Insights into innovation in lifelong learning[1]

Principles of consideration and action of the Commission on Innovations and Learning of the World Committee for Lifelong Learning (CMA)

> **Within the framework of the ethical principles of the CMA's action…**
>> which imply:
>> - a worldwide view on education,
>> - an approach which places the learning subject in interaction in a spatiotemporal context, all along his or her life whatever the modes and places of learning,
>> - a humanistic aim : economy at the service of man and not the contrary
>> - awareness of the diversity of cultures and ideas,
>> - the determination to bring together all the actors by decompartmentalizing cultural, economic and political structures to favor learning.

…the work of the Commission on Innovations and Learning aims at identifying and analyzing learning activities at world level. These activities must be conducted in compliance with the 5 principles mentioned above, and must answer social issues in a given context in an efficient and original way.

Thus, the Commission focuses on "innovations and learning" in so far as they consist in original, nontraditional actions, that is to say designed and implemented in response to the specific needs of a public and adapted to the social, cultural or economic realities of a territory.

This position results from a critical analysis of the **main evolutions of societies and of sciences and technologies** that have appeared at world level since the beginning of the 20th century, and of their **impact on learning practices.**

This document is divided into four parts:

1. Insight into some strong trends in the evolutions of societies
2. Insight into the impact of those evolutions on learning practices
3. Insight into the challenges to take up in order to promote a culture of learning appropriate to today's world
4. Contribution of the Commission on Innovations and Learning, objectives, methods and tools

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[1] One learns from social, cultural and economic life, and more specifically, from organized education and training situations.

1. Insights into some strong trends in the evolutions of societies since the beginning of the 20th century

1.1.   Increase in population

Between 1950 and 2050, the population of OECD countries will not evolve much – around 1 billion people – whereas the world population will increase from 2, 5 billion people to 9,5 billion people (7 billion in 2011).

This situation accounts largely for the fact that OECD countries and the others have different views on education issues. That is why UNESCO emphasizes the need for basic education, especially because of the large number of young people in countries not belonging to OECD, but also because many adults have not attended school in those countries.

We must consequently be aware of the clear-cut differences in the approach of developed countries and developing countries concerning education issues. The former insist on the recognition of experience, on training and employability and on the battle against illiteracy (pan European Regions, United States, Latin America Regions, Asia). The latter focus their action on the fight against illiteracy and on the access to basic education: the 3 R's (Latin America Regions and the Caribbean Islands, Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Arabian Region).

> **! Thus, we must keep in mind that the concept of «innovation in learning" may be understood in a very different manner from one country to another, but can lead to exchanges of experience both ways.**

1.2. Evolutions in life expectancy

Life expectancy has increased considerably (from 42 to 65 years) in a hundred years in all countries, but in an unequal way. Thus, in 2000, life expectancy is 40 years in Benin and 80 years in Japan.

Besides, from 1900 to 2000, the time dedicated to work was divided by three, to the profit of spare time (private life, social life, leisure, retirement) and learning activities (compulsory education, training) (Viard, 2006).

✓ After the Time of belief (predominance of the Church) and the Time of production (predominance of industry), we would thus enter the time of Relationships, with our **free time multiplied by four,** generating a great mobility and implying many personal choices in many areas. These choices require the development of new abilities to be able to decide knowledgeably. Confronted with the uncertainty and complexity which characterize today's societies, will the time thus made available – more or less important according to regions or personal situations – be devoted to more learning activities?

