INTRODUCTION

The Worldwide Resource Pack in Curriculum Change has been constructed around a framework of concepts and trends that characterize contemporary curriculum development.

For the purposes of this Resource Pack, curriculum can be defined as the organization of learning sequences with a view to producing specific, intended learning outcomes, and curriculum development is a set of practices aimed at introducing planned changes in search of better achievements.

The resources contained in this pack seek to develop conceptual understandings about curriculum development and an appreciation of the nature, philosophy and principles of curriculum change as a dynamic and on-going process. It could be useful in producing a paradigm shift in approaching the various dimensions of curriculum change in a way that highlights their inter-relatedness.

Resources included herein are elaborated to various degrees in the conceptual modules of the Resource Pack through the consideration of selected discussion papers and are illustrated in the various case studies. Through a series of activities divided into concrete tasks, the user will be able to understand contemporary curriculum change processes, taking into consideration:

- Concepts of quality and relevance in education and their implications for curriculum change;
- Curriculum change as a complex and dynamic process involving a range of stakeholders in the development of a series of products;
- The implications of emerging trends in curriculum change on
  - policy making,
  - curriculum design, including the structure of curriculum frameworks and subject syllabuses,
  - time and space allocation,
  - education system governance and management, including resource management,
  - textbook development,
  - assessment and evaluation and
  - teacher training and professional development; and
- Processes of curriculum implementation and evaluation.

Structure and content of the Resource Pack

As the resource is designed to be used flexibly in a wide range of different contexts, the products and processes identified above could be useful in both specific circumstances as well as most common curriculum development situations.

The structure of this Pack is built around Module 1, which deals with “Curriculum change” and relates to the various dimensions of curriculum change that form a set of stand-alone modules that can be read separately or in relation to Module 1.

The diagram below illustrates the structure of this resource pack.
Curriculum change

This introductory module proposes a comprehensive approach to curriculum change. It begins by placing curriculum within the broader framework of quality education and effective educational policy and defining curriculum change as a dynamic process aimed at ensuring the relevance of learning. It is therefore a core module and key entry point for the whole resource pack. The other modules dealing with specific dimensions of curriculum change outlined below may be selected based on their relevance to different potential users and the context-specific challenges they face.

Policy dialogue & formulation

This module explores contexts of policy change, first by examining possible triggers and rationales for policy change and second by providing tools for the analysis of strengths and weaknesses in local contexts and for the identification of the partners involved in, and concerned with, the education system. It then identifies the range of possible stakeholder involvement in policy dialogue and formulation, as well as the possible causes of resistance to policy change.

Curriculum design

This module presents a generic structure for curriculum frameworks and examines the relationship between typical constituent elements that can be found in many frameworks. It provides an overview of different approaches to the process of defining what learners should know and be able to do at the end of various learning cycles based on the formulation of objectives, skills, competencies and/or standards. Each of these approaches has implications for the structuring of learning content, time and space allocation at school level, teaching and learning methodologies, and assessment methods.

System management and governance

This module examines the relationship between sound management and governance and successful curriculum development. Consistent with the principle of relevance, it explores the importance of effective management and leadership of curriculum development processes at central, regional and school levels.

The module identifies a number of rationales and modalities for effective management and governance, and considers the need to maintain balance between centralization and decentralization. It explores issues related to the localization of curriculum in specific national and local contexts as a way of ensuring greater responsiveness to local needs and realities. It so doing, it attempts to clarify the different practices associated with decentralization including devolution and decentralization of decision-making power to lower levels, and de-concentration of administrative functions away from the centre.

The module promotes the view that education authorities should develop or adopt a management and governance system that is based on universally applicable principles (such as the primacy of what is best for the child and the importance of ethical and corruption-free processes) and should adopt processes that will work most efficiently in the prevailing economic and political circumstances.
Development of textbooks and other teaching/learning materials

This module explores current trends in the policy and processes of textbook development and presents a variety of models for the user to consider. The module presents the potential role of various stakeholders, including Ministries of Education, in the production and distribution of textbooks. Users are invited to consider the schemes that best apply to their contexts.

The full range of teaching/learning materials is also explored, and some ideas for the selection and production are given in relation to curriculum needs.

Capacity building for curriculum implementation

This module defines capacity building in the context of curriculum change as a process of developing the knowledge, skills and insight of individuals and groups engaged in curriculum change and empowering them to make informed decisions in such areas as policy formulation, curriculum design, textbook development and evaluation, piloting and innovation, curriculum evaluation and finally student assessment through training and the promotion of discourse. Capacity building for curriculum change is examined in the contexts of new teaching and learning approaches and information and communications technology. The module highlights several elements, including the need for carefully targeted capacity building, the priority areas for empowerment of the targeted stakeholders, and the varied approaches to on-going capacity building in order to sustain the change process.

Processes of Curriculum Implementation

This module aims to explore and clarify possible models of curriculum implementation. It examines a range of issues related to implementation, including

- planning for the implementation process,
- analyzing funding and resources,
- the process of piloting new curriculum,
- the importance of initial and continuing teacher training and
- the possible roles of regional and school based leaders in putting new curriculum into place.

