private schools enroll as many as 20% of all Moroccan students. A generous legal framework has been set established to promote private education. The private sector, under the leadership of the BMCE Foundation and in collaboration with the PNUD, has launched an ambitious program of a thousand rural schools whose physical infrastructures are certainly better than the average rural schools, but this experience is too recent to provide a reliable evaluation of educational content of the project.

The National Charter has outlined plans to keep primary and secondary schools tuition free, while suggesting that higher education should charge tuition while providing scholarships to needy students. In practice, however, little has been done to put this principle into practice, and it seems that this project will be pigeonholed as have been similar projects before.

There is however, little difference between most private and public schools because they use similar pedagogies, textbooks and even teaching staff. They display the same shortcomings, and the only real difference between the two systems concerns exam results, which are higher in private schools because of smaller classes and intense student coaching and discipline.

The only schools that provide different pedagogies and curricula are the foreign mission schools, including American schools.

The appropriate role for the state and the market actors in educational reform requires the state to continue to finance the educational system at the primary and secondary school levels and require some tuition from students who can afford it while providing a wide array of student help packages in the form of partial tuition waivers, merit scholarships, etc.

Tuition is needed to motivate students, help finance higher education, encourage innovation and excellence in teaching and research and establish more social justice by making some pay for the education they get.

III.5. Capacity of Libraries

Historical Overview

During the pre-colonial period mosques, *madrasas* and *zawiyas* in addition of members of the political and religious elite maintained both private and public libraries. The various Moroccan dynasties built mosque universities, *madrasas* and funded their libraries the most famous of which include Al Qarawiyyine University in Fès, Ben Yusuf *Madrasa* in Marrakesh and over two score *madrasas* built by the Marinid, the Saadi and the Alawi dynasties. Urban and rural *zawiya* also provided education in their quarters, sometimes attracting thousands of students and established substantial libraries. Library collections were built up thanks to private endowments and book and manuscript donations.

The bibliographic resources of the pre-colonial period were made up primarily of manuscripts and handwritten books. The number of printed books began to increase only after in 1865 when a printing house was set up in Fès.

The size of the holdings of some public and private libraries such as the Royal Library and Archives, the National Library and its regional branches, the Qarawiyyine University library, the Sbihi Library and scores of others scattered across Morocco bear testimony to the relative importance of pre-colonial “public” libraries in Morocco. Private libraries belonging to royalty, the political and religious elites often provided hard to find titles to the local *ulama*.

The importance of the holdings of pre-colonial libraries should not obscure the fact that literacy represented an important capital that was monopolized by a small class of *ulama* and *shaykhs*, most of whom were of the opinion that learning and scholarship were their exclusive domain. The importance of the library holdings is more an indication of the prestige of this class, rather than an accurate indicator of the degree of knowledge dissemination. Run by learned men, these institutions did not lend books to the general public, and readers had to consult books and manuscripts on the premises.

Public libraries in Colonial Morocco

French colonial authorities set up a modern structure to develop, centralize and provide information about the country. In addition to the Mission Scientifique du Maroc, founded in Tangier in 1904 they set up l'Institut des hautes études marocaines (1920), l'Institut scientifique (1921) and the Centre d'études juridiques (1921), and gave a legal framework for the existing public libraries through the dahirs of 1926 and 1931. The Bibliothèque générale et archives was founded in 1919, and moved to its current location in 1924, but the first public libraries were set up only in 1929 in Casablanca and Mazagan (El Jadida) to provide technical information to settlers, engineers, architects, etc.

In 1933 there were 10 municipal lending libraries with holdings ranging from 582 to 15000 titles, and a total readership of 1281 patrons. In northern Morocco a traveling library was

set up in 1919 and in 1937 in the rest of the country. Independent Morocco inherited two central public libraries—one in Tétouan and the other in Rabat—and about 20 municipal libraries. These libraries had no standardized catalog and suffered from a haphazard acquisitions policy.

Independent Morocco made no improvements to the legislative framework established in 1926 and 1937, and today public libraries come under the responsibility of various government departments: Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Education and Youth, local government, and the private sector. The Ministry of Culture supervises the majority of these libraries, about 145 public libraries (1 public library for 200,000 inhabitants)

These institutions suffer from understaffing and lack of professional librarians; they have an average of four staff per library, of which only 2.7% are professional librarians! They are concentrated in urban centers, and in a handful of coastal regions as 65% of them are located in 6 of the 16 regions in Morocco.

Public library holdings include mostly printed books, with very few periodicals or non-print formats. The average book/population ratio stands at 0.02! None of these libraries provide information in non-print media, and very few have a children's section. It is estimated that less than 4% of the Moroccan population uses public libraries. The majority of public library users are high school and university students who use these institutions as study rooms.

A recent study devoted to the Rabat-Salé public libraries, a privileged urban area, shows that very little has been done to improve library infrastructures or human resources. Most libraries are located in cramped premises not designed for libraries that provide little space for staff activities and even less space for their patrons. The only public libraries that provide adequate services with varied collections are run by foreign cultural centers.

These libraries rarely open for more than 37 hours per week, and their opening hours correspond to office hours, which excludes most working people. Book circulation is very low and rarely reaches two titles per annum per person. Annual book rotation (the number of times a book is borrowed a year) is 0.07 against the accepted norm of 5, which indicates that books are rarely checked out because they are obsolete.