1.3 Technologies evolution in relation with demographic evolution

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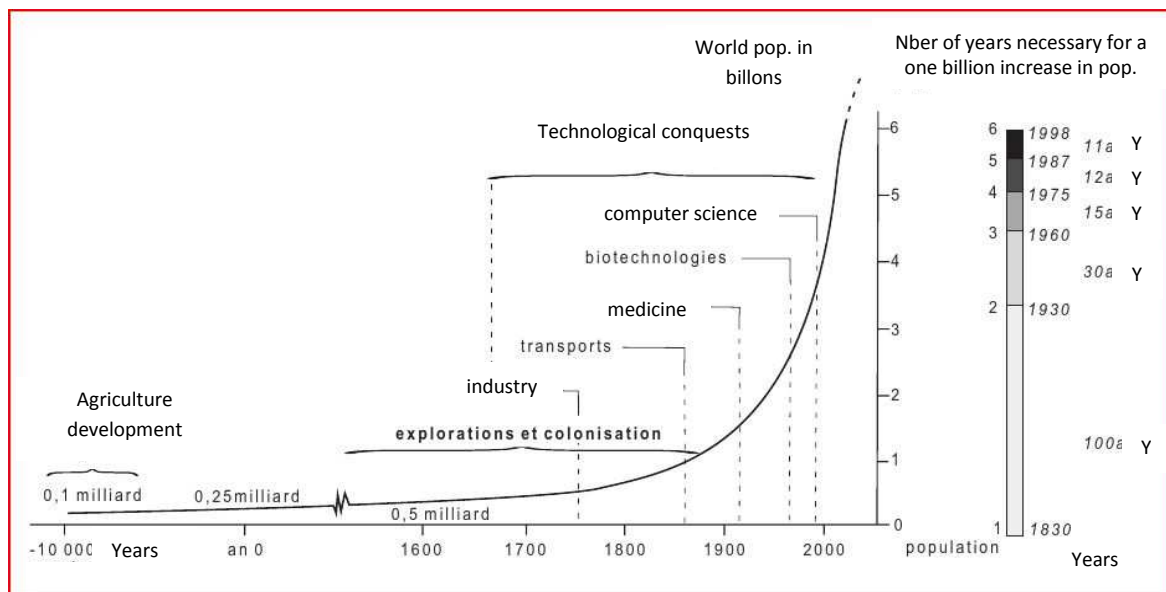
The way of life of people has been transformed thanks to the applications of scientific discoveries in the field of biology (manipulation of the living), of ecology (sustainable development; management of resources: water, forests, food), of demography (drop in infant mortality, birth control). Since 1750, the evolution of techniques has gone along with the increase in population, but a correlation has not been established.

The population growth has been accompanied by an important migration of people from rural areas towards cities, which entails, according to contexts, an access to a better life, or, on the contrary, a passage to poverty, or dire destitution, in relation with slackening social links and endemic unemployment.

✓ **Moreover, among these technological evolutions, ICT generates a major transformation, that could be described as the "tsunami" of digital information.**

Therefore, the manufacturing of data servers and the exponential development of social networks, accessible from a personal computer or mobile phone, anywhere on the planet, involve the command of new skills, namely,

- to know how to select the relevant information, which makes sense and at the right time;
- to be able to learn on a network.

✓ **It is now the individual who can access directly to several sources of information (numerous and more or less transparent) and must give it sense, but who can also transmit his or her own information.**

✓ **A new inequality emerges, that of access to information and knowledge, related to the deficit in education of a part of the population.**

> **! Innovation in learning does not rest on technology itself but in the means of all sorts given to the person to make learning easier.**

1.3 The right to education for all

✓ **Extract (article 26) from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:**

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

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

✓ **Additional elements brought by the Jomtien Declaration (1990) and the Dakar Framework for Action (2000):**

The Jomtien Declaration (1990) recommends[2]:

- Goal 1: Universal access to learning;
- Goal 2: A focus on equity;
- Goal 3: Emphasis on learning outcomes;
- Goal 4: Broadening the means and the scope of basic education;
- Goal 5: Enhancing the environment for learning;
- Goal 6: Strengthening partnerships.

The Dakar Framework for Action (2000)[3] encourages the signatory States to implement the objectives of a *quality basic education for all* by 2015. It emphasizes particularly the education of girls, and contains the promise of donor organizations and countries that *"no countries seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources"*.

Since 1948, elementary education has consequently been compulsory and free. This obligation concerns all the countries which have joined UNO.
In the minds of the authors of this Declaration, human beings must aim at fulfilling themselves completely, education and teaching being merely *means among others* to achieve this result. The approach through learning experience reinforces this objective by extending the learning opportunities to all the situations of life.

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[2] Jomtien Declaration adopted by the World Conference on Education For All, Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990.

[3] The EFA Framework for action, adopted by the World Forum on Education For all, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 april 2000.

