



## Conférence générale

32e session  
Rapport

## Генеральная конференция

32-я сессия  
Доклад

rep

Paris 2003

## General Conference

32nd session  
Report

## المؤتمر العام

الدورة الثانية والثلاثون  
تقرير

## Conferencia General

32ª reunión  
Informe

大会

第三十二届会议  
报告

32 C/REP/1  
1 September 2003  
Original: French

### 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 seventeenth report on the activities of the Bureau. This report covers the period from the end of the 31st session of the General Conference to 31 July 2003.

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

**Decision required:** No decision is required on this document.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. This seventeenth report of the Council of the International Bureau of Education (IBE) is submitted to the General Conference of UNESCO at its 32nd session in accordance with Article V, paragraph (g), of the IBE Statutes.

## II. THE IBE COUNCIL

2. The **IBE Council** is composed of 28 Member States elected for four years by the General Conference. Half of the seats (14) are subject to election/re-election at each session of the General Conference. During the biennium, the Council held its 49th and 50th ordinary sessions (30 January-1 February 2002 and 29-31 January 2003).

3. In accordance with the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the Council, **the 49th session of the Council (30 January-1 February 2002)**: (a) elected its new Steering Committee; (b) approved the activity report for 2001; (c) approved IBE's Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007; (d) approved the programme of activities for 2002; and (e) approved the 2001 accounts and the budget for 2002.

4. **The 50th session of the Council (28-30 January 2003)** approved: (a) the activity report for 2002; (b) the proposals concerning the activities and budget for 2003; (c) the draft resolution and budgetary framework for the 2004-2005 biennium (contribution to document 32 C/5); (d) the proposals of its Working Group concerning the organization, structure and methodology of the forty-seventh session of the International Conference on Education (ICE). The Council also held a half-day forum on the theme: "What scenarios for education/training of the young, today and tomorrow?"

5. Two meetings of the **Council's Steering Committee** took place during the biennium (7 June 2002 and 11 June 2003).

## III. PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

All IBE programme activities form part of the strategic objectives of UNESCO for education, as established in document 31 C/4 (particularly objectives 2 and 3). Emphasis was placed on EFA issues and the goals of the Dakar Forum, with special attention to countries in crisis or benefiting from the E-9 Initiative. Thus, out of the over 36 countries covered by the programme, seven are in conflict or post-conflict situations and four belong to the E-9 group, with flagship activities in Afghanistan, Algeria and Bosnia and Herzegovina (currently being planned). Adhering to the guidelines provided by the forty-sixth session of ICE, the programme has also ensured the continuation of activities in regions or subregions in the form determined by the needs of the various countries, while ensuring a balance between information exchange activities, thematic seminars, training activities and operational projects (always as requested by Member States). IBE has sought to integrate activities conducted in the various regions and reinforce the natural relationships existing between the different IBE programmes, with emphasis on effectiveness, efficiency, complementarity and consistency. Finally, the programme has stimulated synergy, cooperation and sharing of tasks within the Education Sector of UNESCO, its institutes and regional and national offices, in order that greater autonomy and integration may constitute an added return for the Organization as a whole.

## 1. **Capacity-building for curriculum development with a view to improving the quality of education for all**

6. **Capacity-building** activities have been pursued in accordance with the following main lines: the exchange of experiences, the collection and analysis of information relating to educational curricula, methods and structures; the reinforcement of individual and collective skills in this field, with particular emphasis on matters to do with “learning to live together”; special attention paid to specific problems encountered by those responsible for the curriculum in the promotion of social harmony in conflict or post-conflict situations; strengthening of intraregional and interregional cooperation; professional and technical support for a number of pilot or operational projects, at the request of Member States.

7. By the end of the 2002-2003 biennium, IBE will have organized **five seminars** on capacity-building of institutions and people (over 150 participants from 29 countries) engaged in the process of curriculum development in South-East Europe, in the Caucasus region, in southern Africa, in the Caribbean and in South-East Asia. Moreover, it will have been directly involved as a partner in **four other seminars** (Bolivia, Brazil, India, Peru). All of these activities have been executed in close cooperation with the Education Sector of UNESCO and regional or national offices, as well as governmental or academic institutions in the countries and regions concerned. A large amount of documentation (case studies) is available. All of these activities are systematically evaluated and the reports published.

