

WORLD education NEWS & REVIEW education

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Regional News

Africa

LESOTHO

■ Unlike female children in most developing countries, girls in Lesotho are educated while their brothers have to work. As soon as they are old enough, male children have traditionally been sent off by their families to become herd boys in rural areas. The income they earn is used for household expenses and to help pay for their sisters' school fees.

But according to a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) spokesperson, the situation for boys in Lesotho is becoming increasingly difficult. The rise of livestock theft has meant that many of these boys have to go without pay — sometimes for up to two years.

They also face another problem. When young males get too old to work as herd boys, many find work in the mines of South Africa. Recently, however, the mines have been cutting back on migrant laborers, preferring to hire local workers instead.

All of this has impacted female education. A vital source of income has been cut off, and women and girls are now forced to find work to help support their families.

At the same time, UNICEF has attempted to set up weekend and night classes for male children who work as herd boys. But these efforts have not met with a great deal of success. It is difficult to set up classes in such remote areas

and even more of a challenge to convince parents of the educational benefits for boys.

— *Daily Mail & Guardian*
July 6, 1999

RWANDA

■ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is currently working with a number of non-government organizations (NGOs) to support local initiatives to rebuild the country's shattered educational system. As a result of UNDP collaboration with an Irish NGO called Refugee Trust, for instance, 24 new classrooms have been built while 41 more were refurbished.

Thanks to one Refugee Trust project, five schools were built and rehabilitated in the village of Giti and four in Mugambazi. The UNDP contributed \$997,000 to this project.

"Education is the key to national reconciliation and skills-building in the future," said Vincent O'Reilly, deputy director of Refugee Trust. "This must break down the barriers of ethnicity, gender and age bias."

Many Rwandans endowed with professional skills, including educators, either fled the country or were killed during the genocidal war that began in 1995. In the last five years, about 90 percent of the population has been forced out of the country, and resettlement of refugees remains a top priority.

— *CHOICES*
August 1999

SOMALIA

■ The European Community (EC) recently announced plans to set aside 700,000 Euro (\$732,000 U.S.) for its primary education program in the town of Merca, which is situated in southern Somalia.

The EC program is rebuilding five schools, in addition to facilitating the development of a school administration system for Merca. At present, less than 25 percent of the town's children are enrolled in primary school, but the EC project is expected to encourage more to attend.

The Merca program is part of a larger, ongoing project to rehabilitate more than 150 primary schools throughout the country by the year 2000. Somalia's education sector has been devastated by the civil war that followed the over-

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throw of Muhammad Siad Barre in 1991.

In addition to EC efforts, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are providing teaching materials and teacher training at the local level. UNICEF and the World Health Organization are also offering child health care services.

—*Yahoo! News Asia*
 Aug. 30, 1999

The Americas

CANADA

■ Tuition fees for college have escalated almost 90 percent since 1990, forcing many students in Canada to rely heavily on student loans with which to finance their education. The average debt load per student is now somewhere around \$25,000.

Student loans in Canada are backed by the government, and awards are based on demonstrated financial need. But even when students take out the maximum loan of \$9,000 a year, they find that they still do not have enough money to cover all their expenses while in school. Hence, more and more students are turning to banks and credit-card companies to help pay for tuition, miscellaneous fees and living expenses.

The Canadian Federation of Students has condemned this practice and urges students to be wary of credit cards in particular.

Financial institutions have invaded campuses around the country in recent years, offering students credit cards that carry steep interest rates. Many of these students, who have little or no form of income, end up getting into terrible debt with credit card companies. Default on a payment can seriously damage a person's credit rating for years, making it impossible to take out a mortgage or car loan.

—*The Toronto Star*
 Aug. 27, 1999

HONDURAS

■ The National Pedagogical Congress was held in Tegucigalpa in July 1999 to review the country's structure of education and to voice proposals for change.

Honduras' educational system has been in a state of decay for many years now due to abject poverty and a series of civil wars. Schools and universities have frequently been crippled by protracted strikes, organized by students and teachers, while many parents refuse to send their children to schools that are unsafe and unproductive.

Few students make it through high school, and of those who do manage to graduate, many are semi-illiterate and unprepared for the job market. Honduras has the fastest population growth rate in the Americas, with most peo-

Regional News

ple under age 25.

Even though the education budget is higher than ever before, the government has been hard-pressed to yield any positive results.

