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Foreword

Shaping the Future - A Difficult Task

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Living in today's world is not easy: as a human being you need to adapt yourself to a hostile environment where unforeseen challenges emerge, keeping us in constant alert.

Economic development is directly connected to human development; therefore sustainable economic growth needs to be the central point of the current development strategies, not only at country level but mainly at global scale.

Investing in human capital development is important for the society and vital for the economic development. In the next decades, talent will be the key factor of economic development that will link innovation, competitiveness and growth and we must understand the global talent value chain in order to elaborate valuable strategies and adequate policies to support the young generation.

Therefore, shaping the future means firstly to invest in the human capital and "to nourish" the young generation, and to make it growth in terms of the competencies and skills of the workers of tomorrow. A better future is closely related to the access to education, which must be granted to a larger segment of young population not only in developed countries but mainly in underdeveloped countries.

Secondly, encouraging the entrepreneurship initiatives promoted by young people should become a high priority for policymakers in order to diminish the consequences of the "lost generation" phenomenon. Currently, more than 200 million people are out of a job globally and the numbers are to rise to 215 million jobseekers by 2018¹, according to forecasts. The youth are particularly hit by the crisis; currently, there are 75 million unemployed, making them three times more likely to be out of a job than adults². If we add the inactive 15- to 24-year-olds who are

¹ Samans R., Zaahidi S., Keveloh K. – Disrupting Unemployment –Business-led Solutions for Action, a World Economic Forum Report, prepared with Mercer, April 2015, p. 3

² Idem, p.4



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neither in the labour market nor in education or training, there are almost 290 million young people that are neither working nor studying: almost a quarter of the planet's youth³.

Thirdly, we need to understand the basic change processes in human development and how these processes are affected by social, economic, historical, political, cultural and physical contexts, which are dramatically different from the previous ones. Flexibility and adaptability are the key words in today's society and more structured research that informs educational, health and social policies and other intentional change strategies is needed.

Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People is welcoming original papers, research notes or case studies that address the above mentioned themes. We invite our readers to engage in exciting forum discussions in a common effort to shape the future.

³ Idem, p.5