

IBE's expertise and potential involvement in Sudan through the UNESCO Office Sudan (2006-2010)

The IBE is UNESCO's Institute specialized in education & learning content and methods. As such, it was, over recent years, increasingly engaged in field operations and action-oriented programmes and projects focusing on quality curriculum development. At the same time the IBE carried out further its mission to promote policy dialogue in education and to document, through the means of research and action research, international trends in education and learning.

The IBE's expertise resides mainly in curriculum development for the pre-tertiary system (primary and secondary education) which does not exclude its occasional involvement in projects focusing on early childhood education.

Based on the IBE's record of the last five years, its main areas of expertise could be categorized as follows:

- **Technical assistance to member states (especially post-conflict and conflict-affected societies).**

The IBE assisted governments in reconstructing their education system based on carrying out comprehensive processes of curriculum change and improvement in both primary and secondary education (Kosovo: 2000/2001; Afghanistan: 2002-2004; Bosnia and Herzegovina: 2003-2004). The IBE was involved in intensive capacity building for curriculum developers and accompanied the respective ministries of education for a longer period of time. The ministries were supported to reinforce their institutional capacity to handle comprehensive processes of education reconstruction. The IBE has also assisted local teams of curriculum specialists and decision makers to develop a consistent vision of change and translate it into quality documents, such as Curriculum Frameworks, Syllabuses and models of improved textbooks.

In some other occasions the IBE organized study visits for curriculum specialists and decisions makers (Uruguay: 2000; Pakistan: 2005, Iraq and Jordan: 2005) and was engaged in processes of curriculum and textbook revision (Algeria: 2004).

In several other cases, the IBE assisted governments in dealing with processes of curriculum improvement from the perspective of integrating new approaches and perspectives into the curriculum (new strategies of time allocation and curriculum integration: ABEGS countries 2003-2005; competencies-based approaches in primary education: Mauritius 2006).

- **Observatory of international trends and relevant education data bases**

The IBE developed a series of studies and data bases documenting international trends in pre-tertiary education which can be used by local specialists as a source for documentation and capacity building.

- **Enhancing policy dialogue and participation of stakeholders**

The IBE has an extensive record of working with African countries (especially francophone countries) and assist governments in developing a comprehensive education vision. Country teams have been also trained to translate vision into policy documents and engage stakeholders in processes of sharing and effective participation in order to make consensus possible and cater for long term sustainability of education changes at all levels.

- **Development of communities of practice**

More recently the IBE has launched the idea of establishing communities of practice that deal with issues of curriculum change and improvement based on networking, sharing and engaging in joint projects. Several regional focal points have been created, amongst which are several African nodes that ought to facilitate face-to-face and virtual exchanges and cooperation at local, national, regional and international level.

- **Special programme concerning HIV/AIDS education in the curriculum and programme exploring the links between curriculum and poverty alleviation**

Three years ago the IBE embarked on a new programme aiming at collecting HIV/AIDS education programmes worldwide and organizing them into a HIV/AIDS clearinghouse. The programmes also tackle the issue of integrating HIV/AIDS programmes into the formal curriculum and contributes, through capacity building and international exchanges, to addressing policy issues and practical aspect of fighting against HIV/AIDS in schools.

As regards the programmes exploring links between curriculum and poverty alleviation, the IBE works with several Anglophone and Francophone sub-Saharan countries with a view to analyze how the curriculum contributes to poverty alleviation and to promote positive experiences that could lead to substantive improvement of living conditions and individual and societal development.

The IBE possesses an impressive library and is able to facilitate access to many documentation resources worldwide. It has also published a number of education series and magazines, such as PROSPECTS; Innovation; Seminar and conference Reports; reference books on different curriculum and learning topics; Handbooks and other Tools for curriculum developers (see www.ibe.unesco.org).

Potential areas of IBE's contribution to Sudan (2006-2010)

- The IBE could be involved in organizing policy exercises in the country focusing on curriculum and textbook development;
- It can also organize study visits to Geneva or to other relevant settings for decision makers and curriculum specialists from Sudan;
- The IBE could also be contributing to processes of institutional development and capacity building in support of processes of curriculum change and improvement. Pilot projects could be part of such strategies where education policy and vision meet classroom practices and contribute to the improvement of the learning environment;
- The IBE, working jointly with other UNESCO institutes and divisions, such as ED/PEQ could accompany the government, as it did in other cases, in the processes of developing new curriculum documents and integrating into the curriculum aspects and dimensions such as value education, holistic and participatory learning, differentiated learning, competencies-based approaches, HIV/AIDS programmes and/or strategies to contribute to poverty alleviation.
- Through its Community of practice programme the IBE can facilitate access of local decision makers and specialists to international exchanges such as net forums and projects of regional cooperation.

For more information about the IBE see www.ibe.unesco.org