8. **Evaluation** of all the exploratory (or consultative) seminars/workshops organized from 1998 onwards in all regions of the world shows a growing need for training that is wider, more in-depth, better documented and includes the problem of the management of reform processes. A more participatory methodology is also desired that calls upon the principles of action research. Many activities have been initiated by IBE to this end. For instance, a reference framework validated by an international team (August 2002 and April 2003) was established in order to execute a series of case studies in **conflict-affected societies** in various regions of the world and a network of coordinators was set up; the studies will serve as a basis for training materials (modules) intended for capacity-building of teams engaged in curriculum reform in seven countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guatemala, Lebanon, Mozambique, Rwanda Sri Lanka and United Kingdom).

## 2. **Resource bank/observatory of trends in curriculum development**

9. This programme has undergone much internal restructuring and reorganization with respect to its two lines of emphasis (resource bank and observatory of trends). The notion of “**good practices**” in the field of curricula for learning to live together has been strengthened and better defined, with the aim of achieving an internationally consolidated and validated frame of reference. The existing databases (World Data on Education, Country Dossiers, National Reports), which have been frequently consulted on the Internet, have been developed and updated. The INNODATA database and the mini-website for the BRIDGE project, created for the forty-sixth ICE, have been adapted, expanded and combined to form an integrated resource bank entitled “RelatED” (good practices and innovations in the field of curriculum).

10. **Subjects taught**, their **relative importance** and the **distribution of teaching time** (timetables) are a major concern in all curriculum reform. In its role as an “Observatory of trends” and in connection with its “Studies of the process of curricular reform”, IBE has undertaken initial wide-ranging work to collect, analyse, update and systematize the timetables of approximately 100 countries/240 cases (primary education/basic education). Two working meetings (May 2002 and April 2003) with high-level international experts and curriculum specialists, permitted a first critical evaluation of the data already logged and the preparation of a conceptual and operational

framework to guide exploitation of the data, particularly in relation to the goals of the Dakar Forum and the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*.

11. In 2002 IBE provided its first contribution to the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. In 2003 a desire for greater involvement on the part of IBE was expressed by the authors of the report. IBE thus undertook: (a) a study on gender and human rights in education; (b) an analysis of educational policy frameworks, with a view to seeing whether gender had been taken into account, together with a more detailed analysis of the curricular frameworks of six countries (Austria, Benin, Guatemala, India, Slovenia and Tunisia); (c) seven case studies on educational policy and practice and their gender sensitivity (Bolivia, Cambodia, Jamaica, Malawi, Oman, Romania and Uganda); and (d) a study on the theme of gender and decision-making in education (based on the composition of the delegations present at a number of ICE sessions).

12. The **International Expert and Curriculum Specialist Database** has been expanded and is being restructured. It now lists more than 2,100 specialists from various regions of the world. It is intended for use by Member States and UNESCO units, at Headquarters and in the field, as well as by IBE for its own activities.

13. **Over 30 different publications have been prepared:** (a) eight issues of the quarterly revue of UNESCO's *Prospects*, dealing, in six languages, with priority themes for Education for All in collaboration with the Education Sector and other partners. An agreement has been signed with the private publisher, Kluwer Academic Publishers of the Netherlands; (b) four new titles in the series *Educational Practices* giving access to means of approaching the development of programmes based on research; (c) four monographs on innovation selected from the INNODATA/RelatED database; (d) seven final reports of meetings on the development of teaching programmes; (e) six editions of the quarterly bulletin *Educational INNOVATION and Information* published in English, French and Spanish which describe the progress of IBE's activities and how they tie in with the priorities of UNESCO Member States; (f) the *Overview and Strategy 2002-2007*, published in the form of an illustrated booklet; (g) the book *Learning to live together: have we failed?*, intended to publicize the activities of the forty-sixth ICE, published in French, English, Spanish, Russian and Arabic; (h) finally, IBE has co-published with academic institutions in Geneva the minutes of the scientific seminar organized just before the International Conference on Education on the theme of *Problems of living together in curricula*.

