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**REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF
THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION****OUTLINE**

Source: Article V(g) of the Statutes of the International Bureau of Education (IBE).

Background: In accordance with this article, the IBE Council submits to the General Conference its sixteenth report on the activities of the Bureau. This report covers the period from the end of the 30th session of the General Conference to 31 July 2001.

Purpose: This report describes briefly the work of the International Bureau of Education, a UNESCO centre specializing in the content of education, and of its Council, within the framework of the measures to achieve the goals of the Dakar Framework for Action.

Decision required: No decision is required on this document.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This sixteenth report of the Council of the International Bureau of Education (IBE) is submitted to the General Conference of UNESCO at its 31st session in accordance with Article V, paragraph (g), of the IBE Statutes.

II. THE IBE COUNCIL

2. **Membership:** in accordance with Article III of the IBE Statutes, the General Conference, at its 30th session (1999), elected or re-elected the representatives of the following 14 Member States: Cuba, Czech Republic, Hungary, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Senegal, Switzerland, Thailand and Zimbabwe. At its 31st session (2001), the General Conference will be required to decide whether to replace or to renew the term of office of the other 14 members of the Council: Argentina, Benin, Canada, Denmark, Kenya, Mali, Netherlands, Oman, Paraguay, Qatar, Romania, Spain, Sri Lanka and Uruguay.

3. **Two ordinary sessions of the IBE Council were held** during the period under review (26-28 January 2000 and 24-26 January 2001).

4. **The 46th session of the Council (26-28 January 2000).** In accordance with its Rules of Procedure, the Council (a) elected its new Steering Committee; (b) approved the results of the recruitment procedure for the post of Director of IBE (Professor Dr Celia Braslavsky); (c) approved the report for 1999; (d) defined and approved three lines of action for IBE so as to adapt them more effectively to its new function as a UNESCO centre responsible for educational content and methods (capacity-building, development of a platform and an observatory, and promotion of policy dialogue); and (e) approved the budget for 2000.

5. **The Steering Committee of the IBE Council** is now composed of the following members: **President:** Mr Pieter de Meijer (Netherlands); **Vice-Presidents:** Mr A. Guerra Caraballo (Uruguay), Mr A. Hasbi (Morocco), Mr B. Soehendro (Indonesia), Mr B.K. Sogomo (Kenya) and Mr J. Sokol (Czech Republic).

6. **The 47th session of the Council (24-26 January 2001)** adopted (a) the report by the Director concerning activities carried out in 2000; (b) the proposals concerning the activities and budget for 2001; (c) the draft resolution and budgetary framework for the 2002-2003 biennium (contribution to document 31 C/5); (d) the contributions to document 31 C/4; and (e) the decisions relating to the organization, structure and methodology of the 46th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE). The Council examined the Director's proposals for the medium-term programme of activities of IBE (2002-2007) and made a number of comments aimed at improving it.

7. **Two meetings of the Council's Steering Committee were held** on 22 June 2000 and 5 June 2001, the first to discuss ways of consolidating the progress achieved in transforming IBE, the second to review the status of IBE activity implementation, particularly with regard to the preparation of the forthcoming session of ICE.

III. PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

8. Efforts to attain the Education for All (EFA) goals, above all goals (iii) and (vi) (see the Dakar Framework for Action, para. 7) lie at the heart of the restructuring of IBE programmes planned in order to continue to carry out the mission that was assigned to it by the General Conference at its 30th session.

A. CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR THE ADAPTATION OF EDUCATIONAL CONTENT, METHODS AND STRUCTURES

9. Ten capacity-building training seminars in curriculum development and decision-making were held for 320 specialists from 36 countries representing every region of the world. All the seminars dealt with EFA priority topics, and were organized in cooperation with local partners, notably, the ministries of education of the host countries and the UNESCO field offices. The outcomes of these seminars have been published (see Table 1 and the paragraphs devoted to publications and partnerships).

10. Four further workshops/seminars on curriculum development are planned for Central Africa (in Nigeria), the Baltic and North European countries (in Lithuania, in connection with problems of social cohesion), the countries of South-East Europe (in Slovenia), and the Caucasus region (in Azerbaijan), which will be attended by 100 participants from at least 40 countries.

11. An interactive world network of specialists in curriculum development and education for living together is currently being set up. The first stage, involving the establishment of an expert database, has been launched. To date, this database comprises over 1,500 specialists. It is used to serve the needs of Member States and UNESCO units both at Headquarters and in the field.

