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What education for what development? Towards a broader and consensual vision by the OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank in the context of SDGs?

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What education for what development? Towards a broader and consensual vision by the OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank in the context of SDGs?

Most international organizations participate in education because this sector contributes to development. This is the situation for the three organizations that we have examined: the OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank. This paper follows on from previous research which attempted to identify their exact attitude to the link between education and development over the period 1990 to 2010. For this present research, in the context of a common approach to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we have paid particular attention to the possible effects that this context brings to the organizations' official positions: does it provoke paradigm shifts in terms of development visions likely to affect education? Is there a convergence among organizations that historically did not share the same vision?

Keywords: international organizations; OECD; UNESCO; World Bank; education policy; development; Sustainable Development Goals

The research context

International organizations influencing educational policies in both the North and the South stress the importance of investing in education since it contributes to development. The recent Incheon Declaration, approved by national and international actors and directed towards the new global educational objectives, stated clearly once again: "Our vision is to transform lives through education, recognizing the important role of education as a main driver of development and in achieving the other proposed SDGs [Sustainable Development Goals]" (UNESCO et al. 2015, 1). Therefore, if we turn our attention to the role of international organizations in educational policies, it is absolutely essential to examine their development models. In other words: What is their vision of development? What is the impact of this vision on education?

Development?

To better understand each organization's vision of development, it is first vital to clarify the meaning of this concept, specifying from where it came and highlighting its many definitions.

In the simplest terms and in its minimalist conception, development is a change process over time. And this change is most frequently considered as positive. This definition by itself does not mean very much. It is particularly interesting to find out exactly what the content of this change is. From this point on, particular political and moral approaches will be adopted by the users of this concept.

It should be stated that the concept of development appeared in the period following the Second World War, and was particularly conspicuous in the inaugural speech of the American President Truman (1949). He made reference to the course of economic and social progress in colonial and post-colonial countries. Already at that time, he foresaw a development model that should be promoted, which was, not surprisingly in the context of the Cold War, the American model based on democratic values, liberty, etc., in contrast to the Communist model. What was particularly noteworthy in his speech is that there would be different phases of development, such that we would start with a basic level of development in order to reach the ultimate phase, which was that of the developed countries. Thus, for President Truman, colonial countries were at a rather basic level of development and they should strive to reach the ultimate level of development.

In general terms, there are different paradigms to the theory of development. Based on McCowan (2015), we would now like to present the main ones. The first one, the liberal capitalist paradigm, stresses the need to emphasize economic growth in the context of globalization. The strategy is to modernize institutions and economic activities, to change attitudes, and to improve workers' competences and productivity. This paradigm is located within a very economic-centred vision. Next comes the Marxist paradigm, often contrasted with the previous paradigm, which promotes the idea of granting liberty to peoples and individuals in a context of economic exploitation. Particularly for developing countries, the strategy is to break the ties of dependence on the former—sometimes even modern—colonial powers. A third paradigm is post-colonialism, which is mentioned less frequently. The idea is to achieve a different structure of society as perceived by others by dismantling the dominant conceptions of development. It is aimed particularly at former colonial countries. A fourth paradigm,

liberal egalitarianism, corresponds to the official vision of the institutions of the United Nations System. Its key concepts are human rights, equality, fundamental freedoms or well-being. The strategy is to establish constitutional guarantees and international obligations in order that these principles are respected. Finally, the last paradigm is radical humanism, which has for vision the transformation of consciences through the freedom of peoples and the creation of a just society. To achieve this objective, the strategy is to empower individuals and society, particularly through education or various political initiatives.

It should be made clear that the paradigms we have just presented are, by definition, fixed models lacking flexibility. Indeed, some of these paradigms may overlap: we are thinking particularly of the Marxist and post-colonial models. Furthermore, the features of different paradigms may be identifiable in the development policies in a particular context.

