




United Nations
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EDUCATION
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11

A large, circular, purple-tinted world map serves as the background for the central text.

Building a UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) Document: 2008-2013

Guidance Note

Education Policies and Strategies 11



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**Building
a UNESCO National Education
Support Strategy (UNESS)
Document: 2008-2013**

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**Section for Education Support Strategies
Division of Country Planning and Field Support**

UNESCO



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFD	French Development Agency (Agence française de développement)
C/4	UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy
C/5	UNESCO's Biennial Programme and Budget
CCA	UN Common Country Assessment
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	OECD's Development Assistance Committee
DFID	The Department for International Development
E-9	Nine High-Population Countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan)
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ED	UNESCO Education Sector
EDUCAIDS	UNESCO Global Initiative on Education and HIV & AIDS
EFA	Education for All
FO	UNESCO Cluster or National Office
FTI	EFA-Fast Track Initiative
GAP-EFA	Global Action Plan on Education for All
HDI	Human Development Index
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
HQ	UNESCO Headquarters in Paris
IBE	UNESCO International Bureau of Education
IDPs	International Development Partners
IIEP	UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LIFE	UNESCO Literacy Initiative for Empowerment
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
NATCOM	National Commission for UNESCO
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRS(P)	Poverty Reduction Strategy (Paper)
RB	UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education

RP	UNESCO Regular Programme
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
TTISSA	UNESCO Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa
UIL	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDESD	UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNESS	UNESCO National Education Support Strategy
UNEVOC	UNESCO International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WPHRE	World Programme for Human Rights Education

Executive Summary

This is a Guidance Note for designing a UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) document. This guide is meant to be indicative, evolving and inclusive. It presents a number of useful questions one may ask when analysing national development policies and priorities, mapping donors' interventions in-country and accordingly, defining UNESCO's strategy to respond to countries' needs and requests for support to education. It indicates some of the information that is required to reflect on the Organisation's in-country support strategy and to engage in consultations with national institutions and development partners.

UNESCO has been asked by its Governing Bodies and Member States to play a much more strategic role in supporting national education priorities and to strengthen its partnership and synergy with other development agencies, in congruence with international development goals.

The development of country-based education support strategy (UNESS) documents is required for UNESCO to ensure its effectiveness in response to Member States' needs and demands for educational development. Such strategies can be built in light of the analyses of the country's own priorities, the needs and/or gaps in terms of data, policies, capacities and finance, as well as the development community's contributions. UNESCO's own comparative advantage and international development priorities are to be related to the task. The UNESS documents themselves will be analytical arguments for UNESCO's in-country strategies, based on all of the above, including a critical analysis of the roles the Organization has played and is playing in each of the countries concerned.

The UNESS process has been adopted as a method for planning the Organization's Education Sector's Medium-Term Strategy and biennial programmes, as well as for defining UNESCO's programme priorities and implementation strategies in each country. UNESS documents will be developed as a priority in countries requiring special attention from UNESCO, then eventually extended to all Member States wishing to cooperate with the Organization for their educational development.

The contexts of educational development are significantly different across the Member States. Assessing national development policies and programmes is the first step in the process of designing a UNESCO cooperation strategy. The design

of our cooperation strategies should reflect the respective roles and comparative advantages of partners in order to respond to the needs and demands of Member States' educational development. Careful analysis of national capacities, especially institutional capacity, is required in order for UNESCO to develop appropriate, relevant support strategies for achieving government's educational development objectives. Well-defined, evidence-based strategies for cooperation in education will also facilitate UNESCO's more pro-active and constructive participation in UNCTs' common country assessment and programming exercises.

UNESS documents and their syntheses at regional and global levels provide a multi-purpose means for UNESCO, as they define:

- evidence-based building blocks for the Organization's Medium-Term Strategy and biennial programmes of the Education Sector;
- useful repositories of information for reference when designing UNESCO's cooperation agreements and projects with Member States;
- UNESCO's policy positioning with Member States and development partners with regard to national educational development and in light of international development goals;
- instruments to situate the Organization's support strategy within sector-wide national educational development contexts, particularly in the case of the three EFA core initiatives (LIFE, TTISSA and EDUCAIDS);
- the Organization's in-country inputs to the educational components of UNDAF, as well as essential building blocks for joint UN education support strategies in Member States, and
- the expression of UNESCO's commitment to the implementation of the Global Action Plan on Education for All (GAP-EFA) at country level.

Designing UNESS documents will be easier in countries which have already developed credible education policies and plans. UNESCO's efforts will then mainly consist of carefully analysing existing documentation, assessing development partners' support mechanisms, carrying out any necessary additional investigations, and identifying the strategic areas of cooperation and interventions where we can provide support to national educational development. This will be done in conformity with UNESCO's mandate and international development frameworks, as well as in synergy with other development partners. The design of cooperation strategies will be much more time and resource consuming in countries which have not yet developed credible policies and programmes. In such cases, in-depth research including needs assessments is likely to be necessary prior to the actual design of a UNESCO intervention strategy. In both cases, this guide should serve as a useful tool.

UNESS documents will be eventually developed for all countries requiring cooperation with UNESCO in the field of education. While leaving some flexibility according to specific in-country development and cooperation contexts, they will be designed within a medium-term perspective (6 years) and updated every two years in order to indicate the areas of UNESCO's policy, technical and financial commitments for cooperation in education. Wherever possible and in accordance with the provisions of UNESCO's Governing Bodies, opportunities will be sought for harmonizing UNESS timelines with national education development plans and development partners' support strategies, including UNDAF.

Introduction

UNESCO is called upon by its Governing Bodies and Member States to play a much more strategic role in supporting national development priorities and to strengthen its partnership with other development agencies in support of national goals, in conformity with the recommendations of international development frameworks. UNESCO's active engagement in UN common country assessment and programming processes, such as CCA/UNDAF, should be seen as part and parcel of the country's education development plans that are coherent with national socio-economic development strategies. It is through such coherence that the Organization's work can become more responsive to countries' needs and demands, corresponding to their prioritization and our comparative advantages.

The UNDG's Action Plan for *Implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* provides much of the rationale for such an engagement. Three principles guiding this plan are:

1. **Putting national development plans at the centre of UN country programming;**
2. **Strengthening national capacities;**
3. **Increasingly using and strengthening national systems.**

The development of UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) documents is required for the Organization to ensure its pertinence and effectiveness in response to countries' identified needs and demands for national educational development by supporting their policy priorities and filling the critical gaps in terms of expertise, capacities and finance, in synergy with the development community's contributions. National needs and priorities also have to be seen as embodied, to varying degrees, in the international development frameworks and conventions to which Member States are signatories.

Clearly, the process of creating a UNESS document will be more straightforward in countries which have already developed coherent and credible education policies, strategies and plans. The process in such countries will consist mainly of careful appraisal by UNESCO of existing documentation, by analyzing, in a synthetic manner, important studies already carried out, plans already written, statistics

already collected, priorities already determined, projects and programmes in place and development agency involvement in the education sector, etc.

This will allow us to map what exists and where the gaps are, to assess donor support mechanisms, and to identify some additional investigations to carry out. Then, the UNESS will comprise the ‘selection’ of a set of government priority areas for development partners to address and for UNESCO to support in conformity with our mandate and international development goals, in coordination and synergy with other development partners. This new process is likely to confer greater legitimacy to UNESCO’s proposed strategy against this analytical backdrop, with arguments for further resource mobilisation (including staffing and capacity development) where necessary.

The process of designing a UNESS document in a country which has not yet developed a set of credible policies and plans is likely to entail upstream work of data collection, policy analysis and planning before identifying areas of support. UNESCO’s priority in such support strategies would then mainly consist of strengthening national institutional capacities in educational planning and policy development.

In the case of the three EFA core initiatives, UNESS will enable a clear definition of UNESCO’s role and support strategy within sector-wide national educational development contexts. It is important to ensure that all options regarding teacher education in Sub-Saharan Africa, literacy and HIV and AIDS preventive education are coherent with the sector’s overall priorities and strategies.