— *Honduras This Week Online*
July 26, 1999

UNITED STATES

■ Instead of building new universities, Florida legislators are encouraging community colleges to offer bachelor programs. In June 1999, a bill was passed that requires the state to reimburse universities, private four-year colleges and community colleges for offering joint bachelor programs at two-year colleges.

The purpose of the new law is to make bachelor programs more accessible to students who live in remote areas where there are no universities. There is a strong need to expand these programs because Florida does not have any four-year state colleges and its 10-campus university system is unable to satisfy the growing demand for higher education. At present, only 29 percent of Florida's 19-year-olds are attending college. Although the state's 28 community colleges will not be permitted to offer bachelor programs on their own, they can seek approval to offer such programs if no public university or private four-year college is willing to form partnerships.

— *The Chronicle of Higher Education*
July 2, 1999

■ In an effort to meet the overwhelming demand for e-commerce courses, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) introduced a new e-commerce and marketing track this fall. Graduating students will receive certification in e-commerce along with their MBA degrees.

Other universities are offering similar programs. Students at Vanderbilt University, for instance, can now specialize in e-commerce;

Carnegie Mellon University offers a one-year program leading to a masters of science in e-commerce; Loyola University in Chicago is in the process of putting together a number of e-commerce related programs; and the Darden Graduate School of Business at the University of Virginia plans to offer e-commerce courses to businesses as well as students.

The growth of e-commerce specialization programs and courses can be attributed to several factors. Many of the lesser-known business schools have been quick to adopt these programs as a way of differentiating themselves from the bigger schools in the battle to attract students. Polytechnic University now offers an electronic business concentration option in its master of sciences management program. The chair of the department stated that his school wants to focus on e-business over general management to differentiate itself from other business schools that do not offer this track. And the strategy seems to be paying off; enrollments have increased 40 percent over last year.

He also said that traditional business schools and financial companies were caught off guard by the sudden proliferation of e-commerce and have been hesitant to embrace the new trend. Some of the more elite business schools like Harvard and Stanford, for instance, have not introduced e-commerce to their MBA programs. At Harvard, only one of about 50 elective courses is geared towards the Internet.

But while just a few years ago e-commerce was viewed with a great deal of suspicion, it is slowly but surely making its way into

the mainstream. MIT recently stated that Fortune 500 companies have started to take it more seriously and want to hire their students who have specialized in e-commerce.

— *Financial Times*
Sept. 6, 1999

Asia-Pacific

AUSTRALIA

■ Between July 1998 and April 1999, the Australian government granted visas to 95,000 international students.

The largest contingent of foreign students receiving visas to attend Australian institutions of higher education came from Indonesia, according to Australian immigration statistics. Most of these

Instead of building new universities, Florida legislators are encouraging community colleges to offer bachelor programs.

students are believed to be ethnic Chinese. A total of 15,000 visas were issued to Indonesian students, which is double the number granted to Japanese and Korean students, and more than half the number granted to students from Hong Kong.

The next largest contingent came from India (6,150 visas) followed by Malaysia (5,938), China (4,926), Britain (4,500), Thailand (4,400), Singapore (4,274) and Taiwan (3,916).

Visa applications from many countries are still down due to the aftershocks of the economic crisis that wreaked havoc on parts of Asia two years ago. The number of students coming from Korea, for example, fell by 35 percent this

year, while student numbers from Malaysia and Singapore were both down by 10 percent.

But the sharp drop in visas issued to students from those three countries — Korea especially — has been offset by big gains in the number of offshore visas granted to students from China (up 75 percent in the past year) and from India and Indonesia (both up 10 percent).

Visa applications from American students are also increasing. Between July 1998 and April 1999, close to 3,700 offshore and onshore visas were granted to students from the United States, compared with less than 2,500 two years ago. At present, the United States is among the top 12 countries from which students apply for visas to study in Australia.

Higher education in Australia attracts students from more than 100 different countries around the world. South America and the Pacific Islands provide the smallest number of students, while the top 20 nations provide 86 percent of all international students who study in Australia.

— *Campus Review*
June 23-29, 1999

CHINA

Colleges and universities in southern China's Guangdong province are aiming to enroll close to 82,000 new students this year, up 64 percent from 1997-98.

The vice-secretary of the Guangdong provincial government stated recently that the recent recruitment drive is designed to help foster domestic consumption and encourage more students to pursue their studies at home rather than abroad.

Rapid economic development in the province has spurred an exodus of students who go overseas to study. According to the Guangdong Bureau of Higher Education, there are currently 6,000 students studying in other countries, a number that triples each year.