Finally, the first paradigm presented—liberal capitalism—is often considered as the dominant development model at the international level. For Morin (2011), “growth is perceived as the most obvious and dependable motor of development, and development as the most obvious and dependable motor of growth. The two terms are at the same time a means and an end of each other” (23). Adams, Acedo and Popa (2012) state that models of development have evolved over time, gradually integrating more social aspects such as the issues associated with poverty. However, economic growth and global competition remain among the primary aims of development.

The OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank

In our research, we have paid attention to the links between education and development from the point of view of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank—important international organizations for the education sector at the global level. In order to better understand the issues associated with the problem being tackled, we would like to present the principal characteristics of the three organizations.

One common feature is the period when they were set up, namely following the Second World War. The principal purpose of the World Bank set up in 1945, and the OECD, in 1948, was to participate in the reconstruction of Europe which had suffered the consequences of the war. In similar circumstances, the mission of UNESCO, born in

1945, was to enhance peace-building. Towards the end of the 1950s, with the European countries in a more favourable situation, the World Bank and UNESCO directed their activities more particularly to the newly independent countries, basically towards the countries of the South. The OECD, which had originally been called the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), also took an interest in other contexts.

As far as their governance is concerned, the OECD consists of thirty-four member states, UNESCO of 195 and the World Bank of 189. In the third organization, the distribution of voting powers by member states is based on an assessment of national revenue, exchange reserves and its contribution to international commerce. This is the famous “one dollar/one vote” (Stein 2004). For the other two organizations, the operating procedure is more democratic—at least officially—since the Council of the OECD has within it one representative by member state and, for UNESCO, all member states have a seat at its General Conference, its principal decision-making body.

Their fields of activity vary according to each organization. The World Bank intervenes more in developing countries, the OECD in industrialized countries and UNESCO at the global level. Concerning the areas in which they operate, it is important to emphasize that education is not the only sector where these organizations are carrying out their activities. The World Bank and the OECD are multi-sectoral. Furthermore, for the World Bank, it should be noted that the social sector, consisting essentially of education and health, accounts for approximately one quarter of loans granted, which means that education is lost among the other priorities (Lauwerier 2013). Within UNESCO, education is a key sector, but this organization is also active in the domains of science and culture.

Finally, it is useful to mention the ways in which these organizations act. In each case, they proclaim their expertise, which represents the most important way they influence educational policies. Expertise is delivered through research, recommendations and advocacy. To these, Malet (2011) adds the following elements: the provision of standardizing frameworks and instruments which have a strong influence on the direction of national educational policies by establishing the criteria and the objectives for an education system’s performance. Furthermore, even if it is a less important policy instrument, the World Bank awards loans and credits without interest and, to a lesser extent, donations to the countries benefiting from its action.

Beyond the features that we have just described, it should also be noted that there is an abundant literature on these three organizations, particularly concerning their impact on international and national educational policies. There are works essentially on economics or political sociology whose major approach is to take a critical view of their activities, principally those of the World Bank and the OECD. These critical appraisals condemn the neoliberal trend of these organizations (privatisation, insecurity of teachers, etc.) and the imposition of certain measures in the most vulnerable countries in return for support (Klees, Samoff, and Stromquist 2012; Rizvi and Lingard 2009; Robertson et al. 2007).

We pursue this latter trend, while taking a closer look and qualifying some aspects, particularly the links between education and development from a comparative perspective. Unterhalter (2015) has put forward a short synthesis of the connection between education and development from the point of view of some influential organizations in the field of educational policies. For our part, we wish to provide food for thought by proposing a comparative analysis of the three organizations and by providing data from these organizations' immediate and recent sources.

Examining recent decades in order to better understand today

Earlier research on this same topic was undertaken adopting a historical perspective (Lauwerier 2017). More precisely, we analysed the three organizations' strategic reports from 1990 up until 2010. The purpose was to understand the vision of these organizations in terms of development in order to better grasp the implications of this vision for education during this period.

