



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Internal Oversight Service Evaluation Section

**IOS/EVS/PI/73
Original: English**

Evaluation of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics

External evaluation team:
Nick Davis and Allana Coulon
Martin, Jenkins & Associates
February 2007

The views and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of UNESCO or of the IOS. The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	21
EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODS	23
STRATEGIC AND PROGRAMMATIC CONTEXT	27
RELEVANCE	41
RESULTS ACHIEVED	54
QUALITY OF INTERACTION AND COORDINATION	133
FINANCIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT	153
ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES	176
RECOMMENDATIONS	183
APPENDIX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE	188
APPENDIX 2: INFORMATION SOURCES	193
APPENDIX 3: SURVEY RESULTS	198
APPENDIX 4: UIS STATUTES	223
APPENDIX 5: UIS FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	230
APPENDIX 6: ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT	233
APPENDIX 7: SCB PROJECT IN FAST TRACK COUNTRIES	235

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) was established in 1999 to meet the growing needs of UNESCO Member States and the international community for a wider range of policy-relevant, timely, and reliable statistics in the fields of education, science, culture and communication. It is one of nine UNESCO ‘category one’ institutes and the only institute that serves all UNESCO sectors. As a statutorily autonomous body, it is intended to be independent from UNESCO while at the same time aligning its programme with UNESCO’s strategic and programmatic priorities. In doing so, it is expected to work closely with the UNESCO Secretariat, field offices, institutes and centres as well as directly serving the needs of Member States and the international community more generally.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This evaluation is part of an ongoing review by UNESCO of its category one institutes in the context of its decentralisation reform process. Its purpose is to inform UNESCO, Member States and partner agencies about four aspects of UIS: the relevance of its activities; the results it has achieved; the quality of its interaction and coordination with UNESCO and other partners; and the effectiveness and efficiency of its governance and management.

STRATEGIC AND PROGRAMMATIC CONTEXT

UNESCO is not primarily a statistical agency. Nevertheless, UNESCO has been a leading global source of statistical information in its fields of competence, particularly education, since its inception. It is the only universal organisation entitled, by virtue of its Constitution, to ask Member States to provide it with statistical data. Yet providing high-quality data in all areas of UNESCO’s mandate and across all countries of the world is a large and complex task. The coverage and quality of data collected from Member States is dependent on the capacities of national statistical systems, which vary considerably from country to country. In a number of countries, the capacity to collect and produce statistics is still very limited.

Over the course of the last two decades, the needs and demands of statistics users have changed dramatically. Social, scientific and economic developments have stimulated a significant increase in demand for more sophisticated, comprehensive and detailed data. Technological developments have simultaneously enabled the collection, processing and dissemination of data at much lower cost. Governments, NGOs, professional and scholarly organisations now depend on complex, timely and comprehensive data as the basis for public policy, international aid and social reform.

UNESCO's Medium Term Strategy (31C/4) recognises the role of UIS as the focal point for UNESCO's data collection efforts and requires that UIS concentrate on four main lines of action:

- Guardianship of cross-national data through regular collections of key data, including those required for monitoring progress towards International Development Goals (IDGs), data-sharing and dissemination;
- Development of appropriate methodology for new indicators and improvement in existing indicators;
- Assistance to countries with a view to improving their capacities for data collection, use and analysis through training and other support; and
- Analysis and interpretation of cross-national data in order to inform policy development and monitoring.

BRIEF HISTORY OF UIS

UNESCO has a long history in the field of international statistics and its statistical office was widely regarded as the premier global education statistics institution in the 1950s. However, from the 1960s to the mid-1990s, there is evidence that a combined effect of growing expectations from the international community, increasing workload, and declining resources resulted in unsustainable pressure and strain on UNESCO's statistical services. In recognition of this, in 1994 UNESCO invited the Board on International Comparative Studies in Education (BISCSE) to prepare a report for the Director General with recommendations on key steps to strengthen UNESCO's education statistics program.

The BISCSE report attributed the demise in UNESCO's statistical function and its reputation for providing credible data to a decline in human and financial resources. It called for a radical reorientation and reorganisation of the education statistics programme including suggesting structural changes to re-establish the priority, independence and credibility of UNESCO's statistical function. In 1997 the UNESCO Executive Board endorsed a Strategic Plan for strengthening UNESCO's

statistical programmes and services and approved the establishment of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). UIS was subsequently established in 1999 as an autonomous institute within the institutional framework of UNESCO. Shortly after its establishment, the Governing Board of UIS selected Montreal, Canada as the best long-term location for the Institute.

ACHIEVEMENTS

UIS is highly relevant to UNESCO, particularly its education programme, and to the needs of Member States

There is an increasing focus on the need for policy-relevant statistics and indicators across all UNESCO sectors. In particular, there is a strong emphasis by the international development community on the measurement of progress towards EFA goals and MDGs. In this context, the core function of UIS to collect, validate and disseminate statistics in the areas of education, science, culture, and communication and information is perhaps more relevant than ever before in the history of UNESCO.

Immediately prior to the establishment of UIS, the quality of data produced by the UNESCO Division of Statistics was increasingly being called into question by the international community, undermining UNESCO's longstanding reputation for statistical independence and integrity. In the period since, UIS has met and exceeded the expectations of most stakeholders in restoring the trust and confidence of Member States and the international community in the value of UNESCO's statistical function and the credibility of internationally comparable education statistics.

Factors contributing to this include the establishment of UIS as an independently governed category one institute and the subsequent relocation of the Institute to Montreal. Despite the loss of staff and the increased distance to UNESCO Headquarters, these changes gave the Institute the independence and autonomy required to re-invent itself. The subsequent recruitment by UIS of a high calibre staff of professional statisticians and its development of extensive networks within the international statistical and development communities have further contributed to re-establishing UNESCO's statistical reputation. UIS, with the support of the Director General, also successfully re-established its independence from Member States, including upholding its right to not publish data submitted by countries where minimum quality standards are not met. Furthermore, it has made substantial investments in all aspects of data quality - from collection to dissemination of data.

UNESCO stakeholders we spoke to were unanimous in their view that the UIS is highly relevant to the strategic and programmatic priorities of UNESCO, particularly in the education sector and for the purposes of monitoring national, regional and global progress towards EFA goals. UNESCO stakeholders consider the collection, production and dissemination of statistics to be central to the effective conduct of the work of all UNESCO sectors and integral to the development of a culture of evidence-based policy development within UNESCO. The supporting statistical functions of methodological development, standard setting and statistical capacity building are also widely recognised as highly relevant, as much for their role in indirectly improving the quality and comparability of the UIS country-level data as for the direct benefits received by Member States.

Only in relation to its role in analysing and interpreting data did a number of stakeholders raise questions of relevance. The principal concern in this regard relates to the need for UIS, first and foremost, to maintain its independence and credibility as a collector, producer and disseminator of accurate and timely statistics. Some stakeholders considered this reputation could be compromised if the Institute was active in the more subjective area of data analysis and interpretation. On balance, we favour UIS retaining its role in the analysis and interpretation of data, including publication of analytical reports, subject to the following:

- The role of UIS in analysing and interpreting data should primarily be seen as a mechanism for improving data quality;
- There is a role for UIS to publish thematic studies that highlight topical areas of statistics, however its role in this regard should largely be confined to “letting the data speak” (e.g. the publication of trends, comparisons and related data transformations, and by publications that place the data “in context” rather than simply publishing large tables of raw data); and
- In relation to analytical publications that go beyond describing the data, the UIS should aim to publish reports and other analytical outputs jointly with other partners (e.g. UNESCO sectors, other UN agencies, and the international development policy and research community more generally) that do not face the same requirements to preserve independence and credibility of data collection.

Another dimension of relevance is the sector coverage of UIS activities. There is a clear expectation on the part of the Secretariat that UIS will serve all programme sectors by providing policy relevant data as well as collaborating to identify new data needs. The Education Sector has traditionally been the major user of UIS data and is intended to be a key collaborator in the ongoing identification of data needs as well as

analysis and interpretation of data. While the role of the UNESCO statistical office in serving other UNESCO sectors has traditionally been limited, a clear expectation upon the establishment of the Institute was that it would expand its focus beyond education statistics. In practice, the UIS has further sharpened its focus on the collection of education statistics since its establishment.

The Institute's decision to primarily focus resources in the area of education statistics is understandable in the circumstances. Furthermore, progress has been made by UIS during the latter part of the evaluation period to meet the needs of other sectors. For example, since 2002 the UIS has re-established regular collections in the areas of Science & Technology, Communications and Information and, to a lesser extent, Culture. These steps have been welcomed by the UNESCO sector representatives we spoke to and, indeed, have often resulted from joint initiatives between the Secretariat and UIS. There is some frustration in the Culture sector, where it is felt that UIS should be more proactive in identifying information needs and leading the development of a Culture Statistics work programme. Of course it is incumbent on UNESCO sectors to clearly articulate their needs, to work jointly with the UIS to develop a plan for how those needs will be met and, in accordance with the Statutes of the Institute, provide or mobilise resources to implement those plans if insufficient resources exist within UIS. Positive steps have recently been taken to reinvigorate relationships with all UNESCO sectors.

While there is no expectation that equality of UIS resources and effort is warranted across all sectors, the UIS needs to consider whether it has sufficient resources allocated to non-Education sectors in order to be able to credibly serve each sector. In our view, the amount of financial and human resources allocated by UIS to the non-Education sectors is below the minimum required to sustain a credible collection in these areas over the medium-term. This suggests some need for reprioritisation within UIS, or mobilisation of additional resources, if it is to continue to function as a statistical institute for the whole of UNESCO.

Recommendations:

1. The next UNESCO Medium Term Strategy should make greater reference to the statistical function of UNESCO and the specific role that statistics plays in contribution to each of its major programmes.
2. The UIS should critically assess the level of resources available for non-education sectors as part of the prioritisation and planning process for its next Medium Term Strategy, with a view to increasing the capacity of these teams at UIS.

3. The UIS should strengthen the collaboration between Montreal and regional staff to improve regional support for core UIS functions including data collection and analysis. More generally, the UIS faces a major challenge in improving its relevance to Member States and must consider how it can produce more value to countries through the performance of its core functions.
4. In developing its next Medium Term Strategy, and on an ongoing basis, the UIS needs to take note of key trends in the environment for international statistics, particularly the changing needs of statistics users and policy makers. The UIS needs to be more proactive in identifying emerging issues and developing indicators and data collections in new areas, such as measurement of learning outcomes and educational quality.
5. The UIS needs to better promote its brand and flagship products, such as the Global Education Digest, in order to raise its profile and cement its reputation as the premier source of internationally comparable cross-national data.

UIS has achieved significant results, particularly in its role as a guardian of cross-national data.

UIS has made positive contributions towards all aspects of its organisational mission. In particular, UIS has re-established its position as the leading organisation for the collection, validation and dissemination of internationally comparable education statistics. UIS has made positive but tentative contributions in other UNESCO sectors, made more commendable by the very limited human and financial resources dedicated to these areas.

Significant advancements have been made in all aspects of data quality - timeliness, relevance, accessibility, accuracy and international comparability. The range of statistics and indicators available on education has grown substantially, as has the coverage of data for the world's school age population. The efforts UIS has put into its dissemination environment have contributed to broader awareness of UIS's activities and information outputs.

Members of management and Governing Board of UIS note the existence of a trade-off between some aspects of data quality (e.g. accuracy) and timeliness, with some suggestion that UIS may have tipped the balance too far in favour of non-timeliness aspects of data quality. Timeliness is an important issue for users, both in the international community and Member States. The UIS is currently considering changes to internal survey processes, including shifting to a rolling collection cycle, to address some of these concerns about timeliness, however it is ultimately dependent

on the speed with which data is provided by Member States, over which the UIS has limited control. UIS should seek to make improvements to the timeliness of data where possible but not at the expense of the credibility or international comparability of the data produced.

The development of indicators and achievement of consensus on the meaning and relevance of data collected is a long-term investment which requires extensive consultation with subject experts and Member States. Over the short period since the creation of the Institute, UIS has taken significant steps to establish its expertise in this area within the international community. In particular, the role of UIS in upholding statistical principles and identifying risks and limitations in the development of indicators was identified as a particular strength by stakeholders we spoke with across all sectors.

Some stakeholders in the areas of communications and culture statistics expressed frustration at the emphasis UIS placed on identifying the risks and difficulties of developing new indicators and a reluctance to suggest solutions. It was also suggested that the development of new indicators by UIS has generally been reactive (i.e. in response to demands from stakeholders) rather than a result of UIS demonstrating leadership. We interpret this as largely a manifestation of natural tension between a statistical agency and policy organizations, and regard this tension as healthy provided discussions and collaborative activity remain on-going.