The end product, the UNESS document, will serve as a building block for the formulation of UNESCO’s global priorities and, more importantly, its cooperation strategies with the concerned Member States. In other words, the Organization’s priorities and country support strategies will be defined on the basis of the directions given by UNESCO’s governing bodies as well as a reflection of the countries’ actual needs. Our strategy will also take into consideration the Organization’s capacities for action within and outside Headquarters.

The UNESS document will eventually provide the basis of UNESCO’s action plan for in-country support and cooperation; it will guide our engagement with the respective governments, and will be implemented in partnership with the UNCTs and other development agencies; it will also serve FOs as a programmatic framework document for creating synergy and mobilizing extra-budgetary resources additional to the RP for supporting national educational development.

While English or French is the language of internal communication for UNESS, a country UNESS document can be drafted in any of the official UN languages, or in any of the official national languages: in such cases, FOs will ensure that the UNESS document is translated, sooner or later, into one of the two UN working languages.

Through UNESS, it is expected that UNESCO will increase the relevance and effectiveness of its cooperation programmes in response to the actual needs and priorities of Member States and in harmony with our universal mandate and international development priorities, and contribute to better coordination of development assistance in education.

Within the recent reform of UNESCO's Education Sector, UNESS has been adopted as a planning tool for preparing the Organization's Medium-Term Strategy and biennial programmes. A new Section for Education Support Strategies (ESS) has been created within the Division of Country Planning and Field Support (ED/PFS) at HQ to lead and coordinate the overall UNESS process in cooperation with the Regional Bureaux for Education.¹

¹ For further information about UNESS, please contact the UNESS Team (uness@unesco.org). Useful relevant information may also be found at: http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=10200&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

1. Overview

1.1. What is *UNESS*?

UNESS stands for *UNESCO National Education Support Strategy*. UNESCO has been asked by its Member States to improve its effectiveness in response to national education development needs and demands, in partnership with UN and other development agencies, congruent with international development goals. Country-based education support strategy (*UNESS*) documents will be developed by UNESCO to enhance the relevance of its cooperation and support for national priorities in achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals in particular and for educational development in general.

Such documents can be built in light of the analyses of the country's own priorities, the needs and/or gaps in terms of data, policies, capacities, finance and development cooperation. UNESCO's mandate and comparative advantage are to be related to this task in synergy and complementarity with the contributions of the development community. A critical, candid analysis of the roles the Organization has played and is playing in each of the countries concerned should help improve the relevance of UNESCO's global cooperation strategies and country programmes, in response to the actual educational needs and priorities of Member States.

UNESS will eventually be developed for all Member States requiring cooperation with and/or support from UNESCO in the field of education. The synthesis of individual *UNESS* documents will first serve as the planning tool for UNESCO's medium term and biennial programmes and, once these overall programmes have been adopted by UNESCO's Governing Bodies, country-based *UNESS* documents will then constitute the frameworks for building evidence-based, demand-driven workplans by the concerned FOs and for mobilizing partnership and additional support.

Within the context of UN reform towards harmonization of UN and donor inputs, *UNESS* will constitute a building block for an in-country joint UN education support strategy, and for shaping and improving a sector-wide approach to harmonizing development assistance to education around government's priorities and procedures.

1.2. What Is the Purpose of this Guidance Note?

This guide is intended to provide answers to some questions that UNESCO Field Staff may have when designing a UNESS document. The questions may relate to the UNESS process, such as: who designs the document, when consultants are to be involved, how to interact with Regional Bureaux, Institutes and HQ, what are the respective roles of government institutions, development partners and other stakeholders in elaborating UNESS, what the legitimacy of UNESS should be, etc. The guide also details a proposed structure and content for a UNESS document, which should be used flexibly depending on the national contexts in which we are working, provided that the overall logical flow of UNESS is respected.

This guide is a product of a collective endeavour. The UNESS concept emerged amidst the burgeoning reform of UNESCO's Education Sector. In November 2005, a checklist of key points for building a UNESS document was presented and discussed at a seminar, which brought together UNESCO's Education Sector Staff (FOs, Institutes and ED Divisions). In light of the comments and feedback from Field Offices, draft framework guidelines "Building UNESCO National Education Support Strategies" were presented at an Open Debate of the Education Sector in April 2006, as well as to the Programme Planning and Budget Reform Teams of the Education Sector for discussion.

In parallel with this consultative process, some ten countries were selected for pilot testing of UNESS's feasibility. In the wake of the announcement of the Education Sector Reform, in which UNESS was adopted as the official tool for the Education Sector to plan UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy and biennial programmes, a pilot evaluation workshop with Field Directors and Staff concerned was held in September 2006 to draw lessons and proposals for improving both the process and the content of UNESS. This version of the UNESS guide reflects the comments and proposals of UNESCO staff in their determination to improve the effectiveness of our cooperation strategies and the success of this new internal planning process.

1.3. For Whom?

This Guidance Note is primarily addressed to UNESCO field staff who are responsible for the design and implementation of UNESS in countries they are servicing. It is also a reference guide for other UNESCO education staff at HQ and Institutes who may be called upon to render specific professional support to FOs in

designing and implementing the Organization's cooperation strategies in education. New education staff will also learn from this guide how UNESCO strategies of support and cooperation are designed and negotiated with its Member States and development partners.

In addition, the guide is more generally addressed to all who work with UNESCO in the field of education, including national institutions, service providers, development partners, etc. It is aimed more specifically at specialists and consultants who may be tasked with helping to develop parts of the UNESS documents. It may also be used as a basis for preparing terms of reference for the different stages of the UNESS design process and as a resource for designing training activities on UNESS or a country needs assessment.

This guide will be disseminated to NATCOMs, particularly in countries in which the Organization does not have a field office, in order to inform them of the new concept for designing in-country cooperation strategies in education and to facilitate their engagement and participation in the UNESS process.

1.4. The Structure of this Guidance Note

While the UNESS approach is country-specific, there are a number of issues and steps that are common to the strategy design process. This guide, whilst seeking to be as concise as possible, is meant to be comprehensive, balancing the need to provide basic information about the UNESS process for beginners as well as useful details for more experienced Field Staff. In addition to this introductory overview of the UNESS concept itself, the guide covers two broad topics: the process of developing a UNESS document and the expected contents of a UNESS.

Chapter 2 of the present guide deals with the UNESS design process, modalities and timelines, generally in the form of questions and answers. UNESCO, with its universal mandate and mission, operates in a variety of political, institutional and developmental contexts. Some of the questions that arise from such different contexts include: What are the linkages between UNESS and other development frameworks? What are the levels of involvement of Member States and development partners (concerning the provision of necessary information, their consultation, participation, control, etc.)? How could a UNESS document be validated, both internally and externally? Is there a proposed timeline for the document, and if so, how could it be synchronized with national plans and UN agendas?

Chapter 3 deals with the structure and content of the UNESS document itself. Although UNESS documents are necessarily country-specific, Chapter 3 details a proposed structure and a set of analytical aspects to be addressed in light of the mandate given to UNESCO by the international community, such as: its role in international coordination for EFA, as a specialized UN agency for education, its normative function in regard to international conventions and instruments, etc. Some questions include: What is the logical sequence and desirable size of each chapter of the UNESS document? How should the descriptive and analytical aspects of the document be balanced? How can the tension between competing priorities be reconciled? Is UNESS a policy positioning or an intervention strategy paper? Is it a planning tool for C/5 or an implementation workplan for the FOs?

This guide can be used in several ways. Some will want to read the entire text from beginning to end. Others will want to focus on specific issues according to their needs and interests. It is hoped that the questions and answers, together with the modular approach of the guide, will facilitate its use.