2. Insights into the consequences of these evolutions on learning practices

2.1 Education and training as innovation-generating forces … and answers to innovation
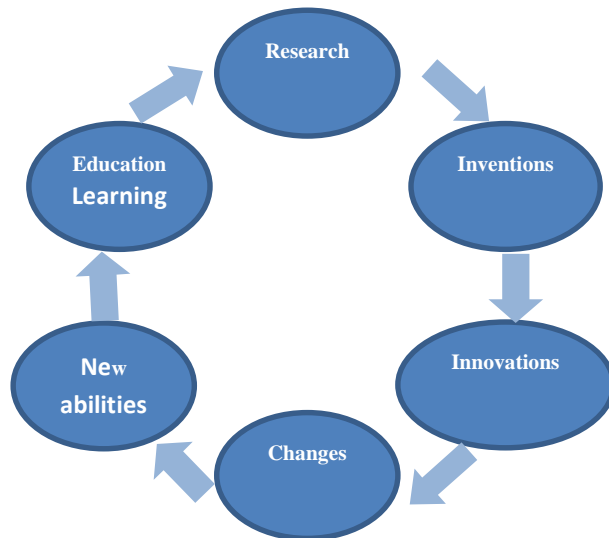
Everything begins with a problem to be solved to cope with reality. Education and training are both the problem and the solution. They are, partly, the solution to the problem of needs for new skills[4]. But they are also a problem; as their development can increase the gap between those who are well-equipped/trained and the others, and because the changes that they entail can cause economic, social and environmental imbalances.

! Any country, whatever its levels of development, is confronted with this cycle, and works out, at its own rhythm, answers of specific learning whose innovative character must be assessed according to the context they come from.

2.2 Education, training, learning: processes and systems to be connected

Life is a long learning experience: **learning** corresponds to the multiple ways and moments of a life to learn; education and training are only one of the aspects of possible learning contexts. From birth to death, we can't help learning. We learn from ourselves, from others, from things. In other words, when we learn we are always taught (among others by teachers, but not only). Teaching and learning are two complementary components of one process.

The compartmentalization between the various forms of learning (formal, non-formal, in formal) and between the operators intervening in the field of education and training implies that we must think in terms of lifelong learning in a context where individuals are mobilized in all their dimensions: development of skills, socialization, citizenship.

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[4] Learning cannot open the way to *autonomy* unless there is the **possibility to choose** one's *aims as well as the means* to learn. Self-direction of one's learning activities cannot be restricted to *motivations* (why?) and *volition* (how?) but should include the relational elements (capacity to act). **One cannot cope with one's responsibilities as an individual without being free to choose.** The approach through *abilities* thus provides:

- an opportunity: possibility to develop what one is capable of doing
- the means to act: to transform this opportunity into actual achievement.

OECD, UNESCO or the European Commission consider mainly the more or less formal aspect of learning activities *organized by institutions* and the type of accreditation of the effects of these activities, to categorize education and training as formal and non-formal, the other learning activities being seen as informal learning activities[5].

2.3 The seven pillars of education for a lifelong learning logic

Learning to:

- **know:** focusing on the transmission of knowledge
- **do:** focusing on the skills in order to act
- **live together:** focusing on life in society
- **be:** focusing on personal development
- **learn:** developing a positive attitude towards learning (responsibility) in order to go on learning throughout one's life
- **change:** taking a critical look on the *status quo* so as to make the present situation evolve
- **become:** developing *beyond* what we already are

"Learning to" means to try to identify the results of education in a broad sense (focusing on the teaching/ learning process) whatever the way in which we learnt.

Among the 7 "learning to", two are particularly favored by the school system: "learning to know" (transmission of knowledge) and "learning to do" (transmission of skills). A third one, "learning to live together", is part of the implicit project of school through the sharing of a common culture: history of the nation, study of the main renowned authors' works, mode of validation of the studies, etc.
We must make conditions easier so that all these "learning to" may develop, at all levels, a culture of learning

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✓ **Learning to know:** Considering the fast changes resulting from scientific progress and the new forms of economic and social activity, it is important to reconcile a sufficiently large general culture with the possibility to study a limited number of subjects thoroughly. This general knowledge constitutes, to a certain extent, the **passport to continuing education,** insofar as it gives both a taste for it as well as its basis.

✓ **Learning to do:** Beyond learning a job, it is necessary to acquire **wider abilities** permitting to face numerous situations, some of which unpredictable. For instance, the skills that make team work easier, a dimension presently too often overlooked in educational methods.These various abilities and the ensuing qualifications become more accessible, in many cases, if pupils and students have the possibility to test and enrich themselves by participating in vocational or social activities during their studies. This justifies the more important place that should be given to the various possibilities to combine school and work experience.

✓ [5]   *Formal education*: activities organized in an institutional framework (schools, secondary schools, universities); *Non formal education:* organized and regular activities out of the above framework; Informal *learning:* non organized and non-regular activities, voluntary and unexpected.