In terms of the development of new methodologies, concepts and standards, UIS is generally regarded as effective. However, UIS could improve the visibility of its efforts in this area through wider engagement with stakeholders. It could also take a more collaborative approach to development activities together with regional staff, regional networks and Member States.

It is important to acknowledge the important contribution that has been made to the future measurement of literacy and education outcomes in developing countries through the creation of the Literacy Monitoring and Assessment Programme (LAMP). This programme was identified by many stakeholders as an example of leadership and innovation by UIS in the development of new methodologies and indicators. LAMP's development in partnership with pilot countries (i.e., to tailor the survey instruments to reflect both the technical and policy needs of the country) is viewed as exemplary and Member States have shown significant interest in this programme.

The challenge for UIS is to manage the expectations of what this programme can deliver in the short- to medium-term. The resources required to support the six countries piloting the LAMP have exceeded expectations, partly reflecting the additional capacity building efforts required in some countries to ensure the integrity of data collected through the survey instruments. Additionally, participating countries and UIS have struggled to secure the necessary funding to advance the project beyond the pilot stage despite the strong interest from donors and partner agencies.

Given the broad mandate and limited resources of UIS, the UIS should aim to build a broader constituency in support of the implementation of LAMP and engage partners - at international and regional levels - to share in the ownership and oversight of the programme's implementation. The core strength and competitive advantage of UIS lies in its expertise in developing statistical methodologies and indicators to allow international comparisons and support the monitoring and advancement of international development goals. It is not clear its comparative advantage lies in implementing large-scale country level data collections.

Standard-setting and enforcement has arguably been a low priority of the UIS since its establishment. This is understandable given the sheer breadth of its mandate, the challenges it faced to restore credibility to its education statistics collection, and the limited human and financial resources at its disposal. However, standard setting is a critical role for UIS in developing the international comparability of statistics collected across all domains of UNESCO. Survey results suggest that international comparability continues to be a concern in relation to some UIS data. There is some concern that UIS has not been particularly effective in setting standards for data quality delivered by Member States and enforcing these consistently. Some stakeholders have emphasised the need for UIS to continue to assert its independence and its right to not accept or publish data that does not comply with international standards. The support of the Director General was identified as a key factor in UIS's ability to reassert and maintain its position of independence and it is important for UNESCO and UIS to remain vigilant in this regard.

With regard to ISCED, the lack of progress in developing and finalizing the Operational Manual and guidelines is surprising given the importance attached by UIS to improving the international comparability of data and the need to support countries to align their national data with ISCED. We recommend that UIS give high priority to the completion of the operational manual in collaboration with UIS regional staff to ensure the guidelines respond effectively to the specific needs of different regions and, where possible, individual countries.

Two programmatic areas where it is necessary for UIS to review progress and re-evaluate its role are in the areas of statistical capacity building and data collection in the areas of student assessment and measurement of learning outcomes (including literacy). In these areas, the demands from Member States and development agencies are high, but the logistical, organisational and financial implications of continuing to support substantial programmes in these areas needs to be carefully considered in light of the other priorities of the Institute and its stakeholders.

In relation to the Statistical Capacity Building programme of UIS, there is some evidence of significant improvements in data coverage and quality in countries where UIS has been engaged for a period of time. For example, the work of UIS has assisted countries such as Ethiopia and Niger to undertake a major overhaul of their education statistics environments, yielding significant improvements in timeliness, coverage and accuracy of statistics. Nevertheless, there are a number of serious concerns regarding the sustainability of the programme that merit further evaluation. These include: the 'hands on' project management role that UIS takes in all stages of the SCB process; the heavy dependence on lumpy and uncertain EXB funding for country-level projects; the lack of focus on institutional capacity building; the heavy focus on the development and implementation by in-house-developed software; and the heavy administrative and financial burden of the programme. A further weakness is the lack of mechanisms for monitoring countries' progress towards building sustainable capacity.

There appear to be regional differences in the way that UIS delivers SCB – we have particular concerns about the way the programme appears to be being implemented in Africa. The work of UIS in Africa is heavily oriented towards the development of EMIS systems and provision of related technical assistance, with a country-level rather than regional focus. The approach of intensively working with individual countries throughout the region has the potential to place very large demands on UIS. Furthermore, the approach to SCB in Africa is regarded as 'old-fashioned capacity building'. Sustainable outcomes are more likely to result from longer-term regional initiatives based on partnerships between development agencies and Member States.

Recommendations:

6. The UIS should develop wider constituencies of support and adopt more of a partnership-based approach to significant new initiatives, such as LAMP. In doing so, the UIS should aim to leverage off the substantial experience and resources of development partners, given that its core strength is its intellectual expertise and its capacity to manage new large scale surveys is limited.

7. The UIS needs to build critical mass in non-education sectors to enable it to adequately fulfil its mandate in respect of the development of new frameworks for data collection (i.e. indicators, methodologies, standards).
8. The UIS needs to continue to develop its external communications strategy, particularly in relation to the website and launch of online data releases and publications, to raise its profile and cement its reputation as the premier source of internationally comparable data in its fields of competence
9. The UIS should continue to seek improvements in timeliness of data as a paramount objective, while not jeopardising the potential validity and international comparability of that data.
10. UNESCO needs to remain vigilant in its protection of the independence of UIS, especially in the event that the UIS enforces its professional right to publish (or not publish) data that may be contested by an individual country
11. The UIS should consider implementing a systematic process for assessing Member States' compliance with ISCED, to inform assessments of international comparability and to identify priorities for targeted capacity building.
12. The UIS needs to better define and reinforce the role of UIS Regional Advisors as representing UIS as a whole and serving all of Institute's core functions, not just capacity building. In this respect, there are opportunities and potential benefits to be gained from further decentralisation of some UIS functions, including aspects of survey follow up and validation of responses.
13. For significant future capacity building initiatives, the UIS should put in place mechanisms for monitoring countries' progress towards building capacity, including assessing environmental factors that are associated with sustainability.

UIS has achieved mixed results in terms of the quality of interaction and coordination with its main stakeholders

The level of interaction and coordination with UNESCO Headquarters has been relatively weak over the evaluation period, although there have been instances of good cooperation on specific projects. There has been noticeable improvement in the frequency and quality of engagement between UIS and the UNESCO Secretariat in the past two years. This has occurred as UIS has identified the need to re-engage with UNESCO sectors as it has further developed its internal capacities and work programme. Moving forward, UIS and UNESCO Headquarters need to develop more institutionalised relationships that allow for the joint development of work programmes and priority-setting, rather than remaining reliant on personal relationships to sustain connections. Relations with UNESCO field offices are

generally better than with the UNESCO Secretariat. This most likely reflects the field presence of UIS and the regular contact with field offices, including through the conducting of training workshops and the collection of national data.

Relations between UIS and non-UNESCO agencies are generally positive. UIS enjoys a very good reputation amongst the international statistical and development community for being responsive and professional. There are good examples of collaboration with a range of stakeholders. The relationships between UIS and key data users such as the EFA Global Monitoring Report Team and the World Bank have improved over the evaluation period. UIS has also been effective at establishing partnerships with other statistical institutes (e.g. OECD and Eurostat) to maximise the contribution of UIS while avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort. UIS enjoys a limited but strong network of bilateral and multilateral donors.

UIS appears to enjoy a positive relationship with Member States, especially in countries where it has carried out statistical capacity building and pilot programmes such as LAMP. However, the high level of commitments undertaken to individual Member States represents a risk to the future reputation of UIS if they are unable to deliver to countries as promised. Given the Institute's relatively small size, UIS needs to concentrate on its role as a catalyst and look to mobilise the efforts and resources of Member States, partner agencies and donors in support of its overall mission.

Recommendations:

14. The UIS should strengthen its participation in regional and sub-regional statistical networks, in order to effectively facilitate cooperation between international agencies and Member States in support of the Institute's mandate.
15. UIS should review its regional operations in consultation with regional staff, and assess the adequacy of current interaction and coordination between UIS Montreal and regional offices, in order to identify areas for increased collaboration and engagement.
16. UIS should consider opportunities for developing stronger relationships with other category one institutes, particularly, IIEP, to exploit complementary capacities and further the strategic and programmatic priorities of UNESCO.

UIS is well governed and managed and operates efficiently

UIS has undertaken an enormous programme of work relative to its size and has frequently been stretched to its limits. UIS has benefited from a high calibre of leadership throughout the evaluation period although, reflecting the youth and rapid expansion of the organisation, some management practices have been under-developed. This latter point applies particularly to the areas of strategic planning and human resource management, although the significant efforts of the Institute in recruiting a high calibre staff are recognised.

The governance of UIS is sound from a fiduciary perspective but there is now scope for the Governing Board to adopt a more active role in the setting of strategic priorities and directions for the Institute. The annual frequency of Board meetings hampers the Board's ability to engage with the Director and staff of the Institute on strategic matters. We believe the Board's lack of Board activism in relation to strategic issues has flowed through to the lack of focus on strategic matters by the senior management of the Institute. While the staff and management of the Institute will often have a better understanding than Board members of the context within which UIS operates, it is important that the Board drive and challenge the Director to develop a coherent and appropriate medium-term strategy and plan. To support this, the Board should consider making more active use of committees as a mechanism for improving the quality of the engagement between the Board and the management of the Institute on matters of strategic importance. We do not wish to overburden the management of the Institute with another layer of oversight but believe the Institute could benefit, at least in the short term, from a strategic collaboration with an appropriate subset of its Board members

Following a change of Director and recruitment of a new Administrative Officer, the Institute has entered a period of stabilisation and reassessment of its strategic position and objectives. Given the rapid and somewhat organic growth of the organisation initially, this represents an important phase for the Institute as it becomes a more mature organisation. It is important that the Institute continues to take a measured and systematic approach to the reorientation of the Institute, both programmatically and organisationally, and that it develops a more integrated structure rather than perpetuating the programmatic silos that have developed. The current process to refresh the Institute's Medium Terms Strategy is timely in this regard. It is important that in the future any strategy developed is kept under periodic review to ensure it remains relevant to the Institute's operating environment.

In terms of funding and financial management, the UIS has been successful in funding its growth through extra budgetary funding. Indeed, the fund raising performance of UIS compares relatively favourably with other UNESCO institutes and centres.

However, fund raising has been somewhat *ad hoc* and largely carried out at programme level rather than reflecting an organisation-wide fund raising strategy. Consequently, some parts of the Institute have grown out of proportion to others. Furthermore, the reliance of the Institute on extra-budgetary funding leaves it vulnerable to an adverse shift in donor sentiment, particularly given its limited reserves. Given the narrowness of the present funding base, the UIS needs to remain vigilant in its efforts to extend both the range and longevity of funding arrangements secured.

Recommendations:

17. The UIS also needs to improve the diversity of its funding base and, in doing so, should focus on the attraction of multi-year general budgetary support as a first priority over one-off project-based funding.
18. The UIS should improve mechanisms for evaluating the full cost of extra-budgetary projects and systematically incorporate an appropriate allowance for overhead and technical infrastructure support as part of its project-based extra-budgetary funding agreements to ensure that the Institute's core funding is not used to subsidise such projects.
19. UNESCO and UIS should consider the provision of a one-day customised induction and governance training programme for new Board appointees to ensure they are equipped to fulfil their fiduciary and other duties.
20. The Board of UIS should consider making more active use of Board committees as a mechanism for improving the quality of engagement between the Board and the management of the Institute on matters of strategic importance.
21. The Board, through the Policy and Planning Committee, should consider clarifying the expectations of the Board in relation to Board reporting, so that the future reporting of the Institute better matches the needs and expectations of the Board.
22. The UIS should investigate how it can make more and better use of informal means of communication to keep its Board Members informed about the activities of the Institute between annual sessions of the Board.
23. The UNESCO Director General should consider asking the Assistant Director General – Education (or his nominee) to attend future meetings of the Board, given the special importance of the relationship between the Education sector and UIS, while not undermining the interests of other UNESCO Sectors.

Challenges

The need to forge closer relations with UNESCO Sectors

A range of factors have contributed to the relatively weak relations between UIS and the UNESCO Sectors. These include:

- the physical distance and time zone differences between Montreal and Paris;
- the lack of knowledge within the Secretariat about UIS and *vice versa*;
- the lack of a strong culture of statistical use within parts of the UNESCO Secretariat;
- a culture of independence within the UIS; and
- a general failure on the part of the Secretariat, notwithstanding some exceptions, to seek to understand and influence the priorities of the UIS.