14. The IBE **website** has been regularly updated and provides access to more and more IBE databases and publications, as well as to other databases (UNESCO and others). On 1 July 2003, the site included 6,100 pages of HTML (800 in 2001) and 2,050 documents in PDF (422 in 2001). There have also been some 1,800,000 copies of publications downloaded. Hypertext links to other sites number 1,200, whereas links to the IBE site exist on about 425 web pages (300 in 2001). Since the 30th session of the General Conference, the site has been visited more than 3 million times (1.5 million in 2001).

15. **The Documentation Centre has continued modernization and maintenance of services.** The bibliographic database IBEDOCS (catalogue of the Documentation Centre) is accessible on the website. A catalogue of the collection of archived periodicals (some 660 titles) has also been produced and is published on the site. The updating of the English version of the *UNESCO-IBE education thesaurus* is completed and accessible on the website. A computerized database of IBE archives for the period 1926-1968 has been created in cooperation with specialists from the University of Geneva, and a census of archives dating from 1969 onwards has taken place. A pilot project to highlight all of the historical archives is under way with the University of Indiana (United States). This documentation is used in the preparation of the *EFA Global Monitoring Report* and other projects and research programmes.

### 3. Promotion, support and development of policy dialogue

16. In 2002-2003, “post-ICE” years, IBE first of all placed emphasis on the quality and wide distribution of the principal documents and results of the forty-sixth session of ICE by means of printed publications (final report in six languages, *Prospects* No. 121, *INNOVATION*) or audiovisual documents (CD-ROM of the forty-sixth ICE and the BRIDGE CD-ROM). The ICE website was also updated. Three other books designed for a wider public than ICE participants were produced. The intellectual and technical involvement of IBE in the *II Telecongresso* (Brazil), which involved over 15,000 people, represented a remarkable initiative in disseminating and highlighting, at the national level, the outcomes of the forty-sixth ICE.

17. UNESCO, via BREDA, was able to draw on the experience gained in preparing, organizing and staging of the forty-sixth session of ICE, through the technical assistance of IBE in preparing and managing **MINEDAF VIII** (December 2002), with IBE also assuming responsibility for organization of and participation in the panel for workshop No. 5 on the Promotion of quality Education for All. Two major meetings on the successes of Education for All, planned for the end of 2003 in Brazil and Argentina, will also have the benefit of this experience and other high-level policy dialogue activities.

18. An in-depth conceptual examination of the idea of “**policy dialogue**” in education was also undertaken. In IBE’s current vision, it includes two specific but complementary and interdependent aspects: international dialogue on educational policy; and policy dialogue as a component of any educational policy. The first aspect refers not only to ICE but also to exchange and experience-sharing activities at global, interregional, regional and subregional levels; the second concerns the preparation and implementation, at national level, of educational policies involving all actors of the education system, including civil society.

19. The **policy dialogue training** activities envisaged for the French-speaking countries of Africa have taken place: the evaluation of needs (bibliographical research, questionnaire to ministries), conceptualization of priority contents (agreement, negotiation, communication, internal and external partnerships), the search for institutional partners (ADEA, World Bank Institute, BREDA) and expertise (European Centre for Negotiation), concerted preparation of a training curriculum, detailed programme of training sessions, preparation of monographs/cases studies. Two intensive inter-training seminars for policy dialogue were organized for high-level ministerial teams (27 participants) from eight French-speaking African countries in Mali (March 2003) and Senegal (April 2003); a third seminar will take place in Cameroon in November 2003. Some 10 monographs/case studies have been produced and a network is in place.