✓ **Learning to live together:** By getting to know more about the others, their story, their traditions and their spirituality. And hence creating a new spirit which, thanks precisely to the perception of our growing interdependence and to a shared analysis of the risks and challenges of the future, encourages the implementation of common projects or an intelligent and peaceful management of inevitable conflicts.

✓ **Learning to be:** That was the main theme of **Edgar Faure's report** published in 1972 under the patronage of UNESCO. Its recommendations are still quite valid today, since the 21st century will require from everyone a wider capacity of autonomy and judgment together with the enhancement of personal responsibility in the fulfillment of the collective fate.

✓ **Learning to learn, to change, and to become:** Cf. supra.

Other "learning to" should be taken into account today:

✓ work in a network;
✓ deal with complexity;
✓ handle risks and seize opportunities;
✓ be proactive in order to anticipate change.
Lifelong learning consists in linking all these "learning to" whatever their origin

! Without abandoning the categorization "formal, non-formal, informal" which characterizes the education and training offer, the Commission on Innovations and Learning will focus on learning actions that rest on a categorization of learning processes, more appropriate to specify the demand for such actions.

! One of the future challenges will be to develop the possibilities of recognition and accreditation of experience so that people and society may profit by the knowledge accumulated through action.

2.4. Placing the individual at the center of the educational relationship
The life of any individual pursues its course in various spheres, progressively building up a social and cultural capital. Four spheres play an important part.

- The political sphere, insofar as it defines orientations which are sustained by budget choices.
- The economic sphere, which conditions the enhancement of abilities through employment
- The cultural sphere, which offers people numerous places suitable for cultural and learning activities.

- The private sphere, where any educational process begins.

But, for those wishing to develop their competence, it is not easy to find their bearings in the jungle of available resources on the territory where they live. It appears that the compartmentalization of the different organizations in charge of accompanying the individuals, at the national level as well as at the local level, leads to a lack of efficiency. A better articulation might permit a better efficiency of collective action.

Territories play an major role in the collective accompaniment of the main stages of anyone's life: normal course, discontinuities, disruptions. They should take into account a wider range of life histories which requires a useful and necessary solidarity to achieve a better individual and collective life. A learning territory must pool the abilities which are efficient and useful to all, especially in countries with strong discrepancies and social inequalities. It is clear that town and region are relevant territories where to develop lifelong learning policies.

On what conditions? Which contract-based links should be invented between territory actors to maintain a balance (between urbanization and depopulation, wealth and poverty)?

3 Insight into the challenges to take up in order to promote a culture of learning appropriate to today's world

3.1 Education must be intended for everyone

✓ **The issue of illiteracy remains one of the plagues of today's world**

Illiteracy in the World:

- 796 million* illiterates (2008) for a world population of 7 billion people
  – India : 36% of the population
  – China : 6%

- 67 million* out-of-school children (2008)

  The number of illiterates at world level is probably underestimated since it was obtained with questions and not by tests.

These global figures conceal strong discrepancies. Thus, 75% illiterate adults in the world live in only 15 countries such as Bangladesh, Brazil, China, India or Nigeria; and 64% adults unable to read or write were women for the period 2000-2006[6].

Since 1948, the efforts made by governments have been considerable, but they are partly wrecked by the population growth. Due to the difficult takeoff of economy in some regions of the world, choices are not always made in favor of education and even less of training.

✓ Illiteracy affects all countries, even those where enrollment rates are high, since the number of adults who have attended school, but who have not practiced writing and

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[6] UNESCO EFA GMR 2006: *Literacy for life*, page 167 (Chapter 6) and UNESCO Literacy Report 2008, page 1.

reading in their everyday life, become illiterate again (in France, it concerns 9% of the population aged between 18 and 65 according to ANLCI).

3.2 Learning must aim at a self-fulfillment beside ensuring short-term employability

✓ Challenge: more *equity* (heath, work, education)*
  – Learning to know, to do, to learn;
✓ Challenge: more *citizenship*
  – Learning to live together;
✓ Challenge: more *dignity*
  – Learning to be, to change, to become

3.3 The courses of action concern many learning fields and actors :

- *Learners:* cultivating and managing (for example: portfolio) their abilities throughout life
- *Teachers*: preparing pupils and students to learn throughout their life in many ways.
- *Associations:* recognizing and validating the abilities of volunteers; developing networks of partners.
- *Local authorities:* promoting a culture of learning; publicizing the learning resources; supporting intercultural intergenerational exchanges.
- *Companies:* improving possibilities to enhance individual and collective abilities, in relation with University.
- *State:* ensuring access for all to basic education; promoting adult education and accreditation of prior experiential learning; coordinating the actions of different administrations concerning learning activities

These actions will be all the more efficient if they imply cooperation between the organizations involved in the implementation of a culture of learning with a view to reviewing the role of school in a Knowledge society, increasing the participation of adults in learning activities, developing learning activities at the workplace, and investing in the social capital favoring an active participation of citizens;

The CMA, wishing to help replace the notion of permanent education, based on the education institution, by that of lifelong learning, based on individuals, intends to adopt a position permitting to encompass the positions of educational institutions, international bodies and private organizations.