These factors mean it will not be easy for UIS and the UNESCO Sectors to forge closer and better working relationships. Any solutions will need to address the disparate causes of ineffective relations identified above, none of which are insurmountable on their own but which collectively pose a significant challenge. Our interviews left us with a strong sense that engagement between UIS and UNESCO HQ is not institutionalised and instead depends on the existence of personal contacts. While inter-personal relationships will always be an important part of the institutional fabric of UNESCO, there is an urgent need for UIS-HQ relationships to be better cemented at an institutional level.

We were encouraged by the commitment we saw on the part of the Director of UIS, and by the ADGs of the Education and Culture sectors, to work more collaboratively. However, it will take a concerted and sustained effort on both sides to make significant progress in this area. As previous evaluations of UNESCO category one institutes have demonstrated, high quality interaction and coordination is not a strong point within the UNESCO system and relations will most likely continue to remain under-developed unless the commitment at leadership level is translated into significant and sustained actions across a broad range of fronts, starting with identification of respective priorities and negotiation of joint work programmes.

Recommendations:

- 24.** All sectors of the UNESCO Secretariat need to engage in more frequent and open discussions with UIS about their statistical priorities, with a view to both influencing the priorities of UIS and identifying opportunities for joint work. The

sectors should also support the UIS by assisting the Institute to mobilise funds in support of these priorities.

25. The UIS should engage UNESCO sectors, in particular the non-education sectors, in a more regular and systematic manner when developing its annual work programmes, biennial programme and budget, and Medium Term Strategy to ensure the relevance, alignment and appropriate prioritisation of resources.

The need to develop a more focussed strategy and improved results-based management

The strategic planning and management of the Institute has been weak throughout the evaluation period. To some extent this is inevitable since the task of establishing and rapidly growing the UIS required a high degree of focus, fleet-footedness, opportunism and sheer determination. Without this dynamic period, the Institute would not have realised the significant achievements documented here. Yet this period can also be characterised by elements of *ad hoc* and rapid growth in some areas.

UIS now has the opportunity to take stock and develop a strategy that responds to the changed operating environment, recognises the Institute's strengths and weaknesses, and reflects these in a more focussed plan of action designed to cement its role as the premier international statistical institute across its fields of competence. This will require some tough choices and bold decisions, such as what roles to play in areas such as statistical capacity building, assessment of student achievement and learning outcomes, and development of non-education statistics. It is important that the development of the strategy be undertaken in an open and transparent manner with invitations extended to key stakeholders to express their goals and priorities. Without this external input, the UIS cannot ensure it will gain the support of its stakeholders, including the donors it relies so heavily on.

There are also significant weaknesses in the area of results-based management. We observed very little in the way of self-evaluation activity by the Institute. For example, formal feedback is not sought from participants in UIS regional workshops and there are few (if any) internal evaluations of UIS programmes. There have, on occasion, been external evaluations of particular projects commissioned by outside donors, notably the World Bank, but such evaluations do not provide sufficient insight into the activities of the UIS to inform management and board-level decision making. This evaluation too, is insufficient for programme management purposes given its broad scope and high-level nature.

We strongly believe that any strategy should be capable of being monitored and evaluated. For this reason, clear and specific objectives should be set as to what the strategy is intended to achieve, not only in terms of the actions to be performed but in terms of the outcomes those actions are intended to contribute to. Once these outcomes are defined, efforts should be made to determine how progress towards them will be measured, and a performance management system put in place to provide the management of the Institute with information on how they are progressing. This need not be an elaborate or burdensome system. Rather, a strategic approach requires a focus on a 'vital few' key performance indicators.

The human resources practices of UIS remain relatively under-developed, particularly given the size of the Institute. Understandably, the focus of the human resources section during the first few years of the Institute's existence was on the recruitment of new staff. This demand was exacerbated by the significant number of staff that left the Institute over the period and the fact that only six staff employed by the Institute in Paris transferred to Montreal. It is testament to the skills of the HR team, the then Director and senior management of the Institute that this large recruitment phase was achieved while retaining a strong focus on quality. Many of the stakeholders we interviewed and surveyed have commented on the very high calibre of UIS staff.

In other areas of human resources, such as induction of new employees, staff performance management and training and development, the Institute's practices are under-developed and unsystematic. The new Director has instituted, for the first time in 2006, compulsory annual performance reviews for staff. Prior to this, performance reviews for staff were not routine. The UIS does not yet have a systematic and well developed approach to staff training or career development.

Recommendations:

26. The UIS needs to improve its strategic planning by taking a carefully considered and consultative approach to the development of the next Medium Term Strategy. Once this revised strategy is in place, the UIS should keep it up to date by periodically reviewing progress and adapting it to changes in the external environment.
27. Once the new Medium Term Strategy is complete, the UIS needs to develop a formal institution-wide fund-raising strategy, and formalise the responsibilities for implementing that strategy. In doing so, the Institute should look to replicate the best practices adopted by other Institutes, notably IIEP, including potentially implementing an annual Partners day. The UIS should explore, with the UNESCO Division of Cooperation with Extra-budgetary Funding Sources and

other UNESCO institutes and centres, how it can undertake ‘joined up’ fund raising efforts where appropriate.

28. In support of the Medium-Term Strategy, the UIS should develop an annual business plan that outlines the operational implications of the strategy for the management of UIS. This should address key issues such as initiatives to build organisational capacity, human resource management and IT development priorities.
29. The UIS also needs to improve its results-based management practices, including by undertaking more self-evaluation and through the implementation of performance management system that focuses on a ‘vital few’ performance areas.
30. The UIS should take steps to improve its human resource management practices, including moving quickly to implement a staff performance review system and formal training and staff development programme, and to increase its investment in staff training, including in non-technical and managerial areas such as fund-raising and relationship management.

The need to improve its relevance to Member States

The UIS faces a significant challenge in improving its relevance to Member States. This represents something of a dilemma, since the Institute’s strength and comparative advantage is in the collection of international comparable data, yet international comparisons are often regarded as of limited relevance at country level because of the huge diversity in country contexts. A balance needs to be found between the promotion of global education indicators, and the development of indicators and methodologies that are relevant to the needs of specific regions and countries.

Notwithstanding the strongly positive views held by stakeholders about the relevance of the UIS, there is a consistently strong view and recognition amongst UIS staff that it could be more relevant to the needs of Member States. For example, there is a view that UIS offers little back to the countries that supply it with data. The UIS is currently exploring, as part of its reorganisation, how it can produce more value for Member States through the performance of its core statistical functions.

Another issue for some Member States is the type of statistics collected by UIS. Data requirements for monitoring progress towards MDGs and EFA goals are different from data required for national-level policy making purposes. Furthermore, there is increasing awareness that a focus on a small number of input- and output-based education indicators, such as primary enrolment rates, may have had negative as well as positive impacts on welfare. Consequently, there is significant emphasis on measures

of learning outcomes and student achievement, which creates increased demand for the development of national and international systems for measuring learning outcomes, to support improved policy, monitoring and evaluation.

Different challenges exist in the area of statistical capacity building, where the dilemma relates to a trade-off between the short-term benefits from intensive and costly country-level technical assistance projects, and the slower but potentially more sustainable outcomes that come from a less 'hands on' approach. Countries and donor organisations are not necessarily the best judges of what is required in this regard, and it is important that the UIS develop, in consultation with stakeholders, a model that it believes is sustainable and will produce results in a reasonable timeframe.

The UIS faces tough choices in deciding how to respond to these challenges. The Institute has to date enthusiastically accepted the challenges to develop capacities in these areas, but it has typically done so without considering the financial and logistical implications for the Institute as a whole. Both the SCB and the LAMP programme, for example, have weighed heavily on the organisation financially, notwithstanding that they are supposed to be largely funded from extra-budgetary sources. As part of its strategy development, the UIS must consider how best to respond to the needs of Member States, while at the same time ensuring that any associated risks to the ongoing effectiveness and viability of the Institute are kept to reasonable levels.

Recommendations:

31. The UIS should consider commissioning a more in-depth field-based evaluation of its statistical capacity building programme, in particular exploring questions of sustainability. The results of the proposed evaluation should be used by UIS as an input into re-examining the underlying principles and design of its statistical capacity building programme, and the development of a revised strategy for SCB.
32. The UIS needs to move to rebuild its relationship with the ADEA Working Group on Education Statistics to ensure a harmonised approach to statistical capacity building in Africa. More generally, the Institute should adopt more of a consistent approach to capacity building across all regions, utilising a partnership-based and catalytic approach rather than the current 'hands on, turn key' approach being used in Africa in particular.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Over the course of its history, UNESCO has established nine category one institutes. These institutes are intended to serve in their fields of expertise as international reference centres, and to provide services and technical assistance to Member States, cooperation partners and UNESCO. In doing so, the institutes are expected to make an important contribution to the attainment of UNESCO's strategic objectives and programmatic priorities.

The institutes are statutorily independent and operate with autonomy from UNESCO Secretariat, while at the same time being strongly guided by the priorities set out in UNESCO's medium term strategy (C/4) and biennial programme and budget (C/5). In the context of its decentralisation reform, UNESCO has initiated a review of its category one institutes with the aim of considering the continued operation of, and support to, each institute or centre against alternative modalities of providing equivalent or better programme support. This evaluation forms part of that review.

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) located in Montreal, Canada is one of three category one institutes outside of the education sector and the only one that serves all UNESCO sectors. It is the statistical office of UNESCO and was established by the General Conference in 1999 to meet the growing needs of UNESCO Member States and the international community for a wider range of policy-relevant, timely, and reliable statistics in the fields of education, science and technology, culture and communication.

In support of this overall mission, the main objectives of the UIS are to:

- collect up-to-date statistics from across the world according to agreed quality procedures and disseminate them to the users;
- develop conceptual and methodological frameworks to underpin its data collections and those of Member States;
- work with Member States to improve their capacities to collect and analyse data of relevance to their policy initiatives; and
- analyse data in partnership with policy makers and researchers, and promote wider and more informed use of data for policy purposes.

EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of this evaluation is to contribute to UNESCO's review of category one institutes in the context of its decentralisation reform process. Specifically, we were asked by UNESCO to focus on the following key issues:

- Relevance of the Institute's activities to UNESCO's strategic and programmatic priorities and to the needs of the international community for statistics in UNESCO's areas of specialization;
- Results achieved by UIS, and its contribution to UNESCO's efforts in achieving its organizational mission;
- Quality of interaction and coordination with UNESCO Headquarters, field offices, institutes and centres, representatives of Member States, partner organisations and donors with regard to the planning and implementation of programmes; and
- Funding patterns, mechanisms and their risks for sustained institutional capacity and viability, and the quality of organisational management and programme implementation systems adopted by UIS.

The evaluation covers the period 1999 to present.

EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODS

INTRODUCTION

The choice of evaluation design and methodology is influenced by the time, resources and information available, and the nature of the activities and outcomes being evaluated. This section briefly describes our approach to this evaluation.

EVALUATION DESIGN

We utilised a mixed-method evaluation design that involved a combination of conventional qualitative methods (e.g. documentary review, semi-structured interviews, illustrative examples and non-probabilistic survey methods). The evaluation uses a post-intervention design. We addressed the lack of an *ex ante* evaluation framework for UIS by using interview and survey instruments to surface respondents' views of the results attributable to UIS's programmes and activities. To counter weaknesses in this design, we utilised multiple lines of enquiry to confirm and validate our findings.

EVALUATION METHODS

The main evaluation methods were as follows:

Document and File Review

A document and file review was completed including review of:

- UIS Executive Board and General Conference reports, including the biennial programmes and budgets;
- The Medium-Term Strategies of UNESCO and the UIS;
- Annual reports by the Director on the activities of the Institute, which provide a record of the oversight of UIS activities by the Governing Board;
- Internal documents provided to us by UIS and previous evaluation reports where relevant;
- Documents available on the UIS website; and
- Certified financial statements of UIS.

A complete list of documents reviewed is included in Appendix Two.

Interviews

We conducted a number of semi-structured interviews with members of UIS's Governing Board, the UIS Director, senior management and other relevant staff, UNESCO Secretariat staff from all sectors, representatives of Member States and representatives of development partners and donors. The former Directors and two former Governing Board members were also interviewed. A full list of interviewees is included in Appendix Two.

The purpose of interviews was to elicit richer information than could be gathered through other means and to fill gaps in information following the documentary review. Interviews were also conducted to provide verification of data collected through other sources and to assist in the process of triangulating findings. Significant use was made of interviews in the context of this evaluation as:

- There are few objective performance measures against which to measure the performance of UIS;
- The relationships between activities and results/outcomes are complex and difficult to measure using survey methods;
- There are many impacts beyond UIS's own activities on the outcomes it seeks to influence, notably the statistical capacity of Member States; and
- Interviews enable the identification of unintended or unimagined results that are difficult to capture through other methods.

In short, interviews allow in-depth probing of issues which permits a rich and detailed understanding of what has happened and why. They allow the incorporation of illustrative examples which add realism, immediacy and depth to data collected via other methods.