12. The “Basic education for participation and democracy” project, funded by Italy in the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, has been successfully completed. The project served to fund a total of 117 training activities, in which 212 trainers and 2,510 teachers took part. The project also financed the installation, in some 250 schools, of “resource corners” for science and mathematics education.

13. A methodology for curriculum development in crisis and post-crisis situations has been developed, and is available for use in a range of contexts. IBE has carried out in Kosovo, in collaboration with UNICEF and UNMIK, a project to strengthen local specialist capacities in educational reform and curriculum development. Among its many components, mention should be made of: (i) *The “Intensive training workshop on curriculum development in Kosovo”*, held in Geneva; (ii) an international seminar on *“Case studies in curriculum development: contributions to the Kosovo education reform”*, held in Pristina in May 2001; (iii) the preparation of a bibliography and the translation into three languages of selected publications; and (iv) other missions and consultations both *in situ* and on the Internet.

14. A methodology for local curriculum development is currently being put in place. Since 2000, IBE, in cooperation with the services of the Buenos Aires Academy, the Town Council of Campana, Argentina, and the private company SIDERCA, has been implementing a project for online curriculum development, involving 35 schools in the city. The project has three objectives: (a) creating the right conditions for reducing the drop-out rate; (b) promoting

new attitudes of tolerance towards classmates; (c) devising transferable methods of local, cooperative curriculum development.

B. PLATFORM/OBSERVATORY FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

15. **The Platform for curriculum development** has expanded its scope to become a resource bank whose main components are currently: (a) the **fourth edition of *World Data on Education*** – updated on the basis of, in particular, the reports submitted to the World Education Forum in Dakar and containing the profiles of 158 national education systems; (b) the **INNODATA data bank** on best educational practices for living together, containing a total of 714 entries; (c) the **BRIDGE database**, comprising 100 projects and programmes selected by Young Professionals, eight of which are ready for use in video format; and (d) the **country dossiers**, whose purpose is to provide various categories of users, through electronic links, with access to information on the educational situation in each country contained in various information sources both within and outside UNESCO.

16. **The setting up of its observatory** will enable IBE effectively to prepare its contribution to the monitoring report that is to measure, as stipulated in the Dakar Framework for Action (para. 19), the progress of education for all. The main actions undertaken are: (a) **the definition of a framework of reference** in cooperation with various institutions; (b) the preparation of ten preliminary presentations of **participatory processes for curriculum development**; and (c) **a study on curricula, textbooks, the teaching of values and quality of education in West African countries**.

17. **Thirty-eight publications of various kinds have been prepared:** (a) eight issues of UNESCO's quarterly review *Prospects*, dealing in six languages with the priority topics of education for all, in collaboration with the Organization's Education Sector and other partners; (b) six new titles in the *Educational Practices* series designed to give access to ways and means of tackling research-generated curriculum development; (c) seven monographs on innovations selected from the INNODATA data bank have been prepared in order to provide a better understanding of the processes that underlie its success; (d) eight final reports of meetings on curriculum development which were held during the 1999/2000 school year; (e) eight issues of the quarterly newsletter *Educational Innovation and Information* published in English, French and Spanish, which helps to follow the evolution of IBE activities and how IBE is geared to the priorities of Member States and UNESCO; and (f) several other documents have been published.

18. **The IBE website has been completely restructured, and went online in its new format** in January 2001. It provides ever broader access to all databases and publications of IBE, as well as to other UNESCO databases and databases elsewhere. On 1 July 2001, the site comprised 800 HTML pages and 422 documents in PDF format. Approximately 225,000 downloadings of publications have been recorded. There are some 1,200 hypertext links to other sites, while links to the IBE site may be found on some 300 web pages. Since the 30th session of the General Conference, the IBE Internet site has been consulted over 1.5 million times.

19. **The Documentation Centre has continued its process of modernization while maintaining its services.** The IBEDOCS bibliographical database (Documentation Centre Catalogue) has again been prepared for publication on the UNESCO databases CD-ROM. A catalogue of the collection of archived periodicals (some 660 titles) has been produced and posted on the website. The updating of the English version of the *UNESCO: IBE Education*

Thesaurus has been completed. A computerized database of the historical archives of IBE for the period 1926-1968 has been produced in cooperation with specialists from the University of Geneva. An inventory is currently being made of the archives from 1969 on. The Documentation Centre has become a member of the consortium of libraries of the United Nations system established in order to share access to online information services.