There is an urgent need to upgrade this depressed sector through the development of a national library plan that would rely on local government agencies, the Ministry of culture and the private sector. More libraries with more space, print and non-print documents and reliable sources of funding are needed. It is estimated that 1505 public libraries are needed to meet international standards, and that over 6 million documents in various formats need to be provided!

Academic and Research Libraries

Academic libraries are found in the schools of the fourteen public universities, Al-Akhawayn University, and the scores of institutes of higher education that are operated by various ministries:

- Military academy, navy and air force schools
- Schools of literature, languages, humanities and social sciences
- Schools of administrative studies

- Schools of agriculture, forestry and fishing
- Schools of architecture and city planning
- Schools of business administration, economic science, statistics
- Schools of civil, mechanical, electrical engineering
- Schools of communications, telecommunications, information science
- Schools of education, teacher training colleges
- Schools of law, business, business administration
- Schools of medicine, pharmacy and health sciences
- Schools of technology and applied science
- Schools of tourism and dramatic arts
- Schools of translation, language research
- National Documentation Center (CND)

Modern library requirements are met only by a handful of these libraries. The vast majority of these institutions are housed in converted buildings that seldom meet the minimum requirements in terms of space, seating capacity, professional and paraprofessional staff or collection size.

These libraries are open only during business hours; operate on the closed stacks model and use a variety of cataloguing models that are not always based on international standards in this field, and their collections usually cover narrowly defined fields that are rarely weeded, and provide very few non print materials, if any. Online databases are available only in a few libraries.

Information technology is rarely used in the majority of these libraries, and when computers are available, they are almost always used exclusively by library staff. There are no public area computers, and Internet access is almost never available either to library staff or patrons.

The only notable exceptions are the National Documentation Center (CND) which was designed as a research and documentation center that provides access to online databases, uses information technology and has a trained corps of professional librarians, the Al Akhawayn University that stands out as the only Moroccan university that boasts a central university library, and the King Abdul Aziz Foundation Library in Casablanca; other universities have only "school" libraries that are accessible only to their own faculty and students. Very often they provide a single reading and reference room with a card catalog. The use of information technology is limited to administrative tasks, and very seldom provides access to the databases. There is great diversity in the use of cataloguing rules. Periodical literature is either scarce or absent from many libraries because of administrative problems or lack of funding.

The 117 private institutes of higher education have very modest library facilities, but make a greater use of information technology and many of them provide broad band internet access.

III.6. New Technology in Teaching: Existing Competencies / Possibilities

The National Charter for Education and Training requires decision makers to promote the use of information technology tools throughout the system. This has led to the development of a plan to use computers and the Internet in schools. A large scale national information literacy program with a budget of \$120 million will be launched in 2005.

The first phase of the project will provide 6000 elementary schools with computers for student use. By 2010 all primary schools will have computers to use in teaching. Likewise all Moroccan junior high schools will be provided with computers over the next few years, whereas all junior high schools have already been equipped with computers. Some technical high schools that provide training programs in computer science, and the training schools for computer science teachers have good information technology infrastructures.

Interactive Television project is designed to use information technology for further training of school teachers, particularly those based in rural areas.

Most public universities have modest information technology infrastructures that have been set up over the past few years. The implementation of the ongoing educational reform that made the teaching of communication and computer science skills compulsory for all students has led public universities to launch a massive program to acquire thousands of computers to be used in teaching and administration. The National Center for Scientific and Technical Research¹⁴ (CNR) is currently implementing a national project known as MARWAN 2 (Moroccan Wide Area Network) in collaboration with Maroc Telecom and the European GEANT network, to equip all Moroccan public universities with broadband Internet access to promote regional networking.

A number of institutes of higher education such as National Higher School of Information Science and Systems Analysis¹⁵ (ENSIAS) and the National Institute of Telecommunications¹⁶ and the Moroccan Institute for Scientific and Technical Information¹⁷ (IMIST), among others, all contribute to the development of competencies both as training and documentation centers.

Morocco has displayed an unflinching interest in the development of distance education through its support of the African Virtual University and the Arab Virtual University, and through the development of a Moroccan Virtual University to promote e-learning and to use the existing educational resources more efficiently.

¹⁴ www.cnr.ac.ma

¹⁵ www.ensias.ma

¹⁶ www.inpt.ac.ma

¹⁷ www.imist.ma

IV. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

IV.1. Recommendations to Improve Problems Concerning Various Levels of Education

The Moroccan educational system, regardless of the government departments that supervise it, suffers from a set of common problems that are found across the system. Those problems are both managerial and pedagogical in nature.

On the managerial side, most schools suffer from a lack of

- personnel trained to manage education,
- an efficient management of human resources procedures,
- an efficient evaluation and quality control body and procedures.

On the pedagogical side, the following are widely acknowledged weaknesses:

- inadequate management set up, mechanisms, and procedures in the education process;
- lack of a reliable information gathering system that establishes early warning devices and, at the same time, displays proactivity and effective problem solving approaches;
- unclear teaching language policy, due to the persistent change in those policies;
- a lack of strong, consistent connections between the three areas of general education, technical education, and vocation education and training;
- a lack of any evaluation set up with which to assess the effectiveness of education and to explore new, innovative areas, in part due to the fact that no adequate research in the field of education has been conceived as a built in instrument..