In this way, we have observed that the World Bank's development vision, and to a lesser extent that of the OECD, is a synonym of economic growth and workers' productivity in the context of globalization. In this perspective, they correspond to the liberal capitalist paradigm mentioned earlier. For UNESCO, the vision of development is historically more holistic and humanist. The following quotation illustrates this idea: "[...] To contribute to the unity of humankind by upholding human dignity, equality, solidarity, the culture of peace, tolerance, respect for human rights and democratic principles" (UNESCO 2002, 1). Numerous characteristics of the liberal egalitarian paradigm can be identified in this vision. However, upon closer examination, its stance wavers between progressist and economic-centred conceptions of development, which renders its expectations for education rather vague. Furthermore, Unterhalter (2015)

recalls that, by emphasizing the impact of investments in education on economic growth, it was UNESCO in the 1960s that convinced the World Bank to turn its attention to this sector.

This approach to development by the three organizations is reflected in their educational policies:

- Education to improve economic growth: “The increasing emphasis on the role in economic growth of people’s knowledge and skills, or ‘human capital’, has helped make education and training more central to the concerns of governments” (OECD 1997, 27); “UNESCO plans to study the issues arising from the transition to a knowledge society and to examine its effects on the organization, forms and content of knowledge [...]. ICTs represent a strong lever for economic growth” (UNESCO 2002, 58); “Only by raising the capacities of its human capital can a country hope to increase productivity and attract the private investment needed to sustain growth in the medium term” (World Bank 2005, 47).
- Education as preparation for the world of work: “How much do various forms of education contribute to people’s employment prospects, to the literacy skills they need in everyday life, or to their prospective earnings?” (OECD 1997, 5); “Knowledge-based societies [...] where knowledge and information increasingly determine new patterns of growth and wealth creation” (UNESCO 2002, 3); “Education must be designed to meet economies’ increasing demands for adaptable workers who can readily acquire new skills rather than for workers with a fixed set of technical skills that are used throughout their working lives” (World Bank 1995, 24).
- Education for everything else (social cohesion, active citizenship, etc.): “All citizens through learning become more effective participants in democratic, civil and economic processes” (OECD 1997, 5); “It is through education that the broadest possible introduction can be provided to the values, skills and knowledge which form the basis of respect for human rights and democratic principles, the rejection of violence and a spirit of tolerance” (UNESCO 1996, 38); “Development of specific content in curricula and educational materials to promote acceptance and integration of minorities, and use of minority languages in instruction” (World Bank 2005, 37).

Since our analysis covered a period of twenty-five years, it is helpful to make clear that the vision presented above corresponds to long-term fundamentals. As far as their evolution is concerned, we have observed a slight tendency for official positions to gravitate towards more social aspects. This trend is confirmed by the more recent guidelines, as we shall show later in this paper.

The context of SDGs

It should be emphasized that international organizations are acting less and less in isolation. They generally intervene in multi-partner contexts. We can therefore observe that these organizations are adopting common objectives at the international level. This had already been the case in the years following 2000 with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In recent years, this process has become even more common with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), involving the World Bank, the OECD and UNESCO. This is how the three organizations describe their involvement with SDGs: “The OECD supports the United Nations in ensuring the success of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by bringing together its existing knowledge, and its unique tools and experience” (OECD 2017); “UNESCO actively helped to frame the Education 2030 agenda which is encapsulated in SDG 4” (UNESCO 2017); “The WBG [World Bank Group] has collaborated with the UN in nearly every region and sector, and its engagement has deepened since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and now with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” (World Bank 2017).

We therefore observe that these institutions have fully accepted their participation in the SDG process. And what is particularly interesting is that the three organizations work together in implementing the new global objectives, as is testified by all of the people we interviewed while carrying out this research.