C. PROMOTION OF DIALOGUE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

20. **Organization of the forty-sixth session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) (5-8 September 2001) is well under way.** Its theme, “Education for all for learning to live together: contents and learning strategies – problems and solutions”, was approved by the General Conference at its 30th session. An innovative methodology was devised by the IBE Council for both the thematic structure and the organization of the session. A special meeting, chaired by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, will take place on 8 September 2001 on the theme of the involvement of civil society in the promotion of education for all.

21. As part of the preparations for the forty-sixth session of ICE, the following activities were added to the regular activities of IBE: (a) the preparation of national reports on the development of education – accompanied by financial aid to those countries which find it difficult to draft their reports; (b) the preparation of “best practices” and video documents; (c) the holding of a net forum with 250 participants; (d) the receipt by 30 July of 85 personal messages from education ministers; (e) cooperation with a view to co-organizing and/or (co-)funding certain Conference activities with ministries of education and research and training centres in several countries (Argentina, Canada, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland) as part of the follow-up to education for all, with the training programme in bilingual intercultural education for the Andean countries, the Commonwealth of Learning, the BERUM project (Bibliotecas para Educadores rurales y urbano-marginales), Peru, and the Institut Universitaire d’Etudes du Développement (IUED), Geneva.

22. **The fifth award of the Comenius Medal will take place at the forty-sixth session of ICE.** Following close cooperation with the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, the National Commissions for UNESCO, NGOs and the Organization’s Education Sector, the jury chaired by the President of the IBE Council chose from the 40 candidatures received five individuals and three projects from all six UNESCO regions: Thomas Bediako, Ghana; Yves Brunsvick (posthumously), France; Pablo Latapi Sarre, Mexico; Sook Jong Lee, Republic of Korea; Mohamed Abdul Kader Ahmed, Bahrain; Comunidade Solidária, Brazil; The Life Science Project, Namibia; and the Atanas-Burov Vocational School, Bulgaria (see Table 2 in Annex II).

23. **IBE made one-off contributions or offered assistance** to meetings for political and technical dialogue organized by the ministries of education of Dominican Republic, India, Morocco and Uruguay, and by the Swiss Federal Office of Statistics, ILO and others. Several study visits were also organized for educators and students at the request of various partners.

24. **Proposals for developing two transverse projects on priority themes: (i) education and AIDS, and (ii) study programmes to fight poverty** were drawn up; planned components include a capacity-building bank, a resource bank and political dialogue.

D. INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT

25. **IBE strengthened its policy of partnership** with the ministries of education and National Commissions of several countries. Its principal partners include units of the Education Sector and other UNESCO units (such as the Division of Educational Policies and Strategies, the focal point for Eastern Europe, the Dakar Follow-up Unit, PROAP and CARNEID); the UNESCO institutes; UNICEF (joint action in Kosovo); the International Academy for Education (for production of the *Educational Practices* series); the World Association for the School as an Instrument of Peace (for the observatory of the contents and methods of education for human rights and democratic citizenship); the University of Geneva (Faculty of Psychology and the Educational Sciences – FAPSE) and the Geneva Educational Research Department (SRED) (for joint actions in the fields of information, research and training); UNESCO's Regional Programme of Education for Emergencies, Communication and a Culture of Peace (Africa), the Pestalozzianum (Zurich), etc.

26. **IBE has strengthened the continuous evaluation of its activities and publications** by continuing to conduct surveys on its main publications launched before this period. Its Council (January 2001) led the way by beginning to assess its own working methods. All on-the-spot activities were assessed by the participants.

27. **IBE has introduced an active policy of academic and staff reinforcement** combining consolidation of its core, the creation of a College of Fellows which is to take an active part in the internal planning processes, the use of high-level consultants, and the incorporation, *inter alia*, of interns and Young Professionals, in conjunction with the UNESCO offices in various countries.

28. **A better balance is being struck between regular and extrabudgetary resources in the IBE budget.** The budget allocated by the General Conference at its 30th session for the 2000-2001 biennium was \$4,876,000 in constant United States dollars. In all, over the past six years, the budgetary allocation to IBE from UNESCO has been cut by over 45%, and a certain number of posts have been abolished. The level of extrabudgetary funding, on the other hand, has grown. The main contributions were: (a) SF 2,300,000 from the Swiss Government for the period 2001-2005; (b) an estimated \$200,000 or more for the costs of staff made available to IBE by the Netherlands (Associate Experts), France (secondment of a civil servant) and UNEVOC, Canada (Young Professionals); (c) \$205,000 from various sources, obtained independently by IBE to defray most of the costs of the International Conference on Education; (d) approximately \$245,000 from interested parties for funding on-the-spot projects; (e) the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has announced its decision to contribute approximately \$400,000 to the IBE programme for the period 2001-2003.