What the guide does not do is to provide any ready-made prescriptions. Field staff will need to apply the guide creatively to find the best possible solutions for designing their respective country UNESS documents.

2. UNESS Design Process, Modalities and Timeline

2.1. Stakeholders in National Education Development

2.1.1. What is the Role of National Institutions?

Government is responsible for the design, implementation and coordination of national educational development irrespective of the different modes of country functioning.

In different countries, there may be one or several ministries in charge of education and training, and the level and type of decentralization also vary considerably. In some countries, educational policy and finance may be entirely devolved to sub-national levels, leaving only marginal roles to the central ministry. In others, educational planning and resource allocation decisions may be taken by prime ministers or central planning commissions, with ministries of education playing merely executive roles. And in others, central ministries of education may be virtually all-powerful, controlling most things right down to the minutiae of educational policy and implementation. Notwithstanding all these differences, the national government is the leading stakeholder in national education development, in which country-specific UNESCO education support strategies are to be conceived.

To attribute to the national government the role of leading stakeholder, however, is by no means to deny or undervalue the important supportive roles played by other stakeholders in the process of national educational policy making and development. Such stakeholders include civil society organizations, development partners, the private sector, etc., which may all work towards the development of credible and coherent national education policies, contributing in different ways to the implementation of national education priorities and strategies. National leadership may result in the alignment and harmonization of individual interventions or it may enable a diversity of approaches and strategies. Government-led coordination of development partners is a further contributing factor to the ownership and effectiveness of national education development policies. Different governments facilitate and ensure differential representation of civil society, NGOs, communities, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, etc. in this process.

2.1.2. What is the Role of Development Partners?

There are broadly four categories of in-country, external development partners supporting national educational development: bilateral agencies, financial institutions, international NGOs and UN organizations.

Bilateral agencies: They are generally the official development agencies of the donor countries (many of them members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee – DAC), such as DFID for the UK, AFD for France, NORAD for Norway, etc. In addition to EU members having their own development agency representation, there are also many in-country EC delegations, among whose concerns is development cooperation. They usually provide support in the form of grants, supplemented by technical cooperation, and implement Official Development Assistance (ODA) in countries of their choice.

Financial institutions: They comprise multilateral development banks, including the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank and the IMF), the regional development banks and funds, such as the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), as well as other international financial institutions such as the European Investment Bank (EIB), etc. The international financial institutions (IFI) provide macro-economic assistance (mostly in the form of loans) to help regulate national economies, but many also provide sectoral assistance including to education: the World Bank, in particular, advises on educational policies and their financial implications, including technical assessments regarding the risk-worthiness of loans; debt relief is also given through the HIPC Debt Initiative and the PRS Approach.

International NGOs: More and more, NGOs, such as Oxfam, ActionAid and Save the Children, are playing important roles in formulating and implementing national education development projects at both national and local levels, generally in direct partnership with local NGOs and communities, in addition to the roles they play in advocacy and providing humanitarian assistance.

UN agencies: These international organizations offer policy advice and technical assistance both to government and civil society. There are mainly two categories of UN agencies: Funds and Programmes (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, etc.); and specialized agencies such as UNESCO and the ILO. The former provide financial and technical support, while the latter, essentially, technical and advisory services in the particular sectors and fields of their competence.

In part due to the multiplicity of development agencies, each with different roles, projects, programmes and means of support, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was endorsed in March 2005 by over one hundred ministers and heads of development agencies. The Declaration aimed at streamlining development cooperation in support of national priorities and international development frameworks such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The signatories committed their countries and organizations to adhere to and continue increasing efforts to provide aid for results around the five key principles of the Declaration (ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability). The Declaration of Paris defines twelve indicators to monitor progress in achieving results.

2.2. Linkages between UNESS and Other Development Frameworks

UNESS is UNESCO's cooperation strategy with its Member States in the area of education. In line with the principles of the Paris Declaration, UNESCO has been asked by its Governing Bodies to improve its responsiveness to national education needs and priorities and to strengthen its partnership with other development agencies. Such an undertaking requires UNESCO to analyze more systematically the education development policies, strategies and plans of its Member States, to draw lessons from its past and ongoing cooperation with them and to identify the needs and gaps in national education plans, programmes and education components of PRSPs, which the Organization proposes to support in synergy with other development partners. This is the information which the UNESS document aims to encapsulate.

UNESS is not a research exercise, nor should it entail any primary data collection. Rather, it is an analysis and interpretation of existing information, including discussion with the relevant ministries and development partners, especially those in-country, in order to design and agree upon a cooperation strategy.

In building UNESS documents, UNESCO will analyse the national policies and plans in light of its normative and advocacy role, as well as the international and regional conventions to which Member States are signatories, such as the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD), the UN Literacy Decade (UNLD), the World Programme on Human Rights Education (WPHRE), etc. Where applicable, UNESS will also analyze the

EFA-Fast Track Initiative (FTI) proposals in order to identify possible gaps and partnership needs with a view to ensuring holistic educational development in the Member States.

In relation to UNESCO's three EFA core initiatives, UNNESS will enable a clear definition of the Organization's role and support strategies within the different Member States' sector-wide national educational development contexts. It will be important to ensure that the programmatic options regarding the Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa (TTISSA), the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), and the Global Initiative on Education and HIV & AIDS (EDUCAIDS) are coherent with the sector's overall priorities and strategies of the countries concerned.

UNESS is UNESCO's 'homework' for improving its partnership with development agencies. Comprising a well-defined analytical description and evidence-based education support strategy, it will facilitate UNESCO's more active and constructive participation in UNCTs' joint assessment and programming exercises (such as CCA/UNDAF). UNESS analyzes the national educational needs and priorities, identifies gaps and options for improvement in terms of data, policies, capacities, finance and donor coordination, and proposes remedial, supportive measures in response to national policies and priorities. Thus, with further agreement of other relevant UN organizations and Government counterparts and in the context of the division of labour proposed in the Global Action Plan on Education for All (GAP-EFA), UNESS can form an essential building block for the formulation of joint UN education support strategy; it will enable UNESCO to play an active role in the process of the formation of "One UN" in-country, while discharging its intellectual, advocacy and normative mandate and responsibilities.

To sum up, UNESS documents and their syntheses at regional and global levels will serve as multi-purpose tools for UNESCO, as they comprise:

- ◆ evidence-based building blocks for the Organization's Medium-Term Strategy and biennial programmes of the Education Sector;
- ◆ useful repositories of information for reference when designing UNESCO's cooperation programmes and agreements with Member States;
- ◆ UNESCO's policy positioning with Member States and development partners with regard to national educational development and in light of international development goals and initiatives;
- ◆ instruments to define the Organization's cooperation strategies within sector-wide national educational development contexts, particularly in the case of the three UNESCO EFA core initiatives (LIFE, TTISSA and EDUCAIDS)

- ◆ the Organization’s in-country inputs to the educational components of UNDAFs, providing in the context of the ongoing “One UN Initiative” essential building blocks for joint UN education support strategy in Member States, which in turn can lead to further shaping SWAp; and
- ◆ the expression of UNESCO’s commitment to the in-country implementation of the Global Action Plan on Education for All (GAP-EFA).

2.3. Who is Responsible for the Design of UNESS?

UNESCO cluster and national offices (FOs) are responsible for drafting the UNESS document in cooperation with the Regional Bureaux for Education, Institutes and HQ ED Divisions, and in consultation with the country’s institutions and development partners. UNESS document preparation, from now on, will constitute an integral part of UNESCO’s work from design through to implementation. Where necessary, both human and financial resources for developing UNESS will be earmarked under the Organization’s Regular Programme and Budget.

Therefore, FO directors and staff will work closely with the National Commissions for UNESCO (NATCOMs) as well as the ministries of education and other key policy and planning bodies; they will take the lead in organizing the UNESS process, ensuring the participation of national institutions in the identification of needs and priorities, consulting relevant authorities and development partners, and seeking the endorsement of the findings and conclusions of the UNESS documents by the respective NATCOMs and education ministries. According to different country contexts, FOs will organize consultative events – such as conferences, seminars or workshops – and/or use in-country donor coordination mechanisms as a means to report and seek feedback on the findings of UNESS as it progresses.