In addition to the above, **vocational education** still suffers from a number of specific problems:

- Little vocational education is provided in industrial settings;
- Scarce viable connections between vocational schools and other schools;
- Little effective involvement of industrial partners;
- Poor image because vocational training is conceived primarily as a strategy of remediation to limit the impact of failure.

Moroccan **higher education**, on the other hand, was overtaken by problems arising from a changing socio-economic and demographic environment. These problems were aggravated by

- the problematic insertion of university graduates in business and industry,
- a very high rate of attrition (up to 50% in free access schools), associated with a poor internal productivity rate, as graduation requires, on average twice as much time as normally required!
- massive enrollment of students in free access schools, with less than 9% of the total student population attending professional schools,
- pedagogical constraints represented by lengthy procedures needed to develop new curricula and syllabi.

The **current higher education reform aims to**

- link the Moroccan system to the European so-called LMD system
- provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to pursue further studies
- develop students communication and learning skills;
- empower and provide students with skills that facilitate their insertion in the workplace;
- improve the system's productivity and fulfill the needs of socio-economic sectors;
- establish a dynamic orientation system to help students match their skills and aptitudes with their study options;
- improve university governance and decision making;
- develop synergies between universities and industry

Prioritizing Problems

Prioritizing the main problems that beset the Moroccan educational system, one can mention the following:

1. The need to adopt a language to use in Moroccan schools;
2. The low competence level of the vast majority of Moroccan school teachers;
3. The low quality of educational materials;
4. The low number of students attending technical and technological schools.

To address these problems it is necessary to handle as a top priority the following issues:

1. Improve the quality of teachers through better teacher training programs;
2. Develop better educational materials that are adapted to the Moroccan setting;
3. Promote and develop technological and technical education;
4. Provide training in the use of new technologies.

IV.2. Assess Recommendations Feasibility:

IV.2.1. Cost effectiveness

Cost effectiveness of these actions is obvious because improving the quality of teachers, developing better educational materials, promoting technological and technical education and training people in the use of new technologies will produce students that master the skills required to engage in life long learning.

IV.2.2. Political will

The political will to implement these recommendations has been clearly expressed through the national Charter for Education and Training (COSEF), the battery of laws that have been enacted recently and outlined through programmatic actions launched by the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research.

IV.2.3. Winners / losers and their resistance / support strategies

Winners include primarily school children, teachers and ultimately the nation. Resistance may be diffuse but is not expected to take an organized form. Resistance may be expressed by some teachers' unions. Support strategies include "mise en réseau de communication orientation/formation des formateurs, utilisation des expériences en projet pilote ». Losers may include those teachers who do not want to submit to evaluation procedures.

IV.2.4. Most desired level of solution (or intervention)

The most desired level of solution is the national Level, rather than the regional Arab or international levels.

V. HOW DO STAKEHOLDERS ASSESS BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION?

V.1. Lessons Learned from Existing Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation Programs in Which the Stakeholders are/were Involved.

The Ministry of National Education has a long experience in the management of multilateral cooperation programs. Cooperation programs are usually launched in collaboration with international donor agencies mainly from the United States, France, Germany, Japan and a few international organizations have been conducted in selected sectors and regions.

The oldest and most important bilateral cooperation programs are the ones developed with France, followed by Spain and USAID.

The objectives, forms and volume of cooperation have changed during the last five decades. Starting as technical assistance programs in the sixties and seventies, they have evolved to what was called in the late eighties, "actions programs", before addressing specific goals and objectives in the mid nineties. At this time, the Minister of Education, aware of the poor return of a diverse and chaotic cooperation, asked all the donors and cooperation partners to focus on two main weaknesses of the Moroccan education system: the education in rural areas and the education of girls.

A strategy of development of education in rural areas was established and a strategic plan for its implementation prepared. Five provinces among the less performant and with the lowest rates of enrollment and scores were chosen as experimental zones.

The USAID, French and Spanish cooperation, UNESCO and UNICEF joined this very innovative program which outcomes were the improvement of the quality of education, better retention, high enrollment among boys and girls, a real participation of the communities and local NGO's and the enrolment of the oldest to literacy courses, while the infrastructure of the schools was improved and basic facilities like restrooms provided and access to water or/and electricity provided. The pedagogy also was adapted as the scholarly calendar.

This program was supposed to be extended through a World Bank loan and Meda, being a part of what is called "Program of Social Priorities". Unfortunately, with the changes of government, the lessons of these successful experiences were forgotten, the assumption of the ministries is that with the "Charte", the extension of the former experiences, was not needed, and only the physical part of the project was implemented, while other very important recommendations were totally ignored.

It is also important to underline that during the period of time 1995 – 1998, the Ministry of Education launched a vast program of cooperation with national and local NGO's. Most of the improvement of the enrollment and retention rates, especially for girls, was due to the positive role of the NGO's. Today Mohamed V Foundation is supporting these NGO's, providing them funding and support while many private donators are joining the movement, for example, the Foundation BMCE, the Foundation Attijari-Wafa, the Foundation Hermes...etc

More recently, the World bank and USAID have provided support to implement National Charte reforms particularly towards increasing primary school enrolment and completion rate of girls and have supported civil society initiatives focused on rural girls' education issues, in addition to support to implement the Social Priorities Program (known as the BAJ Program). USAID has also signed a contract with the Ministry of National Education to equip schools with computers and to train teachers in the use of modern technology in education.

These various projects have contributed greatly to the rapid increase of schooling rates in rural and peri-urban areas (87.8% of all rural children were enrolled in schools in 2003-2004, of whom 45.1% were girls), but did not improve the quality of education and the attrition rate which is still high, or even higher.

