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para la Educación,
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Объединенных Наций по
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

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Report

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**REPORT BY THE IBE COUNCIL ON THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION (IBE)
(2008-2009)**

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 20th report on the activities of the IBE. This report covers the period from the end of the 34th session of the General Conference to 31 July 2009.

Purpose: This report describes briefly the work of the IBE, the UNESCO Institute specialized in content, methods, policies and processes of curriculum development. It is limited to a review of achievements with regard to the expected results of the 34 C/5 (para. 01023). Each year the IBE provides its Council with a full report, together with detailed activity fact sheets. This information is accessible on the IBE website: www.ibe.unesco.org (under "IBE Council").

1. The 2008-2009 biennium proved to be very challenging and fruitful in several respects, particularly with regard to preparations for, and the convening of, the 48th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) held from 25 to 28 November 2008 in Geneva, Switzerland. The follow-up includes a robust programme of activities which is currently being realized. Tangible results were also achieved in the implementation of the new IBE Strategy 2008-2013, approved by the IBE Council at its 56th session (2008), with the consolidation and expansion of core activities, the launching of new initiatives and the pilot testing of training tools for curriculum development. Existing partnerships have been strengthened and new ones established with United Nations agencies and

academic institutions, many emanating from the ICE preparatory process. The donor base has been expanded and the fundraising targets for the ICE have been reached, while the funding agreements for institutional support will be renewed in late 2009.

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 56th and 58th ordinary sessions, in addition to the 57th session held on the occasion of the ICE; the Council's Steering Committee met twice (16 July 2008, and 4 September 2009).

3. The IBE Strategy 2008-2013 is aligned with the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy (34 C/4) under the overarching objective of attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning. Three main strategic objectives have guided IBE contributions to the 34 C/5, under Major Programme I and its four MLAs, namely: Enhancing the capacities for the design, management and implementation of curriculum development processes among specialists, practitioners and decision makers (Capacity development and technical assistance, for MLAs 1 and 4); Improving the quality of curriculum-making processes and products (Knowledge production and management, crosscutting); and Informing innovative policies and practices in the field of curriculum reform and change (Policy dialogue, including the ICE, for MLA 3).

4. As a field-oriented Institute, the IBE progressively reinforces partnerships with UNESCO field offices, United Nations agencies and other stakeholders in order to respond to the needs of Member States in the field of curriculum development, within the context of the EFA agenda and within the United Nations reform framework. New synergies have been created at the programmatic level with UNESCO Headquarters divisions in order to increase resource efficiency and to expand the impact of joint activities. This was the case with the ICE preparations. Special emphasis has been placed on addressing the needs of Member States in Africa. Gender sensitive guidelines for textbook revision are being developed as a contribution to gender equality. The IBE has also implemented South-South and North-South-South cooperation schemes to foster an exchange of expertise and good practices in its activities. Contributions were provided to relevant intersectoral platforms, particularly "Support to countries in post-conflict and post-disaster situations", HIV and AIDS, and Dialogue among Civilizations.

Main Action Area 1: Capacity development and technical assistance

Expected results: Institutional and human capacities enhanced in curriculum design, development and reform
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5. The Community of Practice (COP) in curriculum development has further consolidated and expanded its expert network as an active platform for capacity development and policy dialogue at national, regional and interregional levels. With its membership now more than doubled (over 1,200 members from 126 countries as of June 2009), the COP has been instrumental in mobilizing expertise and fostering international dialogue on a broadened concept of inclusive education, in particular regarding the 48th ICE session (see para. 14). The COP is also playing a key role in the implementation of ICE follow-up initiatives. At regional level, and within the framework of the UNESCO BRENDA-led Basic Education in Africa Programme (BEAP), the COP contributed to country-driven review processes for the elaboration of competency-based curriculum frameworks. As part of a series of training tools, a "Resource Pack" consisting of eight modules was created to develop local capacities for the design, management and implementation of quality curricula. The Pack has been tested in Tanzania within the framework of BEAP. In association with the UNESCO Regional Bureaus for Education, approaches reflecting different regional priorities in curriculum development have been pursued towards secondary education reform and inclusive education (Arab States), the

incorporation of ESD in national curricula (Asia), and in inclusive education in Latin America (capacity development of UNESCO Club animators in Venezuela and Ecuador).

6. Technical assistance was provided to certain Member States to meet their demand for nationally-owned curriculum reform processes in post-conflict situations and transition societies. This resulted in: pilot testing of revised syllabi in Liberia; a two-year action plan to support the integration of cross-cutting themes into curricula in Angola; a proposal for curriculum and textbook development in Iraq; gender-sensitive guidelines for the revision of secondary education textbooks in Vietnam under the “Delivering as One” initiative led by the UNESCO Hanoi Office; and support to competency-based curriculum design in the Caribbean region.

7. To explore the complex links between curriculum innovation, poverty alleviation and peace education, the COP entered a new phase in early 2008 with a focus on competency development for life and work, and Learning to Live Together (LTLT). The project trained 90 curriculum specialists from 9 African countries (Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda) and, thanks to the partnership with GTZ/BMZ, this training was extended to 6 additional countries (Botswana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, South Africa) in late 2008. Three international seminars took place in Kigali, Geneva and Nairobi, reflecting a participatory process leading to the preparation of a toolkit on “Competency development for life and work in the 21st century” that provides a comprehensive overview of conceptual/methodological issues, as well as a wide range of examples of country initiatives in African and other regional contexts.