Ideally, UNESS documents will be entirely drafted by field staff, with professional support from Institutes and ED Divisions at HQ. If, to give but one example, at the initial stage of consultation on UNESS with ministries of education or other national institutions, curriculum development were to appear as of paramount concern and requiring special attention from UNESCO, the FO would seek technical support from the International Bureau of Education (IBE) and provide arrangements, from its financial resources, for mobilizing such expertise. The other Institutes (IIEP, UIL, etc.) and HQ ED Divisions can also be requested to avail their services to FOs for designing (and later implementing) UNESS. It is advisable that FOs share the draft UNESS documents with all UNESCO

entities concerned, including Institutes, in order to get feedback and advice in their respective fields of expertise.

Alternatively, FOs can recruit consultants (national or international) for conducting part of the analytical work of UNESS. However, the outsourcing of UNESS will be limited to needs analysis in Chapters 1-3 (Cf. Sections 3.1 – 3.4 of this guide). In other words, the elaboration of the UNESCO programme (Chapters 4-5), the Organization’s internal work, will not be outsourced, but carried out by the FO staff concerned. Similarly, where applicable in the context of “One UN Programme” in-country, FOs may form alliances and partnerships with one or several UN agencies to carry out joint identification exercises, but when it comes to positioning UNESCO’s policies and interventions with regard to national education development, FOs will undertake the full responsibility for the design and choice of programmatic areas in light of the Organization’s mandate, in consultation with national authorities and in cooperation with development partners.

2.4. Modalities of National Participation, Consultation and Validation

While the approach to designing a UNESS document will be country-specific, some of the steps indicated below may be helpful in working out the best means of ensuring participation, consultation and in-country validation throughout the UNESS process.

First, the FO informs the NATCOM (and/or ministries of education) of the launching of the UNESS process and invites them to designate institutional focal persons or groups to be associated with the joint analysis of national educational needs, policies, and priorities. Creating stand-alone, non-institutional commissions for UNESS should be avoided, unless strongly justified. Ideally, a UNESS document will be written by FO staff² in collaboration with national institutional representatives, but the written contributions of the latter will be thoroughly reviewed and analysed by the FO before being incorporated in the UNESS document.

Second, at each important stage of UNESS development, government authorities will be informed, ideally through the NATCOM, of the major findings in the

² All the members of the FOs, especially the education staff, should be fully involved in this process. Consultants can be recruited for undertaking specific tasks and analytical works under the professional supervision and responsibility of the FOs.

UNESS draft document. Such a key moment might be, for example, when the needs analysis has been completed (Chapters 1-3 or even Chapter 4 in some cases) before proceeding to the phase of defining UNESCO's programmatic focus and interventions. Depending on the country context, the FO could report on the findings to different institutions and levels of the national administration, to the extent possible through the NATCOM, which is the official channel of communication for all matters concerning UNESCO.

Third, once the draft UNESS document has been designed, including the proposed UNESCO programmatic areas and interventions (Chapter 5, in this guide 3.6), the FO would organize an appropriate form of official consultation with relevant government institutions. This could vary from a simple consultation with the NATCOM to a national workshop or seminar with representatives of key national (and sub-national) educational authorities and institutions. It might be appropriate to invite donor agencies and UN partners to such a consultation to ensure synergy and coordination.

Fourth, once the draft document has been finalized in light of the feedback received through the consultative process, the FO would seek the approval of the appropriate government representative, in principle the President of the NATCOM, through an exchange of letters (or another form of agreement depending on the specific context). This would mean that the FO would coordinate the various UNESCO contributions (e.g. from the Institutes, HQ Divisions, etc.); and the NATCOM (or an official national representation) would do its part in coordinating the process of national endorsement of UNESS by different government institutions (be they at central and/or decentralized level) and civil society. The FO would also ensure that the NATCOM or any other government representation bases its proposals concerning UNESCO programmes and priorities (such as: responses to the consultation questionnaire, discussions at regional consultations and the meetings of the Governing Bodies) on the findings of the UNESS document.

Fifth, some other formal consultations might be considered: (i) with development partners, including UN agencies, who, depending on the country's donor coordination context, could be approached either throughout the UNESS preparation process or once UNESS has been designed; (ii) first with the Regional Bureau, then HQ and Institutes, in order to share the draft UNESS document – prior to the NATCOM's or government's official acceptance of its facts and findings – in order to seek their *technical* validation (such as: Is UNESS designed in line with the proposed steps and structure of the Guidance Note? Is the logical sequencing of needs assessment and programme identification respected? To what extent have the roles and

responsibilities of UNESCO in the context of in-country GAP-EFA implementation been conceived? etc.)

2.5. Is UNESS a C/5 Planning Tool or an FO Workplan?

UNESS is a planning tool both for building evidence-based UNESCO Programmes (C/4 and C/5), as well as for ensuring effective UNESCO support to education development in the Member States. UNESS, once developed for each country and compiled as a synthesis drawing on the main priority themes of individual UNESS documents, will feed national perspectives into general policy debates within UNESCO's Governing Bodies (Executive Board and General Conference meetings) and in defining regional and international strategies.

UNESS is intended to be synchronized with UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (2008-2013) as regards the general directions for in-country cooperation, and with the 34 C/5 Biennial Programme (i.e. 2008-2009) as regards the proposed interventions and required resource estimates. To these ends, financial estimates for 2008-2009 will be based on the resources received by the FOs during the previous biennial programme (2006-2007). The UNESS document will be updated, at least once every two years, to synchronize with the Organization's programming cycle (meaning that FOs will adjust their current and forthcoming UNESS documents in 2009).

Once the overall priorities of UNESCO have been decided by the General Conference, together with the resource allocations by sub-programme and by region/cluster, FOs will use their UNESS documents, especially Chapter 5 (in this guidance note, Section 3.6) on proposed interventions, to elaborate a detailed workplan specifying the activities and implementation strategies and to commit the allocated resources against these activities, as well as to design projects for mobilizing extra-budgetary funding and partnership.

In this regard, for the next biennium (34C/5), the Education Sector has proposed a significant reduction in the number of Sub-Programmes and Main Lines of Action in such a way as to accommodate more flexibly specific, in-country priority actions. On their part, FOs will need to streamline their interventions and limit UNESCO's in-country engagement to a maximum of 5 areas of cooperation in education. This should enable the Organization to play a much more strategic role in supporting national education priorities and to ensure its effectiveness

and impact in response to Member States' needs and demands for educational development.

2.6. Who Finances UNESS?

Two stages in the funding of UNESS need to be distinguished: its design and its implementation.

2.6.1. For the Design of UNESS

UNESS will constitute UNESCO's regular internal work, especially for FOs, thus requiring minor financial resources for its development and for future planning exercises (i.e. from the 34C/5 onwards). The resources required for its design and adjustment will come from within the Regular Programme funds allocated to FOs for programme support.

However, since UNESS is a new initiative that has been launched during the implementation of 33C/5 for feeding the 34C/5 planning work, an important initial investment is required to catalyze the kick-off period. There is also a need for FO sensitization, staff capacity development, the hiring of consultants, etc. In order to establish UNESS for 60-100 countries, including minimum staff development needs, some \$2 to 2.5M would be needed before the end of 2007. This sum can be mobilized not only from external funding, but also from reallocation of 33C/5 RP resources (HQ, Institutes, Regional Bureaux for Education and FOs) for this purpose.