In conclusion, stakeholders view bilateral cooperation as a privileged means to benefit from international know how and expertise. The impact of international cooperation has often been limited because although most cooperation projects serve as testing grounds for ideas and processes their impact is limited because:

- Scarce donor resources are wasted through project duplication (but a short period between 1995 and 1998);
- Duplication of efforts as competing donor agencies deal with the same issues;
- Little use of the experience and know how acquired through these project. Lessons learned are often lost when the same problems are addressed nationwide contexts.

A case in point is the successful Morocco Education for Girls, MEG program—funded by USAID—that was initially set up to test solutions designed to improve the enrollment of girls.

V.2 How Do Stakeholders Assess Appropriate Areas for German Cooperation

Bilateral cooperation with Germany exists in many areas. German cooperation is channeled through GTZ programs, the Goethe Institute and a number of ONGs, the most famous of which is the Konrad Adenauer Foundation that has been very active during the past two decades in the financing of publishing, research and workshops in a number of Moroccan universities.

The Ministry of National Education is currently investigating cooperation with Germany in discussions with the state of Hesse.

Official stakeholders believe bilateral cooperation should benefit primarily from the German *hochschule* experience in technical education, in addition to the following higher leverage areas to upgrade the Moroccan educational system and improve its capacity building:

V.2.1. Educational materials

- Improve textbook quality
- Develop teaching tutorials on CD Rom
- Set up CD Rom production unit
- Internet access to educational sites
- Development of educational Internet sites

V.2.2. Teacher training

- Acquire German know how in teacher training approaches
- Acquire German know how in teacher training program management
- Sustain and support services for upgraded teacher training programs through web-based programs or Regional Training Centers
- Workshops and trainings

V.2.3. Technical and technological education

- Network junior and senior high schools with existing technical and technological schools to promote knowledge about and appreciation of technical and technological education;
- Set up and maintain technical and technological schools network;
- Promote hands-on and practical trainings in primary schools to promote technical education

V.2.4. Technologies of information and communication

- Develop NTIC as a training tool and as a subject matter
- Learn how to teach NTIC in schools (using networked systems and databases, etc.)
- Develop and/or acquire content for NTIC programs;
- Promote and implement distance education programs and approaches

The selection of the four areas for future bilateral cooperation programs with Germany is based on the perceived strengths of German cooperation experience, the established needs of the Moroccan educational system as determined by the national Charter for education and training and the Ministry of National Education ongoing reform programs that are designed to address the most urgent weaknesses of the Moroccan educational system. These areas were selected because they also address the deficits that were identified in AHDR2003, mainly the improvement of knowledge delivery systems and procedures, and the need to promote technical and technological education to help Morocco bridge the knowledge and the technology gaps.

Implementation of projects in these problem areas will contribute to the development of quality curricula and schools, and help improve the Moroccan human development index.

Annexes

1. MEDIA COVERAGE: THE MOROCCAN PRESS

This media coverage report will concern primarily newspaper articles and reports published by the Moroccan press in its Arabic and French language editions. *Asharq al-Awsat* has been included because this Saudi paper publishes a Moroccan edition in Casablanca. *Al Hayat* article is listed in this press review because it is based on a presentation about the AHDR made during a conference organized by Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco.

This report does not include radio and television coverage because of the difficulty to obtain reliable data on this topic. Internet site articles have not been included either although it is understood that the Moroccan public has accessed these sites looking for information about the Arab Human Development Report (AHDR).

This coverage aims at measuring media interest in the publication of the AHDR through a quantitative and qualitative approach. The number and type of publications is important as well as the language and content of the articles. Newspaper publishers are also important in this respect because a content analysis by publisher and language can provide us with views that correspond to sectorial groupings based on the positions of specific constituencies.

This report will first provide article publication data related to the AHDR, a content analysis of all articles listed in chronological order and Summary Comments that include some observations on the impact of the AHDR on the reception of the UNDP 2003 Report on Human Development Index in Morocco.

ARTICLE PUBLICATION DATA

A total of 20 articles and reports dealing with the Arab Human Development Report (AHDR) were published by 13 daily and weekly papers and the Maghreb Arab Press, the Moroccan official news agency between October 22, 2003 and May 18, 2004. Two articles were published in Saudi papers, one of which is published in Casablanca, while the second reported on a conference held in Morocco. A total of 10 articles and reports were published in French; and 10 in Arabic.

Arabic language dailies:

1. <i>Al Alam</i> (http://www.alalam.ma)	3 articles
2. <i>AlAhdath</i> (http://www.alahdath.ma)	1 article
3. <i>AlHayat</i>	1 article
4. <i>Al Ittihad al-Ichtiraqi</i>	1 article
5. <i>Assabah</i> (http://www.assabah.press.ma)	1 article
6. <i>Assahra</i>	1 article
7. <i>Attajdid</i> (http://www.attajdid.ma)	2 articles

Most Arab language dailies are published by the main Moroccan political parties. *Al Alam* is published by the Istiqlal Party, *Al Ahdath al-Maghribiyya* by members of the National

Union of Socialist Forces, *Attajdid* by the Justice and Democracy Party (PJD), while *Assahra* is published by the RNI Rassemblement National des Indépendants. *Assabah* is the only independent publication of the group.

