

**Farewell Remarks at the Launch of UNEVOC TVETipedia,
Book Publication, and Mr. Rupert Maclean's Farewell Party,
UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre, Bonn 19 March 2009
By L. E. Munjanganja**

A mix of work and play: a farewell

Let me thank you most sincerely for taking time to come. So far we have witnessed some impressive results of the work of the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre during Mr. Maclean's tenure as Director. The launch of the Handbook on TVET Research, the unveiling of the TVETipedia, and the demonstrated connectedness of TVET practitioners and institutions through the UNEVOC Centres around the globe represent some of the foremost actions at the heart of what this Centre has sought to do since he was appointed Foundation Director in 2001. The UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre itself had been established following the signing of an agreement between UNESCO and the Government of Germany.

I have had the pleasure and good fortune to work under and with Mr. Maclean for a number of years: first in the late 1990s at the UNESCO Asia –Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok, Thailand; and second since 2005 to-date at the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre in Bonn, Germany. At the former he was the Chief of Unit, and at the latter as Director. I got to know him over the years to a point at which I could regard him not only as my boss, but as my friend as well. However, it is to his years as Director on which my remarks will focus.

This function as a whole: the launch of the TVETipedia and book publication, and the farewell party, epitomises the man, shall I say the person, we are bidding farewell. As I said earlier he is the Foundation Director of this Centre. Collegial by disposition, he is a man of the network world where power, accountability, and so forth are distributed, and mutual learning are fostered! He is enamoured of work, and work tinged with pleasure. For him, it's not a question of "all work and no play" that made the proverbial Jack a dull boy.

No dull moments at the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre with him at the helm! He has exerted himself and has not spared any effort to get the Centre off the ground, and to get it on the map: in particular to make the programme activities better known in and out of UNESCO, and to make the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre truly international. This is in part due to the conferences, seminars, workshops, mobile

training teams that were organised; the books, brochures, newsletters, posters, reports and so on that were published and distributed; and the UNEVOC Centres spanning all parts of the world. With the goal to develop and improve policies, systems and programmes of TVET in order to better employment prospects of learners, UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre has joined the ranks of other UNESCO Institutes and Centres that are ports of call for TVET practitioners and leaders seeking advice, exemplars, expertise and success stories in the development and innovation of TVET. This could be in the context of North and South cooperation, or that of North – South - South cooperation. But if successful outcomes have meant long hours in the office or in a town in a developing country away from the comfort of Bonn, these have been grist to his mill. Often I have found him at the office over the weekend. When at times I have been inundated by emails over night or over the weekend, I have asked him how this had occurred. Chuckling, he is wont to say that there are at least two groups of people in the world of work: one that is “task oriented” and the other “time-oriented”; and that he belonged to the former! Through these actions and more, he has contributed greatly to shaping the form and substance of the Centre. Thus, in a few short years it has come to live up to its name as an UNESCO international centre in the arena of TVET. A visit to the UNEVOC website at www.unevoc.org will be a good quick lesson about some of the tangible elements of his impressive legacy as Foundation Director of UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre.

Among the many events he has organised the UNESCO International Meeting of Technical and Vocational education and Training Experts that was held in Bonn, Germany in 2004 is arguably among the best known. With the Bonn Declaration it has left an important mark in the annals of the recommendations of UNESCO international conferences. With respect to the UNEVOC Centres, the number has grown to the stage where there were 280 UNEVOC Centres in 166 countries by the end of last year. Another network known as the E-Forum, now with 1,100 subscribers, has grown phenomenally as well. It is fast becoming one of the most employed and preferred mediums of choice for vocational educators, researchers, students seeking comments, exchanging information, finding help, and requesting examples from an international community of TVET practitioners.

Also notable has been his assiduous cultivation of relationships with the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, the German Commission for UNESCO and corresponding German agencies such as BIBB, GTZ and

InWent. Similar success has been scored in establishing collaborative relationships with several Divisions at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, UNESCO Field Offices and other UNESCO Institutes and Centres. A number of useful partnerships have been formed with different UN agencies and relevant regional inter-governmental organisations. Here in Bonn he has been a member of the UN Heads of Agencies Forum, where he has demonstrated his commitment to the exhortation of the UN to deliver as ONE. For a year he was pleased to be its chairman. Also, several private sector organisations can be counted among the corresponding institutions of UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

So rich is his legacy that I could go on and on. Therefore, there is a lot from which our Director can take pleasure and satisfaction, and take it easy and relax. However, from conversations with him about his future after UNEVOC, and given his energy and desire to do a book here and a paper there, I don't know if the conventional retirement mode is yet for him. I would not be surprised if this retirement turns out to be only a change of address of his workplace. Well, I wish him a well-deserved retirement, and hope that he can look to his tenure as Director with contentment. I am sure my colleagues are with me in saying that. Let me conclude by expressing the hope that play trumps work in his retirement. I hope his good wife will help in order that this comes to pass. Many thanks for your attention!