

# UIS-Catalogue of Learning Assessments: A proposal for Version 2

16 September 2016

The ACER Centre for Global Education Monitoring supports the monitoring of educational outcomes worldwide, holding the view that the systematic and strategic collection of data on education outcomes, and factors related to those outcomes, is required to inform high quality policy aimed at improving educational progress for all learners.



## Contents

Executive summary .....	2
Introduction .....	5
Proposed new version of the Catalogue of Learning of Assessments .....	6
Purpose of the catalogue.....	6
Use of the CLA data .....	6
Scope of the CLA.....	7
Structure of the CLA.....	8
CLA content areas.....	10
Suggested content areas for general questions.....	10
Categorisation of learning assessments: An issue for discussion.....	14
Existing mapping tools of learning assessments.....	15
CLA questionnaire.....	18
Mechanisms for implementation.....	18
Data collection.....	18
Data updates.....	18
Data presentation.....	19
Conclusion .....	20
References .....	21
Appendix 1: Household-based assessments .....	22
Appendix 2: Proposed questionnaire to complete the new CLA.....	23
Appendix 3: United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4.....	24

## Executive summary

The UIS Catalogue of Learning Assessments (CLA), previously referred to as the Observatory of Learning Outcomes (OLO), was launched to map the different assessments countries use to monitor student achievement. However, the first version of the CLA is now considered to be more extensive than required and too costly to implement as a tool for mapping the assessments countries use. At the same time the goals for the CLA are being extended beyond mapping the different assessments countries use to monitor student achievement for information purposes to take in the following purposes:

- provide national data that could be used for reporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) targets,
- provide data that contribute to an evaluation of how robust countries' assessment/examination systems are,
- feed the information about countries' assessment and examination activities into the process for identifying capacity-building needs.

To achieve this three CLA modules are proposed. Module 1, a simpler more streamlined mapping instrument, rather than a tool that collects in-depth data, is now being proposed. Module 2, an instrument (or suite of instruments) that will be used to collect national data for reporting achievement of the SDG targets. Module 3, an instrument (or suite of instruments) that evaluates the robustness of assessment/examination systems and identifies capacity-building needs.

This paper, discusses Module 1, a streamlined version of the current UIS CLA questionnaire instrument to collect data regarding learning assessment programs and examination systems. It is proposed that the CLA be enhanced in the following aspects:

### *Use of the CLA Module 1 data:*

Data collected through the CLA should take a mapping perspective and be used as a starting point to provide overview information about learning assessments and examination systems. If users are interested in more in-depth data, they should be referred to data from other existing data collection tools where appropriate.

### *Scope of the CLA Module 1*

The current questionnaire primarily targets students enrolled in formal education in ISCED levels 1 and 2. The enhanced CLA questionnaire should cover ISECD levels 0–3, and include not only school-based assessments, but also household-based assessments. This will ensure that the CLA better covers all the populations mentioned in the SDG 4 targets related to learning outcomes.

*Structure of the CLA Module 1:*

The structure of previous version of the CLA was made complex because some information was collected about assessments at ISCED 0 and household-based assessment, but, given that these assessments were outside the defined scope of the questionnaire, the information was different to that collected about national assessments/examinations and international assessments.

If the coverage of the questionnaire is expanded so that ISCED 0 assessments and household-based assessments are treated the same as other kinds of assessments, then the structure can be greatly simplified to: (1) contact information; (2) list of assessments, and (3) a standard set of general questions to collect information about each of the assessments listed.

Further, by expanding its coverage to include household-based assessments and assessments at ISCED levels 0 and 3, the CLA will not only be collecting basic information about a more complete range of assessments and examinations, but it will also be giving itself the best opportunity to capture and track emerging assessment trends and patterns across countries.

*Suggested CLA Module 1 content areas:*

A standard set of general questions should be asked about each of the assessments listed at the beginning of the questionnaire. The set of questions should include minimal contents that are useful for a mapping exercise. Such questions would cover areas such as: 1) assessment name, 2) level of implementation, 3) organisation responsible, 4) purpose, 5) inception and frequency, 6) target population, 7) accommodation of special needs, 8) participation, 9) sampling design, 10) sample size, 11) cognitive domains, 12) background information, 13) assessment administration, 14) data analysis and reporting, and 15) dissemination.