2.6.2. For Implementation of UNESS

While UNESS is primarily a UNESCO's internal document, it is a cooperation strategy with the country concerned, as well as a tool for mobilizing extra-budgetary support and promoting donor harmonization under the Paris Declaration. Therefore, UNESS, in regard to its biennial implementation, will be designed on the grounds of the following three funding sources: the Regular Programme, extra-budgetary and counterpart funding. These three sources, as described below, are to be considered when preparing the Organization's in-country interventions and strategies for the 2008-2009 biennium (see also Section 3.6.2):

- ◆ UNESCO’s Regular Programme (RP) funds: The RP funds will be called “core resources” of UNESS. The prospective funding proposals arising from a country’s UNESS document can be estimated on the basis of the previous biennial allocations to FOs (derived from the 2006–2007 budget, which was voted by the General Conference). It is anticipated for the next biennium (2008–2009) that more RP resources will be decentralized to FOs, leaving no funds at HQ for specified in-country support, thus improving the transparency and accountability of the financial flows to Member States. One may expect that such arrangements will allow for some budgetary increases to FOs over the previous biennium, even within the context of the “zero nominal growth” of the Organization’s budget.

- ◆ Extra-budgetary funds: The RP core resources of UNESCO can be complemented with extra-budgetary contributions from its development partners (bilateral and multilateral agencies), and these will be called “additional resources” for implementing UNESS. The proposed amount of the indicative, additional resources will be estimated by adding (i) the funds already committed by donors for (and beyond) the next biennium for a particular country; and (ii) the prospective resources that FOs are more or less certain to mobilize from potential donors³ for a particular country on the basis of their past experience. Funds-in-Trust and self-benefiting funds (which a beneficiary country may deposit at UNESCO for management by FO) can be included in this category.

- ◆ Counterpart funding: If a country (a national institution) allocates or earmarks its own budget and/or in-kind resources for implementing some of the UNESS-proposed interventions, the FO will identify such amounts as national counterpart funding in the UNESS document. If UNESS-proposed activities are built into the joint programmes with UNCTs and other international development partners, their contributions can be referred to here as UN counterpart funding. In the same vein, the indicative amount of the above-mentioned, core and additional UNESS resources will be reflected as UNESCO’s contributions to national education development plans and programmes, and as such, will be indicated to Member States and development partners, including in the context of the Paris Declaration.

³ Either directly by FOs themselves or through other UNESCO entities such as: regional bureaux, institutes and HQ.

2.7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The UNESS process requires regular feedback and biennial review and revision, as necessary, of the proposed areas and strategies, as well as of the actions taken over the short- and medium-term periods. Routine monitoring to identify shortfalls and possible options for adjustment/improvement should be in-built into FO planning processes. Furthermore, as UNESS aims to strengthen our support for implementing national priorities in partnership with other development agencies, the evaluation of the outcomes and impact of UNESCO's cooperation strategies in education, particularly in countries in which SWApS are in place, should become a part of national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as well as donors' review and stocktaking processes.

The UNESS will describe indicators to assess the outcomes to be achieved as a result of our supportive actions for the government and jointly with other partners (see Section 3.6.2 of this guide).

Consequently, it is advisable that the UNESS document specifies the following aspects, particularly in Chapter 5 on proposed interventions:

- ◆ The expected medium- to long-term outcomes of national education development priorities that UNESCO proposes to contribute to achieve through UNESS (specified as Medium-Term Outcome, which can be derived from the targets and timelines of national plans);
- ◆ The actions that UNESCO proposes to carry out during the forthcoming biennium (2008-2009) in order to contribute to the achievement of the above government priorities and outcomes (specified as UNESCO's Action 2008-2009);
- ◆ The output/outcome indicators for the actions 2008-2009 of UNESS, whose performance should be evaluated in light of the level of their contribution to national priorities: such UNESS review and evaluation can be conceived as being part of the regular national mechanisms, e.g. annual sector reviews, annual progress reports, joint assessment missions, UNCTs' joint reviews, etc. (This will be very country-specific and built upon or within joint reviews, etc.);
- ◆ If a separate evaluation is needed for any UNESCO actions, such as an extra-budgetary project run by UNESCO, UNESS will provide necessary justification and the timeframe.

3. UNESS Structure and Content

3.1. Indicative Structure of UNESS Document

Drafting a UNESS document involves the following logical steps, which will become the UNESS chapters:

- (1) A brief presentation and analysis of the country's overall development context, challenges and priorities;
- (2) A brief description and a more detailed analysis of the country's education system (both in formal and non-formal settings), the major educational issues and challenges, followed by an analysis of the national priorities and strategies in education;
- (3) A mapping of the development cooperation context, especially in education, explaining the country's level of dependence on external finance, and importantly, analyzing the extent to which development partners' priorities, areas of interventions and modalities address national priorities, including the extent of donor harmonization and alignment with the government's priorities and procedures;
- (4) A candid analysis (and where possible, evaluation) of UNESCO's recent and ongoing support for national educational development, paying special attention to our experience and the lessons learned from past cooperation with the country,

Proposed structure for a UNESS document

Chapter 1. Development Challenges and Priorities

- 1.1. Economic, Social and Human Development Context
- 1.2. National Development Priorities

Chapter 2. Educational Challenges, Priorities and Strategies

- 2.1. Educational Context and Challenges
- 2.2. National Priorities and Strategies in Education

Chapter 3. Priorities and Interventions of Development Partners

Chapter 4. UNESCO's Programmatic Thrust

- 4.1. UNESCO's Past Support for National Education
- 4.2. UNESCO's Programmatic Priorities in Education

Chapter 5. Strategy of Cooperation for National Education Development

- 5.1. Gaps and Emerging Needs in National Education
- 5.2. Proposed Interventions: Areas and Strategies

in light of the Organization's mandate and comparative advantage on the one hand, and of the government's expectations on the other;

- (5) A candid analysis (and where possible, evaluation) of UNESCO's recent and ongoing support for national educational development, paying special attention to our experience and the lessons learned from past cooperation with the country, in light of the Organization's mandate and comparative advantage on the one hand, and of the government's expectations on the other;
- (6) A formulation of the proposed strategy of cooperation with the country, its case being argued on the basis of the previous steps. This will be derived from (i) a careful analysis of the needs and gaps that may still exist in the country's education plans in light of international development initiatives; and (ii) a selection of the support needed to overcome them in terms of human, technical and financial resources, by development partners in general, and by UNESCO in particular: this can be facilitated using an outcome matrix as explained later in this guide.

Within each of the five UNESS chapters, a set of questions can be used as a starting point to providing the necessary analysis. However, these should not be followed dogmatically, as different countries will require different sorts of analysis, depending on the information readily available, the research and studies already carried out by nationals or external development partners, the overriding political context, etc.

Chapters or steps (1) through (4) comprise the evidence gathering, and Chapter (5) or step (5) comprises the culmination of the exercise: the cooperation strategy. UNESS is not a research exercise, nor should it entail any primary data collection. Rather, it is a culling of existing information, wherever possible, in order to engage in discussion with the relevant ministries and development partners and to determine the most appropriate cooperation strategy for interventions by UNESCO.

The Annexes, in addition, comprise further reference material and information that can be useful for contextualizing the findings of educational issues and development challenges covered in the UNESS documents. All the supporting data, statistics and analyses that need to be documented in order to base a reliable UNESS can be added as annexes. References to documentary sources used, interviews and/or consultations held throughout the UNESS process will be annexed as well. UNESS documents in time will become a valuable source of institutional memory for the ED Sector.

The space that can be allocated for each of the five chapters will vary and depend not only on the level of detail FO wish to provide in a UNESS document, but also on the intended, multi-purpose use of this document by them (such as: analytical paper on the needs of a country, background document for CCA/UNDAF, or UNESCO strategy statement, etc.) Therefore, while it is generally recommended that the major text of UNESS (without annexes) take around 30 pages at this stage of UNESS launch, FO will take at liberty to decide on the actual size of the documents prepared for each country. Whatever the full length of the document, it is strongly recommended that Chapters 1 and 2, taken together, comprise less than 60 percent of the entire main text and Chapter 5, on UNESCO's cooperation strategy, comprise about 20 percent of the document (without annexes).