Illustrative Examples

Examples of activities or projects supported by UIS and their associated results have been described to bring the evaluation 'alive'. They are an illustrative device and in all cases are supported by more general findings. The examples selected for inclusion in this report were chosen following analysis of the data generated by other evaluation methods.

Surveys

Given the large number of UIS stakeholders spread across a large geographic area, non-probabilistic surveys were used to collect data on the views of stakeholders about their relationship with UIS and the results achieved by the Institute. Separate questionnaires were developed for UNESCO and non-UNESCO stakeholders. Survey respondents included representatives of:

- Member States, including officials responsible for the collection, production and use of statistics in their respective countries;
- Partner organisations, donors and other non-UNESCO stakeholders; and
- UNESCO field offices, institutes and centres.

The surveys were administered on-line during November. The procedure, response rates and results for these surveys are included in Appendix Three.

Observation

We had the opportunity to observe the Governing Board of the Institute in session during our field visit to Montreal. This informal observation was done to establish hypotheses about the governance of the Institute that were tested and validated through interviews with current and former Governing Board members.

LIMITATIONS

The purpose of a mixed-method design is to use the strengths of some methods to counteract the weaknesses of others, thereby contributing to a more robust overall design. However, no evaluation design is perfect. The major limitation of our design is that, in the absence of strong internal self-evaluation mechanisms and historically measured performance indicators, we were required to rely heavily on the subjective views of interviewees and survey respondents in arriving at our findings. Asking survey respondents to attribute outcomes to activities requires accurate recall of past events and subtle and complex judgements about multiple contributing factors about which they have imperfect information. We countered the risk of bias in the views of respondents by comparing and contrasting findings from a variety of sources and obtained using a number of different methods. Nevertheless, it is common for respondents to over-estimate their powers of deduction and so our findings risk being exaggerated.

A large volume of information was considered for this evaluation. UIS provided open access to their staff during our visit to Montreal and were responsive to follow up requests for information.

STRATEGIC AND PROGRAMMATIC CONTEXT

The collection, production and dissemination of statistics is cross-cutting and relevant to all of UNESCO's sectors. This section highlights the key aspects of the strategic and programmatic context with which UIS operates.

Strategic context

UNESCO is not primarily a statistical agency. The purposes and functions of UNESCO, as defined in Article I of its constitution, make no specific mention of data gathering. Nevertheless, UNESCO has been a leading global source of statistical information in its fields of competence, particularly education, virtually since its inception. It is the only universal organisation entitled, by virtue of its Constitution, to ask Member States to provide it with statistical data.

“UNESCO's central mission, in the fields of statistics, may be seen as servicing its Member States' policy-makers. More precisely, it can be defined as enhancing policy and programme formulation and decision-making processes based on accurate statistical information, with a view to helping Member States and the international community to achieve their goals in UNESCO's area of competence.” (152 EX/6, p. 1)

In striving to demonstrate statistical leadership in its fields of competence, UNESCO aims to: organise itself as a focal point for the identification, collection, processing and dissemination of the best available data, knowledge and experience in education, science and technology, communications and culture; and foster a culture of evidence-based policy – nationally, regionally and internationally – through the collection and use of high quality, timely data. (31 C/4, UNESCO Medium Term Strategy, p. 8)

The importance of UNESCO's statistical function reflects the fact that high-quality, timely and relevant data have the power to tell clear and compelling stories about the state of the world, and changes in it, and is a crucial input into policy making by Member States. Meaningful internationally comparable statistics are also of vital importance in international and national development efforts. However, providing high-quality data in all areas of UNESCO's mandate and across all countries of the world is a significant and complex task. The coverage and quality of data collected from Member States is dependent on the capacities of national statistical systems,

which vary considerably from country to country. In a number of countries, the capacity to collect and produce statistics on education, science and technology, culture and communications is still very limited and, in some cases, close to non-existent.

Prior to the establishment of UIS, national and international agencies were generally satisfied with a limited range of general-purpose data. Over the course of the last two decades, the needs and demands of statistics users changed dramatically. Social, scientific and economic developments have stimulated a significant increase in demand for more sophisticated, comprehensive and detailed data. Technological developments have simultaneously enabled the collection, processing and dissemination of data at much lower cost. Governments, NGOs, professional and scholarly organisations now depend on complex, timely and comprehensive data as the basis for public policy, international aid, social reform and infrastructure development.

Important recent trends in the international statistical environment include:

- Increasing demand for relevant and comprehensive internationally comparable indicators, which has placed an increased burden on UIS and national statistical capacities. Users of statistics have higher expectations regarding the timeliness, quality and comprehensiveness of data than ever before;
- Increasing recognition of the need to strengthen data on educational outcomes rather than the traditional input and output focus of educational indicators. This has led to increased demand for household survey data, particularly measurement of learning achievement, as a complement to administrative data;
- Increasing complexity in the institutional environment, with increasing numbers of actors involved in statistical and monitoring activities. This has increased the onus on institutions like UIS to coordinate their efforts and avoid gaps and duplication;
- Many statistical offices in developing countries experience significant attrition of capacity, which generates ongoing demand for capacity building; and
- There is a lack of stable core funding for statistical systems throughout the world, raising questions of vulnerability and sustainability.¹

¹ Adapted from the UIS Medium Term Strategy.

The UNESCO Medium Term Strategy (31C/4) recognises the role of UIS as the focal point for UNESCO's data collection efforts and requires that UIS concentrate on four main lines of action:

- Guardianship of cross-national data through regular collections of key data, including those required for monitoring progress towards International Development Goals (IDGs), data-sharing and dissemination;
- Development of appropriate methodology for new indicators and improvement in existing indicators;
- Assistance to countries with a view to improving their capacities for data collection, use and analysis through training and other support; and
- Analysis and interpretation of cross-national data in order to inform policy development and monitoring.

The 31 C/4 also highlights the central role that UIS plays in the context of monitoring progress towards EFA goals and in building capacities and facilitating the free flow and sharing of information. In addition, UIS data is a key input into many other high profile international development initiatives, such as the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals, the Literacy Decade, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, HIV/AIDS initiatives, the Fast Track Initiative and the UN Girls Education Initiative.

Programmatic context

Each biennium, the General Conference approves the UNESCO Programme and Budget for the next two years and, as part of this, invites the Governing Board of UIS to continue the mandate of the institute by improving the collection, maintenance and dissemination of statistics and indicators for UNESCO's international statistical database, developing new statistical concepts, building the statistical capacity of Member States, and conducting and disseminating analytical studies which contribute to effective policy analysis. Within the C/5s, the strategy and expected results of UIS are reported independently of the five Major Programmes in accordance with its functional autonomy and cross-sectoral mandate.

The mandate of UIS is described in 32 C/5, and in much the same way as previous biennia, as follows:

- To monitor emerging policy priorities and information needs so as to introduce further improvements to UNESCO's international statistical database and its system for the collection and dissemination of cross-national statistics within UNESCO's fields of competence by strengthening communication with the

Member States and cooperation with the field offices and partner agencies and networks;

- To develop new statistical concepts, methodologies and standards in education, science, culture and communication, and to promote standardization in the collection and production of quality statistics and indicators at both national and international levels for informing policy and monitoring progress towards development goals;
- To contribute to building national statistical capacity by participating in sector analysis and project work in collaboration with development agencies, and through the dissemination of technical guidelines and tools, training of national personnel, and providing expert advice and support to in-country statistical activities; and
- To strengthen statistical analysis in partnership with research institutions so as to provide value added to available data and to generate widespread use of information in support of policy- and decision-making.

The following is a summary of Institute’s expected results, by MLA, for the 2004/05 biennium as outlined in the 32 C/5. More detail on the expected results and achievements of the Institute is provided in the Results Achieved chapter.

Main Line of Action	Expected Results
1) Improvement of the UNESCO international statistical database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to harmonize data collection systems, agree common standards and procedures; • to establish and monitor targets towards achieving improvements in the coverage and speed of data collection and availability; • to disseminate statistical surveys, statistics and indicators; • to develop new international surveys in the fields of culture, communication and the sciences and agree an operational plan with Member States and relevant Sectors • to coordinate networks with international organisations and statistical agencies.
2) Developing new statistical concepts, methodologies and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to improve and develop methodologies for the collection of statistics for national policy-making and for monitoring international development goals (in all sectors); • to finalize and disseminate the ISCED Operational Manual together with relevant training material; • to continue to participate in international methodological evaluations and developments in relation to science and technology data;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite agencies and institutions currently collection and disseminating international statistics on communications to for a network aimed at harmonizing and improving the statistical and measurement methodologies currently in use; • to update the Framework for Culture Statistics to provide the conceptual and methodological basis for national and international collection and dissemination of statistics on culture.
3) Statistical Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to reinforce political commitment to strengthening of data systems and to use of data by countries; • to establish a common framework to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of a country's statistical system and for monitoring progress of statistical capacity-building efforts developed; • to strengthen the capacities of Member States in the field of data collection, statistical production, analysis and interpretation of data.
4) Strengthening statistical analysis and dissemination of policy-relevant information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to distribute a wider range of statistical material for a variety of audiences, including analysis responding to international and national policy needs; • to establish a programme of research and statistical analysis in collaboration with a network of research institutions and other organizations conducting statistical analysis on policy issues; • to increase the number of countries where UNESCO is an active partner of national statistics authorities to help them analyse data in a comparative context for the definition of policies • to conduct regular research on user satisfaction with a view to refine the UIS customer-focus.

It is worth highlighting that, in support of Major Programme I - Education, the UIS is responsible for monitoring progress towards the education-related millennium development goals (MDGs) and helping Member States to monitor progress towards EFA goals as part of UNESCO's contribution to the six objectives of Education for All (EFA) in the Dakar Framework for Action. Specifically, in 1999, as part of the cross-cutting theme on eradication of poverty, UIS became the designated EFA Observatory and was directed to give priority to:

- (i) integrating EFA monitoring data into regular statistical surveys;
- (ii) developing new indicators and improving existing indicators;
- (iii) assisting countries to improve their capacities for data collection and analysis through training and support; and

- (iv) promoting awareness and the use of data at the national level by developing analyses of data collected in the UNESCO statistical database.

In the 31 C/5, the Education Sector also undertook to pursue its collaboration with UIS in the development of education indicators, in particular those related to EFA, within the context of the World Education Indicators (WEI) project. There was also the intention to cooperate with UIS to develop robust, internationally comparable indicators to assist in the evaluation and monitoring non-formal education and literacy. These activities are representative of the strong alignment between the programme priorities of the Education Sector and those of the Institute.

The major planning documents of UNESCO have, over the course of the evaluation period, been less clear about the extent and nature of the UIS's intended contribution to the Science, Culture and Communications and Information sectors. However, key aspects of the UIS work programme in relation to each sector are highlighted individually under the first and second MLA's for the first time in the 33 C/5:

Science

MLA 1:

- Evaluate the 2004-05 survey of research and development and consult users as to the frequency of this collection.
- Implement data collection relating to human resources in science and technology.
- Work to improve data quality and response rates in all science and technology data through the provision of technical assistance at regional and national levels dependent on extra-budgetary funding.

MLA 2:

- Complete a chapter for the Oslo Manual on innovation statistics which will focus on innovation applications of science and explore the feasibility of collecting such data.
- As follow-up to the joint project with OECD on the careers of doctoral holders, UIS will expand the project to other highly qualified staff and consider wastage from key science professions.

Culture

MLA 1:

- Work in close collaboration with the relevant units of the Secretariat in order to define and collect data for the future UNESCO World Report which will focus on culture.

- Review the implications for UIS data collection of the adoption of a Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

MLA 2:

- UIS in partnership with the UNESCO Office in Bangkok will build a framework for statistics on cultural industries in the Asia-Pacific region. This area of statistical development will serve as a template for other regions of the world
- UIS is also a major contributor to a report of the World Heritage Centre of the Status of World Heritage Sites, which is to be published in 2006. As follow up to this collaboration, UIS will participate in the development of indicators for the long-range monitoring of World Heritage Sites.

Communication and Information

MLA 1:

- UIS will evaluate the success of the press and broadcast surveys with the aim of conducting them on an on-going basis in response to the WSIS 2003 Plan of Action which calls for the monitoring of broadcasting.
- Data on the availability and access to, ICTs in primary and secondary schools will be included in the annual UIS education surveys.
- The collection of other data will depend upon the consultations being conducted through the inter-agency partnership on data for the information society.

MLA 2:

- UIS will prioritise the development of indicators to measure the progress in implementing the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by WSIS.
- UIS contributions to the interagency 'Measuring ICT for Development' project is likely to focus on community access and ICT and education strands, which the WSIS 2003 Plan of Action identified as two critical areas for bridging the digital divide.