Unlike the CLA 1.0, categorisation of assessments into certain types (i.e., national assessment, international assessment or public examination) is not required in the proposed new questionnaire. Categorisation of learning assessments entails boundary issues between key features of assessments, and it inevitably requires discussion. This discussion should be based on the recognition that the categorisation must be useful, coherent and informative.

*Suggested CLA Module 1 questionnaire:*

Based on the proposed 15 content areas, ACER-GEM has drafted a proposal for a new CLA Module 1 questionnaire, which is available as a separate file.

*Mechanisms for implementation:*

The online data collection platform UIS is currently developing is expected to increase the efficiency of data collection. Simple functions for updating data should be incorporated into the online platform.

The simple, interactive UIS Learning Assessment Capacity Index (LACI) platform should be considered as an option for presenting CLA data.

## Introduction

The UIS CLA was first launched as the Observatory of Learning Outcomes (OLO), the first version of CLA, to map the different assessments countries use to monitor student achievement. The questionnaire instrument has over 110 items, and the data collected from 36 countries are currently available [at the UIS website](#).

The CLA was reviewed by Brenlla (2015). The resulting CLA 2.0 proposal included more items in some existing content areas, and the addition of some new content areas and, to address quality issues, it had a structure informed by the International Test Commission's guidelines. The CLA 2.0 proposed by Brenlla, if implemented, would result in a longer and more complex CLA than the current implementation.

However, the first version of the CLA is now considered to be more extensive than required and too costly to implement as a tool for mapping the assessments countries use. At the same time the goals for the CLA are being extended beyond mapping the different assessments countries use to monitor student achievement for information purposes to take in the following purposes:

- provide national data that could be used for reporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) targets,
- provide data that contribute to an evaluation of how robust countries' assessment/examination systems are,
- feed the information about countries' assessment and examination activities into the process for identifying capacity-building needs.

To achieve this three CLA modules are proposed. Module 1, a simpler more streamlined mapping instrument, rather than a tool that collects in-depth data, is now being proposed. Module 2, an instrument (or suite of instruments) that will be used to collect national data for reporting achievement of the SDG targets. Module 3, an instrument (or suite of instruments) that evaluates the robustness of assessment/examination systems and identifies capacity-building needs.

This paper, discusses Module 1, a streamlined version of the current UIS CLA questionnaire instrument to collect data regarding learning assessment programs and examination systems. The rationale for the streamlining is that:

- administering an extensive questionnaire is very costly, and the cost/use ratio may not represent value for money,
- the CLA should not double-up on collecting more in-depth data that are already collected elsewhere,
- a streamlined version of the instrument would make updating data easier.

Also, the enhancement of the CLA questionnaire needs to be undertaken within a larger context of the development of the UIS Data Quality Assurance Framework (DQAF). The DQAF is a set of mechanisms that aim to ensure that national and regional assessment data are of acceptable quality to be reported against the UIS reporting scales that will be used for SDG 4 monitoring. A new version of CLA could feed valuable information into these mechanisms. As the contents of the DQAF are currently being outlined, details on how a new CLA can support the implementation of the DAQF will be further elaborated when the DQAF is more fully developed.

Taking into consideration the above context, ACER-GEM proposes a streamlined version of the CLA questionnaire instrument to collect data regarding learning assessment programs and examination systems – this will be Module 1 of a new CLA.

## Proposed new version of the Catalogue of Learning of Assessments

### Purpose of the catalogue

The primary purpose of the CLA is clearly defined in the instructional manual of CLA 1.0 as to ‘map the different assessments countries use to monitor student achievement’ (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015, p.4).

*Recommendation 1:* While preserving this primary purpose, we suggest that the data collection initiative could fulfil the following secondary purposes:

- provide national data that could be used for reporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) targets,
- provide initial data that contribute to an evaluation of how robust countries’ assessment/examination systems are,
- feed the information about countries’ assessment and examination activities into the process for identifying capacity-building needs.

How to operationalise these secondary purposes in the CLA instrument will depend in a large part on the way the CLA supports the implementation of DQAF. The remainder of this paper is concerned with module 1, the purpose of which is the mapping different assessments in different countries to monitor learning achievement.

### Use of the CLA data

A mapping created through the CLA can be used as a starting point where users can find basic overview information about learning assessments and examination systems in



countries of interest. Then, where needed, the users can be directed to separate and more detailed sets of data collected through other existing tools.

