

NATIONAL REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

Suggestions for preparation: 2008 series

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The forty-eighth session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) will take place on 25–28 November 2008 in Geneva on the following theme: “Inclusive education: The way of the future”. At each session of the ICE Member States of UNESCO have the opportunity of presenting a national report. The national reports have been prepared since the 1930s, and they represent not only an important source of information about the development of education in the world, but also a useful reference on education systems, recent policy developments and innovative ventures for the use of decision-makers, educational researchers and practitioners.
2. As in the case of the forty-seventh session of the ICE (Geneva, September 2004), the full set of national reports will be made available on CD-ROM, as well as through the website of the UNESCO’s International Bureau of Education (IBE). In addition to the printed document in a suitable number of copies, it is also essential for the IBE to receive the electronic version of the report in one of the most widespread formats (*.txt, *.doc, or *.pdf). The electronic version of the report can be transmitted to the IBE by e-mail as an attachment to the following address:
m.amadio@ibe.unesco.org
3. In recent years, the national reports have been used by the IBE as an essential information base for the preparation and updating of the profiles of national education systems included in the database *World Data on Education*, which is also made available on CD-ROM and through the IBE’s website (www.ibe.unesco.org). Taking into account that the sixth edition of this database (December 2007) contains a general description of the organization and functioning of 161 education systems, it is not strictly necessary to include this information in the national report unless significant changes have been introduced recently.
4. The national reports should avoid, as far as possible, duplicating information already presented on recent occasions to UNESCO, or information already made available to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Nevertheless, the IBE would appreciate it if any recent documentation that corresponds to the theme of the ICE and prepared at the request of national or international bodies could be attached to the national report as an annex.

B. GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE NATIONAL REPORT
ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

1. *The education system facing the challenges of the twenty-first century: an overview*

This part of the report should contain an overview and assessment of the development of education (at all levels), particularly the reforms carried out and the changes introduced since the presentation of the last national report. The focus should be on the following aspects:

- 1.1. Major reforms and innovations introduced in the education system, in particular concerning:
 - (a) the organization, structure and management of the education system;
 - (b) the aims and purposes of education at each level;
 - (c) curricular policies, educational content and teaching and learning strategies;
 - (d) the legal framework of education (in particular, new legal provisions);
 - (e) objectives and principal characteristics of current and forthcoming reforms.

- 1.2. Main policies, achievements and lessons learned especially as regards:
 - (a) access to education (focusing on actions being taken to reach children, youth and adults that are currently excluded);
 - (b) early childhood intervention (as a means to support children's development, transition to primary education and learning);
 - (c) learning outcomes, particularly concerning the efforts to improve learning achievement (how well are students performing at various levels?) and reduce inequalities (how have disparities in achievement been reduced?);
 - (d) pre-service teacher training, recruitment, deployment, working conditions and in-service professional development.

- 1.3. The role of the education system in combating poverty as well as other forms of social exclusion and cultural marginalization (how is it envisaged? What kind of contribution is expected? What kind of strategies should be implemented?).

2. *Inclusive education: The way of the future*

Rather than being a marginal issue on how some learners can be integrated in mainstream education, inclusive education is an approach that looks into how to transform education systems and other learning environments in order to respond to the diversity of learners. Quality education is therefore education that is inclusive as it aims at the full participation of all learners. (*Guidelines for Inclusion: Ensuring Access to Education for All*. UNESCO, 2005).

Education systems must be inclusive, actively seeking out children who are not enrolled, and responding flexibly to the circumstances and needs of all learners. The key challenge is to ensure that inclusion is a concept reflected in national government and funding agency policies. Education for All must take account of the needs of the poor and the most disadvantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads, and ethnic and linguistic minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV and AIDS, hunger and poor health; and those with special learning needs. (*The Dakar Framework for Action. Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments*. UNESCO, 2000).

The forty-eighth session of the ICE is expected to discuss the topic of inclusive education. Debates are to be organized around four sub-themes: (i) **approaches, scope and content** (to broaden the understanding of the theory and the practice of inclusive education); (ii) **public policies** (to demonstrate the role of governments in the development and the implementation of policies on inclusive education); (iii) **systems, links and transitions** (to create inclusive education systems which offer opportunities for lifelong learning); and (iv) **learners and teachers** (to foster a learning environment where teachers are equipped to meet the learners' diverse expectations and needs).

In this context, it would be particularly useful to present your country's experience, innovations and best practices related to a broad view of educational inclusion as outlined above.

2.1. *Approaches, scope and content:*

- (a) How is inclusive education conceptualized? What is the current vision of inclusive education in your country?
- (b) What are seen as the most important challenges for ensuring educational and social inclusion? How have these challenges changed in recent years?
- (c) What specific legal or regulatory frameworks refer to inclusive education issues? What groups are considered as excluded in these frameworks and how are they categorized?

2.2. Public policies:

- (a) What are the current dimensions of the phenomenon of exclusion from and within education? What kind of indicators and data are used to inform inclusive education policies?
- (b) Which inclusive education issues have been, are, or are going to be relevant for educational policies in your country?
- (c) What groups are considered to be most vulnerable to various forms of exclusion from and within education? Who are the excluded groups that current policies have yet to take into account?
- (d) In what ways do current educational reforms address inclusive education?

2.3. Systems, links and transitions:

- (a) What are the main barriers (e.g. economic, political, social) to inclusive education?
- (b) What are the most important facilitators of inclusive education?
- (c) What specific approaches and measures have been adopted to make the education system more inclusive?
- (d) What specific approaches and measures have been adopted to make the education system more flexible in order to offer additional educational opportunities to those who have dropped out or have not attained an appropriate level of qualifications?

2.4. Learners and teachers:

- (a) What new approaches to teaching and learning are being implemented to increase educational opportunities for all, improve student learning outcomes and reduce disparities?
- (b) In what ways is the curriculum being designed and organized to respond to the diversity of learners?
- (c) In terms of curricular time, how many instructional hours per year are dedicated to learning reading in the early primary grades? During how many years?
- (d) How can teachers be trained and better equipped to meet the learners' diverse expectations and needs?
- (e) How can the formal and non-formal learning environments be more effectively organized in order to ensure the inclusion of all learners?

3. *Documentary references used for the preparation of the national report*

C. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

Member States are free to choose the appropriate form of presentation of their national report, for instance, a printed document provided in a suitable number of copies or transmitted to the IBE by electronic mail as an attachment (address: m.amadio@ibe.unesco.org). It is essential for the IBE to receive the electronic version of the report in one of the most widespread formats.

1. In the event that the report is produced in a language other than English or French, it would be appreciated if another version were presented in at least one of these two languages.
2. It is desirable that the report correspond to a standard format: A5 (14.8 x 21 cm) or A4 (21 x 29.6 cm). It is also important that the text be clearly legible.
3. It is desirable that the national report should have annexed to it the principal recent official documents on educational policy, on-going or future reforms, legal documents, etc.
4. The pages of the report should be numbered in one continuous sequence, not counting blank pages, and avoiding unnumbered and loose pages.
5. Bibliographic references used for the preparation of the report should include the individual or collective author, the title, place of publication, publishing house, date of publication and pagination. If the title of the document or publication is not in English or French, a translation of the title into one of these languages would be useful.
6. In order to facilitate cataloguing, the cover page should be presented in the following way:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

National report of [*your country*]

by

[*the official author, for example, the Ministry of Education*]

[*Publisher, if the report has been published*]

[*Date*]