Thus, this research and that presented above allow us to appreciate the potential changes taking place during a period of adoption, common ownership of an international framework—that of the SDGs. Have they had to make any concessions? Have they been able to incorporate their own vision successfully? Is there a convergence among the international organizations examined, even if historically they did not share exactly the same vision of development and, hence, of education?

Methodology

We would like to point out that the data employed for this research arose from three distinct sources: recent strategic organizational reports; interviews with representatives of the three organizations; and “tweets”. With these instruments, we have carried out an analysis of the content. These sources have the advantage of, in one way or another, making about a global vision of development clear before moving on to the implications of this vision for education.

The list of strategic reports examined is presented in the following table.

Table 1: List of strategic reports examined

Institution	Documents
OECD	- OECD Strategy on Development (2012) - Education Today 2013. The OECD Perspective (2013)
UNESCO	- UNESCO Education Strategy 2014–2021 (2014)
World Bank	- Learning for All. Investment in People’s Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development (2011) - A Stronger, Connected, Solutions World Bank Group. An Overview of the World Bank Group Strategy (2014)

The contemporary period covered by this research allows a far greater variety of sources to be examined compared to our previous research. It is for this reason that we have carried out semi-directed interviews with representatives of the three organizations. It should be noted that it is very difficult to meet the staff of these organizations. Despite numerous requests, we were finally able to make contact with four people (two from the OECD; one from UNESCO and one from the World Bank), given that we wanted to meet those involved at the strategic level. There are not very many of them. In any event, the advantage of interviews is that it gives the possibility of examining in detail official positions gleaned from institutional documents (particularly the vague areas, the contradictions) and to discuss the way these orientations are implemented at the national level.

We were also interested in the organizations' social networks. We selected Twitter. The organizations communicate more and more in this way. The messages were very similar to those on the pages of Facebook. The advantage of Twitter was that the staff members had public accounts. We therefore wanted to see if their views via this medium corresponded with the messages in the reports and interviews, knowing that communication generally takes place several times a day, spontaneously, and therefore with less reflection than that of the reports which have been written over a long period of time. Finally, we would also like to say that institutional "Tweets" may be quoted verbatim in this paper. Those of individual staff members, even though they are in the public domain, considering the right to anonymity in the digital era, cannot be easily identified.

An evolution in the position of the OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank?

Having presented the context of this research, we will now highlight the development visions of the OECD, UNESCO and the World Bank, as well as the implications of these visions for education, in the context of shared ownership of the SDGs.

Broader (humanistic?) visions of development

The data analysed suggest a trend towards a broader vision of development. Indeed, one of our correspondents described the OECD's vision of development. It includes more social aspects than previously: "Human progress. (...) Leaving our planet in a better shape than we take it over. I think this is what development is about. Individual and collective capacity and responsibility for improving our planet, our lives" (I-OECD-2). This type of statement is evident on specific questions such as those concerning refugees, which are mentioned on numerous occasions in the social networks associated with the organization (it should be noted that we reviewed the tweets during a period that coincided with the publication of a report on migration by the OECD): "With ~1.5 million new asylum requests in #OECD area in 2016, governments shd step up #integration efforts" (T-OECD-1).

As in previous periods, this broader vision can also be found in UNESCO's statements. According to an interview conducted with one of its representatives, development is a synonym for peaceful societies within which fundamental rights are respected. The same person described this vision as "extremely humanistic" (I-

UNESCO-1). We find this same position in all the different types of sources examined (reports, social networks, interviews): “#Peace is a commitment to a better future based on shared values, dialogue, tolerance & respect” (T-UNESCO-1). This emerges from the way, for example, the matter of refugees on the social networks is dealt with: “On #RefugeeDay, we honour refugees’ strength, courage & resilience in the quest for peace. Let’s stand #WithRefugees” (T-UNESCO-1). We feel, however, that this attitude is more evident among the staff members of the organization during interviews or on social networks than in reports: no doubt the latter have to receive the consensus of all member states and therefore are obliged to adopt a less-committed vision.