This envisaged use of data supports the simplification of the current CLA and use of existing data collection tools.

## Scope of the CLA

Currently, CLA 1.0 focuses on system-level educational assessments which primarily target students enrolled in formal education programs. The coverage of this questionnaire can be described in terms of the types of assessments, the levels of education that are addressed and the years in which the assessments occurred.

The types of assessments covered are large-scale educational assessments of: (1) public/national examinations, (2) large-scale national assessments and (3) international assessments. Classroom assessments and household-based assessments of learning outcomes are excluded from the survey, according to the questionnaire instructions.<sup>1</sup> The rationale for this exclusion is not clearly explained in relevant documents. Moreover, although these assessment types are described as excluded, some general questions about household-based assessments are still asked.

The ISCED levels covered are Levels 1 (primary education) and 2 (lower secondary education). However, the questionnaire includes some general questions with regard to ISCED Level 0 or Early Childhood Education (ECE)<sup>2</sup>. The rationale for excluding Level 3 (upper secondary education) is not provided in relevant documents.

The years of assessment administration covered in CLA 1.0 are 2000–2014.

*Recommendation 2:* In the enhanced CLA, household-based assessments should be included on an equal footing with all other assessment types.

Covering this type of assessment would enable the CLA to collect data about learning outcomes of children regardless of whether or not they are enrolled in formal education programs. This will achieve wider coverage of the populations in the SDG 4 targets.

*Recommendation 3:* Assessments at ISCED Levels 0 and 3 should also be included in the CLA.

This will also contribute to better alignment with the SDG 4 targets.

---

<sup>1</sup> Household-based assessments are often associated with citizen-led assessments. In this paper, citizen-led assessments are regarded as a type of household-based assessments. See ‘Appendix 1: Household-based assessments’ for the definitions of household-based assessments and citizen-led assessments.

<sup>2</sup> Education in ISCED level 0 is classified as early childhood education (UIS, 2012), but it may be referred to in different ways, for example: early childhood education and care, or early childhood education and development. According to UIS, ISCED Level 0 can be further divided into early childhood educational development (ISCED Level 0.1) and pre-primary education (ISCED Level 0.2). In this paper, early childhood education (ECE) is used to refer to the overall education in ISCED level 0.

By expanding its coverage to include household-based assessments and assessments at ISCED levels 0 and 3, the CLA will not only be collecting basic information about a more complete range of assessments and examinations, but it will also be giving itself the best opportunity to capture and track emerging assessment trends and patterns across countries.

*Recommendation 4:* The enhanced CLA should cover assessments implemented since 2010 onwards to focus on more recently implemented learning assessments.

This will allow for a complete dataset of all assessment activities within countries, regardless of whether those countries have completed both CLA 1.0 and the new enhanced CLA, or just completed the enhanced CLA.

## Structure of the CLA

Table 1 shows the structure of the CLA 1.0 questionnaire. It comprises nine sections (Sections 0–8). In Section 2, countries are asked to list assessments that have been conducted by type of assessments. Some general questions are asked about each of the assessments at the same time. Then, in Sections 3–8, countries are asked to answer a set of detailed questions for each of the assessments listed in Sub-sections 2.1 and 2.2. Sections 3–8 do not ask about assessments listed in Sub-Sections 2.3–2.5 – no further information is collected about these assessments in the questionnaire.<sup>3</sup> The table also shows the number of questions associated with each section.

---

<sup>3</sup> Data about international assessments (sub-section 2.3) are collected directly from the international agencies responsible for implementing the assessments

**Table 1: Structure of CLA 1.0 questionnaire**

Section	Sub-section	Description	Number of questions
0		General information about the questionnaire	–
1		Contact information	–
2		List of assessments	–
	2.1	National assessments	8
	2.2	National public examinations	8
	2.3	International assessments	8
	2.4	Large-scale assessments in Early Childhood Education (ISCED 0)	5
	2.5	Household-based assessments of learning outcomes	5
3		Scope, purpose, funding*	23
4		Test design*	11
5		Coverage and sampling*	12
6		Data processing*	7
7		Measurements & results*	8
8		Data dissemination*	17

\*Questions concern national assessments (as listed in Sub-section 2.1) and public examinations (as listed in Sub-section 2.2) only.

*Recommendation 5:* The structure of the enhanced CLA should be simple, comprising the following sections: (1) contact information; (2) list of assessments, and (3) a standard set of general questions about each of the assessments listed.