Many of these students are not even in college yet. About half of the 6,000 are teenagers enrolled in primary and secondary schools located primarily in Guangdong's prosperous cities. Younger students used to account for less than 30 percent of the total number going abroad to study. In 1997-98, for example, only 50 students from Shenzhen High School applied to overseas programs; there were 90 applicants last fall.

On average, each of these teenagers spends about 150,000 yuan (US\$18,000) per year studying in the United States, Britain and other countries. The local bureau of education estimates that with 2,500 teenagers going abroad each year, Guangdong is losing close to 1 billion yuan (US\$120.5 million) in educational revenues annually.

— *China Daily*
July 28, 1999

INDIA

The Bachelor of Information Technology (BIT), currently offered at Indira Gandhi National Open University, is a three-year intensive program comprised of nine trimesters. After successfully completing the first five trimesters, students are granted a Higher National Diploma (HND) in computing. The HND is awarded by Computing & Multimedia of Edexcel Foundation in Britain and is equivalent to a bachelor's degree in the United Kingdom.

Edexcel is one of the largest degree-awarding bodies in the United Kingdom and is affiliated with BTEC (formerly Business & Technology Education Council) and the University of London Examination and Assessment Council.

On successful completion of the ninth trimester, students are awarded a BIT degree and are eligible to enter the second year of the university's Master's in Computer Applications program.

The only requirement for admission into the BIT program is a valid high school diploma.

— *University News*
June 7, 1999

JAPAN

Japan is currently experiencing a shortage of lawyers. In the wake of a string of personal and corporate bankruptcies resulting from the ongoing recession, many of the country's law schools are under pressure to bolster enroll-

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The screenshot shows a web browser window with the following content:

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ments to meet the demand.

There are currently 16,800 lawyers in Japan, or one lawyer for every 6,600 people, according to a recent survey. Compare this with one lawyer for every 300 people in the United States, and one for every 650 British citizens in the United Kingdom.

Many blame tough entrance and bar exams as the main obstacles to increasing the number of lawyers in the country. According to one source, most of the 1,100 students who passed the Japanese bar last year had taken the exam at least five times before achieving an acceptable score.

Many students applying to law school hire tutors to help them pass the entrance exams. Needless to say, a disproportionate number of students who make it into law school are from high-income families that can afford after-school tutors and the high cost of tuition.

In an effort to turn out more lawyers for the country, the Japanese Federation of Bar Associa-

parents in upgrading facilities and curricula; their strong commitment to and positive attitude towards education; and their superior teaching methods in subjects like math and science. He further suggested that Malaysia's national schools could stand much to gain by emulating their Chinese counterparts.

Of the 600,000 or so children enrolled in Chinese schools, 60,000 — or 10 percent of the total — are Malay children.

Many Malay parents have lost confidence in their national schools and are looking for alternatives.

They have embraced the Chinese schools for a number of reasons: their children can learn a third language (students are taught Mandarin, Bahasa Melaya and English) while in school; science and math are taught better at Chinese schools; children come out of Chinese schools better prepared for college; parents are also given greater flexibility in deciding

about the controversial student-loan scheme, in addition to the impending brain drain of young talent.

Last year 7,683 students left the country, up from 4,713 in 1997-98. These so-called "nonresident borrowers" currently owe more than \$6 million in overdue student loan repayments, a figure that accounts for almost half the \$13.7 million in student loan arrears.

Canterbury University Student Association President Darel Hall was not at all surprised by the IRD statistics. The exodus of graduates and post graduates for greener pastures overseas, he says, has become commonplace on campuses all over the country.

But while students have always taken time off to travel abroad after graduation, Hall claims there has been a "qualitative shift in what's pushing them to go, and what's making them think twice about coming back."

The lack of job opportunities at home and the burden of paying back student loans are the two factors most responsible for the exodus of college graduates, he says.

— *The Press Online*
Sept. 4, 1999

The number of college graduates who leave New Zealand for overseas opportunities and default on student loans has close to doubled during the last 12 months.

tions has agreed to slightly increase the bar exam pass rate, although not enough to satisfy the national demand for lawyers.

— *Times Higher Educational Supplement*
July 16, 1999

MALAYSIA

■ Chinese schools are becoming increasingly popular among Malaysia's non-Chinese students. Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib recently praised Chinese schools for their cooperation with

which particular school is best for their children.

— *The Star Online*
Sept. 2, 1999

NEW ZEALAND

■ According to figures obtained from the Inland Revenue Department (IRD), the number of college graduates who leave New Zealand for overseas opportunities and default on student loans has close to doubled during the last 12 months. The exodus has raised concerns

THE PHILIPPINES

■ De La Salle University in Manila recently graduated 23 social workers from the Certificate Program for Street Educators. The program, which is supported by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), aims to improve services for street children.