The social aspects, as they have already featured in previous decades, are always mentioned in the statements of the World Bank, particularly the need for “improving the education of girls, improving the opportunities for people in disadvantaged communities” (I-WB-1). On the social networks, we find numerous references to health, particularly nutrition, handicaps and social services: “In many countries the poorest get a smaller share of #socialassistance benefits than the richest” (T-WB-1). Even cultural aspects are taken into consideration by the organization: “1 in 3 Indigenous Persons in cities inhabit insecure, unsanitary & polluted slums” (T-WB-1).

What is important about this broader vision of development is the growing interest on the part of international organizations in environmental questions. On this point, there has been an evolution compared to previous periods: “Development challenges are global challenges. Issues such as climate change, natural resources scarcity, and food and energy insecurity have implications for all” (OECD 2012, 2). This is also true of the World Bank:

Warmer global temperatures and projected sea-level rise threaten both future poverty reduction and the sustainability of past gains that were achieved through decades of work. The adverse effects of climate change fall disproportionately on the poorest countries and the poorest groups within countries (World Bank 2014, 3).

The social networks are saturated with this type of statement: “How do you deliver affordable energy to 1.3 billion people? For #India, the answer is #solar” (T-WB-1).

The OECD is therefore not simply focused on the economy. According to one of our correspondents, this represents a progression in terms of the organization’s

priorities: “So yes, economics is very important at the OECD. But economy is there for a purpose, which is to improve the lives of the population” (I-OECD-1). This is confirmed in the most recent report on development which indicates an evolution in the terminology: “A new Vision which looks ahead at the important role of the OECD in contributing to better policies for better lives, implementing a comprehensive approach to development” (OECD 2012, 2). For the OECD, even the economy is viewed in a much broader perspective:

You know it depends how you define economy. We look at it much more in terms of the society in which we live. The economy is the infrastructures and all these things. But at the end it’s about people, it’s about ... we pay a lot of attention to the inclusive development of our economies, ensure that people are at the heart of this (I-OECD-2).

It is not simply functional or instrumental: “#Productivity means ‘working smarter’ not ‘working harder’: living now & for the future” (T-OECD-1). Problems associated with the unexpected effects of the global economic model are also pinpointed by the OECD’s statements: “There are 45.8 million #slaves in the world today” (T-OECD-1). The OECD even attempts to apply pressure so that this vision is adopted by its member states: “The vision of an inclusive... and wellbeing of society, I think that’s something that our countries considered important and trust the OECD with” (I-OECD-2). Thus, for the OECD and the World Bank, what changes is that issues other than economic ones are now placed in the list of priorities: “Working with all of its partners, the World Bank Group will pursue the goals in ways that sustainably secure the future of the planet and its resources, promote social inclusion, and limit the economic burdens that future generations inherit” (World Bank 2014, 1).

The consequences of these visions of development, oriented more towards the social and the ecological, affect the three organizations’ guidelines for education: “Education contributes to high levels of income, poverty reduction. It contributes enormously to health, to peace, to sustainable development” (I-OECD-1); “Lifelong learning in the UNESCO perspective fosters the values of peace, democracy, tolerance, intercultural understanding, gender equity and care of the planet” (UNESCO 2014, 34); “Education enhances people’s ability to make informed decisions, be better parents, sustain a livelihood, adopt new technologies, cope with shocks, and be responsible citizens and effective stewards of the natural environment” (World Bank 2011, 11).

We can observe this in specific cases, such as the question of refugees: “Immigrant #Students at #School: Easing the Journey towards Integration” (T-OECD-2). UNESCO establishes clearly the link between education and environmental issues: “Learn how @UNESCO supports countries to meet #ParisAgreement climate obligations regarding #education” (T-UNESCO-1). For the World Bank, it is the same story concerning the link between culture and education: “We want to make sure to achieve our goals without leaving behind. (...) Groups that are using different languages than the national language. (...) We also need to make sure that our programs are acceptable to people difficult to reach (...)” (I-WB-1).