*Recommendation 6:* Section 3 in the structure proposed above should apply to all kinds of assessment types and levels, including household-based assessments and learning assessments at ISCED levels 0 and 3.

Table 2 shows a suggested structure of the enhanced CLA.

In the list of assessments requested in Section 2, some form of categorisation of assessments by type was asked in the CLA 1.0, but the categorisation to be adopted requires some consideration. This issue will be discussed in the following section of this paper.

Discussion of the general set of questions that would appear in Section 3 is also presented in the following section of this paper.

**Table 2: Structure of a new CLA questionnaire**

Section	Sub-section	Description
1		Contact information
2		List of assessments
3		General questions about each learning assessment
	3.1	[Name of assessment]
	3.2	[Name of assessment]
	3.3	[Name of assessment]
	–	–

## CLA content areas

### Suggested content areas for general questions

It is suggested that a standard set of general questions should be asked about each of the assessments listed in Section 2 (see Table 2).

*Recommendation 7:* The standard set of general questions should include minimal contents that are useful for a mapping exercise. Questions should cover the following content areas:

- 1) Assessment name
- 2) Level of implementation
- 3) Organisation responsible in your country
- 4) Purpose
- 5) Inception and frequency
- 6) Target population
- 7) Accommodation of special needs
- 8) Participation
- 9) Sampling design
- 10) Sample size
- 11) Cognitive domains

- 12) Background information
- 13) Assessment administration
- 14) Data analysis and reporting
- 15) Dissemination

The above content areas are suggested with reference to other recent efforts to map the learning assessment landscape, and to previous work ACER has undertaken to characterise assessments.<sup>4</sup> Table 3 below provides further descriptions of these content areas. It also maps each content area on the relevant items of CLA 1.0. Note that this mapping demonstrates that the enhanced CLA covers only a small proportion of the sections in CLA 1.0. The consequence of this would be a leaner questionnaire and a lower response burden.

**Table 3: Suggested content areas for a new CLA questionnaire**

Content area	Description	Notes	Relevant sections/items in CLA 1.0
Assessment name	Full name of the assessment	Assessment name in English and local language if required. This variable is included in CLA 1.0 and 2.0.	3.1.1
Level of implementation	To identify at which system-level the assessment was implemented	New question to CLA	
Organisation responsible	Organisations that mandated, implemented, and funded the assessment	This question is included in CLA 1.0 and 2.0.	3.1.13, 3.4, 3.5
Purpose	Respondents are asked to select the purpose of the assessment from a list of response items.	This question is included in CLA 1.0. The response choices are slightly modified in CLA 2.0.	3.3
Inception and frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year the assessment was established in the country</li> <li>• Frequency of the data collection (number of years)</li> <li>• Years of implementation</li> </ul>	This area is based on the relevant questions in CLA 1.0 and 2.0, but slightly modified	3.1.5 3.1.6, 3.1.7, 3.1.11

<sup>4</sup> For an example of previous work ACER has undertaken on characterizing assessments, refer to *Learning assessments at a glance* (ACER, n.d.). For the assessment mapping framework used in the *2015 EFA Global Monitoring Report*, refer to the annex ‘National learning assessment by country and region’ in UNESCO (2015, p. 304). For another example of a recent attempt to map the national assessment landscape, refer to Education Policy and Data Center (2015).

Content area	Description	Notes	Relevant sections/items in CLA 1.0
Target population	Definition of target population: Grade-based (e.g., Grade 4), age-based (e.g., 10-year-old students), or education program-based	New question to CLA This item is based on the relevant items in CLA 1.0 and 2.0, but modified. Assessments in ECE can be identified using this variable	3.1.12, 3.2.2, 3.2.3 3.2.5 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.4, 5.2
Accommodation of special needs	Type of special needs accommodated	This question is retained from CLA 1.0	4.2.3-4.2.5
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To distinguish between household-based and school-based assessments</li> <li>Type of school (public/private)</li> <li>Requirement status for schools to participate (mandatory or not)</li> </ul>	Some questions are new to CLA, and some are modified from CLA 1.0	3.1.12 3.2.5
Sampling design	Unit and sampling method used	This question is modified from CLA 1.0	5.3
Sample size	Numbers from which a relative sample size can be derived, including size of target population, number of children/young people sampled and number that participated	This area is based on the relevant questions in CLA 1.0 and 2.0, but modified	5.4
Cognitive domains	Cognitive domains (or subjects) covered in the assessment	This area is based on the relevant question in CLA 2.0, but modified	4.2.8
Background information	Lists of background information collection instruments and the kind of information collected are provided	This area is based on the relevant questions in CLA 1.0 and 2.0, but modified.	4.2.6
Assessment administration	Assessment administration format, distinguishing between the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group administration, or one-on-one administration</li> <li>Paper-based, computer-based, oral, portfolio or observation</li> </ul>	This area is based on the relevant questions in CLA 1.0 and 2.0, but modified.	3.2.7, 4.1.2