An estimated 60,000 to 75,000 street children are sexually exploited or prostituted in the Philippines, according to the DSWD. Many others fall victim to drug abuse, street violence and health hazards.

The certificate program, which was launched about a year ago, offers courses in guidance, counseling, non-formal education, values education, recreational education,

health and physical education, and evaluation and assessment techniques.

— *Manila Bulletin*
Aug. 17, 1999

E. Europe and the Newly Independent States

CZECH REPUBLIC

■ In April 1998, the Czech parliament passed a new higher education act. The law, which went into effect on Jan. 1, aims to:

1) Establish more non-university type education offering vocational programs lasting for three years.

2) Make it possible to establish private institutions of higher education.

3) Change the status of colleges and universities.

4) Evaluate the quality of higher education institutions and the quality of accrediting activities conducted by the Accreditation Commission.

5) Prepare and publish an annual report on the activities and financing of all institutions.

6) Guarantee that higher education remains free of charge except for registration fees.

— *Le Magazine Number 11, 1999*

POLAND

■ A new reform package embracing educational administration, structural organization of the education system and new core curricula went into effect Sept. 1, 1999.

Administrative changes include the following: Nursery, primary and secondary schooling have been placed under the authority of local communes (*gminy*) or districts (*powiaty*). The new reform law has also separated administrative and pedagogical supervision,

with the latter being carried out by regional education authorities.

In addition, four types of schooling have been introduced: the six-year primary school; three-year lower secondary school (*gimnazjum*); three-year specialized upper-secondary school (*liceum*); and two-year vocational school.

Education is now compulsory for all children ages seven to 18. Students will be evaluated after each level of schooling through external standardized tests.

When they finish their three years of specialized upper-secondary school, students are required to take a special examination (*matura*) to enter institutions of higher education.

Students who complete two years of vocational school are permitted to take the *matura* exam so long as they successfully fulfill the requirements for the two-year supplementary *liceum*.

New core curricula have been introduced into all four types of schools. Students must devote 80 percent of their studies to the national core curricula and 20 percent can be chosen from electives.

— *Le Magazine Number 11, 1999*

RUSSIA

■ Local authorities in St. Petersburg recently built six new schools and granted a pay raise for all teachers. But some education analysts and legislators say that, despite these efforts, there is still much work to be done to alleviate the chronic problem of classroom overcrowding.

In addition, schools are in desperate need of repair and require more assistance from the federal government.

In September, salaries increased by 25 to 36 percent for the city's 76,200 teachers who average 922 rubles a month.

St. Petersburg's Education Commission considers classroom overcrowding to be the most serious problem currently facing the

city's school system. About 4 percent — or 22,000 out of 555,000 pupils — have to take classes outside normal school hours this year due to overcrowding, down from 10 percent last year. On average, 35 students are crammed into classrooms that were built to hold a maximum of only 25 students.

The Education Commission has proposed a number of ways to alleviate classroom overcrowding, including the following:

- Transform the extra space in kindergartens, which are let out earlier, into classrooms for elementary and high school students.

- Use the technical-professional colleges, which the federal government ceded to the city last year, to accommodate these pupils.

Besides the overcrowding problem, many school buildings around the city have poor heating systems, unsanitary bathrooms and are laden with fungus and asbestos. Officials from the Education Committee have proposed a four-year plan to renovate school buildings and modernize facilities and equipment, while creating better health conditions for teachers and students.

The plan also aims at lengthening the 11-year school system to 12 years. At present, 25 local schools are experimenting with the 12-year format.

— *The St. Petersburg Times*
Sept. 3, 1999

Middle East

EGYPT

■ Each year in early August, the results for the *thanawaya amma* (annual high school examination) are posted throughout the country, allowing students to learn what university spaces are available to them. Those who do not make the grade cannot get into the faculty of their choice.

Students refer to the year of preparation study before taking the

exam as the "ghoul" largely because of the tremendous pressure they are under to achieve a good score.

Many experts are criticizing the *thanawaya amma* for the agony it puts most students through.

Dr. Muhammad Shaalan, a psychiatrist from Cairo, says students who do not attain high marks in the exam lapse into depression because they feel their dreams for the future have been shattered. Some even commit suicide as a result.

Others agree with Shaalan and blame the current system of education for burdening students with undue woes.