French language dailies:

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. <i>Al Bayane</i> (http://www.albayane.ma) | 1 article |
| 2. <i>Le Matin</i> (http://www.lematin.ma) | 1 report |
| 3. <i>Libération</i> (http://www.liberation.press.ma) | 1 article |
| 4. <i>L'Opinion</i> (http://www.lopinion.ma) | 2 articles |

Three French language dailies are published by three major political parties. The Party of Progress and Socialism publishes *Al Bayane*, the National Union of Socialist Forces publishes *Libération*, while the Istiqlal Party publishes *L'Opinion*. *Le Matin*, on the other hand, is a quasi official paper.

French language weeklies

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. <i>Aujourd'hui le Maroc</i> (http://www.aujourd'hui.ma) | 1 article |
| 2. <i>L'Economiste</i> (http://www.leconomiste.com) | 1 article |
| 3. <i>Le Journal Hebdo</i> (http://www.lejournal.press.ma) | 1 article |

The three weeklies included in this list are published by independent journalists with no clear political ties.

Maghreb Arab Press 1 report

Arab daily published in Morocco

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Asharq al-Awsat (http://www.asharqalawsat.com) | 1 article |
|--|-----------|

Summary Table

Month	# of articles	Arabic	French	Conference
October 03	8	4	4	
November 03	3	1	2	Casablanca
February 04	1	0	1	Beirut, Lebanon
March 04	1	1	0	Ifrane
April 04	3	3	0	Rabat & Marrakech
May 04	4	1	3	Rabat
Total	20	10	10	

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE ARTICLES

L'Economiste (October 23, 2003).

The paper announces the publication of the AHDR in Amman, Jordan.

It points to the high economic value of knowledge, reviews the deficits in knowledge, freedom, literacy and women empowerment outlined by the report and indicates that Arabs

are called upon to invest more in education, promote quality education and research, provide more political freedom, more opportunity, and more freedom of expression to overcome these huge shortcomings.

The Arab world lags behind in almost all fields, and it is urgent to follow Asian development models that promote quality education to catch up with the developed nations.

The tone of the article is even, and there is no feel of urgency in the treatment of these crucial developmental issues. The arguments of the AHDR are apparently accepted at their face value, and the writer suggests that the sensible thing to do is to follow the recommendations of the report.

It also points out that this report has not mentioned the progress made by Morocco towards empowering women, particularly after the September 27, 2002 elections.

Aujourd'hui Le Maroc (November 18, 2003)

Aziz Daki, the author of this article is moved by the diagnosis the AHDR makes of the Arab countries. He subscribes to the conclusions of the report, and sets out to answer the question that stands as the head of his article: "Why are the Arabs doing so poorly?"

The author lists all the deficits discussed by the report that include high illiteracy rates, poor and ineffective educational systems, low quality research and development programs, ineffective and heavily censored media, poor knowledge acquisition and dissemination.

He argues that the time has come to face reality, and that Arabs cannot hide behind convenient conspiracy theories to explain away these deficiencies because the AHDR has been drafted by respected Arab intellectuals for the benefit of the Arab nation.

He suggests that the challenge is to be free or perish, and that freedom has become a necessity if the Arabs are to overcome all the deficits listed in the report. Freedom, democracy and good governance are necessary to provide the needed opportunities which will make knowledge acquisition and hence development possible. Arabs have to realize that they have made so many mistakes, taken so many wrong decisions that must be corrected if they want to remain relevant.

If the Arabs have performed so poorly it is because of the authoritarian structure of society and of the political system that prevents development because it deprives both men and women of basic freedoms. Arabs not even doing well economically speaking: the Arab world is barely above Spain because it makes little use of knowledge!

Al Bayane (October 22, 2003)

This unsigned report announces the publication of the AHDR in Amman, Jordan, pointing out that it has been authored by 40 Arab experts for the UNDP who identify Arab deficits and propose solutions in order to catch up with the rest of the world. Critical deficits in freedom of expression, limited access to education, subjugation of women, and censorship are highlighted, and yet the title of this article speaks only of the lack of freedom of speech in the Arab world!

Bridging the knowledge gap is said to provide a solution towards economic growth and higher productivity.

L'Opinion (May 18, 2004).

One wonders why this paper took months to deal with important document, and why it finally sidesteps the main issues raised by the AHDR.

The author, Abdelkader Mouhcine, points out that some have charged that the report has painted a bleak image of the Arab world, showing that Arabs lag behind in all fields, but instead of addressing this issue he goes on to say that some Arab countries, and more particularly Morocco, have initiated actions designed to promote economic development through the creation of an Arab Free Trade Zone, closes on an oratorical question concerning the challenge that awaits the Arab world..

L'Opinion and Le Matin

These papers publish unsigned reports to announce that Rabat Rotary Club will host a panel discussion on the AHDR on May 13, 2004 in collaboration with the UN Information Center in Morocco. This panel discussion aims at launching a fruitful debate on the AHDR.

Libération (October 22, 2003)

This paper declares that the AHDR is a “call to recover Arab knowledge”.

The author points out that the AHDR is the second of four reports UNDP has commissioned about the Arab world, and quoting Dr. Rima Khalaf Hunaidi, Director of the Arab UNDP region, indicates that the 2002 report had been downloaded over a million times to suggest that the current report is expected to serve as a basis for an Arab debate about the present and the future of the Arab world.