3.2. Chapter 1: National Development Challenges and Priorities

This Chapter describes the background against which the national development priorities have been chosen and helps to shed light on the status of overall socio-economic development, as well as the major achievements, issues and challenges that the country faces. This overall development context and the prioritization of national issues and strategies provide the background for the more specific, detailed education context and priorities in Chapter 2 on national educational challenges, priorities and strategies.

3.2.1. Economic, Social and Human Development Context

This first section should briefly describe the country's major development challenges, in order to place the priorities for the education sector within this wider picture. One may want to know not only what distinguishes this country in terms of its development trajectory, but also how it compares, for instance, with similar countries – as a least developed country, a country emerging from post-conflict, an E-9 country, a country in that particular region, etc.

Typically, a PRSP and/or a UNDP national human development report would serve this purpose well, in addition to any recent CCA document. Similarly, the background statistics in Table 1 of the EFA Global Monitoring Report could be a good starting place, though one would need to look beyond the current year to get a feel for the trends in these indicators, as they describe some of the major facets of the country's overall development context.

UNICEF, UNFPA and Bretton Woods Institutions' assessment reports would also be useful, as would their country strategy documents or the introductory sections of bilateral and multilateral project identification documents, provided that necessary bibliographical references are given. Because country contexts are so different, it is not possible to say which of all the questions below will be the most important in describing the overall context and challenges; however, the following questions might provide some initial guidance:

- What are the major demographic trends?
- What are the main socio-economic, ethnic, religious or language groupings within the population and their relative level of participation in education? Are there any socio-cultural traditions that would constitute important factors to be taken into consideration in development strategy and cooperation?
- What kinds of disparities exist in the country? What is the nature and status of gender disparities? Who are the marginalized? What is the literacy rate?
- What are the main features of the current economic situation, and the trends? What are the main sources of livelihood?
- What is the current Human Development Index (HDI) and how has it changed over the years? What are the main constituent factors pulling down or pushing up the HDI?
- What is the rate of incidence of poverty and how has it changed? What are the main constituent factors accounting for these trends?
- What is the prevalence of HIV & AIDS and their rates of increase?
- What is the current governance situation? What is the political and institutional framework? How is the leadership characterized?

This section is an analytical overview of those important elements which describe the country's overall context and its developmental challenges. It is not merely a list of facts or statistics, but a tapestry that highlights the major factors that distinguish the development status and trajectory of the country in general and of education in particular.

The MDG challenges for a country concerned can also give a snapshot of the issues and challenges ahead, as shown in the example below:

Example of MDG Challenges in a country

Millennium Development Goals (MDG)	Current Status in a country
Halve the number of people living in extreme poverty between 1990 and 2015	55% of people live on less than US\$ 1 per day.
Halve the proportion of people suffering from hunger	29% of children are underweight.
Ensure all children complete primary education of adequate quality	Fewer than 60% of primary-aged children attend school. 7 million primary-aged children are not in school.
Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005	The percentage of girls enrolled in primary education is 92%.. In some states it is less than 40%, particularly in the north of the country.
Reduce child mortality by two thirds among children under five	One in five children dies before her/his fifth birthday. Main causes are malaria (33%), VPD (22%), diarrhoea (19%) and acute respiratory infections (16%).
Reduce deaths of mothers due to child bearing by 75% between 1990 and 2015	One birth in a hundred results in the death of the mother. Women in northern part of the country have a one in fifteen chance of dying through a pregnancy-related cause.
Halt the spread of AIDS	5% of people are infected with HIV - over 10% in some states. Over 1 million children have already been orphaned by AIDS.
Halve the proportion of people without safe drinking water by 2015	Less than 50% of the rural population have access to a safe water source.

3.2.2. National Development Priorities

This second section analyses the national development priorities, including the pillars of any poverty reduction strategy (PRS). The key documents for this section clearly would be the current national development plan and the PRS, together with any associated policies or legislation.

Depending on the nature of the national development plan, it may or may not be costed; there may be prioritization of policies, but not necessarily by budgetary prioritization. If there is a medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF), it will need to be carefully examined, together with the budgetary priorities of the annual planning periods covered. The national plan may be in the process of being revised, with the current one coming to the end of the period for which it was written.

This section should provide the overview of the national development policies, strategies and priorities in relation to the overall development context and challenges described in the previous section. Some questions that may be asked are:

- ◆ What are the main documents and frameworks that provide policy directions and development priorities in the country?
- ◆ What are the macro-economic policies and strategies (e.g. PRS)? How are the policies and strategies developed? Which department is the main responsible agency and how does it interact with other ministries in its formulation? What is the level of participation of different stakeholders?
- ◆ Are there national strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and what is the place given to human resource development in general and to education in particular?
- ◆ Which strategy framework is governing budgetary prioritization (e.g. MTEF)? Does this prioritization match the nominal prioritization in the policy or plan?

3.3. Chapter 2: Educational Challenges, Priorities and Strategies

Chapter 2 focuses specifically on the education sector (both in formal and non-formal settings). It ‘places’ education within the national development priorities and strategies identified and analyzed in Chapter 1 and aims, first, to describe and analyze the major issues and challenges (and recent accomplishments) in the education sector as a whole, and secondly the focus of the government’s education priorities and strategies. As with Chapter 1, this chapter should go beyond the presentation of the government’s education development priorities and strategies and include analysis of the budgetary priorities of these plans. The logic is to lead to the identification of any outstanding policy, financial or human resource gaps in the sector-wide education development plans of the country.

The information for this chapter, as for the previous one, can be found not only in national development plans and IDP support programmes, but also through interviews and consultative meetings with the main stakeholders.

3.3.1. National Educational Context and Challenges

This first section consists of analyzing educational achievements, issues and challenges at all levels and forms of education with regard to learners of all ages (preschool through higher, including non-formal). The description and analysis will be sector-wide and can be done by sub-sector: ECCE, non-formal education, including literacy programmes, primary education, secondary education, technical and vocational education, special education, teacher education, and tertiary education. Overarching issues pertaining to planning, management, governance and financial aspects, special needs and inclusive education, HIV & AIDS education, partnerships, etc. can be analyzed either as cross-cutting themes or by sub-sector, as appropriate.

Two aspects are important to note in preparing this section:

- ◆ This is not a sector analysis exercise, nor should it entail any primary data collection. Rather, it is a culling of existing documentation in a structured way to feed relevant information into the identification and design of UNESCO's cooperation strategy.
- ◆ This section will go beyond merely a compilation and synthesis of existing documentation in order to analyse and interpret, where necessary, the present situation, prevailing issues and prospective challenges in light of international development frameworks and conventions such as the EFA goals.

FOs will draft this section by analyzing the educational issues and challenges which are most relevant to the country concerned. Some questions that can be asked in drafting this section are:

- ◆ What is the current educational structure? Is it going to be reformed and if yes, what will be the perceived implications for future educational development? Are there possibilities for developing a lifelong learning perspective?
- ◆ What are the main documents comprising education-related legislation, policies and plans? Are there any outstanding issues that are not attended to in these policies and plans?

- ◆ What characterizes past achievements in education?
- ◆ What are the main issues and challenges in education (access to and participation in education, trends in enrolments, internal efficiency, quality of teaching/learning, geographical/gender/social disparities, literacy rates, educational finance, managerial and institutional aspects, and/or governance, etc.)?
- ◆ Where relevant, what is the impact of HIV & AIDS and the education sector's response to this pandemic?
- ◆ How are financial and human resources distributed across education sub-sectors? Are resources used efficiently and effectively? What is the level of dependence on external finance for education?