"The *thanawaya amma* is a nightmare for the students and the whole system needs to be revolutionized," opined Professor Madiha al-Safty, a sociologist at the American University of Cairo.

"It emphasizes only memorization and does not allow any creativity or free thinking."

However, despite the numerous complaints from experts and parents alike, education officials insist that the *thanawaya amma* offers the best criteria for determining university spaces for the huge number of students who take the exam each year.

Muhammad Mahrous Ismail, an economics professor at Alexandria University, is critical of the *thanawaya amma* but does not see any alternative to the exam. "Another system might risk the interference of unscrupulous individuals," he said, referring to the enormous pressures that exist in obtaining a university degree.

Moreover, the number of students competing for university places has increased to such a degree that classroom overcrowding has become a chronic problem at Egyptian universities.

But while universities can absorb a lot of the overflow, the job market cannot. Postgraduate unemployment remains an even big-

ger problem for many young Egyptians.

— *Middle East Times*
Aug. 28, 1999

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

■ Abu Dhabi Men's College (ADMC) is offering two new degree programs this year: business information technology and engineering management.

Both programs lead to a bachelor's degree in applied sciences and are geared towards working professionals who wish to enhance their educational background.

Courses for these programs are conducted in the evenings and are offered on a part time basis over 18 months to accommodate working professionals.

Each program only accepts between 15 to 20 students out of 120 applicants.

The business information technology program, which began Sept. 4 when the university reopened, is preparing students for work as senior systems analysts and information technology managers.

It includes seven courses and an industrial project that all students are required to complete before they are awarded a degree.

The engineering management program is scheduled to begin in December and is geared towards professionals who work in the fields of civil, chemical, mechanical and aviation engineering. Only 20 applicants will be accepted into this program.

— *Khaleej Times Online*
Sept. 1, 1999

W. Europe

MALTA

■ The government plans to open the Malta College of Technology, Applied Arts and Sciences (MCTAAS). The new institution will provide technical and

vocational education for mostly 16 to 19-year-olds and eventually plans to offer degrees.

There are currently 3,800 students in Malta attending 14 pre-higher education colleges. The establishment of a national technical college would bring these students together under the roof of a single governing body with university status.

At present, Malta University is the country's sole provider of higher education.

But with the opening of MCTAAS next year, students will have a choice between an academic track offered at the university and an alternative vocational track offered at the proposed technical college.

The number of 18-year-olds enrolled at Malta University has increased from 6 percent in 1987 to about 20 percent today. Although the school would like to see this figure reach the European average of between 30 and 40 percent, some education officials are concerned that MCTAAS will attract a lot of students who otherwise would have enrolled at the university. But officials are hoping that both institutions will benefit from the country's expanding student population. In the 1980s, state kindergartens were set up in every town — an initiative that enrolled 90 percent of Malta's three- and four-year-olds.

Those who were four-years old in 1984 are of college age today and are looking to pursue higher education programs.

Student numbers at Malta University have climbed from 1,000 in the early 1980s to 10,000 today. The university is also looking to expand its adult education and international programs, as well. With regard to the latter, Malta University currently enrolls around 400 foreign students who come from 70 different countries.

— *Times Higher Education Supplement*
July 23, 1999

Recent Developments in Egyptian Education

by Ulla Maija Salmi

Schools and institutions of higher learning have existed in Egypt since ancient times. In the days of the Pharaohs, adult education was largely conducted in temples where astronomy, medicine, geometry and physics, among other subjects, were taught.

When the Greek-speaking Ptolemies ruled Egypt (323-300), Alexandria University and the famed Library of Alexandria served as the two main pillars of higher education.

In the middle of the seventh century, Islamic education was established throughout Egypt, giving rise to two distinct institutions: the *kuttab* (Koranic schools for children) and the *madrasah*, which became centers of learning for older students and scholars.

Al-Azhar University, the world's oldest continuously functioning university founded in A.D. 970, constituted the core of this educational system until the 19th century.

Muhammad Ali, who ruled from 1805 to 1849, is largely credited with modernizing Egyptian education. He hired experts and technicians from Europe and founded a number of secular schools and military training academies based on Western models.

During his reign, the most promising Egyptian students were sent to Europe to study on government scholarships. In 1908, the Egyptian University (later Cairo University) was founded as the country's first secular institution of higher education.

The tradition of overseas study continues to this day. In 1997, for instance, about 500 students were sent abroad on government stipends to pursue doctoral studies.

