

UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Observatory of Learning Outcomes Regional Workshop- *Siem Reap (Cambodia)*

Catalogue of Learning Assessments

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Content:

- ❑ Context: Post 2015 global development agenda
- ❑ What is the catalogue of students learning assessments?
- ❑ Why is it important?
- ❑ Sample research/policy questions
- ❑ Expected products from this project of the catalogue
- ❑ Country cases

Context of Post 2015 global development agenda and UNESCO Leadership in education:

- Technical Advisory Group for post-2015 education indicators was established to provide technical guidance to the Education for All Steering Committee (EFA SC): Experts from the EFA Global Monitoring Report, OECD, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank
- Regional EFA meetings in 2014 and early 2015 to review proposed education targets
- The new post-2015 Global Education Agenda will be adopted in the Republic of Korea in May 2015

Post 2015 Global development agenda in education

MDG 2 : Achieve universal primary education- Indicators to report are input oriented such as access and enrolment indicators, pupil-teacher ratios; and output indicators oriented such as completion rates

▣ Current debate: Shift from Education for All to Meaningful Learning for All

Global shift in the educational paradigms, from teacher centered to learner centered

▣ Lifelong learning, 21st century skills and the integration of ICTs in education command the transformation of the traditional teaching-learning process, hence the way learners should be assessed

▣ Post-2015 agenda presents two *new* issues, in the areas of learning outcomes and equity.

Post-2015 agenda presents two new issues: learning outcomes and equity:

Learning outcomes: 5 of the 7 targets (**Target 1 to target 5**), examples-

- ▣ *Target 2: By 2030, all girls and boys complete free and compulsory quality basic education of at least nine years and achieve relevant learning outcomes, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalised.*
- ▣ *Target 3: By 2030, all youth and at least x% of adults reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society, with particular attention to girls and women and the most marginalised.*
- ▣ *Target 5: By 2030, all learners acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to establish sustainable and peaceful societies, including through global citizenship education and education for sustainable development*

Equity:

- ▣ *Target 7: By 2030, all countries allocate at least 4%-6% of their gross domestic product (GDP) or at least 15%-20% of their public expenditure to education, prioritising groups most in need; and strengthen financial cooperation for education, prioritising countries most in need.*

As a result... (Context, end.)

A global inventory of current students assessments is a key output that fits in the post 2015 global agenda in education!

What is a catalogue of student assessments?

- A summary characteristics of student assessments administered in a given country, targeting a specific population among students (and their schools and family environments), which results are used for specific purposes such as certification, policy reform in education, selection for higher level education programme, holding schools/teachers accountable or providing support to teaching staff, etc.
- This survey differs from traditional data collection surveys because it is not intended to collect data directly from the population of interest (students and related stakeholders).
- The units of interest are more individual assessment process oriented. For this reason, traditional statistics or indicators are not among the priority data a catalogue template is supposed to collect, but descriptive metadata related to the assessment process or data about data!

Target population or the universe of this survey

For the purpose of UIS survey, the target population includes:

- The national and international assessments, and
- The public examinations administered to students in
 - **primary schools (ISCED 1)** and in
 - **general and vocational lower secondary education programmes (ISCED 2).**

School-based assessments are excluded.

Three types of student assessments targeted:

- **National assessment**, defined as << a tool for providing feedback on a limited number of outcome measures that are considered important by policy makers, politicians, and the broader educational community (Greaney & Kellaghan,2008) >>. In general, they are **sample based**, but also **census-based (e.g Standard 4 attainment test in Botswana)**! Are low stake for students but not always for teachers and schools.

Some countries use both options: Australia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Uruguay, and Chile conduct sample-based and census-based assessment (DFID).

- **International assessment**, in which a number of countries follow similar procedures to obtain information about student learning outcomes. Current international assessments are sample-based.
- **Public examinations** are **census-based** (generally cover all students in a given grade or populations that verify specific requirements), are of high stake for candidates and sometimes for teachers in private schools where reputation is generally built on results from these exams. They intend in general to certify and select high performing students.

Assessments to be excluded:

- 1. School-based assessments and assessments organized by decentralised educational institutions which are mainly for selection purposes from one grade to another or one programme to another.

- 2. Tests which do not specifically target students enrolled in education programmes and which are administered to all candidates who apply for a professional certification, generally without prior enrollment to an equivalent official general or vocational educational programme. This type of test is decentralised and can be organised by unions or professional associations. Driving license exams or exams for membership to a professional association are few examples.

- 3. Household-based assessments of learning outcomes, even if they target children enrolled in ISCED level 1 or 2 programmes.

Why is the Catalogue important?

For the national and international community, this catalogue:

- ▣ Provides baseline data for the Post 2015 education agenda regarding learning outcome indicators
- ▣ Provides parameters for potential capacity building by identifying gaps and needs in countries with low technical capacities for conducting large scale national assessments based on international standards
- ▣ Generates baseline data to explore alignment of the education systems across countries, and for linking and equating purposes
- ▣ Generates baseline information for the development of international student assessment studies to track student competencies, and evaluate effects of educational policies at the regional basis
- ▣ Monitor how penetration of information and communication technologies change the assessment processes across the world

Why is the Catalogue important (end.)?

- Monitor the shift from knowledge-based to competency-based assessment as an indication of effective move from teacher centered to student centered educational paradigms
- Provides elements that can explain student performances in current international and regional assessments
- Facilitate the decision of UNESCO Member States considering whether or not to participate in particular international/regional assessment, based on their characteristics described in this catalogue (*appropriateness of the assessment frameworks for the country, required technical skills, etc*).

Sample of research questions

- ❑ What educational programmes (ISCED levels and grades) and why do countries conduct large scale national and international assessments or public examinations?
- ❑ What countries can learn from each other and how data can be used to improve the education systems?
- ❑ What subjects and content domains are been assessed across countries?
- ❑ Are national assessments aligned to existing national, state/provincial or territorial curricula?
- ❑ How the current country profiles can facilitate or hamper the regional harmonization of educational programs and students learning outcome assessments?

Sample of research questions (end.)

- How are males and females of a given country performing across assessments and subjects, and how do they compare each other?
- Are 21st century skills targeted in current assessments?
- Are test instruments oriented to knowledge or skills assessments?
- How important are school/state/provincial/territorial based assessments in high-stake national assessments and public examinations?
- How are data disseminated?

Structure of the template (9 sections)

- General information
- Contact information
- List of targeted assessments: National, international and public examinations
- Scope, purpose and funding
- Test design
- Coverage and sampling
- Data processing
- Results
- Data dissemination

Two products (public goods!), free of access

- ✓ **Online catalogue**

Descriptive data and country profiles published online:

www.uis.unesco.org

- ✓ **Countries reports**

In the future, based on data and related documentations, specific studies will be conducted with the aim of producing analytical reports that provide detailed answers to the questions that were asked to motivate this catalogue study, in collaboration with national and international counterparts.

Expected results from this workshop

- ❑ The participants share the same understanding of technical terms used in the template
- ❑ Appropriation of the project by the participants in order to contribute in the subsequent steps following this meeting.
- ❑ Each participant has worked to fill the template with data from at least one national assessment or a public examination of his choice
- ❑ A fixed deadline to send the completed templates, as a result of discussion between participants and their commitment

Thank you!