20. In April 2002, jointly with the University of Geneva/FPSE and the Summer University on Human Rights and the Right to Education, IBE responded to offers from the **Geneva International Academic Network (GIAN)** with a consolidated project entitled “Interdisciplinary training for policy dialogue in the field of education”. Planned to last two years, this project is based on activities already launched at IBE and widens the perspective by considering the historical and comparative dimension in the construction of a “vision” for education. With the forty-seventh session of ICE in mind, the activities in this field will focus on the problem of the “transfer of models” in secondary education in various regions of the world. The project will begin with the production of studies, teaching materials (modules) and training sessions designed both for leaders in education policy and for representatives of NGOs and advanced students of the educational sciences.

21. Following the decision of the IBE Council at its 49th and 50th sessions, and according to the wishes of the Director-General of UNESCO, IBE has begun preparatory work for the **forty-seventh**

**session of ICE.** The Council had decided to propose to the 32nd session of the General Conference the general theme of equity and quality of education/training for young people (12/18-20 years old). In view of the decisions of the 166th session of the Executive Board (April 2003), new thematic proposals have been prepared and will be submitted directly at the 32nd session of the General Conference (Commission II) during the oral report of Mr Aziz Hasbi, President of the IBE Council.

#### **4. Cross-cutting programme A: technical cooperation/assistance to Member States**

22. IBE's assistance in the development of a networked curriculum (35 schools in the town of **Campana**, Argentina) is continuing. With Phase I complete, the project is being evaluated.

23. A cooperation agreement was signed in August 2002 with **ABEGS** (Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States). It stipulates that IBE will continue to support curriculum reforms undertaken in the subregion (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates). Four research, documentation and simulation dossiers were produced and evaluated during a training seminar designed for curriculum managers in the States concerned (Bahrain, May 2003). The first activities were very satisfactory and are followed by a second phase starting in May 2003.

24. The positive experience gained by IBE in 2000 and 2001 in supporting curriculum reforms in Kosovo was put to use at the Division of Educational Policies and Strategies in the Education Sector and the UNESCO Office in Kabul as a contribution to the UNESCO project of support for the reconstruction of the education system in **Afghanistan**. An intensive training seminar/workshop for 30 Afghan educators was held with great success in Tehran from 30 September to 12 October 2002. The involvement of IBE in this project, in collaboration with UNICEF, financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), is continuing in 2003 and concerns capacity-building of curriculum makers and methods of teaching, the development of a new Afghan curriculum framework and the creation of a resource centre for curriculum development and teaching materials.

#### **5. Cross-cutting programme B: clearing house on HIV/AIDS prevention**

25. Training projects for the selection of textbooks and the development of curricula in Algeria and Bosnia and Herzegovina have been planned (with DEP and IIEP), with Japanese funding.

26. Under the inter-agency flagship programme for combating HIV/AIDS, IBE is seeking to reinforce prevention and education on the subject, in the specific area of curricula, contents and methods, in their development, their application and their evaluation at the primary and secondary levels of formal education. The project, launched in 2002, aims to collect, analyse, evaluate and circulate information on national or regional programmes and projects for the prevention of HIV/AIDS and to maintain a global clearing house with the intention of systematically incorporating education for the prevention of HIV/AIDS in official curricula. It also envisages contributing to subregional, regional or international conferences/seminars in order to take advantage of the information collected and processed as a tool for capacity-building and contributing to policy dialogue in HIV/AIDS prevention. An Internet site was opened in late January 2003. Following an informal consultation with experts and partners in education for the prevention of HIV/AIDS, the structure of the database has been improved. The criteria for evaluating the curricular materials for the prevention of HIV/AIDS were finalized following the meeting of a group of national, regional and international experts, including representatives of UNESCO, held in June 2003. They will be applied by IBE and its partners for the sake of systematically evaluating the collected material. The good practices identified during the expert meeting will be presented in the form of a CD-ROM (September 2003) accompanied by other relevant information from the IBE clearing-house site.

#### IV. PARTNERSHIPS, INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

27. IBE has successfully continued its policy of reinforcing existing **partnerships** and seeking new alliances. The growing interest shown by more and more institutions in working with IBE is clear recognition of the quality of its work and a great encouragement to follow up on the progress already made.