Egypt's educational system

grew exponentially following the revolution of 1952. The ruling junta, led by Gamal Abdul Nasser, envisioned a country where every Egyptian citizen had access to schools and universities. Unfortunately, the system was unable to keep up with the rising demand for education, resulting in the chronic overcrowding of classrooms and lecture halls.

When oil prices collapsed in the early 1980s, the Egyptian economy took a turn for the worse. At the same time, the population growth rate continued to soar. Egypt's population is currently 67,273,906, with an annual growth rate of 1.82 percent.

In 1996, more than 24 million Egyptians were between the ages of six and 24, a figure that has impacted dramatically on the country's education system.

In the mid-1980s, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) published a critical report on Egypt's system of education, and by the early part of the 1990s, the Egyptian government moved to-

wards educational reform. Most of the reforms have received substantial financial backing from United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations and, more recently, the European Union.

Structure and Administration of Education in Egypt

There are two parallel educational systems in Egypt: the religious Al-Azhar system and the secular system. Both the Al-Azhar institutes and Al-Azhar University operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Al-Azhar Affairs.

The Ministry of Education supervises the secular schools while higher education falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Al-Azhar University and its satellite schools are not discussed in this article because there is no current data to suggest the religious educational system has undergone the same kinds of changes as its secular counterpart.

Basic Education

By the mid-1980s, Egyptian schools were suffering from an acute shortage of classroom space. The overcrowding was so bad, in fact, that students had to attend school in shifts, with some schools operating on as many as four shifts

a day. Many parents sent their children off to work full-time when it became clear that a few hours of schooling each day wasn't going to help them learn a profession or

trade.

One of the proposals set forth in the UNESCO report was to shorten the length of basic education. Prior to 1988, basic education consisted of six years of primary school and three years of preparatory education. After that year, primary education was shortened to five years, while prepara-

By the mid-1980s, Egyptian schools were suffering from an acute shortage of classroom space.

tory education remained at three years.

The educational reforms also prolonged the school year from 32 weeks to 38-40 weeks, depending on Ramadan. As the number of years spent at school diminished, the real amount of study hours increased.

Prior to 1988, students attended school for 288 weeks over a period of nine years. After that year, however, they spent 304 weeks at school over eight years.

In 1994, a completely new curriculum was introduced that added more study hours per week during the five years of basic education (for the new primary- and preparatory-school curricula, see appendix on page 12).

The objective here was to have students spend one year less at school in order to better utilize classroom space.

Between 1991 and 1996, government funding for basic education increased by about 45 percent. During that time, student enrollments rose by around 12 percent. In the last decade, more than 6,000 new schools have been built. New textbooks and teachers' manuals have also been published and are currently used in schools all over Egypt.

A technological development program, launched a few years ago, aimed at distributing multimedia instructional material to schools undergoing computerization. At the end of 1997, approximately 4,000 schools all over the country were connected to the Internet.

Measures have also been taken to increase the number of qualified teachers and to improve the teaching methods of current classroom instructors through new training programs. At present, about 1,000 Egyptian teachers take part in international in-service teacher training programs each year.

Secondary Education

1) General Secondary Education

General secondary education in Egypt consists of three years of study following eight years of basic education. There are two main tracks of general secondary education: arts and science.

Since 1988, the first two years of secondary school are common to both tracks and consist of the following subjects: Arabic, religious studies, two foreign languages,

students must obtain a score of at least 238 out of a possible 280 in the basic education examination.

Students graduate from secondary school by passing the *thanawaya amma* (general secondary school final examination). Starting in 1995/96, the *thanawaya amma* examinations have been taken during the last two years of secondary education. Students are also allowed to retake any part of the examination they did not pass the first time around. Additional

**“Classes of excellence” or honors classes
have also been established for
exceptionally gifted pupils and are
conducted separately at regular schools.**

es, math, science, civics, physical education, one elective in art/music and one in the technological subjects.

During the third year, students in both tracks continue to study Arabic, two foreign languages, religious education, civics, physical education and one elective in arts/music and technical studies. However, students who choose the arts track study arts subjects, such as philosophy, logic, statistics and economics while science students, in contrast, take subjects like math and physics.

In addition, students from the arts track have to choose one science subject, and students from the science track must choose one arts subject (for the new secondary school curriculum, see appendix on page 12).

“Classes of excellence” or honors classes have also been established for exceptionally gifted pupils and are conducted separately at regular schools. Students who wish to enroll in these classes must pass aptitude and creative thinking tests. To take these tests, stu-

changes may be forthcoming because the examination is frequently reviewed (see Regional News section).

