

## Education for recovery

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### 1. *The global financial crisis – steady ahead for higher education and research.*

- **Higher Education, Research and Innovation** are essential drivers and carry solutions for a stronger, cleaner, fairer economy. They are an international language and an enduring diplomacy, but require constant reform to engage with new challenges.
- **A Reform Framework** can recalibrate to regain basic values that assist us in emergence from the global financial crisis, while addressing climate change, economic and social equity, and the millennium development goals. A parallel and healthy devil's advocacy should challenge established dogmas in these areas, discounting the persuasive pressures of the long past, the too fast and the hungry press.
- **The Research Balance** could have a 40% strategic investment focus around known or predicted challenges, but should retain 60% investment in the pursuit of fundamental knowledge, which will find its own applications.
- **The Demand** for mobility and flexibility of talent will increase. OECD projections show that international student numbers are set to double to over 5 million by 2020, coming especially from Asia. Human populations will rise from 6bn to 9bn by 2050, 60% living in the Asia Pacific region. Aging is already a major factor in the economic, social and environmental futures for many countries. Life-long learning will be increasingly important for inclusion in employment and society.
- **Future Factors** that drive reform will need new types of leadership and international citizenship that is thinking international, interdisciplinary, and towards implementation. This requires innovative, forward looking curriculum reform, training, cooperation and relevant international experience in different languages and cultures.

### 2. *The Evolutionary dynamics of strengths and competition – approaches and examples.*

- **China has committed** in its five year plan to increased year on year investment in higher education, research (especially health, science and technology) and innovation. **But** there are gaps in human resources, learning and teaching systems.
- **Europe** is increasing rapidly the courses taught in English and access through the Bologna programs, along with investment in selected international research universities (for example, 9 in Germany). **But** there are relatively few universities from mainland Europe ranked in the world's top hundred.

- **Britain** is developing further focus investing in higher education, with Universities UK and the British Council more evident in international markets. Twenty years of the research assessment exercise have strengthened the % of world research, quality and leadership from Britain. **But** there is some risk to the priority and quality of teaching and to the collegial culture of universities.
- **The USA** is investing significantly in research and education infrastructure in an already strong sector, with a new emphasis on international recruitment. **But** there are serious challenges to many universities meeting their costs, when some state higher education budgets are being reduced by 25% and previous high returns on endowment investments were used to cover operational costs.
- **Australia** is investing in research and education infrastructure, along with international engagement, in a turbulent time. **But** the world's most successful education export sector will come under heightened competition, and success in research leadership depends on expanding international partnerships at the cutting edge.

### ***3. International University Partnerships – teamwork to resolve challenges and build leadership***

- **Networks to build capacity** are developing, with the University of Sydney for example now working at a formal institutional level with over 100 universities in 20 selected countries on research and teaching programs that also provide international experience and leadership. These programs are backed up with tailored leadership training in public sector, university, government and industry reforms.
- **Strategic Partnerships and Alliances** are being built with universities, governments, industry, international agencies and alumni to develop the critical mass that can make a difference in advancing research and education objectives.
- **The OECD** has proved to be a vital knowledge source and partner in these developments, with its policy and political influence, outstanding data resources, and directorates for example in higher education, science and technology, environment, futures programs, migration and employment. These provide our academics with the solid knowledge platforms on which to base further research and innovation.
- **Less developed country universities** must be engaged more in equal partnerships, helping to establish sustained in-country research leadership and two-way learning. Joint programs and projects, joint appointments, sandwich degrees and scholarship exchange programs are required to accelerate sustainability and to mitigate against brain drains from vulnerable countries.
- **Proposal.** The OECD should consider an enhanced teamwork and alliances with global university networks, where the operational capacity of the network can assist in implementing mutual objectives and accelerate practical progress towards a stronger, cleaner, fairer economy.