This article points out to the urgent need of bridging the knowledge gap through increased investment in quality education, the promotion of open debates and free speech and the creation of a political and social environment conducive to tolerance and openness.

The report hopes to initiate a debate on the vital issues it outlines in an attempt to promote the development of a knowledge based economy and the development of an Arab knowledge model that is tolerant and enlightened. It also suggests the Arab world should open up further on the rest of the world, pointing out that the golden age of Arab culture corresponds to its greater openness on other cultures.

The article indicates that the World Values Survey shows that Arabs support good governance and the acquisition of knowledge, but display less interest in women empowerment.

The articles lists the “five pillars of an Arab knowledge society” that include freedom of speech and good governance, the acquisition and dissemination of quality education, the promotion of science, research and development, and the information and communications revolution.

The report provides a strategic plan devised by Arab intellectuals to promote change from within. The report indicates that the post 9/11 events have meant a loss of civil liberties across the Arab world, which resulted in the imposition of strict limits on the freedom of speech and opinion, and free access to information.

The report argues that political tensions between the Arab world and the USA should not close the door before knowledge generated in America, the most important source of knowledge in the world today.

The report recommends that Islam be depoliticized. This could be achieved if cultural and political views are expressed through legitimate non-religious channels and institutions, and that Islam is abused by the collusion between tyrannical leaders and ultra conservative religious dignitaries. This situation puts serious limitations on personal freedoms and prevents the participation of women in public life.

Quality education and knowledge are said to be the best means to overcome these deficits and promote durable human development.

This article supports the conclusions of the AHDR and suggests that the Arabs are not against democracy, good governance, freedom of speech, or pursuit of knowledge despite the existence of crippling deficits. It suggests that now that the diagnosis is laid down, all the Arabs have to do is implement the necessary changes!

MAP (Feb 22, 2004)

The Moroccan official news agency MAP announces that Morocco has sent representatives [Prof. Abdelkader Fassi Fihri, Directeur of l'Institut d'Arabisation] to attend a conference organized in Beirut, Lebanon by the Hariri Foundation and the UNDP regional office to discuss ways to implement the AHDR.

[Upon his return from Beirut, Prof. Fassi Fihri hosted a conference on the role of Arabic in the promotion of research and development in the Arab World. This event was announced in the April 15, 2004 issue of *Al Alam*].

***Le Journal Hebdo* (25-31, Oct. 2003)**

This short article states that Arab human development is slowed down by the many deficits identified by the AHDR. Critical deficits in the production and dissemination of knowledge, democratic freedom and good governance to promote economic development are discussed.

The article states that Arab profiling in the USA and Europe will further slow down Arab development: the number of Arab students in America has dropped 30% between 1999 and 2002. Israeli policies in the Middle East also slow Arab development.

***Al Ittihad al Ichtiraqi* (Oct. 22, 2003)**

This article discusses the main traits of the portrait of the Arab world as drawn by the AHDR. It points out that this report has been commissioned by the Arab Fund for

Economic and Social Development and the UNDP Arab region office, and highlights ten features that include: terrorism and freedom, Iraq, Palestine and Israeli threat, Arab Satellite TVs, books, education and arabization, importing culture, decline of Arab middle class, separating knowledge and politics and the Arabic language.

The AHDR paints a bleak picture of the Arab world, sets down an unblinking diagnosis of Arab weaknesses and shortcomings and sets out a framework for Arab development. The report states that this framework requires political freedom, good governance, and freedom of opinion, the freeing of religion from politics, the development of the Arabic language, and accessing other cultures through a dynamic and ambitious translation program.

AHDR charges that some Arab states have taken advantage of the post 9/11 context to curtail civil liberties, while Israel used this opportunity to reoccupy parts of Palestine, and that this very aggression is used by many to delay the implementation of reforms and has encouraged others to pursue a policy of arms build up to meet the challenge posed by Israeli military might.

The report points to the positive role played by a handful of Arab satellite TV stations that promote free debate and work to give an Arab presence on the media front. These efforts cannot however overcome the serious quantitative and qualitative weaknesses of Arab media. Arab governments are urged to reduce their interference in this area to promote freedom of opinion and diversity.

The report shows that Arab book production is insignificant, and that the Arab educational system needs to be improved substantially, pointing out that the success of Asian countries is due mainly to the performance of their educational systems. It points out that arabization of Arab higher education has become a must, and that importing technology does not mean importing the knowledge that accompanies it.

The report argues that the Arab middle class needs to be supported against loss of social prestige, economic status, and a growing sense of uselessness which result in a crippling brain drain that has a negative effect on local development. University graduates unemployment devalorizes knowledge.

The report indicates that only democracy can guarantee the freedom of knowledge because real knowledge can be produced only in a free environment. Academics and intellectuals have been routinely used to legitimate political decisions, and have been oppressed and marginalized whenever they displayed varying degrees of independence.

The report affirms that Arabic is a highly flexible and sophisticated language, and is thus able to access the world of informatics and complex knowledge, but warned that the Arabic language has to overcome many challenges. The Arabs have to develop an Arab knowledge acquisition and dissemination program.

Al Ahdath al-Maghribiyya (Oct. 26, 03)

Knowledge can empower the Arabs again. This heading summarizes this article that emphasizes the importance of knowledge in overcoming underdevelopment and stopping the downward slide of the Arab world. This article list the many Arab deficits listed in the report and suggests that only a heavy investment in education and the introduction of

qualitative changes can allow the Arab world to stop sliding down and begin to catch up with the rest of the world. Bridging the knowledge gap is a vital necessity.