2) Technical Secondary Education

Technical secondary education offers three- and five-year programs in commerce, agriculture and industry. Students who successfully complete these courses and pass the national examination are awarded the Technical Secondary School Certificate, which makes them eligible for higher education.

Higher Education

Higher education is offered primarily at universities and higher institutes. The higher institutes often operate under the auspices of ministries other than the Ministry of Education and offer programs in the applied fields.

All universities require a passing grade on the *thanawaya amma* exam for admission into an undergraduate program. However, some institutions restrict the number of

RESEARCH, continued on page 11

*Book Review***African Education Guide is a Useful Resource**

by Kenneth Warren
WES Senior Area Specialist

The *Guide to Higher Education in Africa* is a particularly welcome contribution given the dearth of available information on African systems of higher education.

Published in English and soon to be published in French, this first edition guidebook is the result of a new partnership formed between the Association of African Universities (AAU) and the International Association of Universities (IAU) to collect and disseminate current data on higher education in Africa.

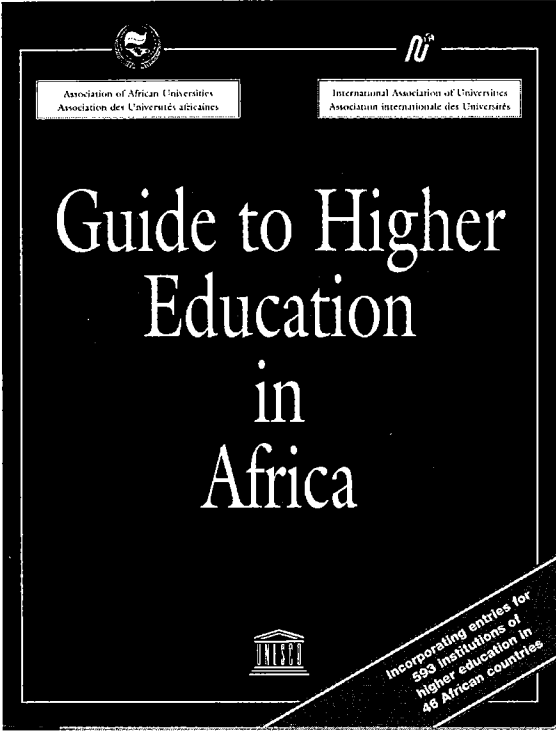
The guide presents detailed descriptions of the educational systems of 46 African nations, including their institutions of higher education and the national agencies responsible for higher education in each country.

Although information is scant for some schools, nearly 600 colleges, universities and technical institutes are listed in the book, most with detailed institutional profiles.

In addition to providing concise overviews of each country's educational system, the book deals with the various levels and sectors of education (including vocational and technical studies and different stages of university-level studies) and presents them in easy-to-read format. Educational credentials are also listed in the native languages of each country and include English translations.

Further information is provided on admission requirements, grading systems, non-formal higher education, recognition of studies and qualifications, and teacher training. The reader will also find information dealing with student services and expenses, financial

Guide to Higher Education in Africa
by the Association of African Universities &
the International Association of Universities
Price: \$65



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aid and international cooperation.

The *Guide to Higher Education in Africa* is a user-friendly, affordable resource that should be included in all reference libraries.

It is both well organized and comprehensive, building on much of the material found in the most recent version of the World Aca-

demic Database CD-ROM.

The guide is also a useful source of up-to-date information on higher education addresses, official institutional contact persons, telephone and fax numbers and e-mail addresses.

RESEARCH, continued from page 9

applicants they accept each year and administer their own entrance exams in addition to the *thana-wayya amma* requirement.

1) University Education

Egyptian university programs are four years in length and lead to a *baccalaureos* degree in the sciences and to the *licence* in law and arts.

The *magistr* requires two to three years of study beyond the *baccalaureos* and usually requires a thesis.

The highest degree is the *doktora*. It requires at least two years of research beyond the *magistr* and a dissertation. In medicine, a *doktora* in medical sciences may be prepared concurrently with the professional doctor of medicine degree.

University facilities have improved significantly in the last few years. Because most university instructors hold doctorates — often earned from abroad — there is no shortage of qualified professors. A few years ago, a number of surveys reported that university libraries in Egypt suffered from a dearth of up-to-date scientific literature.

While this still holds true today, research facilities are improving thanks to the implementation of new technology. Many university libraries are now linked to the Internet, which is becoming increasingly accessible to a wide range of students.