In this way education is seen as less focused on the unique necessity of training individuals capable of adapting to the labour market, particularly on the part of the OECD: “I don’t only mean in a functional way. You learn for a job. But I think education means to develop the cognitive, social and emotional skills that make us to be people” (I-OECD-2). Among these competences are “character qualities. If you think about curiosity, leadership, courage, empathy relating to other people” (I-OECD-2). The social networks associated with the institution could carry this type of message: “If you want to achieve happiness, you need a good education! #OECDForum” (T-OECD-2).

Finally, the incorporation of broader, less instrumental dimensions in the messages of the three organizations parallels taking into consideration the evolution of global objectives: “One of these goals is global citizenship, but also education for sustainable development, education for human rights, tolerance, all of these things” (I-OECD-1). This evolution takes concrete form in the OECD’s activities:

When we started PISA we looked at mathematics, reading and science. And in 2015 we added social competency, problem solving. Now in 2018 we are bringing the aspect of global competency: the capacity of individuals to see the world through different lenses, perspectives. Appreciate different ideas, values. Tolerance and diversity. These aspects are now very important and therefore we try to reflect them in the OECD instruments (I-OECD-2).

The OECD is even in the vanguard compared to the countries that form its membership since all of them are hesitant to adopt this perspective:

Now, when it comes to implementation, the PISA assessment of global competency, only some countries will actually do it. Other countries will say:

‘well, you know, I have no problem with the concept, but I won’t do that in my country’ (I-OECD-2).

This change is diminished by the fact that on the organization’s Twitter, over the period of one month, there was no specific mention of SDGs. The same is true with the personal pages of the institution’s staff members, although during interviews they were mentioned a great deal.

For its part, UNESCO, in its 2014 report, describes its “overarching mission” as the promotion of education for peace and sustainable development (UNESCO 2014, 31). Connected with that is education for global citizenship. It represents “a framing paradigm that encapsulates how education can develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners need to secure more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies” (UNESCO 2014, 46). UNESCO was the pioneer in highlighting concepts such as education for global citizenship and education for sustainable development:

Actually, we have been actively promoting these concepts. In particular, education for sustainable development has been around since the beginning of 2000. Global citizenship education has been around for some years. We were the first to start using it (I-UNESCO-1).

Our correspondent went even further about the length of time these subjects had been widespread: “Even though in our own constitution, all of the visions that you see with the SDGs, it was there from the beginning, at the end of the Second World War” (I-UNESCO-1). We understand that UNESCO takes its role seriously as leader of the SDGs: “The 3rd meeting of the #Education2030 Steering Committee starts today! A great day of discussions ahead” (T-UNESCO-1). This agenda is often mentioned on the social networks: “#Education2030 is the world’s new bold agenda to make sure that no one is left behind” (T-UNESCO-1).

We should note that the World Bank supports the SDGs, while the countries in which it functions base their policies on these objectives: “I think we are in line with the countries we work with. Our country partners are committed to the Sustainable Development Goals” (I-WB-1). However, far less reference is made to them in its official statements than by the two other organizations.

The economy at the heart of long-term concerns and enduring contradictions

Despite a growing will to incorporate a broader vision of development, reflecting the new international context of SDGs, we are now going to show that the economy still remains at the heart of the discourse on development. The importance of education for economic growth and for acquiring the competences necessary for the labour market has not gone away.

This is evident in the message of the OECD: “We are on the cusp of a new wave of #innovation that will have an even greater impact on productivity growth” (T-OECD-1). In particular, economic growth is one of the OECD’s priorities: “The world’s centre of economic gravity is changing and developing economies are among the key drivers of global economic growth” (OECD 2012, 2). Thus, the OECD sticks to the fundamentals on education, which means that individuals should acquire the competences needed to tackle the global economies:

Countries need an increasingly educated and skilled workforce to succeed in today’s knowledge economy. That means good basic education in childhood and adolescence that equips people not just for the jobs of today, but with the ability to learn new skills for the jobs of tomorrow right through their lifetime (OECD 2013, 11).