The Role of UIS in UNESCO's Decentralisation Strategy

In 1999, as part of a broad reform process, UNESCO launched its decentralisation strategy with the objective of enhancing its impact and relevance in Member States while at the same time ensuring the overall coherence of UNESCO as “one organisation, with one overall mission” (171 EX/6 Part III, page 1). Fundamentally, the aim was to allow the design and implementation of programmes that, while global in scope, are adapted to the local needs and specific circumstances of Member States.

In terms of institutional reform, the decentralisation process focused on rationalising and reorganising the network of programme implementing offices within a simpler two-tier system: the creation of offices representing clusters of countries (cluster offices) backed up by regional bureau specialising in each of UNESCO's field of competence. Within this framework, UNESCO's category one institutes can be viewed as providing third-tier technical support in highly specialised disciplines (e.g. statistics, educational planning, higher education).

From a pragmatic perspective, the institutes are recognised as having the potential to be precious sources of expertise in specific sectoral or inter-sectoral areas. In the context of the decentralisation strategy, they are responsible for providing relevant support directly to Member States, either internationally or regionally, in exactly the same way as the field network (171 EX/6 Part III, page 5). Yet they are also expected to contribute to greater programme coherence and, in particular, to dovetail their strategies and activities with UNESCO's overarching strategies, major programmes and main lines of activity.

UNESCO has recently taken steps to more clearly define the purpose, role and scope of activities of UNESCO institutes and centres as well as their relationships within the relevant programme sectors. The aim of this exercise was to:

- Reinforce the relevance of institutes and centres to the Member States;
- Avoid duplication and enable synergies within the UNESCO system;
- Enhance coherence, quality and impact of UNESCO programmes; and
- Improve efficiency and effectiveness in policy formulation, programme development and delivery.

It is important to consider the implications of this significant reform process for this evaluation. UNESCO's decentralisation strategy and related reforms are both highly-relevant and potentially confounding factors for this analysis. The various reforms have occurred gradually over time and many of the initiatives are still being bedded down. UIS was established at the beginning of this reform process with the express intention that the Institute have both intellectual and functional autonomy. Given the relative newness of this Institute, and the significant upheaval and organisational re-building caused by the move of UIS from Paris to Montreal, it is unreasonable to evaluate UIS against the normative benchmark of an effectively functioning, decentralised UNESCO system. Nevertheless, the outcomes sought from the reform process are a strong signal of the manner in which UIS is expected to function within

the UNESCO system, and the reforms are therefore an important backdrop against which to consider our recommendations.

BRIEF HISTORY OF UIS

Pre-History²

UNESCO has a long history in the field of international statistics. The first attempts to cooperate internationally in the area of education statistics were sponsored by the International Bureau of Education, which was established in 1929 and later became part of UNESCO. IBE conducted an education survey in 1929, which was completed by twenty-six countries. The first comparative tables of international education statistics appeared in 1937 and covered the number of primary and secondary schools, students and teachers.

Following World War II, the United States proposed to the UNESCO preparatory commission that an international statistical service on education be established. The proposal was adopted at the first session of the General Conference and became one of UNESCO's first programmes. The UNESCO statistical function served two basic purposes: to help set standards³ including a minimum set of definitions, classifications, and tabulations of statistics on education and illiteracy; and to collect, analyse, publish and widely disseminate data on education.

The UNESCO statistical office became widely recognised as the premier global education statistics institution in the 1950s and remained at the peak of its leadership well into the 1960s (Heyneman, 1999). Significant progress was made in ironing out common definitions of school, teacher and pupil at both primary and secondary levels. Similar progress was made in the areas of vocational education and literacy measurement. Yet by its own admission, the UNESCO statistical office made little progress on the development of common standards for data collection, quality control or data management. Nor was UNESCO particularly effective at increasing countries' level of commitment to invest in their data management systems.

Growth in education and increasing demands of the international community put major strains on the UNESCO statistical office in the 1960s and 1970s. For example, throughout this period the numbers of students and countries expanded significantly. Many countries that had produced education statistics lost their ability to monitor their

² This section draws heavily on Heyneman (1999) and BICSE (1995).

³ Among the first products of this standard-setting function was the 1958 Recommendation concerning the Standardisation of Educational Statistics.

education systems as they became preoccupied with fiscal and other crises (Heyneman, 1990). In 1974, at the direct urging of Member States, the formal responsibilities of UNESCO's statistical office were clarified in the Director General's annual report as follows:⁴

- To collect, compile, analyse and disseminate education statistics;
- To maintain the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED);
- To improve and expand data collection on science and technology;
- To expand collection and improve the quality of data on culture and communication and to standardise statistics on radio and television;
- To expand the educational data bank and publications (with an emphasis on financing and higher education); and
- To provide assistance to Member States for the development of statistical services.

Notwithstanding this role clarity, the UNESCO statistical office continued to come under great strain throughout the late 1970s and 1980s as a result of increasing workload and declining resources. Consequently, it increasingly focussed solely on the collection and publication of statistics. In doing so the office arguably neglected efforts to ensure the quality of those statistics was maintained and invested little in improving countries' adherence to standards or improving their statistical systems.⁵

The situation continued to decline in the 1990s. In September 1994, the UNESCO Division of Statistics convened an informal meeting in Paris to discuss how to better respond to the needs of the international community for educational statistics. Participants agreed on the need to prepare a long-term action plan for the improvement of the quality, comparability and relevance of education statistics at the international level and on the importance of seeking advice from independent experts in preparing such a plan; and

UNESCO subsequently invited the Board on International Comparative Studies in Education (BICSE) to prepare a report for the Director General with recommendations on key steps to strengthen UNESCO's education statistic program (a box on the following page summarises the key recommendations of the BICSE report). That 1995 report noted the demise of UNESCO's statistical function and the decline in its reputation for providing credible data. It attributed this, in part, to a

⁴ In the words of the Director General, the "statistical activities had a double purpose: to service the Secretariat's programme sectors and to serve the Member States.

⁵ In the 1960s, the UNESCO statistical office offered country-by-country training in statistical procedures based in Paris but by the 1980s the office could barely manage the processing of the high volumes of raw data being collected as a result of the explosion in the number of Member States.

BICSE's Recommendations for Enhancing UNESCO's Role in Education Statistics⁶

1. UNESCO should articulate and legitimise a broader mission for its statistics branch, reflecting more worldwide interest in education statistics than characterised UNESCO at its founding, and embodying a broader sense of audience and responsibilities than the expectations articulated for the Division of Statistics in 1974.
2. The Division of Statistics should be granted functional autonomy within UNESCO, the main benefits of which would be: greater visibility; independence from UNESCO bureaucratic rules; senior leadership at a higher level; attractive to highly qualified statisticians; greater confidence within the expanded community of data users and prospective external donors; and freedom to develop and apply creative solutions to long-standing problems.⁷
3. UNESCO should bring its human and technical resources devoted to statistical activities into better balance with expectations for these activities. Limited resources have sapped the capacity of the Division of Statistics to carry out its original mission, much less support the wider mission UNESCO is being called on to undertake. The Division's computer support is also outdated and requires upgrading.
4. UNESCO should demonstrate its commitment to a core set of activities that are responsive to its organisational needs and that can inspire confidence in outside agencies who might wish to fund supplemental activities through or in coordination with the Division of Statistics. Among the candidates for these core functions include: establishing common definitions and data standards; regularly collecting and disseminating core education statistics and indicators; documenting the data base; planning and coordinating a strategic research and development effort; carrying out analytic activities; and catalysing efforts to build the statistical infrastructure in Member States.

⁶ Adapted from the Board on International Comparative Studies in Education (1995) *Worldwide Education Statistics: Enhancing UNESCO's role*, Guthrie, J. W. and J. S. Hansen (eds.) National Research Council, Washington, D.C.

⁷ For completeness, a number of risks were also noted: possible misuse of leadership; inability to gain added resources; and failure to adequately make the transition from the existing structure which might trigger a hardship that would be difficult to overcome. On balance, the BICSE considered these risks small when compared with the prospective advantages.

relative decline in human and financial resources, noting that only 1.2% of the UNESCO budget and 1.5% of its staff were allocated to statistics. The decline in funding was reflected in a reduction in the number of statistical posts, which fell from 51 in 1984 to 32 in 1997. The BISCE report called for a radical reorientation and reorganisation of the education statistics programme and suggested structural changes to re-establish the priority, independence and credibility of UNESCO's statistical function. As it turned out, the report and its recommendations were a watershed for UNESCO's role in the collection of statistics.

The BISCE report ignited debate at UNESCO about the future of its statistical function. The predicament of the Organisation was succinctly summarised by Heyneman (1999) in his article on the rise and fall of UNESCO's statistical function:

“Forty years ago UNESCO was the conduit for state-of-the-art statistical techniques. It was the world's most reliable source of cross-national educational information. It attracted some of the best and brightest statisticians. Then UNESCO was a world leader. But progress on education statistics has bypassed UNESCO. Today, its technologies are antiquated; its techniques are motivated by tradition rather than response to demand or by innovation ... UNESCO data must be treated with caution or worse, they must be assumed to be untrustworthy.”

Formation of the Institute

In September 1997, at its 152nd session, the Executive Board of UNESCO considered a “Strategic Plan for the Strengthening of UNESCO's Statistical Programmes and Services” (152 EX/6). The report recognised the changing needs of national and international agencies and the social, scientific, economic and technological developments which were stimulating demand for timelier, more reliable, and policy-relevant statistical data and information. Furthermore, the report recommended that UNESCO reorient and upgrade its existing statistical services by establishing a semi-autonomous UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

The purpose of the proposed institute was to enforce high professional standards and mobilise new partnerships and extra-budgetary support for the provision of reliable statistical products and services. The Strategic Plan drew heavily on the conclusions and recommendations of a Consultative Committee, which included various experts and representatives of Member States, UN institutions and development agencies and had met during February and March 1997.

The Strategic Plan recommended that the main objective of the Institute should be to provide Member States and the international community with internationally comparable information in the areas of education, science, culture and communication, and that this objective should be supported by two levels of activity: assisting countries to build statistical capabilities; and ensuring the worldwide collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical information.

UIS was subsequently established in 1999 as an autonomous institute within the institutional framework of UNESCO. Its establishment followed the adoption of a Resolution by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1999, which emphasised the importance of high quality statistical information to inform the decision making of Member States within UNESCO's broad mandate of the advancement and sharing of knowledge and the free flow of ideas.

Relocation of the Institute

At its 30th session, the General Conference invited the Director General to make a recommendation on the location of the new Institute, on the basis of bids received from Member States and taking account of the views and recommendations of the Governing Board of UIS. All Member States were invited to submit proposals to host the Institute by 29 February 2000. Bids were received by United Kingdom, Canada, Netherlands and France.

At the first ordinary session of the Governing Board of UIS in February 2000, an *ad hoc* Committee was established to evaluate the bids and recommend the permanent location of the UIS to the Director-General. At the 150th session of the Executive Board, the Director-General endorsed the recommendation of the Committee that the bid from the Government of Canada to establish UIS in Montreal best met the criteria set out to determine the best location for the Institute. The key attributes of the Canadian bid were significant financial support from the Canadian government and a hosting agreement with the University of Montreal.

In the first two years of operation, a major focus of the UIS was the planning and coordination of the relocation from Paris to Montreal, including overseeing the refurbishment and setting up of IT systems at the new premises and the recruitment of 34 new staff. Only six existing UIS staff made the move from Paris to Montreal with the Institute and the resulting loss of staff capacity, institutional memory and the complete change of IT system adversely affected the ability of the

Institute to fully deliver its core work programme let alone begin to develop new programmes and activities. To its credit, the Institute kept the disruptions to its work programme to a minimum.

The ongoing need to rebuild IT systems, transfer the out-dated statistical database from Paris, and recruit significant numbers of new personnel to the Institute (many of whom were also new to UNESCO and the UN system) dominated the operational environment of the Institute during the period 2001-2002. From 2001 to 2005 there was a major expansion of statistical and support staff, such that the Institute more than doubled in size from 41 to 91 staff.

Only in 2004/05 did the situation of the Institute begin to stabilise. In June 2006, at the 175th session of the Executive Board, the Governing Board report on activities of the Institute stated that UIS was in a period of stabilisation and had restructured a number of administrative processes to ease administrative pressures resulting from the rapid growth of the Institute (175 ex/45). As at July 2006, the Institute comprised 90 staff (excluding secondments), made up of 59 in fixed posts, 17 staff on appointments of limited duration, six with special service agreements, seven with service contracts and one consultant. Approximately 42 staff members are based outside Montreal in field offices located in Africa, Asia, and South America.