8. Through UNESCO’s combined capacity development and clearing house functions, contributions were made to the integration of HIV and AIDS education into curricula and important results were achieved, including: collection and dissemination of over 720 good curricular practices as a contribution to the UNESCO HIV and AIDS Clearinghouse; an updated version of the manual for integration of HIV and AIDS education into curricula; an interactive CD-ROM for teachers and teacher trainers; and a video on good practices for HIV and AIDS education in Cameroon. Furthermore, some 120 specialists were trained in Central African countries and the Russian Federation, and technical assistance on school health/nutrition and HIV and AIDS for pre- and in-service teacher training was provided in Guyana.

9. The “GidaPan” initiative was launched in early 2008 as a joint venture between the IBE and Carnegie Mellon University, in collaboration with the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet). This initiative aims at sharing good practices in linking curriculum and new technologies (GigaPan), while promoting inclusive school settings and encouraging sustainable networking among students of different cultural backgrounds through web-based exchanges of high resolution digital photos. The pilot phase was implemented in schools in South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago and the USA while the activities will soon be expanded to Asia (Indonesia) and Latin America (Brazil).

Main Action Area: Knowledge production and management

Expected results: New orientations and developments in the field of education identified through information collected and processed, research and studies

10. The IBE’s clearinghouse services, and the knowledge base on education systems and curricula, were enriched through the compilation, production and dissemination of up-to-date information. Main results included: a compilation of data on educational legislation, governance and financing in 184 countries for the 2009 EFA Global Monitoring Report; a content analysis of 129 messages from Ministers of Education (48th ICE session); an exploratory analysis of 2008 National Reports on inclusive education in Latin America and the Caribbean; the cross-checking of data on primary education duration and statutory entry age in 80 countries for the Global Education Digest 2008; the final report of the 48th ICE and a CD-ROM containing all ICE materials; two papers of the

IBE Working Papers on Curriculum Issues series; and one issue of the Educational Practices series. The IBE also supports the review process of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) as a member of the Technical Advisory Panel.

Expected results: Knowledge and information updated and disseminated on education systems, existing curricula and curriculum development processes, as well as examples of best practices and innovations

11. Databases on education systems were further developed and expanded, with 193 Country Dossiers updated and 161 education profiles of the World Data on Education database made accessible. All available National Reports (1932-1992 series) were catalogued in UNESDOC and the migration of IBE online catalogue to UNESDOC completed. The archive of online curricula grew to a total of 403 documents, while 70 weekly alerts and 5 Digests were compiled and disseminated.

12. As a key dynamic element of the knowledge management process, the IBE website was completely restructured, complying with the UNESCO Portal guidelines. The improved IBE website, made available in June 2008 with a special section on the ICE, is now a multilingual and user-friendly tool. The visit count increased from 1.9 to 2.8 million, while page views quadrupled from 4.8 to 19.5 million.

13. Fresh impetus was given to Prospects, which became a peer reviewed journal with improved quality control, time delivery and visibility. Five issues were completed, including a special issue on Inclusive Education for the ICE. Four additional publications were also made available.

Main Action Area 3: Policy dialogue and the ICE

Expected results: International policy dialogue on education policies intensified and broadened

14. The year 2008 was dedicated to the organization of the 48th session of the ICE on "Inclusive Education: the Way of the Future". The preparatory process was considered as a model for stakeholder involvement and a key contributing factor in the high quality of the debates. Overall, the conference preparation involved nine regional preparatory workshops organized through the COP - including four regional preparatory conferences (Cameroon, Indonesia, Latvia and Lebanon) and one international seminar (Geneva). The Conference's importance as a unique global forum for educational policy dialogue, and its specific place within UNESCO's overall strategy for fostering quality Education for All (EFA), was confirmed by the high degree of representation: more than 1,600 participants, including some 100 Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Education from 153 Member States. The ICE "Conclusions and Recommendations" recognized "the importance of a broadened concept of inclusive education that addresses the diverse needs of all learners and that is relevant, equitable and effective". The ICE added some innovative new features, such as a web-cast round table where young people were able to address questions to different Ministers of Education and an exhibition showcasing concrete inclusive education practices.

Expected results: Implementation of the decisions of the 2008 International Conference on Education monitored

15. Activities have been carried out to maintain the momentum created around inclusive education, including advocacy and information dissemination during major events and meetings targeting policy-

makers, education experts and specialists. The Parliamentary Education Commission in Uruguay in June 2009 involved participants from 68 countries. Meanwhile, a follow-up workshop to the ICE to refine a regional road map for inclusive education took place in Lebanon in July 2009 and others are being organized in other regions.

Human and financial resources

16. The IBE has eight professional posts (P) and seven General Service posts (GS) financed by the UNESCO RB allocation. It has taken steps to increase its delivery capacity by recruiting staff under Assignment of Limited Duration (ALD) contracts and by recruiting research assistants. An internship programme was introduced, with the IBE already hosting some 28 interns from 12 countries, including two six-month interns from the UNESCO-Korean Research Foundation Internship Programme. As reported to the Council's sessions, it is clear however that these measures can not compensate for the acute shortage of core senior staff, which needs to be urgently addressed.

17. All programme activities are financed through voluntary and extra-budgetary funds. The IBE has successfully mobilized additional funding to the extent that the extra-budgetary funds now represent more than 50% of the total budget for the 2008/09 biennium. UNESCO's financial allocation to the IBE for 2008-2009 was \$4,591,000, which is unchanged since 2002. The extrabudgetary resources for the same period, paid into the IBE Special Account, amounted to \$2,008,527. The extrabudgetary resources received outside the Special Account (Funds-in-trust, UNAIDS, etc.) amounted to \$860,019. For the ICE, some \$545,450 was raised from donors, in addition to a contribution of \$471,368 from different UNESCO divisions, mainly within the Education sector, for a total of \$1,016,818. An additional \$550,000 is expected for programme activities in 2009. These contributions, added to other revenues amounting to \$242,000, take the grand total to \$4,677,363.