Content area	Description	Notes	Relevant sections/ items in CLA 1.0
Data analysis/ reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data analysis approaches, particularly:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- if IRT analysis is used to scale cognitive data;</li> <li>- if competency levels/benchmarks are established;</li> <li>- how cognitive results are analysed (e.g. frequency analyses, mean scores);</li> <li>- if relationships between cognitive performance and contextual factors are explored via analytical methods such as correlation, regression, multilevel modelling;</li> <li>- if trend analysis is conducted;</li> <li>- if international comparisons are used (in multi-country assessments).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• National average of student performance</li> <li>• Minimum level of achievement</li> <li>• Disaggregated results reported</li> </ul>	This area is based on the relevant questions in CLA 1.0 and 2.0, but modified.	7.1, 7.2.1, 7.2.3, 7.2.4, 7.2.5
Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are reporting and dissemination methods?</li> <li>• Are results reports and databased publicly available?</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	This area is based on the relevant questions in CLA 1.0 and 2.0, but modified	8.2

## **Categorisation of learning assessments: An issue for discussion**

In CLA 1.0, countries are asked to list all the learning assessments under the following categories: national assessments, national public examinations, and international assessments. According to the general information in Section 0 of the new CLA proposed by Brenlla, EGRA, LLECE, PIRLS, TIMSS, PASEC and SACMEQ are all categorised as international assessments. However, the way assessments should be categorised requires some consideration.

The categorisation of all of these assessments under the banner of ‘international assessments’ is not in line with other widely accepted approaches to categorising assessments and examinations (see, for example, Wagner (2011)), and may be counter-intuitive to many working on examinations and learning assessments or making use of their data and results. To many people, in particular, an international assessment is one that has a much more standardised cross-national implementation, and one that generates results that are truly comparable across countries, and EGRA does not have these characteristics.

Another issue concerns regional assessments. While CLA 1.0 includes regional assessments such as LLECE, PASEC and SACMEQ in the category of international assessments, categorisation of learning assessments in other studies sometimes sets ‘regional assessments’ as a separate category from ‘international assessments’ (Wagner, 2011). In general, regional assessments share similar characteristics as those of international assessments, but a major difference can be seen in its geographical scope.

At this point it is not clear what distinctions should be made through categorisation by assessment type and the purpose of those distinctions.

One possible distinction relates to purpose. For example, possible purposes could include:

- Certification for grade or school cycle completion (typically applicable to national or sub-national examination systems).
- System diagnosis, as in a one-off administration to obtain a snapshot of student performance levels (typically applicable to national assessment programs).
- System monitoring, as in recurrent administrations to monitor student performance levels (typically applicable to national and regional assessment programs).

It would not be expected that an assessment would have just one of these purposes.

A second possible distinction relates to the external connections and relationships that the assessment has. For example



- The assessment is implemented as part of participation in an international study that permits comparison across participants
- The assessment is implemented as part of participation in a regional study that permits comparison across participants
- The assessment does not produce results that are directly comparable across countries but does relate to an international network of assessments that share common features
- The assessment is developed and implemented nationally or sub-nationally.

*Recommendation 8:* Further consideration should be given to the classification of assessment by type. The categorisation should be informed by consideration of the purpose of the classification. It is not necessary for respondents to categorise learning assessments at the time of CLA data collection. Assessments can be categorised later based on the information collected through the new CLA questionnaire.

### **Existing mapping tools of learning assessments**

It is understood that two other existing data collection tools have influenced the development of CLA instruments: the questionnaire administered as part of the OECD's Review of Evaluation and Assessment in Education (OECD, 2013), and the World Bank's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) (World Bank, 2012).

