Introduction

The financial crunch that began in 2008 has resulted in slower growth globally. Although several countries in Asia seemed to have weathered the crisis better than expected, the situation has not eased completely as is evident from continuing concerns about the recent fiscal cliff debate in USA and the Eurozone debt crisis which recorded the highest unemployment rate for Europe in November 2012.

Recent statistics add to these concerns. For example, about 200 million people – of whom 75 million are under 25 years old – are unemployed. In fact, 600 million jobs are needed over the next 15 years to keep current employment rates (World Bank, 2012, World Development Report). Similarly, policy makers are asked to take note of the increase in the number of 15-29 year olds who are neither employed or in education or training in OECD countries in 2010 (OECD, 2012, Education at a Glance). If left unattended, these young people will represent a lost generation of valuable human resources.

Traditionally, young people expect to find jobs in either the public or private sector after they finish their schooling. Faced with on-going economic and financial challenges, reliance on business-as-usual practices is no longer acceptable. Consequently, many governments looking for alternative, innovative approaches are encouraging their youth to become entrepreneurs to create job opportunities for themselves and their peers.

However, being an entrepreneur means more than just knowing how to start up a small shop or business. There is no doubt that some people are naturally talented and possess the traits to become successful entrepreneurs. The 21st century needs a variety of personalities, imaginations, talents and skills to deal with 21st century challenges. Creativity and intellectual innovations are necessary building blocks to sustain tomorrow’s society by transforming knowledge into both tangible and intangible outcomes and successes. The New World demands professionals who are creative, flexible, adaptable and innovative. These traits and characteristics must, and can, be nurtured through education which has to evolve with changing demands and conditions. Education has to adapt to changes in the nature of work and facilitate the development of useful and productive members of society.

Entrepreneurship can be taught and learned. To teach and nurture entrepreneurship requires a rethinking of our education systems, pedagogies, curriculum and other education services and activities.

UNESCO Bangkok convened the 15th UNESCO-APEID International Conference on Creativity and Entrepreneurship in Jakarta in December 2011. Following great interest in the close linkages between creativity and entrepreneurship in education and the workplace, UNESCO Bangkok and Zhejiang University in China co-organized a meeting on entrepreneurship education on 11-12 June 2012 in Hangzhou, China, with support from the Hangzhou Municipal Government, Alibaba Cloud Computing and the World Bank in Indonesia. The 70 participants from 11 countries who attended the meeting in Hangzhou agreed that entrepreneurship education needs multi-stakeholder support from
government, education institutions, academia, private sector, international organizations and the students themselves. Presentations from different stakeholders and energizing discussions during the meeting resulted in the following points for further action:

- Consolidate the network for entrepreneurship education
- Continue this series of meetings, supported by offers to host the next three meetings from China in early 2013, Malaysia in late 2013 and Hong Kong in early 2014.

As a result, UNESCO Bangkok, the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, Zhejiang University and Zhejiang Technical Institute of Economics (ZJTIE) are organizing the 2nd UNESCO-APEID Meeting on Entrepreneurship Education to be held in Hangzhou on 26-27 March 2013.

**Objectives of the meeting**

- Formalize the Entrepreneurship Education network (EE-Net).
- Share innovative and educational approaches, projects and practices of entrepreneurship education.
- Discuss and formulate the structure, function, objectives and processes of EE-Net.
- Identify potential areas of programmes and activities, e.g. conduct research on elements of entrepreneurship education (curriculum development, teacher education, career counseling, extracurricular activities, work-based projects and internships); create database of young entrepreneurs in the region to serve as role models and mentors, etc.
- Plan follow-up activities for 2013 and 2014.

**Participants**

About 30 international participants will be invited to attend the meeting, and may include participants from the first meeting in Hangzhou in 2011 as well as new partners, policy makers, educators, prominent entrepreneurs and professionals in the field. The local hosts will cover local costs including local transport, accommodation and meals of the international participants.

**Proposed programme**

**Day 1**

- Opening and welcome messages
- Keynote presentation on entrepreneurship education
- Plenary presentations from representatives of governments, universities, international organizations, NGOs, private sector and young entrepreneurs
- Welcome dinner

**Day 2**

- Discussion and formulation of Entrepreneurship Education Network (EE-Net)
- Visit to school/university/private enterprise to showcase EE in action

**Contact persons**

- Mr. Bai Yunfei, Chinese National Commission for UNESCO; tel.: +86 10 66 09 7509; fax: +86 10 6601 7912; email: byf@moe.edu.cn
- Tonny Zheng, Zhejiang Technical Institute of Economics (ZJTIE), tel: +86 571 86928211; mobile: +86 0 15869021285; fax: + 86 571 86928211; email: tonny672@163.com
- Ms. Lay-Cheng Tan, UNESCO Bangkok, 920 Sukhumvit Road, Prakanong, Bangkok 10110, Thailand; tel: +66 2 391 0577 ext. 211; fax: +66 2 391 0866; email: lc.tan@unesco.org