Governance and Management of UIS

UIS is managed with a significant degree of autonomy. It is overseen by a Governing Board, comprised of 6 elected and 6 designated members, and has wide latitude to manage its own administrative affairs in accordance with UNESCO's rules and procedures. It is fully accountable for the management of its own budget and, while receiving regular budgetary contributions from UNESCO, has the authority to receive financial support from any appropriate sources. The Statutes of the Institute are reproduced in Appendix Four.

RELEVANCE

INTRODUCTION

This section considers the relevance of the Institute's roles and activities from multiple perspectives: UNESCO, Member States and other stakeholders. The UIS is answerable to a number of parties who have multiple and potentially competing interests. Given financial constraints and the need for UIS to maintain a degree of independence and institutional integrity, the process of balancing these needs is a complex and ongoing challenge.

Of course, assessing the 'relevance' of an international statistical institute is more complex than simply determining whether the organisation is fulfilling the needs of stakeholders. There are many dimensions of relevance that need to be considered, such as the appropriateness of the balance between the Institute's various functions, the usefulness and relevance of the types of statistics being collected, and the extent of any mismatches between the intended mission and actual activities of the Institute. We explore these complex issues below.

CONTEXT

The creation of UIS as a semi-autonomous, independently governed UNESCO Institute was a response to fundamental challenges from the international community about the marginalisation and perceived irrelevance of its predecessor organisation, the UNESCO Division of Statistics. In its 1995 report, the BISCE concluded that the Division of Statistics had been adversely affected by a decade of retrenchment of financial, human and intellectual resources. This retrenchment saw an increasing focus on education statistics, neglect of its standard setting function, a marked reduction in the number of publications containing data analysis and a severely restricted ability to work closely with Member States. This was exacerbated by the simultaneous escalation of the expectations of Member States and third parties. Moreover, the nature of the demand for statistics was changing rapidly:

“With regard to statistics, UNESCO was born into a world that no longer exists. Until comparatively recently, national as well as international agencies concerned with education were satisfied with reporting a limited range of general-purpose

data, based on what now seem like primitive statistical practices ... The new and intensified patterns of global interdependence and interaction stimulate a demand for new kinds of education statistics. It is not simply that users increasingly want information from more nations, they also want more accurate data and data from which they can make more sophisticated judgements ... In addition to desiring indicators and indices from which institutional conditions and national progress can be inferred, modern-day statistics users are interested in more and accurate measures of student performance.” (BISCE, 1995, Ch. 4).

Perhaps most damaging was the neglect by the Division of Statistics of its core asset: the quality of its data. In relation to data management, the BICSE found “there is widespread scepticism within the international community of data users about the quality of data published by UNESCO” (BISCE, 1995, Ch. 3, p. 3). This lack of confidence in UNESCO’s ability to produce accurate, reliable and comparable data fundamentally undermined the relevance of UNESCO’s statistical function.

These problems meant UIS inherited an unfortunate legacy of “questionable relevance” upon its establishment. Its challenge in the early years was therefore to reassert its credibility as an international statistical agency. The starting position for UIS was also affected by its transfer to Montreal, which on the one hand resulted in a massive loss of human capital, but on the other hand allowed the Institute to make a “fresh start”. Furthermore, the antiquated IT infrastructure inherited by UIS, and the failure to transfer trained support staff to Montreal, meant that the database of UIS represented more a liability than an asset.

This historical context is important to bear in mind in assessing the achievements of UIS in the first few years of its existence. Taken together, this unfortunate starting point should significantly moderate the expectations of the Institute’s performance over the evaluation period.

RELEVANCE TO UNESCO

The Statutes of UIS clearly state that the prime objective of the Institute shall be to serve the needs of Member States. Nevertheless, there is a clear expectation that UIS is to be responsive, depending on additional finances, to the needs of other parts of UNESCO. While the Statutes of UIS confer on it significant functional autonomy and independence from the UNESCO Secretariat, the Board of UIS is nevertheless required “to approve the general policy and the nature of the Institute’s activities within the framework decided by the General Conference, including the Approved

Programme and Budget and with due regard to the obligations resulting from the fact that the Institute is an integral part of UNESCO” (UIS Basic Texts). The Statutes of UIS clearly envisage it as contributing to the strategic and programmatic priorities of the Organisation.

The UNESCO Medium Term Strategy recognises UIS as “the focal point for UNESCO’s data collection efforts” and acknowledges its role to “foster a culture of evidence-based policy – nationally, regionally and internationally – through the collection and use of high quality, timely data in education, science and technology, communications and culture” (31C/4). More specifically, it asks that UIS concentrate on four main types of action⁸:

- Guardianship of cross-national data through regular collections of key data, including those required for monitoring progress towards IDGs, data-sharing and dissemination;
- Development of appropriate methodology for new indicators and improvement of existing indicators;
- Assistance to countries with a view to improving their capacities for data collection, use and analysis through training and other support; and
- Analysis and interpretation of cross-national data in order to inform policy development.

In addition, the 31 C/4 makes specific mention of the role of UIS as EFA Observatory, which involves monitoring and reporting progress towards EFA goals in close cooperation with national bodies, donor agencies and non-governmental organisations engaged in EFA activities. The EFA Observatory was seen as a key part of the broader UNESCO effort to encourage the development of evidence-based policies and build the capacity of Member States to map their situations, design better education systems, deliver services and monitor results and developments towards reaching EFA goals.

Other than the strategic guidance and expectations mentioned above, the UNESCO MTS makes little specific reference to UNESCO’s statistical function and its role in contributing to programme sectors.⁹ Nor does it identify key strategic and programmatic priorities in each of the major programmes. Nevertheless, numerous UNESCO staff we interviewed across the four Sectors in which UIS operates

⁸ These expectations essentially mirror the statutory functions of UIS outlined in its Basic Texts.

⁹ An exception is the reference to efforts to design meaningful [education] indicators as well as fostering capacity-building in the collection of statistics in close cooperation with other United Nations competent bodies, national institutions, and in the framework of the PARIS 21 initiative (31 C/4 paragraph 191).

(Education, Science, Culture and Communication and Information) made it clear that statistical measurement is (or at least should be) a central part of almost everything UNESCO does.

The other UNESCO programmatic documents published throughout the evaluation period – the biennial Programme and Budget (C/5) – provide further clarity regarding UNESCO’s priorities for UIS.¹⁰ For example, in 32 C/5, the General Conference invited the Governing Board of UIS to focus the Institute’s programme on the following priorities:

- (a) to monitor emerging policy priorities and information needs so as to introduce further improvements to UNESCO’s international statistical database and its system for the collection and dissemination of cross-national statistics within UNESCO’s fields of competence by strengthening communication with the Member States and cooperation with the field offices and partner agencies and networks;
- (b) to develop new statistical concepts, methodologies and standards in education, science, culture and communication, and to promote standardization in the collection and production of quality statistics and indicators at both national and international levels for informing policy and monitoring progress towards development goals;
- (c) to contribute to building national statistical capacity by participating in sector analysis and project work in collaboration with development agencies, and through the dissemination of technical guidelines and tools, training of national personnel, and providing expert advice and support to in-country statistical activities; and
- (d) to strengthen statistical analysis in partnership with research institutions so as to provide value added to available data and to generate widespread use of information in support of policy- and decision-making.

These priorities largely mirror the four statutory functions of UIS. Nevertheless they are underpinned in the C/5s by reasonably detailed descriptions of the strategy and key actions to be delivered by UIS under each of the four Main Lines of Action, along with

¹⁰ The Regular Programme and Budget for UIS is not integrated into the Major Programmes of UNESCO but is instead given its own treatment in the C/5.

specification of expected results and related performance indicators.¹¹ In the main, these detailed expectations have remained relatively constant over the evaluation period.

The main strategic planning document of UIS is its Medium Term Strategy 2002-07. This document is strongly aligned with, and makes explicit reference to, the strategic and programmatic priorities articulated above. In particular, the UIS Medium Term Strategy recognises:

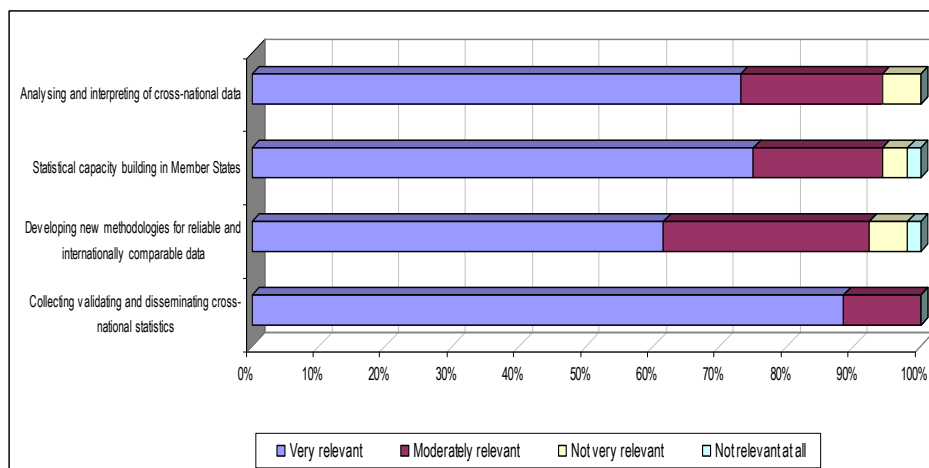
- the need for the Institute to provide high quality statistical services in all areas of UNESCO's competence – education, science, the social sciences, culture and communication;
- the role UIS has in servicing the needs of UNESCO alongside those of Member States and other international agencies;
- the contribution that UIS is expected to make towards fostering a culture of evidence-based policy, both nationally and internationally, through the collection and use of high quality, timely data; and
- the specific priorities of UNESCO, in particular the statistical requirements of UNESCO's Member States in Africa, the less developed countries, the island countries and the E-9 countries, and the thematic priorities outlined in the UNESCO Medium Term Strategy.

Similarly, the annual budget and programme of UIS approved by the Governing Board each year accords with the biennial programme and budget of UNESCO. This has been facilitated by the high degree of consistency in the articulation of the mandate of UIS in its Statutes, in the UNESCO Medium Term Strategy (C/4) and in the biennial Programme and Budgets (C/5s).

Notwithstanding this formal alignment of strategies and plans, there are aspects of the relevance of the Institute, both positive and normative, that deserve further attention. From a positive perspective, UNESCO stakeholders we spoke to were unanimous in their view that the UIS is highly relevant to the strategic and programmatic priorities of UNESCO, particularly in the education sector and for the purposes of monitoring national, regional and global progress towards EFA goals. Our survey of UNESCO field offices and institutes lends considerable support to this view.

¹¹ It should be noted that these performance indicators are not well specified nor routinely reported against.

Figure 1: Perceived relevance of UIS Roles



Source: Survey of Field Offices, Institutes and Centres

From a normative perspective there is the question of the relevance of the specific roles of UIS in light of the stated objectives of UNESCO. All UNESCO stakeholders we spoke to consider the collection, production and dissemination of statistics as central to the effective conduct of the work of all UNESCO sectors. This function is regarded as the Institute’s core function and integral to the development of a culture of evidence-based policy development within UNESCO. The supporting statistical functions of methodological development, standard setting and statistical capacity building are also widely recognised as highly relevant, as much for their role in indirectly improving the quality and comparability of the UIS country-level data as for the direct benefits received by Member States. Only in relation to the role of analysis and interpretation did any stakeholders raise any questions of relevance.

The issues raised by those who questioned the relevance of the Institute’s role in this area related to:

- the need for UIS, first and foremost, to maintain its independence and credibility as a collector, producer and disseminator of accurate and timely statistics. Some individuals thought the Institute’s reputation in this area could potentially be damaged if the Institute moved into the more subjective arena of analysis and interpretation; and
- the question of relative priorities of the UIS, given limited human and financial resources. Some stakeholders would prefer the UIS to concentrate its efforts on improving the coverage and quality of its database, leaving policy-makers and researchers to undertake the analysis and interpretation of data.

Countering this view is a number of arguments conveyed to us by some UIS staff and stakeholders during our interviews:

- The analysis and interpretation of data is consistent with the Institute’s statutory mandate “to provide analysis services within the context of the Institute’s mission, taking into account the needs of the Member States” and, therefore, the UIS would be negligent in its mission if it was not publishing analytical studies;
- Member States and other stakeholders value the analytical products produced by UIS. Perhaps more importantly, the UIS analytical team understand the strengths and limitations of the data collected by UIS, and this understanding is perceived as meaning that there is less risk that the data will be mis-interpreted by them;
- The analysis and interpretation of data is a key mechanism by which potential inconsistencies and “non-standard” errors in the data can be identified. In this context, the analysis and interpretation of statistics can be seen as part of the quality assurance processes of the UIS and an tool for improving data quality; and
- Having internal capacity to analyse and interpret data is important if UIS is to proactively identify the needs of users (e.g. policy makers) for new statistics and indicators. In the past, before the UIS had developed this capacity, the development of important new indicators, such as the primary completion rate, were driven by external stakeholders (e.g. the World Bank) rather than by the UIS. Only if informed by analytical assessments of what is relevant, can the UIS better fulfil its role of anticipating and adapting to user needs.