E. CONCLUSION

29. **IBE has consolidated its activities as the UNESCO centre responsible for educational content.** It has taken an active part in the Organization's efforts to achieve the goals of quality education for all set forth in the Dakar Framework for Action. IBE is receiving increasing numbers of requests from Member States and other partners – both within and outside UNESCO – for information, technical assistance, training programmes and curricula development policies. Its budgetary, extrabudgetary and human resources remain insufficient to meet the growing demands.

ANNEX I

TABLE 1

INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION

SYNTHETIC DATA FOR MEETINGS ON CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
2000-2001

REGION/TITLE OF SEMINAR	PLACE AND DATE	PARTNERS	NUMBER OF COUNTRIES TAKING PART	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
AFRICA <i>Curriculum renewal policy, curriculum development processes and local realities and challenges in the twenty-first century</i>	Libreville, October 2000	Ministry of Education, Gabon	Nine countries in Central and West Africa	50
<i>Curriculum development and education for living together: curriculum design and management problems in Africa and the rest of the world</i>	Nairobi, June 2001	Ministry of Education, Kenya; UNESCO Regional Programme of Education for Emergencies	Ten countries in East Africa and Nigeria	40
ASIA <i>Reform in the teaching of science and technology at primary and secondary level in Asia: Comparative references to Europe</i>	Beijing, March 2000	Chinese National Commission for UNESCO	Ten Asian and six European countries	32
<i>Capacity-building for curriculum specialists in the countries of East and South-East Asia</i>	Bangkok, December 2000	Ministry of Education, Thailand; UNESCO-PROAP	11 Asian countries and RECSAM	34

REGION/TITLE OF SEMINAR	PLACE AND DATE	PARTNERS	NUMBER OF COUNTRIES TAKING PART	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
<p>LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN</p> <p><i>Teachers of young people in Latin America for the twenty-first century: challenges, experience and proposals for initial and in-service training</i></p>	<p>Maldonado, Uruguay, August 2000</p>	<p>National Administration for Public Education, Uruguay</p>	<p>Seven countries in South America</p>	<p>16</p>
<p><i>Curriculum development for learning to live together in the Caribbean region</i></p>	<p>Havana, May 2001</p>	<p>Ministry of Education, Cuba; Cuban National Commission for UNESCO</p>	<p>Twenty countries</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>MEDITERRANEAN</p> <p><i>Evaluation of education reforms in Mediterranean countries</i></p>	<p>Madrid, October 2000</p>	<p>National Institute for Quality and Evaluation, Spain</p>	<p>Four countries</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>GULF COUNTRIES</p> <p><i>The management of curriculum adaptation for curriculum specialists in the Gulf region</i></p>	<p>Muscat, February 2001</p>	<p>Ministry of Education and National Commission of Oman for UNESCO</p>	<p>Five Gulf countries, ABEGS and the UNESCO Office in Doha</p>	<p>34</p>
<p>TOTAL (10 meetings)</p>			<p>36</p>	<p>320</p>

ANNEX II

TABLE 2

INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION

Candidatures chosen for award of the Jan Amos Comenius Medal
2001

NAME	COUNTRY	INSTITUTION PRESENTING THE CANDIDATURE
INDIVIDUALS		
Mr Thomas Bediako Chief Regional Coordinator of Education International	Ghana	Education International
Mr Yves Brunsvick (posthumously) Former Secretary-General and Vice-President of the French National Commission for UNESCO	France	Swiss Government; the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Directors of Public Education
Mr Pablo Latapi Sarre Researcher at the Centro de Estudios sobre la Universidad, National Autonomous University of Mexico	Mexico	Public Education Secretariat, Mexico
Mr Sook Jong Lee Professor at Kangnam University	Republic of Korea	Government of the Republic of Korea; Kangnam University
Mr MohamedAbdul Kader Hamed Professor of Arabic (specialist in curricula and teaching methods), University of Bahrain	Bahrain	University of Bahrain
PROJECTS		
Comunidade Solidária	Brazil	National Commission for UNESCO; Brazilian Institute of Education, Science and Culture
The Life Science Project Ministry of Basic Education and Culture	Namibia	Ministry of Education and Science, Denmark
Atanas-Burov Vocational School	Bulgaria	Bulgarian National Commission for UNESCO; Ministry of Education; Bistra and Galina Foundation