3.3.2. National Education Priorities and Strategies

This second section describes national policies, priorities and strategies in education. In practice, policies can be expressed in many different ways, some of which will depend on the country's traditions. There is likely to be educational legislation as well as administrative texts which regulate the management and administration of the education system. A national education policy may be defined rather informally in ministerial speeches or press coverage. It may be defined more formally in written "framework documents", 'green (draft)' or 'white' papers. There may also be reports of special educational commissions. Implicit policies may orient government decisions without finding public expression, or they may be reflected in the daily decisions of agencies tasked with specific educational responsibilities, such as examinations boards or curriculum development units, etc. All such formal and informal, explicit and implicit policy needs to be analyzed in this section of the UNESS document.

As with the previous section, the presentation of the country's educational policies and priorities needs to be developed into an analysis of whether the stated policies and priorities attend to those issues and challenges that the country faces, not to mention the extent to which they correspond with international development frameworks, including the EFA goals, etc. In drafting this section, the following questions provide some initial guidance:

- ◆ What are the country's educational policies, priorities and strategies as expressed in its constitution, sector plans, education components of PRSP, etc.? Are they coherent or do contradictions in policy emerge in these various documents? Does the UNDAF document properly relate to them?

- ◆ What are the most critical areas for EFA achievement, and how does the country intend to address them? Are non-formal education approaches recognized as relevant components of education provision?
- ◆ Do national policies and priorities provide for balanced educational development, and does the provision of educational finance match the expressed policies and priorities?
- ◆ Are there reform plans for education (e.g. governance, decentralization, teacher education, curriculum development, examinations, tuition, specific sub-sectors, e.g. non-formal, ECCE, literacy, higher education, etc.) and how are they designed and being implemented? Are there any obvious gaps in the design and coverage of education reforms?
- ◆ Do existing plans provide information on credible multi-year financial resource requirements for educational development? How is public educational expenditure evolving to meet the international recommendation (of 6% GDP)?
- ◆ What areas and strategies of capacity development require urgent support (viz. national or sub-national educational planning and management, and the gamut of educational service provision, viz. teacher education, curriculum development, examinations, etc.)?

3.4. Chapter 3: Priorities and Areas of Development Partner Interventions

Chapter 3 maps the local and international development community's areas of intervention and priorities in support of the country's education system. As with previous chapters, listing these areas is but a start to the analysis of the gaps in the required support identified, going beyond the matching of government's policy and expenditure prioritization to cover the contributions being made by cooperating partners in tackling the major issues and challenges in educational development. The purpose of this analysis is two-fold: to facilitate the design of UNESCO's support strategy not only in response to national needs and demands for education development, in alignment with national priorities and timeframes, but also to improve the synergy of our future support activities with those of other development partners. In line with the Paris Declaration as well as the GAP-EFA, UNESS will analyse whether donor support is provided in a coordinated, harmonized and effective way while avoiding duplication and overlap.

Typically, it will be easier to identify development partners' commitments, but not necessarily their disbursements nor the predictability of their resource flows. In carrying out a mapping of local and international donor agencies' strategies, priorities and intervention areas, some questions that may be asked include:

- ◆ Who are the major development partners (multilateral and bilateral agencies, etc.); what are the priority areas of their interventions, funding resources, the extent and duration of their involvement and the aid modalities used? Do their interventions utilise national institutional mechanisms and processes, or are they run by distinct administrations with parallel processes?
- ◆ Are there other NGOs and CSOs supporting education, and how do they operate with respect to national priorities?
- ◆ Are donor interventions divided geographically, thematically or sub-sectorally, and how have any such divisions been defined or decided?
- ◆ What capacity development is being carried out and/or planned by the major development partners? Has there been any effort to combine these contributions into a comprehensive, joint plan? What are the obstacles to any such effort? How are the priority areas and modalities of capacity development determined?
- ◆ What donor coordination mechanisms are in place? Who leads such coordination? What role does the government play in donor coordination? What is the status of donor harmonization and alignment in the country? Which agency is the lead agency for education and how does it exercise this role?
- ◆ What annual and/or mid-term sector reviews take place? Are they effective? How do donors participate in such joint review exercises? How does the UNESCO FO participate in these exercises?

Additionally, it would be helpful to analyse government and donor community expectations of UNESCO and their requests for support from us. This section as a whole will need not only to analyze the contributions of others, but also the relevance of the expectations held for UNESCO's contributions in light of national strategies and priorities for educational development, the capacity development requirements identified and the donor coordination mechanisms in place. Typically, the source of information for this analysis will be the report of discussions held with the government and/or in donor coordination meetings in which UNESCO may often be requested to play a particular role.

3.5. Chapter 4: UNESCO's Programmatic Thrust

Chapter 4 analyses UNESCO's past and ongoing support to the country's national educational development, given its most recent history and current engagement in the sector within the framework of our Regular and extra-budgetary programmes in education. This exercise will help design a UNESCO strategy that responds to countries' needs (alignment with national priorities), takes into consideration the mandate and comparative advantage of the Organisation (strategic and normative role), while improving the possible synergies of our support with those of other development partners (donor harmonization).

3.5.1. UNESCO's Past and Ongoing Support to National Educational Development

This section provides a candid analysis of UNESCO's recent past and ongoing support for national educational development. The programmatic areas and activities that UNESCO has supported during the past (2004-2005) and current (2006-2007) biennia will be listed, including how financial resources (and, if possible, human resources) have been allocated.

For ease of reference, a table can be drawn up for this purpose, as shown in the example below:

Example of Expenditure by Activity and Budget Source, USD

Activity	Regular Programme		Extra-budgetary Projects		
	2004-2005	2006-2007	Amount	Project Duration	Funding Source
Policy support for EFA	227,346	300,000	30,580	2005-2006	Gov. & NGO
			100,000	2005-2008	NORAD Funds-in-Trust
Capacity building in planning and management	127,385	150,000	245,000	2006-2007	Gov. & NGO
Total	354,731	450,000	375,580		

In this section, the FO will need to explain how the areas of UNESCO support were selected, what the support entailed in practice, and to draw the lessons learned from past and ongoing cooperation with the country, in light of the Organization's mandate

and comparative advantage on the one hand, and the government's expectations, on the other. Where evaluations have been carried out – whether internal or external – this is the section in which useful feedback and recommendations for improving the Organization's support can be included.

Some questions that may be useful for drafting this section include:

- ◆ What are the major areas of support and activities of past and ongoing Regular Programmes for the country (intervention areas, implementation modalities and costs)? How were these identified and selected for support?
- ◆ What are the past and ongoing extra-budgetary projects (intervention areas, implementation modalities and costs)? How were these projects identified for support? What is the relationship between the Regular Programme areas and extra-budgetary projects?
- ◆ What evaluations have been carried out of UNESCO's past and ongoing support to national educational development? What lessons have been drawn for the future from such evaluations? Do any other evaluations of donor support to education have implications for our country programmes?
- ◆ In the case of countries in which any of the three EFA core initiatives (EDUCAIDS, LIFE and TTISSA) are concerned, how should UNESCO's role and support strategy for these initiatives be situated within the sector-wide national educational development context?
- ◆ What is UNESCO's role in development partnerships and coordination with other development agencies? How does UNESCO contribute to and participate in CCA/UNDAF processes? What lessons can be drawn from the roles currently played by UNESCO and those the Organization could play with respect to development partners' support to the country's national educational development?

3.5.2. UNESCO's Programmatic Priorities in Education

In this section, the key features of the current and perceived programme priorities of the current biennium will be presented, in light of UNESCO's mandate to play a normative, advisory and capacity building role for national educational authorities. It will be useful in this section to relate the strategic priorities identified in the GAP-EFA to those national priorities identified in Chapter 2, especially the role that UNESCO is expected to play in its in-country implementation.