On balance, we favour UIS retaining its role in the analysis and interpretation of data, including publication of analytical reports, subject to a number of considerations:

- The role of UIS in analysing and interpreting data should primarily be seen as a mechanism for improving data quality;
- There is a role for UIS to publish thematic studies that highlight topical areas of statistics, however its role in this regard should largely be confined to “letting the data speak” (e.g. the publication of trends, comparisons and related data transformations, and by publications that place the data “in context” rather than simply publishing large tables of raw data); and
- In relation to analytical publications that go beyond describing the data, the UIS should aim to publish reports and other analytical outputs jointly with other partners (e.g. UNESCO sectors, other UN agencies, and the international development policy and research community more generally) that do not face the same requirements to preserve independence and credibility of data collection.

The above approach is relatively standard practice amongst national statistical offices. Another dimension of relevance to UNESCO is the sector coverage of UIS activities. There is a clear expectation on the part of the Secretariat that UIS will serve all programme sectors by providing policy relevant data as well as collaborating to identify new data needs. The Education Sector has traditionally been the major user of UIS statistical data and is intended to be a key collaborator in relation to the ongoing identification of data needs and in the analysis and interpretation of data. While the role of UIS in serving other UNESCO sectors has traditionally been limited, a clear expectation upon the establishment of the Institute was that it would expand its focus beyond education statistics.

In practice, the UIS has further sharpened its focus on the collection of education statistics since its establishment. The decision to give priority to education statistics was not taken lightly and reflected the view of the then Director, Denise Lievesley, and the UIS Governing Board that it was not feasible to build substantial capacity in non-education areas in the early years of the Institute's existence. This decision reflected a range of factors including: the deficiencies inherited by UIS in the systems and processes used to maintain and manage its core education statistics collection; the very limited human resources at the Institute's disposal upon its establishment; the huge challenge to restore the reputation for independence and credibility of its education statistics collection; and the large demands from the Education Sector, Member States and international community for high quality education statistics above all else. In light of these circumstances, the Institute's decision to focus its resources in the area of education statistics is entirely understandable.

In terms of the relevance of UIS to other Sectors, progress has been made by UIS during the latter part of the evaluation period. Since 2002, the UIS has re-established regular collections in the areas of Science & Technology, Communications and Information and, to a lesser extent, Culture. These steps have been welcomed by the UNESCO Sector representatives we spoke to and have often resulted from joint initiatives by the Secretariat and UIS.

In the Science and Communications and Information sectors, UNESCO staff we spoke to seemed genuinely satisfied that their immediate needs for statistics were being met by the UIS. Of all the Sectors, the greatest frustration was expressed by representatives of the Culture sector, who felt that UIS should be more proactive in identifying information needs and leading the development of a statistical work programme in this area. Of course, it is also incumbent on the Sector to clearly articulate its needs, to work jointly with the UIS to develop a plan for how those needs

will be met and, in accordance with the Statutes of the Institute, provide or mobilise resources to implement those plans if insufficient resources exist within UIS. Positive steps have recently been taken to reinvigorate the relationship between the UIS and the Culture Sector with a view to improving the Institute’s relevance to the Sector.

While there is no expectation that equality of UIS resources and effort is warranted across all sectors, the UIS does need to consider whether it has sufficient regular funding to be able to credibly serve each of the non-Education sectors. In our view, the amount of financial and human resources allocated by UIS to the non-Education sectors is below the minimum required to sustain a credible collection in these areas over the medium-term. This suggests some need for reprioritisation within UIS, or mobilisation of additional resources, if it is to continue to function as a statistical institute for the whole of UNESCO.

RELEVANCE TO THE NEEDS OF MEMBER STATES

It is important to consider the legacy inherited by UIS from the Division of Statistics before assessing its perceived relevance to the needs of Member States. In principle the Division of Statistics recognised Member States, along with internal UNESCO programme Sectors, as its primary stakeholders. In reality it paid “significant lip service ... to the importance of service to Member States.” (BISCE, 1995). During the 1980s and 1990s, the Division became increasingly preoccupied with the production of the Statistical Yearbook and had limited funds for travel, both of which severely restricted its ability to work with Member States. The Division’s only substantive initiative in support of Member States during this period was the extra-budgetary funded National Education Statistical Information Systems (NESIS) project.

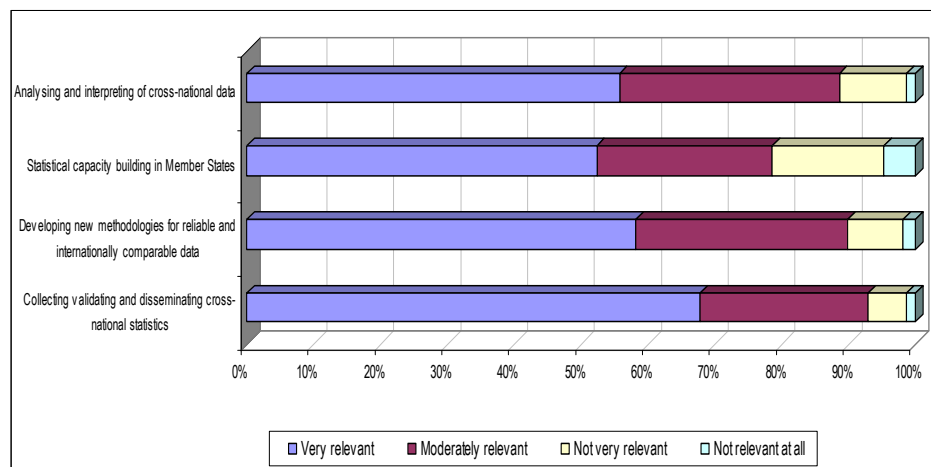
We surveyed UIS external stakeholders about the perceived relevance of the roles of UIS to their organisational needs.¹² More than half the Survey respondents were representatives of Member States, the majority of whom were “very aware” of the activities of the Institute. The most common response for all four of the Institute’s core roles was *very relevant*. Only in the area of statistical capacity building did the majority not hold this view. One comment in the Survey illustrates the strong views held about the relevance of UIS to Member States:

“By collecting accurate data from the region and disseminating it to all jurisdictions, UIS provides a means of comparison, dialogue and networking that

¹² Full results of the survey can be found in Appendix Three.

would not be possible otherwise. The workshops hosted by UIS are extremely beneficial to increasing awareness in terms of the most recent international best practice and the methods utilized in similar regional jurisdictions. UIS provides a unique training service that is integral to building statistical and analytical capacity within the Caribbean region. My jurisdiction looks forward to tapping into this resource in the future.”

Figure 2: Perceived relevance of UIS Roles to Member States



Source: UIS External Stakeholder Survey

Notwithstanding the strongly positive views about the relevance of the UIS, there is a consistently strong view and recognition amongst UIS staff that it needs to be more relevant to the needs of Member States. For example, there is a view that UIS offers little back to the countries that supply it with data, other than the provision of comparative international tables. The UIS is currently exploring, as part of its reorganisation, how it can produce more value for Member States through the performance of its core statistical functions.

Another issue for some Member States is the type of statistics that UIS is collecting. Data requirements for monitoring progress towards MDGs and EFA goals are different from data required for national-level policy making purposes. Furthermore, there is increasing awareness that a focus on a small number of input- and output-based education indicators, such as primary enrolment rates, may have had negative as well as positive impacts on welfare. A recent evaluation concluded that the World Bank, and the international aid community more generally, had helped many countries to improve access to primary education but had been less effective in helping them to improve educational quality and increase learning outcomes (World Bank, 2006). The evaluation concluded that:

“Primary education efforts need to focus on improving learning outcomes, particularly among the poor and other disadvantaged children. The MDG push for universal primary enrolment and completion, although a valuable intermediate goal, will not suffice to ensure that children achieve the basic literacy and numeracy that are essential to poverty reduction.” (World Bank, 2006)

Consequently, the World Bank and other international actors, including the Education Sector of UNESCO, are placing much greater significance on learning outcomes and student achievement. This creates increased demand for efforts to improve the development of national and international systems for measuring learning outcomes, to support improved policy, monitoring and evaluation.

UIS needs to consider how it responds to significant shifts such as this. The Institute has made efforts to anticipate and react to changing priorities and needs over the evaluation period. For example, it has increased its efforts in the areas of early childhood education, teachers, out of school children and educational financing, all of which have become more topical in recent times. Expectations of progress in these areas need to recognise that UIS is dependent on measurement at national level and so global statistical data takes time to amass. While UIS has been fairly proactive in these areas, in relation to the measurement of learning outcomes the implied changes are more radical than in these other areas. That is because administrative data (which is the bedrock of UIS statistics) is typically not an appropriate basis for measurement of learning outcomes and educational quality. The UIS needs to address with some urgency whether and how it is to tackle this challenge.

RELEVANCE TO OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

There is a formal expectation in its Statutes that UIS shall be responsive, depending on available finances, to the needs and demands of international organisations. This has been backed up in practice by strong and stable financial support from some key international organisations, the most significant of which has been contributions from the World Bank. During the course of this evaluation we have interviewed a number of non-UNESCO stakeholders, all of whom have commented that the role of UIS is highly relevant.

World Bank representatives we interviewed rated the relevance and importance of the mission of the Institute as extremely high, particularly in light of the increased focus on measuring and monitoring the progress of countries towards the achievement of the

Millennium Development Goals. Indeed, according to one recently retired World Bank official, “the mission of the UIS has never been as important as it is now – there has never been as much focus in the international development community on statistics in general, and education statistics in particular, as there is today”. Other donors we spoke to were very supportive of the work of the UIS and considered it to be highly relevant to the needs of Member States.

OTHER FINDINGS

Linked to the question of relevance is the extent to which stakeholders are aware of UIS and recognise the work that it does. For example, the Institute’s Global Education Digest, published annually, is authoritative and more comprehensive in its coverage of education statistics than UNESCO’s former statistical flagship publication, the *Statistical Yearbook*. The *Statistical Yearbook* previously held a special place in the hearts of many stakeholders, many of whom expressed to us their reluctance about its discontinuation. But its arguably superior replacement has a relatively low profile amongst key stakeholder groups and needs to be promoted more aggressively by UIS.

The ongoing relevance of UIS’s role and activities depends on how well it reads and adapts to the ever changing context within which it operates. What might be considered relevant at one point in time may prove inadequate at another - relevance is a benchmark that is continually being redefined. Any successful statistical agency must therefore possess the capacity to keep in touch with and adapt to the changing needs of statistics users and policy makers, including the different issues that emerge in different regions and sectors. The UIS needs to regularly scan the environment to ensure its programme remains relevant to the needs of its stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE THE RELEVANCE OF UIS

In order to maintain and enhance its relevance in the future, we make the following recommendations:

1. The next UNESCO Medium Term Strategy should make greater reference to the statistical function of UNESCO and the specific role that statistics plays in contribution to each of its major programmes.
2. The UIS should critically assess the level of resources available for non-education sectors as part of the prioritisation and planning process for the next Medium Term Strategy, with a view to increasing the capacity of these teams at UIS.
3. The UIS should engage UNESCO sectors, in particular the non-education sectors, in a more regular and systematic manner when developing its annual work programmes, biennial programme and budget, and Medium Term Strategy to ensure the relevance, alignment and appropriate prioritisation of resources.
4. All sectors of the UNESCO Secretariat, for their part, need to engage in more frequent and open discussions with UIS about their statistical priorities, with a view to both influencing the priorities of UIS and identifying opportunities for joint work. The sectors should also support the UIS by assisting the Institute to mobilise funds in support of these priorities.
5. The UIS should strengthen the collaboration between Montreal and regional staff to improve regional support for core UIS functions including data collection and analysis. More generally, the UIS faces a major challenge in improving its relevance to Member States and must consider how it can produce more value to Member States through the performance of its core functions.
6. In developing its next Medium Term Strategy, and on an ongoing basis, the UIS needs to take note of key trends in the environment for international statistics, particularly the changing needs of statistics users and policy makers. The UIS needs to be more proactive in identifying emerging issues and developing indicators in data collections in new areas, such as measurement of learning outcomes and educational quality.
7. The UIS needs to better promote its brand and flagship products, such as the Global Education Digest, in order to raise its profile and cement its reputation as the premier source of internationally comparable cross-national data.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

LABORATORY OF IDEAS

“UNESCO will play a key role in anticipating and defining, in the light of the ethical principles that it champions, the most important emerging problems in its spheres of competence, and in identifying appropriate strategies and policies to deal with them”¹³.