***Attajdid* (Oct. 29, 2003),**

Youness Bidiwi writes that AHDR grants that change needs to start from within. This article lists deficits in civil liberties, knowledge and women empowerment. These deficits can be overcome only if civil liberties are protected, women are empowered and the knowledge gap is bridged. Changes must come from within, not as a result of outside, particularly American, pressures.

Much progress has been achieved during the closing decade of the 20th century, but quantitative and qualitative changes need to be introduced. The report concludes that Arab development should rest on five pillars: (1) right to freely organize, freedom of opinion and speech; (2) development of quality education; (3) “naturalization” of knowledge; (4) development of a knowledge society that integrates knowledge in its social and economic structure; and (5) development of an original Arab knowledge model that is both open and enlightened.

***Assabah* (Oct 31, 2003)**

Abdellah Nihari provides one of the few articles devoted to AHDR that concentrates on Morocco. Like other papers, this article lists the major deficits identified by the AHDR, but devotes considerable space to the enumeration of *Morocco's* weaknesses and deficits. Education is singled out: high illiteracy rates, low levels of schooling, unaffordable education to most families, poor quality kindergarten education, high drop out rate—50% leave school without degrees, and high graduate unemployment rate (40%).

This article concludes that low quality education poses a serious challenge, and that widespread unemployment of high school and university graduates reinforces the belief that education has lost its role as a means of economic development and social promotion.

***Al Hayat* (March 26, 2004)**

Aziz al-Adma, professor at Central European University discusses the concepts of culture and knowledge in the AHDR. His paper is based on a presentation he gave at a conference on the AHDR organized by Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, 11-14 December, 2003.

The author criticizes the AHDR for its failure to point to the changes that have taken place in this part of the world during the past two centuries. The author argues the report presents a simplistic view of development and cannot by any means be said to provide a final solution to Arab development. He argues that this institutional report needs to be refined so as not to be used to justify further domination of the Arab world.

The author contends that the concept of development used in the report ignores the historical dimension of the development of cultures and is weakened by its excessive

universalism, and its failure to account for local, regional, social and economic differences within the Arab world.

The report is also blamed for its faulty conceptualization of Arab culture, religion, and intellectual and cultural heritage. These issues, the author contends, have not been treated scientifically enough as have been the issues related to development, knowledge, educational systems and research.

The author warns that the report presents an inadequate view of religion because it suggests a return to true Islam, ignoring the fact that the religious scene in various Arab countries displays different social and cultural interpretations of Islam according to specific social, economic and political contexts. He argues that it is wrong to believe that culture is permanent while development is changing. He suggests that cultural development is both possible and desirable.

The author argues for the recognition of the clear distinctions that exist between Charia and international legitimacy: Charia is naturally against international legitimacy and human rights (marriage, divorce, inheritance laws, etc.) Culture is not religion, neither is religion culture.

The author points out that this report uses a broad concept of knowledge that includes ethics and shared beliefs, whereas knowledge should be restricted to scientific knowledge to be used for human development. He contends that religious knowledge is not objective knowledge, but a belief-based knowledge whose efficacy is elsewhere.

The author faults the AHDR report on a number of issues that include religion, knowledge, culture, the historical dimension of development, etc. He seems to suggest that this report has not been bold enough to challenge crucial cultural and religious notions.

***Al Alam* (April 15, 2004)**

This is a report announces the organization of a seminar on the role of Arabic in the development of research in Morocco by the Institut d'études et de recherches pour l'arabisation. This seminar will debate this issue starting from the AHDR conclusion that Arab societies must bridge the knowledge gap and promote Arabic to develop a genuine knowledge society in the Arab world.

The purpose of this seminar is to (1) discuss the AHDR, (2) evaluate its propositions; (3) propose ways to promote the use of Arabic in the development of a knowledge society; (4) promote a bold language reform that turns Arabic into a means of producing quality knowledge, and (5) identifying the incentives needed to develop a genuine Arab knowledge base.

***Attajdid* (April 19, 2004)**

In this article Abdelghani Bellout, reports on a seminar that was organized by the Center for Constitutional and Political Studies of Cadi Ayyad University in Morocco, in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation about the AHDR in April 16-17, 2004. The seminar brought together 27 participants from Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia.

This article highlights a limited number of presentations the most notable of which is the presentation given by Yahya Yahyaoui of Mohammed V University (Morocco) about the cultural, economic and political determinants of a knowledge society.

Yahyaoui charges that even the industrialized countries have not become knowledge societies, the last stage of development and that the AHDR poses the problem of development from above and is not clear whether it should come from within or be imposed from outside. He wonders whether change should be imposed from outside if it cannot come from within, and warns that the current situation suggests that it will be imposed from outside, witness the Greater Middle East Initiative, the proposition of France and Germany, the NATO project.

Yahyaoui warns that Arab governments will pay a heavy price, just like Iraq, and charges that Arab intellectuals are irrelevant either because they have been marginalized or co-opted.

One speaker pointed out that development require more women should be educated, given access to jobs and become more involved in practical life if development is to be achieved. Another speaker from Egypt warned that in the West women have enjoyed freedom, and are now commodified. Arab women should be wary!

Al Alam (April 26, 2004)

Abdelilah Belkeziz states the AHDR paves the way from the Greater Middle East Initiative (GMI).