To present UNESCO's programmes for education and cross-cutting themes of relevance to the country's educational development priorities, some of the following questions may be asked:

- ◆ What are the programmatic priorities of the current biennium that are most relevant to the country? Are these addressed in the country's policies and priorities for national educational development? Are they supported by other development partners? Are there gaps in such support that can be identified?
- ◆ Are there other UNESCO education programmes that are relevant to national strategies and priorities?
- ◆ What roles and areas of the GAP-EFA (and/or international development priorities) can the FO best take up in supporting the country?
- ◆ What is the FO's capacity for identifying and supporting the educational needs of the country (number of cluster countries, number and profile of permanent and/or temporary education staff, estimation of time allocations, etc.)?
- ◆ What are the minimum capacities that would be required for the FO to support national educational development following the identification (above) of the roles expected of UNESCO (number and profile of staff, resources, etc.)? If not met, what would be the alternative scenarios concerning UNESCO's support? Which UNESCO entities (HQ, RB and Institutes) would need to be associated with further investigations and implementation of the support identified in UNESS?

3.6. Chapter 5: Strategies of Cooperation for National Educational Development

This final chapter outlines the main areas and strategies of the Organization's support for national educational development. It is designed to position UNESCO's education policies and strategies at country level, to outline the proposed UNESCO interventions, and to feed national perspectives into the design of the Organization's Medium-Term Strategy and biennial programmes in education. Once UNESCO's Governing Bodies have approved these global programmes, this chapter will:

- ◆ Facilitate the preparation by FOs of the actual workplans in the country, aiming to support national priorities in light of the needs and gaps previously identified;
- ◆ Provide analytic and programmatic inputs for UNCTs' CCA/UNDAF processes, particularly their educational components;

- ◆ Comprise a common repository of information for UNESCO;
- ◆ Help design and implement staff capacity development programmes, according to the capacity and staffing needs previously identified;
- ◆ Eventually contribute to more efficient and effective cooperation with Member States responsive to national priorities and strategies and in concert with international development partners.

3.6.1. Gaps and Emerging Needs in National Education

This section identifies any critical gaps that may exist and emerging needs in national education development planning and implementation. These can be issues and areas which the FO considers necessary or insufficiently addressed in the country's education policies and plans, as well as additional actions that the government, civil society and/or development partners may need to carry out to ensure that the gaps are filled, in terms of human, technical and financial resources, including development cooperation, in light of UNESCO's normative role and international development frameworks.

Some questions that may be asked for this purpose include:

- ◆ What issues of educational development are insufficiently addressed in the country's education policies and plans, in light both of the national needs identified and international development goals?
- ◆ What are the felt gaps and/or emerging needs in terms of data, policies, capacities, finance and/or donor coordination (including PRSP, UNDAF, etc.)?
- ◆ Is there sufficient data and analysis in national studies and plans on which to base, e.g. a UNESS document?
- ◆ What support can be provided by development partners to overcome the gaps?
- ◆ How can we provide policy and planning support?
- ◆ Does the FO have the necessary resources to respond to national educational development needs? What would be required to fill the priority gaps?

This 'analysis of support needs' will provide a necessary compass for FO support to Government as may be requested in its interaction with funding agencies and human and financial resource mobilisation, and is therefore useful not only for UNESCO's programmatic purposes, but also for improving UNESCO's role in international coordination of EFA and in-country implementation of the EFA-GAP.

3.6.2. Proposed Interventions: Areas and Strategies

This is the final section of the UNESS document and is conceived as the logical culmination of the analyses and arguments substantiating the previous chapters. The underlying argument of this section is based on the following premises:

- That UNESS is consonant with the Government’s national development priorities and those specifically identified for the education sector;
- That it is derived from:
 1. an analysis of the conditions and challenges of national educational development;
 2. an appraisal of the government’s policies and priorities in tackling these issues and challenges;
 3. the mapping of support being given by development partners;
 4. the lessons drawn from our past and ongoing cooperation for national educational development, and that of others;
 5. an examination of the match between the gaps, the comparative advantages and the strategic priorities of UNESCO in education, as well as the normative role that the Organization is expected to play in light of international development frameworks and conventions.

Streamlining of UNESCO Support

One of the ideas behind UNESS is that given the limited resources in UNESCO and, more importantly, as requested by our Governing Bodies that we play a much more strategic role in supporting national education priorities, UNESCO will in the future select only a few critical areas of support for a given country and ensure its commitment to these areas over several years in order to improve the effectiveness and impact of its cooperation.

In principle, each UNESS will select and focus on three programmatic components (maximum five) for UNESCO support during the next biennium. How these components will be formulated or structured is left at the discretion of FOs, which should take into account not only the prioritization of national policies and strategies, but also the complementarity and synergy with development partners, as well as the Organization’s normative mandate, resources, capacities and priorities.

Assuming that an FO selects five programmatic components for support and cooperation with a Member State, the following examples give an indication as to the flexibility that FO can have in the design of the outcome matrix:

- ◆ FO identifies only one development objective and then defines five outcomes to support under this objective;
- ◆ FO identifies two objectives and then defines four outcomes to support under the first objective and one outcome under the second objective;
- ◆ FO identifies five objectives and then defines one outcome to support under each objective.

As said earlier, the selection of an area of support (or a programmatic component) is in the FO's hands, based on the various consultations with government and wider stakeholders, as well as on the secondary investigations described in the prior chapters. A selected area or component of cooperation can be narrow or wide in scope: it could be sub-sectoral (e.g. in-service training for primary education teachers; adult education, etc.), cross-sectoral (e.g. learning outcomes at all levels of education; strengthening national leadership in donor coordination; decentralization, etc.), and/or cross-cyclical (e.g. developing institutional capacity for planning and monitoring and evaluation; project identification, design and financial mobilisation, etc.).

FO will make use of the opportunities given by this flexibility to design a coherent cooperation programme that it proposes to implement for the next biennium, thus avoiding the fragmentation of micro-activities which often lead to a limited impact for national education development.

UNESS Outcome Matrix

Through UNESS, UNESCO will design its strategy for support and cooperation with Member States in response to national education development needs, priorities and strategies. In order to build such an outcome-oriented cooperation strategy, whereby UNESCO can contribute to national development through technical support and capacity building in the field of policy, strategy, monitoring and evaluation, and in synergy with development partners, an outcome matrix is proposed to facilitate the design of this section of UNESS.

The details of this matrix can vary from one country to another: at the same time, one must ensure that the matrix clearly indicates what government's development outcomes are to be attended to in the national education sector (i.e. Medium-Term Outcome), what critical issues and gaps are to be addressed (Major Issues and Challenges) and what actions UNESCO proposes to carry out in order to tackle these developmental issues and gaps (See also Section 2.7 on Monitoring and Evaluation).

Objective: Can be in the same vein as one of the country's education plans, which is however to be reviewed in light of UNESCO's programmatic priorities				
Medium-Term Outcome (by 2013)	Major issues and challenges	UNESCO's Proposed Action (2008-2009)	Output or outcome (by 2009)	Partnerships
Outcome 1: State a country priority outcome that FO proposes to support for its achievement (the timeline could be: either 2013 to synchronise with UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy or other targets or timelines you deem relevant in light of national plans and development partners' programmes, e.g. UNDAF)	Select one (or several related) of the prevailing issues/gaps identified in the previous section (on gap analysis), that UNESCO proposes to contribute to overcome over the years to come.	Describe one or a set of related actions to be carried out by UNESCO within the new biennium (2008-2009) in order to contribute to overcome the gap(s) stated in the previous column, thus to achieve the developmental outcome of the national education plan(s). Such description can comprise the information about the indicative modalities of support	Formulate either concrete outputs expected as result of the UNESCO action and/or, wherever possible, the corresponding targets of the national education plans to be achieved by 2009.	<u>National:</u> State one or some key beneficiary AND partner institutions concerned by the action(s), as well as their roles.
			Indicative costs (USD): Estimation of the financial resources required to carry out the action(s) in terms of core resources (Regular Programme), additional	<u>International:</u> State multilateral and/or bilateral agencies to partner or coordinate with for carrying out the action(s), as well as their respective roles.
Outcome 2:				
Outcome 3:				

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