28. Cooperation with **institutions in Geneva** (see Memorandum of Understanding of June 2000) has been pursued to good effect. Moreover, IBE endeavours to reinforce its position and working relations with other institutions in the **host country**. To this end, a cooperation agreement is being prepared with the Higher School of Education of the canton of Zurich and its centre for educational research; another agreement was signed with Graduate Institute of Development Studies (IUED), Geneva.

29. Two other cooperation agreements were concluded during the biennium: with **ABEGS** and with **GTZ** (German aid programme). Academic links with several universities have been established, as has new cooperation, in regard to training on policy dialogue, with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the World Bank Institute (WBI) and the Organization of American States (OAS), with the signing planned of a cooperation agreement. IBE maintains positive working relationships with several other institutions, such as UNAIDS and the International Academy of Education.

30. **Internal cooperation with UNESCO** has progressed. At Headquarters it has taken shape throughout the Education Sector, but especially with the Division of Educational Policies and Strategies (Afghanistan, Algeria, etc.) and the Regional and Institutes Coordination Unit (Euro-Arab Dialogue). IBE has also provided substantial contributions to the *EFA Global Monitoring Report* and to preparatory work for document 32 C/5. Away from Headquarters, close collaboration has been set up or maintained with several regional offices (UNESCO-BREDA, UNESCO-OREALC, APEID/UNESCO-Bangkok), national offices (Brazil, Nigeria, Peru, etc.) and all of the UNESCO Institutes, especially IIEP.

31. The **composition of the IBE budget** continues to evolve in the direction of a reduction in the UNESCO regular allocation and an increase in extrabudgetary resources. The financial contribution of UNESCO to IBE for the biennium was **\$4,591,000** (a decrease of \$285,000 as against 2000-2001). The extrabudgetary resources paid into the IBE Special Account have risen to a total of about **\$2,000,000**. This includes: a contribution from the Swiss authorities, under the existing agreements, of 1,200,000 Swiss francs (\$800,000) for programme activities, as well as for partial funding of human resources; the contribution (\$400,000) from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) for programme support; the contribution from the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs (\$200,000) earmarked for the publication in connection with the follow-up to the forty-sixth session of ICE and the implementation of new training activities in policy dialogue; and approximately \$350,000 of new resources (ABEGS, Afghanistan, payment for services, etc.). To that can be added 50%, or \$150,000, of the contribution provided by UNAIDS to finance the “clearing house” activities in connection with the inter-agency project for the prevention of HIV/AIDS, and approximately \$150,000 of additional resources from Headquarters (*Prospects*, translation funds, FITOCA). Expenditure on personnel (associate experts, interns) provided to IBE by other countries – other than Switzerland – and other agencies can be estimated to total about \$200,000 (Netherlands, Government of Quebec, ILD/Canada, DAAD/Germany, etc.). Other contributions, either “in kind” or in the form of co-financing of joint activities, have been recorded, particularly under operational assistance projects to Member States (provision of services).

32. During the biennium IBE welcomed more than **20 interns**, some at the request of their university and as part of their training courses, others provided by ministries of education, governments or international institutions. All of these young professionals were involved, according to their profiles, in various programme activities and thus had an opportunity of broadening their experience while providing quality inputs for IBE's work.

33. In the area of **institutional management**, IBE has encountered a number of administrative difficulties, especially in the area of budget and accounts monitoring. An audit was conducted by the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) at Headquarters from 19 to 30 August 2002. This enabled IBE to introduce or reinforce a number of measures in the interests of a more efficient organization and sound administration of programmes and activities.

## V. CONCLUSION

34. In the period under review, IBE consolidated its activities as UNESCO's international centre responsible for educational content. It has taken an active part in the Organization's efforts to achieve radical reform of the institution, in order to be better able to answer the needs of the Member States and to attain the goals set in the Dakar Framework for Action. IBE is increasingly in demand among Member States and other partners – both within and outside UNESCO – for information, technical assistance, training programmes and the definition of policies concerning curriculum development. Its budgetary, extrabudgetary and human resources, however, are insufficient to meet the growing demands.

35. The documents and publications mentioned in this report can be consulted on the IBE website ([www.ibe.unesco.org](http://www.ibe.unesco.org)) or requested from IBE.