2) Non-University Higher Education

Industrial and commercial technical institutes often provide two-year courses leading to a diploma in a variety of professions, including accountancy, secretarial work, insurance, computer science and electronics.

Several new engineering and technological institutes have been established in recent years: the Higher Institute of Technology in

Benha, the Industrial Institute of Cairo, the Industrial Institute of Beni Seouif and the Computer Institute of Port Said.

3) Private Universities

The government has also encouraged the establishment of private institutes and universities. Until 1996, the American University of Cairo was the only private university in Egypt. In October 1996, however, four new private universities were opened:

- Egyptian International University in Ismailiya
- Egypt University for Science and Technology
- Sixth of October University
- October University for Modern Letters and Sciences in Sixth of October City

These four schools were established under the indirect supervision of the Supreme Council for Universities, which is responsible for monitoring standards to ensure graduation certificates from state and private universities represent an equal educational level. They have been authorized by the government to provide instruction and to collect tuition fees.

Private universities are free to implement their own criteria for admission, and to set fees without intervention from the Ministry of Education.

Teacher Education

1) Primary

New primary school teachers are now required to hold a degree from a university faculty of education. Those who do not have the proper qualifications must enroll in retraining programs at education faculties. Courses for these programs (four years in length) are held in the evening and lead to a Bachelor of Education (BE) degree.

Ain Shams University has also started a distance-learning program to upgrade teaching quali-

cations leading to a BE in primary education.

2) Secondary

Holders of the General Certificate of Secondary Education are eligible to enter four-year secondary school teacher-training courses offered at university faculties of education.

Those who hold a four-year university degree are also eligible to teach at the secondary level, provided they have completed one year of postgraduate training at a university faculty of education and earned a General Diploma. However, university graduates who specialized in certain "shortage" subjects can begin teaching without teaching qualifications.

Useful Addresses

Further information about educational reform in Egypt and the technological development program can be found on the home page of the Egyptian Ministry of Education: <http://home.moe.edu/english>.

A current list of Egyptian universities and their addresses can be found on the home page of the Supreme Council of Universities: <http://www.frcu.eun.eg>.

Sources

- 1) *World Guide to Higher Education*
- 2) *Handbook of World Education*
- 3) *The International Guide to Qualifications in Education*

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See the appendix to this article on page 12.

APPENDIX FOR RESEARCH ARTICLE, from page 11

The Primary School Curriculum 1994/95 (38 week school year)

Subject	Grades				
	1	2	3	4	5
Religious Education	3	3	3	3	3
Arabic Language	12	12	12	11	8
Arabic Handwriting	2	2	2	1	1
English Language	-	-	-	3	3
Mathematics	6	6	6	6	6
Social Studies	-	-	-	2	3
Science and Health	-	-	-	2	4
Educational Activities & Practical Skills	10	10	10	-	-
Technical Education	-	-	-	2	2
Physical Education	-	-	-	3	2
Music	-	-	-	2	1
Practical/Technical Training	-	-	-	3	2
Library	1	1	1	1	-
Total	34	34	34	39	35

Source: National Center for Educational Research and Development,
Ministry of Education, Cairo

Preparatory School Curriculum 1994/95 (38 week school year)

Subject	Grades		
	6	7	8
Religious Education	2	2	2
Arabic Language	6	6	6
Foreign Language	5	5	5
Mathematics	5	5	5
Social Studies	3	3	3
Science & Health	4	4	4
Technical Education	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	2	2
Music	1	1	1
Practical Training	4	4	4
Total	34	34	34

Source: National Center for Educational Research and Development,
Ministry of Education, Cairo

General Secondary School Curriculum 1994/95 (38 week school year)

Subject	Grade		
	9	10	11
Religious Education	2	2	2
Arabic Language	6	6	6
First Foreign Language	6	6	6
Second Foreign Language	3	6	-
Mathematics	4	5	5
Chemistry	2	5	-
Physics	2	-	5
Biology	2	5	-
History	2	-	5
Geography	2	5	-
Civics	1	-	1
Music/Art	2	-	2/2*
Technological Subjects**	2	-	2
Physical Education	2	1	2
Psychology & Sociology	-	5	-
Geology & Environmental Sciences	-	5	-
Philosophy & Logic	-	-	5
Statistics & Economy	-	-	5
Total	38	36	31

* Student chooses one subject.

** Technological Subjects include: Home economics, Commercial, Agricultural or Industrial field, and Computers. Student chooses one subject
Source: National Center for Educational Research and Development, Ministry of Education, Cairo

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