! Hence a double necessity for the works of the Commission on Innovations and Learning: to focus, as a priority, on the learning actions:

- **which enable people to place themselves clearly in a learning system that makes sense for them**
- **which facilitate and implement a decompartmentalization between actors**

4. The contribution of the Commission on Innovations and Learning, objectives, methods and tools

The Commission on Innovations and Learning focuses on pinpointing, analyzing and presenting devices facilitating learning modes that illustrate the research themes identified by the CMA.

The emphasis is on innovative and original operations which:

–at methodological level, make sense as regards decompartmentalization between organizations and intercultural relations and facilitate a greater mobility of individuals;

–at the level of objectives, aim at equity in access to education, employment and heath(learning to learn, to know, to do), development of citizenship(learning to live together)and respect of the individuals 'dignity' (learning to be, to change, to become).

All the actors are involved to implement a **culture of learning** enabling everyone to learn throughout his or her life under any circumstances. It requires a decompartmentalization of organizations so as to devise a better articulation between them in the field, where people live.

The work of the Commission comes within the framework of the themes dealt with by CMA (networks, territories, learning organizations) and of the sets of themes linked with research:

• Research on experiments to reduce inequalities in the access to lifelong learning, due to gender, place of residence, social origin (and to the combination of these factors);

• Research on experiments to accompany or take into account the development of non-formal and informal learning, in and out of training institutions. It can include innovative experiments making use of digital resources, or experiments and research in the field of health intercultural relations connected with mobility;

• Research on schemes facilitating knowledge transmission between generations;

• Research on learning organizations which, beside the Western school system, include the subject of spirituality in lifelong learning.

Moreover, the relevancy of actions leading to more learning will be assessed according to the **geopolitical constraints** existing on the territories where are carried out, and to their meaning in that context.

We will also assess how exemplary they are according to the possibility to **transfer them** to other territories

The Commission on Innovations and Learning has elaborated an analysis tool: a display grid of learning actions.

This grid can be used in three ways: description of an action; to accompany an interview; as the plan of a monograph.

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CMA/Commission on"innovations and learning"
Display grid of an innovative learning action

Context

- Political (including organizational aspects)
- Economic
- Cultural
- Problems: key elements, indicators
- Diagnoses, or preliminary studies, or audits…
- Priorities, selected objectives

Description of the learning action

- Title of the action, the State and the territory concerned
- Objectives (what is aimed at)
- Aim(quantified in a precise space- time)
- Expected final direct and indirect results (employment, undertaken creation, integration, other training...)
- Organization: agents(actors: initiator, project manager, possible supervision), partnerships, (distribution of tasks and duties)
- Targeted public (its difficulties, its school level…)
- Learning activities
- Educational devices
- Calendar (preparation, implementation, assessment)
- Financial set-up, yearly budget

Analysis of the relevance of the action in relation to the problematic and its innovative elements

- Values
- Greater awareness of actors
- Learners 'motivation
- learning methods(learning through action, work-based training)
- Use of NICT
- Training and role of teachers
- Place of general education including literacy schemes
- Participation of learners in decisions
- Education to citizenship
- Equity(appropriate training contents)
- Dignity(learning to be, to become)

Medium and long term assessment

- Emancipation of the publics
- Results at the economic, political and cultural level (changes in culture and society)
- Commercial and juridical issues
- In relation to the themes selected by the CMA: decompartmentalization, intercultural development

Prospects

- Durably
- Transferability
- Crucial steps

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First activities selected

- India: DECAPLAN, job training
- Morocco : craftsmanship and education (carpet making)
- Europe : TTNET (Training for Trainers Network)
- RERS : Knowledge reciprocal exchange network
- RERS la Poste : managers ' education
- Réseau des Cités des Métiers (10 countries)
- Personalized Learning Networks / Personalized Learning Workshops
- Réseau des Petits débrouillards : introduction to science
- Competence networking in Arles by les Arbres de connaissance

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