

RECOMMENDATION No. 66
TO THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION
concerning

**THE IMPROVED EFFECTIVENESS OF EDUCATIONAL
SYSTEMS PARTICULARLY THROUGH REDUCTION OF
WASTAGE AT ALL LEVELS OF INSTRUCTION**
(1970)

Preamble

The International Conference on Education convened in Geneva by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, having assembled on the first of July nineteen hundred and seventy for its thirty-second session, adopts on the eighth of July nineteen hundred and seventy the following Recommendation:

The Conference,

Considering Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948),

Considering the declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959),

Considering the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education adopted by the general Conference of Unesco at its eleventh session (1960)

Considering the Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its twelfth session (1962),

Considering the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers adopted by the Special Intergovernmental Conference on the Status of Teachers (1966),

Considering the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation adopted by the General Conference of Unesco at its fourteenth session (1966),

Considering the Recommendation of the International Conference on Educational Planning (1968),

Considering that we are entering the Second Development Decade,

Considering that 1970 has been declared International Education Year,

Considering the relevant recommendations adopted by the International Conference on Public Education at its various sessions,

Considering that education has as its aim not only the inculcation of essential knowledge but also and principally—the development of all aspects of the personality of the pupil and that teaching methods should be adapted to this end,

Considering that it is necessary that every pupil should be enabled to complete the cycle of education on which he embarks and, that within the framework of life-long education, there should be adequate provision of continuing education for the early leaver,

Considering that most countries have been seriously concerned with some form of wastage, and that statistical analysis has shown clearly the extent and distribution of the phenomenon of wastage at various levels and points of the educational systems,

Considering that drop-outs often entail unproductive expenditure and that repetitions increase the cost of education thereby prejudicing both qualitative and quantitative improvement in education, to say nothing of the ill-effects that repetition may have upon pupils,

Considering that the improvement of the effectiveness of educational systems and particularly the reduction of wastage are essential both for ensuring for all the realization of the right to education and also in order to strengthen the contribution of education to social and economic development of the society,

Submits the following Recommendation to the Ministries of Education of the different countries:

Basic Principles

I) The measures to be taken to reduce educational wastage should be studied in the light of the following principles:

a) all aspects of the social and economic context and of the educational systems are relevant to wastage;

b) many factors contribute to wastage at the different levels of instruction. They vary widely from one country to another, particularly with the level of development. Broadly speaking, they fall into one of the following categories:

The environment

(i) home and community: geographical, social, economic or cultural constraints (distance from school, an unhelpful environment, linguistic differences, underdevelopment, public opinion, etc.),

(ii) the school system (administration, organization, curricula, number and qualification of teachers, family-school relationship, buildings and equipment, etc.),

the personality of the child (physical, mental, intellectual and moral factors, motivation, etc.)

c) factors associated with wastage usually occur in combination and require studies concerned with their interaction as well as with their independent effects. These studies should be based mainly on what has been learnt through experience in a particular context.

2) The reform of educational systems resulting from the evolution of civilization should encourage us to re-examine, in the light of the specific characteristics of each country, the question of curriculum reform (especially in the first years of the school course) the role of evaluation procedures and ways of organizing school and vocational guidance with a view to reducing educational wastage and also failure to enter upon a working life successfully.

Practical Measures to Reduce School Wastage

3) A number of measures should be taken, some of which should be of a general nature, aimed at improving the effectiveness of educational systems. These should effect a renewal of such systems by bringing them closer to life, to economic and social needs, and to

individual aspirations. Other more specific steps should deal with the various factors influencing wastage.

4) The aims of education in a rapidly changing world should be redefined, taking into account the contribution which education must make to human, social and economic development and to the effective implementation of the right to education.

5) It seems desirable to keep the concept of the life-long education in mind, since this provides a link between education and life, and ensures that people's knowledge is constantly improved and that school and out-of-school education are properly co-ordinated. It seems desirable to overhaul educational structures in order to achieve greater flexibility and a better coherence between the various components of education, while ensuring maximum continuity within systems and facilitating transfer from one type or level to another.

6) Care should also be taken, when determining the content of education, to allow for the need not only to teach facts, but also to teach how to learn- basic instruction should have its proper place new subjects should be included where necessary as knowledge progresses; an introduction to practical life and technology should be provided, and attention should be given to the inculcation of attitudes which will be beneficial in a working life.

7) It seems desirable that there should be continual improvement of the methods used in teaching and education in general, both by using modern information media and educational technology, and by applying the results of educational and psychological research so that the methods used are better suited to the child's needs.

8) It is essential to improve the pre-service and in-service training of teachers and their guidance, paying particular attention to their preparation for the new role they are to play, in view of the need for a new type of relationship between teachers and the taught and for a broad preparation for life.

9) It is important that selection procedures and methods used to test knowledge and assess school results should be reviewed, and that arbitrariness and subjectivity in these matters should be eliminated as far as possible- it seems desirable to adopt a positive attitude towards pupils and to take into account the affective and temperamental aspects of each pupil's personality. To this end it

R 66

seems desirable to adopt measures to evaluate the efficiency of educational institutions as a whole.

10) It is essential to develop school counselling and vocational guidance services on a permanent basis, so as to supply the children, their families and the public with adequate information about the educational system and the opportunities it provides for achieving a better life in general and for employment.

11) There should be close co-operation between educational administrators, educators, school psychologists, careers advisers, doctors, social workers and parents.

12) There should be close co-operation between the school, the family and the community.