However, these tools collect detailed policy information surrounding learning assessments. Given that CLA is changing its direction towards a streamlined approach, it would be helpful to compare CLA with other activities that have a similar mapping objective. For this reason, the proposed new CLA questionnaire is compared with other two recent efforts to map the learning assessment landscape: the Global Monitoring Report and the National Learning Assessment Mapping Project.

#### **Global Monitoring Report**

The Global Monitoring Report, undertaken by UNESCO, provides a global overview of national assessment and evaluation activities (UNESCO, 2015). It focuses on national assessments only.

#### **National Learning Assessment Mapping Project**

In the National Learning Assessment Mapping Project (NLAMP), Education Policy and Data Centre (EPDC) maps the landscape of national assessments and public examinations, and outlines the ways in which the seven domains of the Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF) are reflected in the current priorities of national education systems (Education Policy and Data Center, 2015).

Table 4 below compares the content of the proposed enhanced CLA questionnaire with UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report and EPDC's NLAMP. The table shows that the

proposed enhanced CLA would yield more detailed data than these other initiatives, but also that these other initiatives may provide data that can pre-populate the CLA.

**Table 4: Comparison of elements between proposed new CLA, GMR and NLAMP**

Elements		Proposed new CLA	UNESCO GMR (2015) <sup>5</sup>	NLAMP (2015) <sup>6</sup>
Coverage	ISCED level	0-3	Not specified	1-3
	National assessments	√	√	√
	Public examinations	√		√
	International assessments	√		
	Household-based assessments	√	√	
	Year	2010-	1995-2013	2004-2014
Content area	Country	√	√	√
	Name of assessment	√	√	√
	Level of implementation	√		
	Organisation responsible	√	√	
	Purpose	√		
	Inception and frequency	√	√	√
	Target population	√	√	√
	Accommodation of special needs	√		
	Participation	√		
	Sampling design	√		
	Sample size	√		
	Cognitive domains	√	√	
	Background information	√		
	Assessment administration	√		
	Data analysis and reporting	√		
Dissemination	√			

<sup>5</sup> UNESCO. (2015). *EFA Global Monitoring Report: Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and challenges*. Paris: UNESCO.

<sup>6</sup> Education Policy and Data Center. (2015). *EDPC Policy Brief: Mapping national assessment*. Washington, DC: Education and Policy and Data Center.

As shown in the above table, the proposed new version of CLA would set wider coverage and could yield more detailed data than other similar mapping tools of learning assessments.

## CLA questionnaire

Based on the 15 content areas proposed in the previous section, ACER-GEM has drafted a new CLA questionnaire (see Appendix 2).

Considering that UIS is currently developing an online platform for CLA data collection, the questionnaire was prepared with an assumption that the instrument would be delivered using the online platform. Therefore, the flow of the questions may not appear as smooth as it could be when delivered online. It is suggested that the proposed questionnaire be reviewed as such.

## Mechanisms for implementation

Mechanisms for implementing the proposed new version of CLA are described in terms of data collection, data updates and data presentation.

### Data collection

*Recommendation 9:* We suggest that the practice of collecting data about international assessments directly from implementing agencies be continued for the new CLA version. Furthermore, to limit the burden on respondents and increase efficiency, the enhanced CLA should, where possible, be pre-populated with data drawn from other sources (eg the EFA Global Monitoring Report and EDPC's NLAMP, as discussed above, or result reports of cross-national assessments). Given that the proposed new CLA would be leaner and comprise a considerably smaller number of questions than CLA 1.0, it is expected that data collection for the new version of the CLA would require fewer resources than were required for the previous version.

It is understood that UIS is currently developing an online platform for data collection. Together with the streamlined instrument, it is expected that data collection could be implemented efficiently.