Curriculum evaluation and student assessment

Curriculum evaluation is presented as an important source of curriculum policy change and on-going feedback for continuous curriculum adaptation in the process of implementation. Rationales for evaluation are considered and the module then identifies curricula and curriculum components which may be evaluated. Possible approaches to evaluation are explored.

The module focuses on processes and techniques of evaluation – who should evaluate, whose opinions are important, which types of qualitative and quantitative data can be useful, how to gather data and what to do with data.
Module 1: Curriculum change

Overview

This module seeks to guide the reader through the several factors that should be taken into consideration when revising curriculum change policies. It contains 3 activities:

1. **Change to improve quality**, to discuss the multiple meanings of “quality” in education.
2. **Worldwide trends in curriculum change**, to consider the main directions in which reform is taking place.
3. **Curriculum as a process and product**, to broaden the conception of curriculum including several material and practical components.

Key words

Curriculum reform; revision; renewal; curriculum process; curriculum design and development; rationales for change; access; quality; relevance; equity; rights; inclusion; international and regional trends; teaching and learning; educational curriculum standards; objectives; aims; competences.

Module 2: Policy Dialogue & Formulation

Overview

This module is about policy dialogue – the process of formulating curriculum-related public policies by engaging and consulting with stakeholders. It is these policies which set the parameters for the work of curriculum developers. The module offers opportunities for the users to develop their understanding of this process by exploring:

- National issues that commonly prompt and shape changes in the curriculum and education systems;
- The various participants or stakeholders involved in education reform and curriculum change and their respective roles and interests in policy formulation;
- Potential problems and areas of conflict that may arise from formulation and implementation of changes in the curriculum;
- Ways of managing / dealing with conflict and resistance as well as mobilizing popular support for ongoing or proposed change in the curriculum; and
- Examples of sensitive or challenging curriculum policy issues in particular socio-political and cultural contexts.

The six activities in this module seek to guide the reader through the stages of curriculum policy formulation:

1. **Rationales for promoting a change** – Why curriculum changes occur.
2. **Actors and context for change** – Conducting ‘contextual scans’ of the educational system and wider environment.
3. **Consultation Processes** – How to identify legitimate stakeholders in the curriculum and how to engage them in policy dialogue and consultations.
4. **Advocacy towards political authorities** – The way curriculum specialists can have productive conversations with government decision-makers to achieve support and leadership in the process of curriculum change.
5. **Planning a consultation process** with a view to generating as much consensus as possible among stakeholders as well as popular support for the substance and direction of the curriculum policies.
6. **Sensitive issues** – How countries in various parts of the world have dealt with some politically and/or culturally sensitive curriculum policy issues to preserve and promote national goals and interests.

Key words

Analysis of strengths; weaknesses, opportunities and threats; collaboration; conflict; contextual scan; consultation; decision-making; decentralization; language policy; multicultural issues; policy dialogue; policy formulation; policy implementation; rationales for change; resistance; social cohesion; stakeholders; values.
Module 3: Curriculum Design

Overview

This module provides opportunities to explore current developments in curriculum design and to understand the central concepts involved in:

- Defining national curriculum standards;
- Defining curriculum outcomes, standards, competencies, objectives, and content;
- Current approaches to curriculum integration, diversification and differentiation with particular reference to the following examples:
  - Citizenship and/or Values Education and Social Transformation;
  - Science and Technology Education (STE);
  - School Health and HIV/Aids Prevention;
  - Coping with emergency situations;
  - Common or connected student learning outcomes; and
- The principle and practice of curriculum design for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

The reader is guided into an analysis of the building blocks of curriculum at the macro level, through 3 activities:

1. **The structure of a Curriculum Framework** – Includes the typical components of curriculum frameworks to be used as a structural analysis tool.
2. **Defining what students should know and be able to do** – Helps the participant to revise and choose several alternatives to define the expected achievements of students.
3. **Approaches to curriculum integration** – Reviews existing strategies for curriculum integration with different focuses and depth.

Key words

Curriculum design; standards; structure; learning areas; subjects; contents; scope; sequence; integration of curriculum; cross-curricular provision; integrated curriculum; flexibility of curriculum; diversification; time allocation; learning outcomes; four pillars-orientated design; sustainable development.

Module 4: System Management and Governance

Overview

This module offers opportunities for the user to develop their understanding of the policies and processes of system management and governance by exploring:

- Possible models for managing curriculum development and implementation with particular attention to processes of curriculum localization;
- Some modalities of regulation and control in education systems:
  - Keeping balance between centralization and decentralization;
  - School-based management of the curriculum;
  - Localisation of curriculum in national and local specific contexts in view of ensuring greater responsiveness to local needs and realities; and
  - Different concepts of decentralisation: devolution, de-concentration, decentralization of decision-making; and
- Opportunities and challenges of the broader involvement of stakeholders (local government, civil society, parents and local community) in curriculum development and implementation.