Even if, for a representative of the OECD, the organization does not appear to have a single economy-centred vision of education, the Tweets are very much focused on this domain: “Helping workers navigate a rapidly transforming #labourmarket requires building right #skills” (T-OECD-2). In more concrete terms, intercultural competences, even if they take place in a more social perspective, are also viewed in the same way in both our interviews and on the social networks:

Can you work and live with people who are different from you? Who think differently from you? Who work differently from you? And I don’t see as a kind of contradiction between the social and economic aspects. How open are our societies in Europe to the refugees coming from somewhere else? But the same kind of skills are at the workplace. At the workplace people come from different contexts (I-OECD-2).

It should come as no surprise that for the World Bank economic growth is at the heart of its concerns for education: “Simply put, investments in quality education lead

to more rapid and sustainable economic growth and development” (World Bank 2011, v). Links with the world of work are also unambiguous: “Make sure to be in line with what the labor market is requiring” (I-WB-1). These priorities are clearly evident in the messages of the various social networks associated with the organization: “#Jobs of the future will be more digitally demanding. How will countries compete?” (T-WB-1). Globalization, increasing in importance over time, will validate the emphasis on education: “At the same time, the stunning rise of new middle-income countries has intensified the desire of many nations to increase their competitiveness by building more skilled and agile workforces” (World Bank 2011, 2). The inclusion of ICTs in the educational framework is also intended to make people more prepared for the world of work: “New information technologies have transformed—and continue to transform—how people live and communicate, how enterprises do business, the kind of jobs that are available, and the skills that are in greater or lesser demand” (World Bank 2011, 22).

UNESCO resorts particularly to a progressist vision of the goals aimed at by education for development. It is interesting to note, however, that in its strategic report for 2014, the organization suggests that its priorities are education for peace and sustainable development while, at the same time, including a whole chapter entitled: “Developing skills for the world of work” (UNESCO 2014). Nevertheless, the link with its other priorities is not evident.

The economy is key, even when it would seem that social aspects have been taken into consideration. For example, on the social networks, the OECD promotes greater inclusion of LGBT. Upon a closer examination, it is particularly its presence in the work place that concerns the organization. Equally for the World Bank, social questions are often mentioned only when they are connected with economic issues: “Once an adolescent girl is married, it’s rare that she remains in school. The economic costs of child marriage” (T-WB-2). For UNESCO, social aspects are also associated with economic issues: “Less than 4% of CEOs in the world’s largest 500 corporations are women” (T-UNESCO-1). Even so, this is stated less explicitly than it is by the other two organizations.

Beyond the focus on the economy, already present in earlier decades, contradictions and inconsistencies are still evident. And even if the organizations introduce themes such as sustainable development and global citizenship, as we have just pointed out, one must be very careful because the manner in which they are put forward is not incompatible with the liberal capitalist model. Education for sustainable

development may be considered in its minimalist version: one must above all sort out one's rubbish, be prepared for tsunamis, but certainly not reform the development models. As is stated in UNESCO's report *Rethinking education* (2015), "current patterns of economic growth, coupled with demographic growth and urbanization, are depleting non-renewable natural resources and polluting the environment, causing irreversible ecological damage and climate change" (16). Thus, to speak about sustainable development (= economic growth) is a nonsense about which the international organizations ask themselves few questions.