### Data updates

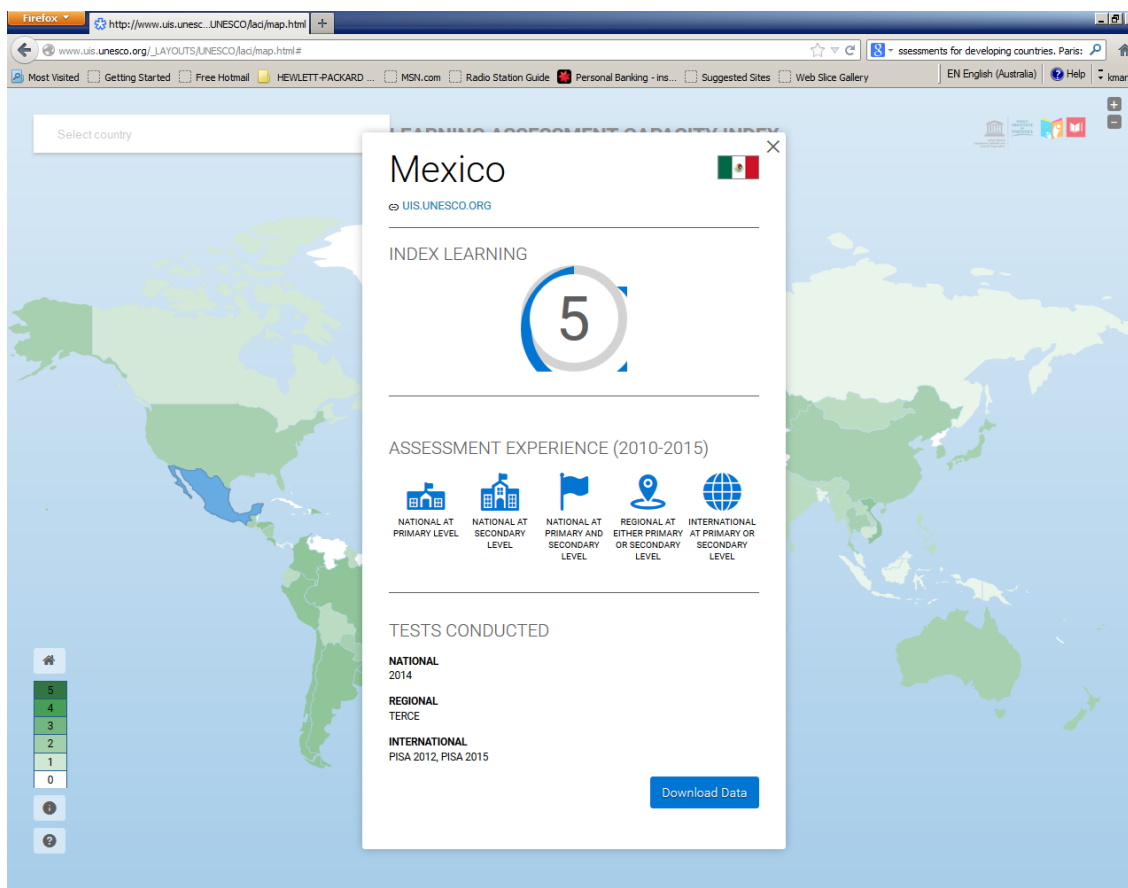
*Recommendation 10:* The ideal cycle of carrying out the CLA survey should be short enough to track and document/capture emerging assessment trends and patterns across countries, but long enough to allow sufficient time for data collection. It could be a 3 to 4 year cycle, depending on the implementation cycle of learning assessments that will be mapped through this survey.

It is important to ensure that simple functions for updating data are incorporated in the online platform for data collection.

## Data presentation

*Recommendation 11:* Data collected through the CLA questionnaire should be presented in a way that satisfies the declared purposes of the collection, ie to map existing assessment programs and examinations systems in countries.

Currently, CLA data are presented [on UIS website](http://uis.unesco.org) where users need to click through a few stages to access detailed data without having an overview of what data are available from the website. We suggest that the format used for presenting the UIS Learning Assessment Capacity Index (LACI)<sup>7</sup> could be suitable for CLA. The LACI provides ‘a snapshot of countries’ readiness to produce the data needed to improve learning outcomes and monitor progress towards the SDG on education’ (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016). When clicking a country of interest on the world map, a screen pops up showing the country’s LACI along with five icons indicating the level of the country’s engagement in learning assessments (see the screen shot below). CLA data could be displayed using the LACI platform. For example, details of each learning assessment can be displayed when clicking one of the icons that represent a type of learning assessments (e.g., public examination or national assessment).