Two activities have been selected:

1. **Balancing national and local needs/interests** – Helps in reflecting the web of needs and interests that have to be balanced to achieve an acceptable implementation of the curriculum.
2. **Curriculum Localization: Challenges and opportunities** – Leads to reflection about the constraints that limit and also enable localization processes.
Module 5: Development of Textbooks and Teaching / Learning Materials

Overview

This module offers opportunities for users to develop their understanding of policies and processes related to the development of textbooks and other teaching / learning materials by exploring:

- Some features of a range of textbook development schemes;
- Possible roles of the Ministry of Education in providing easily accessible and quality textbooks;
- Approaches to ensuring quality textbook development;
- The evaluation of textbooks using agreed criteria;
- Other materials (both print and non-print) that can support the teaching and learning process; and
- The development of community-based supplementary teaching and learning material.

The module contains 5 activities:

1. **Policy Management** – General options for designing a policy for textbook development.
2. **Textbook evaluation and approval** – Use of criteria for revising textbooks.
3. **Supplementary teaching and learning materials** – Enables discussion on the wider scope of teaching materials that have to be considered for production and/or acquisition.
4. **Decisions about implementing e-learning** – Highlights some particular points to be considered when planning the implementation of e-learning strategies.
5. **The teacher as curriculum materials developer** – Discusses teacher efforts to produce curriculum materials sensitive to the local conditions.

Key words

Bias detection; criteria for textbook evaluation; distribution; e-learning; trends; non-print materials; production; rental scheme; technical specifications; textbook adoption; textbook approval; textbook development.

Module 6: Capacity Building for Curriculum Implementation

Overview

While curriculum can be conceptualized in a number of ways, the notions of ‘intended’ and ‘implemented’ curriculum are useful for curriculum developers.

The intended (or ‘official’) school curriculum is expressed in policy documents, curriculum frameworks or guidelines, frameworks of standards and assessment, syllabi, textbooks and other instructional materials and clearly defines the structure, content and methods of intended learning experiences. This ‘intended’ curriculum is then put into practice through real teachers interacting with real students in real schools. It is the ‘real’ or ‘implemented’ curriculum that shapes students’ learning experiences and determined their learning outcomes.

This module offers opportunities for users to develop their understanding of central issues related to capacity building for curriculum implementation by exploring:

- Approaches to encouraging discourse about curriculum philosophy, concepts, change and the implications for education systems;
- Strategies for promoting new approaches to teaching and learning, information and communications technology;
- Issues in school-based training and teacher education; and
- Whole school issues.
This module is organized around 2 activities:

1. **Approaches to capacity building** – Discusses needs for training in a framework of continuous capacity building.
2. **Teacher involvement in capacity building** – Helps in exploring the different attitudes that can enable or block the capacity building processes.

**Key words**

Capacity building; community of practice; ICT integration; in-service training; multi-grade / multi-class teaching; needs-based training; pre-service training, professional development; teacher support network; teaching and learning; whole school approach.

### Module 7: Processes of Curriculum Implementation

**Overview**

This module offers opportunities for the user to develop their understanding of approaches to piloting by exploring:

- Possible rationales and objectives for piloting;
- Models for piloting;
- Key issues in pilot planning and design;
- Issues in monitoring and evaluating pilots;
- Lessons and insights from successful pilots;
- Piloting practices in local contexts in light of the experience of other countries; and
- The challenges involved making the transition from pilot initiative to mainstream provision.

The reflection proposed to the reader is organized in 3 activities:

1. **Models for piloting** – Discusses several possible models that could be selected to design and conduct a pilot.
2. **Pilot design** – Helps in analysing variables to be considered during the piloting.
3. **From pilot to policy / Mainstreaming innovation** – Helps participants to identify possible potholes in the process to transfer pilot experiences to the whole educative system.

**Key words**

Collaborative pilot; feasibility study; field tryout; innovation; implementation; laboratory tryout, mainstreaming, micro testing; piloting; pilot tryout.

### Module 8: Curriculum Evaluation and Student Assessment

**Overview**

This module offers opportunities for users to develop their understanding of curriculum evaluation and student assessment by exploring:

- International and regional trends and rationales for curriculum evaluation and student learning assessment;
- Types and methods of curriculum evaluation and student assessment; and
- Approaches to the restructuring of evaluation and assessment systems.

This module is organized in 3 activities:

1. **Curriculum evaluation** – The participant is guided through an analytical schema to plan the evaluation of curricula.
2. **Student Assessment** – Participants examine considerations about student assessment that are regularly included in curriculum materials.
3. **Assessing learning outcomes in new content areas** – Strategies and special modalities for assessing learning outcomes are analysed for content areas recently included in curricula.

**Key words**

Evaluation; assessment; assessment instruments and tools; impact; learning outcomes; curriculum evaluation; performance; effectiveness; decentralization; accountability; internal evaluation; external evaluation.