CURRICULUM REFORMS: ESSENTIAL TOOL FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

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IMPLEMENTING THE PARIS AGREEMENT: NEW RESEARCH SOLUTIONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
Introduction

Why curriculum reforms?

Status quo (Zimbabwe context)

Characteristics of climate change curriculum

Curriculum highlights

Climate policy implications

Recommendations

Conclusion
Introduction

- Changes in the climate system unequivocal

- Developing countries to suffer greatest risks due to:
  - Over-reliance on climate-sensitive sectors e.g. Agriculture & Forestry
  - Low institutional capacities
  - Poor resource base

- Thus, climate change (CC) adaptation indispensable
- Article 2 of the Paris Agreement (2015)- strengthen the global response to the CC threats

- For effective CC response- need well informed & responsible citizenry - effected through education

- Article 6 of UNFCCC- Education, training & public awareness for CC adaptation

- Education critical in improving climate response
At what stage of human development should CC education programmes be initiated?

Education key in creating new patterns of behaviour

Education content is dependent upon the curriculum set at national level

Current curriculums in developing nations not adequately addressing CC issue

Need for reforms
Why curriculum reforms?

- Current curriculum not adequately addressing CC issue

- Climate science empirically documented - plenty of teaching material can be generated

- Intergenerational effects of CC-learners equipped with essential K, S, V & A to be able to deal with current & future CC impacts.

- Education for effective & efficient participation in promulgation and formulation of CC policies
Status quo (Zimbabwe context)

- Climate-related issues taught in:
  - Environmental Science - Primary school level
  - Geography & Science subjects - Secondary level (O’ & A’ Level).
  - Natural & Social Sciences - tertiary institutions

- Consequently, students who do not take these subjects/courses, lack the basic understanding and skills relevant to CC adaptation.

- Therefore CC education at all levels should be inclusive, not discriminatory.
- CC not taught as a topic at both P & S curriculum (analysis of syllabus)

- Teachers at P & S levels have misconceptions about CC - lack an in-depth understanding

- Existing CC education & awareness programs (Plan Int, ActionAid, EMA, E. Africa) taken as “extra-curricular” activities, not examinable.

- CC issues treated as “trivial” yet should be core and mandatory in the curriculum for effective response.
Characteristics of climate change curriculum

- An effective climate change curriculum should:
  - focus on behaviour change (Tbilis Decl., 77)
  - ensure mandatory CC education for all
  - aim at developing knowledge & skills essential for effective CC response
  - be holistic and interdisciplinary in nature;
  - be consistent;
  - have clear assessment procedures for CI
  - complement vision & objectives of the nation
  - relate to local, regional and global CC initiatives
Curriculum Highlights

CC education be included in the curriculum at all levels as a prerequisite - lifelong CC education

- Dissemination of climate information by learners
- At P & S levels, CC be taught as a topic in compulsory subjects or be a subject examinable.
- Teachers at P & S trained on CC at teacher training colleges to increase awareness levels.
- **Skills-based** learning/ curricula to empower learners to respond appropriately to CC threats
At tertiary level- build professionals with knowledge to participate in climate policy making

CC issues not a matter of the natural/social sciences alone– a cross-cutting issue requiring input of all.

Tertiary institutions to make use of the IKS to further refine theory & develop CC literature- response*

Establishment of **climate change training institutions**. At regional level, use PAU.
Climate Policy Implications

- CC education at all levels of education should be the integral theme of climate policy-creation of new patterns of behaviour for response

- Policy should support CC adaptation research & emphasize on the establishment of climate change information networks for developing nations.

- **Bottom-up approach** in climate policy making-involve communities, academicians, learners and other stakeholders. **No to TOP-DOWN Approach**
Recommendations

- Provide funding for:
  - CC curriculum development
  - Training of educators in CC - human capital dvp
  - Production of level-specific CC teaching material
  - CC research on climate response.

- Set-up a task force to review content & identify gaps in curriculums used in developing nations & advise governments appropriately on the need to incorporate CC issues.
- Educators by virtue of being implementers of the curriculum should be involved in CC curriculum development.

- Continuously monitor, evaluate and reform the education curriculum to keep up with global trends.

- Address political and social impediments that could deter the proposed reforms – stakeholder consultations.
Conclusion

- Need to mainstream CC education in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century curriculum so as to strengthen people’s knowledge, skills and ability to adapt.

- CC education should be a lifelong process starting at an early learning age and continuing through all stages to promote behavioural change and enhance adaptive capacities of communities.
THANK YOU
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