<sup>7</sup> [http://www.uis.unesco.org/\\_LAYOUTS/UNESCO/laci/](http://www.uis.unesco.org/_LAYOUTS/UNESCO/laci/)

**Figure 1: A screen shot from the UIS Learning Assessment Capacity Index**

Source: [http://www.uis.unesco.org/\\_LAYOUTS/UNESCO/laci/map.html](http://www.uis.unesco.org/_LAYOUTS/UNESCO/laci/map.html)

## Conclusion

This paper has presented a proposal for an enhanced CLA to collect information about examination and learning assessment activities in countries. The enhanced CLA will be leaner than earlier versions, but will collect overview information that is more complete in scope, covering all kinds of assessments at a broader range of ISCED levels.

In addition to the efficiency gains that will result from a leaner CLA, further gains will come from the fact that the enhanced CLA will draw other existing data sources where appropriate.

Mechanisms for data collection and updates will need to be further elaborated. They should aim to ensure that the CLA database is as complete and up-to-date as possible, but also that the response burden on countries is minimised. An online platform for data collection and updates should lead to greater efficiency.

Mechanisms for data presentation will also need to be further elaborated. These mechanisms should be in line with the articulated purpose of the CLA as a tool for mapping basic assessment information. Online mechanisms should enable users to explore the CLA database in ways that are easy and engaging. The interface that presents the data from the UIS Learning Assessment Capacity Index (LACI) may be an appropriate platform for presenting CLA data.

## References

- ACER. (n.d.). Learning assessments at a glance. Retrieved from <https://www.acer.edu.au/gem/gem-la>
- Brenlla, M. E. (2015). Basis for Catalogue of Learning Assessments 2.0 (CLA 2.0): Concept note and experimental version of CLA 2.0 based on International Test Commission Guidelines.
- Education Policy and Data Center. (2015). EPDC Policy Brief: Mapping national assessment. Washington, DC: Education Policy and Data Center.
- OECD. (2013). Synergies for better learning: An international perspective on evaluation and assessment *OECD reviews of evaluation and assessment in education*. Paris: OECD.
- Plaut, D., & Jamieson Eberhardt, M. (2015). *Bringing learning to light: The role of citizen-led assessments in shifting the education agenda*. Washington, DC: Results for Development.
- UNESCO. (2015). EFA Global Monitoring Report: Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and challenges. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2015). Survey 2015 Observatory of Learning Outcomes: Instruction manual for completing the Catalogue of Learning Assessments. Montreal, Quebec: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2016). Learning Assessment Capacity Index. Retrieved from <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/learning-assessment-capacity-index.aspx>
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (n.d.). *Survey of system-level educational assessments (unpublished)*.
- Wagner, D. A. (2011). Smaller, quicker, cheaper: Improving learning assessments for developing countries. Paris: UNESCO IIEP.
- World Bank. (2012). Systems Approach for Better Education Results: What matters most for student assessment systems: A framework paper. *SABER Working Paper Series 1*.

## Appendix 1: Household-based assessments

Household-based assessments of learning outcomes are defined in the instructional manual for CLA 1.0 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015) as follows:

Generally conducted by interviewers that visit households in order to collect background information on the household, and to assess the cognitive skills of one or more members of the household... Household-based assessments of learning outcomes do not only target students enrolled in formal programmes; they generally include out-of-school children and may apply other selection criteria, such as age of children to be assessed (p.9).

The major defining characteristic of household-based assessments is the location of the assessments (household-based, not school-based). Within the category of household-based assessments, there are different types of surveys depending on who organises it.

Citizen-led assessments are led by citizens group, and are often conducted in households. According to Plaut and Jamieson-Eberhardt (2015), citizen-led assessments share the following defining characteristics: Citizen-led assessments are:

- An assessment of basic reading and math competencies,
- Conducted in households,
- Conducted orally and one-on-one,
- Statistically representative,
- Independent of government as they are organized by civil society (p.11).

In particular, they highlight the importance of conducting the assessment in households, not schools, so as to include all children—not just those enrolled in and present in recognised schools on testing day. This means that out-of-school children are included, as well as children in unrecognised schools.

However, not all household-based assessments are led by civil society. Some are organised by international organisations. For example, the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) is a household-based survey of adult skills conducted by OECD (OECD, 2013).



## **Appendix 2: Proposed questionnaire to complete the new CLA**

Please see a separate file for Appendix 2.

## Appendix 3: United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4

Quality Education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

### *Targets*

**4.1** By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

**4.2** By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

**4.3** By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

**4.4** By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

**4.5** By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

**4.6** By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

**4.7** By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

**4.a** Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

**4.b** By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries

**4.c** By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.