He agrees that this report is an Arab effort to discuss Arab human development and define strategies required to achieve this goal, but warns that we must be wary of its ideological foundations, particularly because it paves the way for the GMI. He contends that the Bush Administration did not have to produce any report to justify its intervention in the Arab Middle East because of the very existence of the AHDR.

Al Alam (May 11, 2004)

Yahya Yahyaoui wonders whether the AHDR paves the way for the GMI.

The author suggests that the two UNDP reports about the Arab world drew strong criticism because (1) they reveal Arab weaknesses and deficits (illiteracy, unemployment, oppression and exploitation, and (2) call for reforms pointing out that if vital reforms are not quickly launched regional stability will be endangered further, and the interests of the developed world will be threatened.

These reports make reform proposals that challenge area rulers to address the severe deficit in democracy and good governance, and the prevalence of corruption. They argue (1) that democracy and good governance must become the framework for human development; (2) that well educated citizens are the proper agents of development, and (3) that free enterprise and opportunity are the proper mechanisms of development.

The failure of the area to develop at the same pace as similar areas is due to its crippling deficits in education, research, and innovation in science and technology. A knowledge

society must first eradicate illiteracy, promote quality education and launch educational reforms. Opportunity promotes the development of democracy, freedom and economic well being.

The author points out that opposition to the AHDR does not include the suggested reforms themselves, but the imposition of reforms from the outside. The report shows that the existing Arab governments are required to carry out the imposed/required reforms. These reports reveal to the world an obvious truth, which whips up resentment.

He argues that the report is *viewed* as a document produced by a conservative and radical US administration determined to shape the Middle East to suit its economic and strategic needs, as an attack on the Arab world.

The author of this article views the AHDR and the GMI as milestones that mark the nadir of Arab decadence and humiliation. These documents are drafted at a time when the American right that holds power in Washington displays a strong determination to turn Israel into a center of scientific and technological power in the region. They show that this dominated area is looking for outside help because by itself it cannot overcome underdevelopment, lack of freedom, etc.

Arab governments are shocked to be told to their face that they have failed to develop their nations or to plan for their future development.

SUMMARY COMMENTS

The AHDR has drawn widespread comments that were published by a wide selection of Moroccan Arabic and French language dailies and weeklies. Over 50% of the articles were published within two months of the publication of the AHDR in Amman, Jordan.

Apart from the conference organized by Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane in December 2003, the remaining other conferences organized either in Morocco or abroad to which Morocco was officially represented took place between February and May 2004.

As a general rule these articles provided informative abstracts of the AHDR and pointed out that the Arab countries have to rise up to the challenge to deal with the crippling problems identified by the report. These articles were often written by professional journalists and published mainly in the French language dailies. Most of the critical articles were published in the Arab language dailies and were very often authored by University professors.

The majority of these articles did not question the methodology or the conclusions of the AHDR. Only three articles published in *Al Alam*, *Al Hayat* and *Attajdid* questioned the methodology used by the writers of the report or argued that the AHDR is more than another institutional report that proposes recipes for development but a real call for the domination of the Arab world, a report that provides valuable live ammunition to the Bush administration in its attempts to conquer the Arab middle east.

The contents of the conferences on which some papers provide reports provide an intellectual investigation of the issues raised by the AHDR, and one even uses its recommendations concerning the valuable role that can be played by Arabic to call for the

implementation of a profound language reform that would put Arabic at the center of an important educational and cultural program. The AHDR brings encouraging arguments to those who support more use of Arabic, and who view the increasing use of English as an attempt to displace Arabic, and prevent it from playing the vital role mother tongues are said to play in the development of cognitive skill and the integration of knowledge in social and economic systems.

Only one article devoted some attention to the picture of Morocco in the AHDR.

The AHDR and the reception of the UNDP 2003 Report on Human Development Index in Morocco.

The AHDR does not seem to have generated the debate its authors have hoped for, but one of its impacts might be observed if we review the media coverage devoted to the publication of the UNDP 2003 Report on Human Development Index in Morocco.

No less than 10 articles were published by the Moroccan Arabic and French language dailies and weeklies, with *Attajdid* publishing 30% of this total within one three months of the publication of this report.

It is interesting to note that while most articles dealing with the AHDR have done little more than provide informative abstracts of the report, taking the position that it has provided an accurate radiography of the Arab world and suggested remedies for the ailments it diagnosed, the articles concerning the 2003 UNDP report on Human Development Index (HDI) dealing with the specific case of Morocco the tone becomes more partial.

Indeed the tone is harsh and critical, and most of the articles denounce the degradation of the HDI in Morocco that is represented by the 126th position held by Morocco in a list of 175 countries surveyed! Tones ranging from irony, objectivity and outright condemnation dominate these articles.

All articles points out that only last year Morocco had ranked 113 and that in one year it had fallen down below an additional 13 countries. This bitterness is displayed through a set of comparative figures that show that Morocco ranks 15 among 19 Arab countries surveyed, ahead only of a war torn Iraq bankrupted by three successive wars, a strict international embargo and foreign occupation, the Sudan, Mauritania, Yemen and Djibouti.

The AHDR seem to have sharpened the feeling that there can be no development without measurable human development that can be quantified thanks to development indicators that put man at the center.

Attajdid, an Arabic language daily published by the PJD, the "Islamist" party devotes a total of three articles where the poor performance of Morocco is said to result from blatant unequal distribution of resources.