13) In order to offset certain social, economic and geographical handicaps, the following steps should be taken *inter alia*:

a) the extension of free education at all levels and the extension and improvement of the school network and better distribution of schools, particular attention being paid to the needs of rural areas and minority groups;

b) the establishment of boarding schools, especially for children from sparsely populated areas;

c) the institution or expansion of social services or the application of a policy of assisting the family or child (canteens, free food or clothing, school transport allowances, nurseries open during parents' working hours, etc.); *d)* the expansion of school health and medical services;

e) the expansion of pre-school education, especially in rural areas and the overcrowded areas in large towns;

f) the granting, on a more equitable basis, of more scholarships and educational allowances of various kinds as well as of grants for higher education which will free students from the need to take paid work that hinders their studies; *g)* supervised study on a voluntary basis after school hours;

14) Systematic public information should be organized on a permanent basis to give parents an awareness of the importance of their children's attending schools.

15) Steps should be taken to make schooling compulsory; provide the facilities needed to cater for the enrolment of all children- and prevent foreseeable voluntary drop-out, particularly when this results from the working activities of minors.

16) Services should be set up or expanded to trace physically or mentally handicapped children, and institutions should be founded for such children.

17) The teaching of the language of instruction should be improved, both as a subject and as a tool for the acquisition of knowledge.

18) Steps should be taken to eliminate those factors making for wastage which are connected with the use of a language other than the mother tongue as the vehicle of instruction.

19) Special attention should be given to the teaching of basic subjects in which wastage sometimes occurs—for instance, the mother tongue and mathematics.

20) Measures should be devised to reduce the rate of repetition in the first years of the primary course, in which they appear to be particularly high.

21) In reviewing the content of education, provision should be made for new subjects closely related to life, the environment and work, in order to strengthen the pupils' motivation.

22) It is also desirable to deepen the child's interest in school through various extra-curricular and out-of-school activities.

23) School psychological services should be established or improved, and the role of the school psychologist should be redefined and expanded.

24) In the educational structure provision should be made for complementary forms of education which will enable children who have dropped out from school or who are seriously behind in their work to acquire more general knowledge and vocational or prevocational training, so that they may re-enter the educational system or enter the production sector.

25) A study should be made of the possibility and desirability of introducing, at the appropriate level, trade courses or preparatory courses for working life.

R 66

26) In reviewing the content and structures of education, a study should be made of the possibility of the school giving the pupil, at an appropriate age, practical experience of the world of work as part of his training for life.

27) The material conditions in which education is given — equipment, teaching materials, laboratories and libraries — should be improved.

28) The important factor of wastage resulting from excessively large classes should be eliminated by reducing the numbers in each class so that there is an appropriate pupil/teacher ratio in countries where circumstances allow of this, although this should not be done in those countries where it would make the school attendance situation worse. In such countries, educational authorities and research workers should devise ways of improving the efficiency of such classes, thus reducing wastage.

29) The results of experience gained by teachers and schools which have succeeded in reducing wastage considerably or even in eliminating it should be disseminated and widely applied.

30) In reforming educational systems and working out special measures to reduce wastage rates, account should be taken of the part that can be played by educational research and the science of education.

Studies to be carried out

1. Statistical studies

31) The collection of data for national purposes should be standardized and organized systematically. To this end, reference should be made to the methods used in the Unesco survey on the statistical measurement of educational wastage (1969), in order to calculate drop-out and repetition rates and (or) to assess the effectiveness of educational systems (although such methods might be improved) and use should if necessary be made of modern data-processing techniques.

32) Further studies should be undertaken, using the case-study methods at national level and with international assistance. If possible, Unesco should take the lead in promoting these studies, in which regional educational offices and centres could take an active

part. The studies should deal with the following points, the work done by the various regional organizations being taken into account:

- a) how to achieve greater accuracy in the collection of data;
- b) how to check the reliability of wastage indices and of the deductions to be made from them;
- c) the elaboration of techniques for the assessment of wastage in school systems without repetitions or drop-outs;
- d) elaboration of indicators of wastage for the purpose of simulation on the basis of alternative hypotheses;
- e) the nature and incidence of wastage in higher education.

II. Studies, research and experimentation

33) Methodologies should be elaborated and studies in depth should be carried out to investigate the various aspects of the problem of wastage, especially the causes of backwardness, the learning process and motivation in different contexts and locality.

34) The aims and basic principles of educational systems should be redefined with a view to ensuring maximum retention of pupils at school without prejudicing educational standards.

35) Studies and research should also be carried out on the criteria to be applied to promotion and to the assessment of school results and on the procedures to be adopted for these, especially as regards automatic promotion.

International Co-operation

36) International co-operation in the exchange of information statistical data and the findings of research and experiment, as well as in the free circulation of tests that have proved effective in classroom practice, should be fostered.

37) The Regional Conferences of Ministers of Education convened by Unesco should study the problems of school wastage and their causes, together with possible remedies.

38) Unesco should draw up co-ordinated programmes for the study of wastage problems, at both national and regional levels and such programmes should be conducted in association with IBE,

R 66

IIPE, the Unesco Institute for Education (Hamburg) and the Regional Offices and Centres.

39) It is desirable that Unesco should make available to Member States, at their request, assistance for the preparation of studies on the problem of wastage and for the training of specialists to study this problem. The fellowships made available to governments under external assistance programmes could be used for this purpose. Member States should also seek adequate international assistance for the collection and standardization of statistical data.