In this way, we find these contradictions in the OECD's messages: "Taking action on #climatechange can boost economic growth" (T-OECD-1). Here we observe that the organization would like to link the possibility of acting positively on the climate as a way of promoting even stronger economic growth. Even UNESCO does not appear to appreciate the contradiction between economic growth and ecological issues: "We are very concerned to see the link between investing in education and yes, economic growth" (I-UNESCO-1). Even more so, since ecological considerations receive minimal treatment. For example, the quotation "Living sustainably requires a huge shift in mindset. Education has to be part of that change" (T-UNESCO-1) is accompanied by a drawing of people sorting through their recyclable waste. Is this the sole purpose of environmental education? For the World Bank, education would rather prepare you for a tsunami than suggest an alternative ecological model: "Comparing countries with similar income and weather conditions, those countries with better-educated female populations are more capable of coping with extreme weather events than countries with low levels of female education" (World Bank 2011, 13).

The people we interviewed have to a certain extent explained the reasons for these inconsistencies. At the OECD, one staff member we met accepted that there could be divergences within the organization. It was particularly mentioned that numerous people within the organization believe that emphasis should be focused on higher education, particularly the non-university sector, because it has the closest links with the world of work. Others think that it is necessary to assume a holistic vision of education that should not have assimilation into the world of work as its unique goal. We should also add that inconsistencies can be explained by the fact that some of the organization's staff worked previously for other organizations with a different set of values. Therefore, they are able to convey different types of messages depending on the institutions they worked for previously.

Conclusion

By way of a conclusion, we would like to recall some of the key outcomes of our research. Even though it has come to the fore in the last decades, the SDGs context displays a greater orientation in the official positions of the three organizations towards broader visions of development that take social and environmental matters more into account. UNESCO has already adopted a holistic vision of development. This is also true of the OECD, and to a lesser extent of the World Bank. From this perspective, there is greater convergence between the three institutions.

Nevertheless, in the way the message is formulated, it is not completely incompatible with the liberal capitalist paradigm, which has been typical of these organizations' vision until the present time. The priority granted to economic growth and the labour market still represents the fundamental model, particularly for the World Bank and the OECD. Even so, vagueness and contradictions remain: they would like, for example, to topple the ecological model so as to favour the economic models likely to damage our planet.

The vision of development for the SDGs sums up the whole of our analysis: more social concerns, the economy always to the fore and enduring contradictions:

We resolve, between now and 2030, to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. We resolve also to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities (United Nations 2015, 3).

We must therefore ask ourselves why the models put forward, particularly those of the World Bank and the OECD, prevail nearly everywhere in the world. We believe that these organizations have the ability to bring people together on unifying themes: who is opposed to sustainable development in its simplest expression? These two institutions also transmit a less vague and more accountable message when their vision is more limited. In this way, the message is more convincing than that of UNESCO. This is even more true because the other development paradigms have not been

conclusive in practice at the national and international levels: profound social change could cause anxiety (calling privileges into question, power sharing, etc.).

Furthermore, are there international organizations capable of conveying an alternative vision of development, and therefore of education as well? Specifically, in keeping with our research, we can say that, among the three organizations studied, it is UNESCO's vision that comes closest to that of humanist development. It should then be able to play a greater role on the international scene by promoting a broader and more progressive vision of development and therefore of education. But then it has an obligation to confront the vagueness and contradictions that we have mentioned in this text. Beyond a lack of financial and human resources, UNESCO must therefore today plead in favour of an alternative vision of development and of education, particularly as it is the organization responsible for Objective 4 of Sustainable Development, which deals with education. As an alternative vision to the liberal capitalist paradigm, Barrón Pastor (2015) suggests a "post-development model" according to which it is necessary to promote humanistic education, whose objective is the well-being of individuals and society instead of a largely instrumental education destined mainly for economic productivity and consumerism.

To go even further in terms of research, it is relevant to ask what will be the implications of these visions of development, and therefore of education, at a more practical level, especially in schools. We should ask ourselves particularly about the limitations on teachers imposed by the dominant model. At the national level too, do curricula contain to a large extent the international guidelines that we have presented in this paper?

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