What activities are included and what were the expected outcomes?

The role of UIS as a “laboratory of ideas” requires the Institute to show intellectual leadership in its fields of competence which reflect the changing policy contexts in those fields. The identification of future needs and the development of appropriate responsive and flexible data and indicators was one of the primary functions of the Institute, as outlined in Article III of its Statutes. Aspects of this function are contained in several of the programme priorities for the Institute, including:

- Developing new statistical concepts, methodologies and standards
- Regular review of existing data collection to ensure on-going relevance of existing indicators and incorporate new indicators
- Interpretation and analysis of statistical data to produce basic and in-depth analyses to inform policy- and decision-making in Member States

Table 1 describes the main activities and expected outcomes of UIS in relation to its role as a laboratory of ideas.

¹³ C4 Medium-term strategy 2002/7

Table 1: UIS “Laboratory of Ideas” Activities and Expected Results (1999-2006)

Sector	Item	Description	Expected Results/Outcomes
Education	Refine and develop statistical indicators for EFA/MDG monitoring	Refine existing indicators to improve the measurement of international development goals and respond to new areas of emerging policy interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or improved conceptual frameworks and comparative indicators developed to support measurement of progress towards EFA and MDG goals.
	Literacy Assessment Monitoring Programme (LAMP)	Develop new methodologies to measure levels of literacy through assessment surveys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodology developed for measuring individual literacy skills in order to profile the literacy levels of populations over a range of competencies • The LAMP methodology piloted by collecting data from assessment surveys in six countries.
	Assessment of Learning Outcomes (ALO)	Joint programme with the UNESCO Division for Promoting Education Quality (PEQ) and World Bank to measure education quality towards the end of the primary cycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme designed and funding secured to improve the quality, quantity and utility of national, regional and international student assessment systems.
Science	Develop new indicators in S&T	Methods developed to measure innovations in science applications and losses from the science professions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New conceptual frameworks and comparative indicators developed in the areas of innovation and careers of doctoral holders.
Communication & Information	Partnership for Measuring ICT in Development	In partnership with ITU and UNCTAD, agree a set of core indicators on ICT in education. UIS to develop questions on ICT to be collected with the regular UIS education surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT questions included in annual UIS Education surveys.
Culture	International symposium on culture statistics	UIS jointly sponsored an international 3-dsy symposium to identify priority areas for the Institute’s collection of culture statistics and inform the development of a Framework for Culture Statistics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish international networks in culture statistics and develop framework for Culture Statistics

Cross-cutting	Expert advice	Across all sectors, UIS has played a role in providing expert advice on issues in measurement and indicator development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uphold statistical principles in the formulation of new data collections or indicator development
Cross-cutting	In-depth policy analysis	Develop a programme of research and statistical analysis in collaboration with a wide network of research institutions and other organizations conducting policy analysis on statistical issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from other sources such as household and institutional surveys utilised in conjunction with data in the UNESCO statistical database to strengthen and validate analyses • Comparative analyses of data undertaken in special areas of interest in the education sector. • Contributed time series analysis and projections in order to inform policy makers on anticipated trends and scenarios

What activities has UIS delivered?

A significant component of the UIS’s work over the evaluation period has contributed to their role as a “laboratory of ideas”. This comprises the UIS’s indicator and methodology development activities and analytical reporting in emerging policy areas. The UIS also regularly advises UNESCO sector staff and other stakeholders on the merits and challenges of undertaking statistical and measurement issues in areas of interest. UIS has engaged in these activities across all four sectors however, as in other areas, their efforts in the education sector have been the most substantial and well recognized.

As part of their role as the EFA Observatory, UIS has endeavoured to keep abreast of emerging policy issues and review, modify or develop new indicators to enable Member States and international organizations to better monitor progress towards the EFA goals. Over the evaluation period, UIS has sought to play an influential role in the development or modification of indicators in a number of policy areas. These include literacy; basic education; non-formal education; early childhood development; learning achievement; and adult education. UIS has also adopted a clear role in upholding ethical principles relating to the development of statistical indicators, with an emphasis on maintaining the integrity of the data and enabling reliable, meaningful measures of progress and inter-country comparisons. As part of this responsibility, UIS has made efforts to ensure that where new indicators are developed, the effects on

countries, in terms of additional data collection, availability of data and policy relevance are considered.

Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP)

One notable area where the UIS has demonstrated “thought leadership” in recent years is in the area of literacy assessment and monitoring. The Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) began in 2003, in response to the need for more reliable monitoring of education outcomes and literacy levels in developing countries. The purpose of this programme is to develop a methodology to measure literacy skills that was tailored to the needs of developing countries. The LAMP involves measuring five levels of literacy and numeracy skills, and five component skills that underpin fluent reading, through a combination of household survey methods and educational assessments. As well as developing an innovative methodology for assessing literacy levels, the indicators have been developed in consultation with education experts and participant countries. This partnership has enabled UIS to constantly assess the relevance and technical feasibility of the indicators for Member States.

Since 2003, LAMP has completed the development of the assessment instruments and supporting documentation and procedures. Survey instruments have been developed in partnership with six countries - El Salvador, Kenya, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, and the Palestinian Autonomous Territories. In order to reflect local socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics, UIS has worked closely with the pilot countries to design appropriate instruments and tailor assessments to the specific needs of national policy makers. Such an approach has the added benefit of strengthening national statistical capacity while facilitating the collection of data that will address genuine needs and can help target resources and assistance.

However, the next phase of the LAMP, in terms of the piloting and validation of the survey instruments in participating countries, and the proposed implementation of LAMP in 30-50 additional countries presents significant resourcing and organizational issues for the UIS. To illustrate the scale of the investment required, it was estimated in the 2005 Governing Board Report that full implementation will cost \$150 000 per country, and the undertaking of UIS was that the Institute and countries would work together to secure the funding sources for this. It is conservatively estimated that the total cost of implementation of LAMP in 30 countries would be around \$25-30M. These challenges are discussed in more detail below.

Work on the assessment of learning outcomes for primary students has not been progressed to the same extent despite repeated demands from international development agencies for improved measures of education outcomes and quality. The lack of progress appears to reflect limited financial and technical resources, and lack of agreement between key contributors about the most appropriate role for UIS to take in this area. It is also likely that this reflects the significant work and attention that has been devoted to the development of LAMP, diverting resources and attention away from the ALO programme.

Science and Technology

UIS has also actively contributed ideas and expertise in the area of Science, and to a lesser extent, communication and information, and culture statistics. In the area of Science and Technology, limited resources have influenced the strategic approach taken by UIS to co-operate with established academic and international organizations that already collect statistics on science and technology. UIS has worked to increase the quality and relevance of cross-national S&T statistics by adapting existing survey instruments used in OECD countries to the needs of developing countries. In partnership with OECD, Eurostat and Member States, UIS developed a survey on the careers of doctorate holders in the field of science to assess the extent of 'brain drain'. This work responded to a priority issue identified in this field through consultation with the Science sector at UNESCO Headquarters. UIS has also attempted to improve the cross-national comparability of science statistics by developing guidelines for developing countries to apply the OECD's Oslo Manual for measuring innovation, and is currently doing the same for the Frascati Manual on research and development statistics.

Communication and Information (CI)

UIS demonstrated leadership in the field of CI statistics through the preparation of a statistical report on "Measuring and Monitoring the Information and Knowledge Societies: A Statistical Challenge" for the World Summit on Information Societies in 2003 (WSIS). UIS also jointly sponsored a side event on ICT Measurement at WSIS 2003. These activities were designed to raise awareness of the need for ICT data to measure progress of countries towards Information for All objectives as well as identify the complexities of measurement in this area. As a member of the multi-agency Partnership for Measurement of ICTs for Development, UIS has been asked to lead the development of indicators to assess the use of ICTs in education.

Culture

Over the period of the evaluation, UIS has had a relatively limited role in “anticipating and defining emerging problems and identifying appropriate solutions” in the field of culture statistics. In 2002, UIS jointly sponsored a three-day symposium with the Quebec’s Observatoire de la culture et des communications. This symposium brought together researchers, national statisticians and users of cultural data to identify priorities for UIS’s future culture statistics programme. While this event was significant for international contributors to culture statistics, it did not lead to the development of a framework for culture statistics by UIS as intended. UIS has contributed to discrete projects such as reporting on World Heritage Sites, a report on International Flows of Selected Cultural Goods and Services, and a regional project on developing social impact indicators in Asia. However, these activities have been in response to requests from other parts of UNESCO and do not reflect leadership by UIS in these areas. In the development of a culture sector statistical programme, including a framework and standards for international culture statistics, senior management within the culture sector identified the need for UIS to take on a greater intellectual leadership role.

Analysis and Interpretation of Cross-National Data

In assessing the analytical functions of UIS, we have distinguished between basic statistical analysis and reporting, such as the production of statistical annexes and data sets, and the more in-depth policy analyses carried out by the Institute. With regard to the latter, UIS has produced a modest number of thematic reports on areas of policy interest. Two examples of thematic reports recently produced by UIS are:

- Teachers and Educational Quality: Monitoring Global Needs for 2015; and
- Children Out of School: Measuring Exclusion from Primary Education (Joint UNICEF/UIS output).

In the education sector, UIS produced a number of joint reports on policy topics relevant to the World Education Indicators (WEI) programme. These reports have been a collaborative effort with OECD and 19 WEI countries on topics such as education financing and trends in education participation in those countries. UIS also developed its analytical role in the area of literacy. An example of this was the collaboration with OECD on a “Literacy Skills for Tomorrow’s World. This reported on the results of the PISA PLUS project which measured the competencies of 15-year

olds in knowledge and skills, and their ability to apply them in real-life situations in 13 non-OECD countries.

In response to criticisms about the limitations of administrative data, and to improve the richness of information available on progress towards the achievement of EFA goals, UIS has made efforts to incorporate the use of alternative (non-UIS) data sources, such as household and institutional surveys in their analyses. UIS has worked with other international agencies such as USAID, World Bank and UNICEF to examine the relative advantages and limitations of survey and administrative data and explore ways of linking diverse data sources. This led to a joint project between UIS and UNICEF to develop a methodology for defining, measuring, and reporting the number of children out of primary school globally and regionally. This methodology integrated both survey and administrative data in an effort to produce a single set of international measures for Out-of-School Children.

How effective are these activities in contributing to UIS and UNESCO objectives?

The development of indicators and achievement of consensus on the meaning and relevance of data collected is a long-term investment which ideally requires extensive consultation with subject experts and Member States. Over the short period since the creation of the Institute, UIS has taken significant steps forward in establishing its expertise in this area within the international community. In particular, the role of UIS in upholding statistical principles and identifying risks and limitations in the development of indicators was identified as a particular strength by stakeholders we spoke with across all sectors.

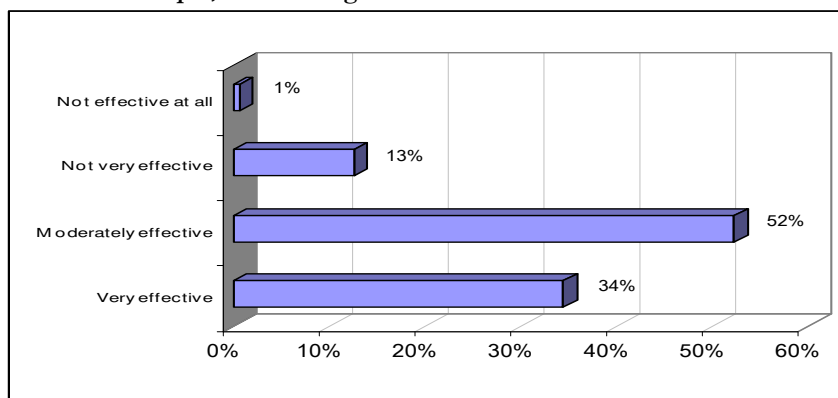
Alongside this, stakeholders, particularly in the areas of communications and culture statistics, expressed a degree of frustration at the emphasis UIS placed on the risks and difficulties of developing indicators without then providing solutions or leadership on how best to proceed. It was also suggested that the development of education indicators by UIS has generally been in response to demands from the UNESCO Education Sector, the GMR team or other international stakeholders, such as the World Bank, UNICEF, and UNEVOC, rather than leading the debate in relation to new information needs. Programme staff at UNESCO Headquarters and members of the GMR team identified the need for UIS to be more proactive in identifying emerging issues and developing indicators and data collection in these areas. The lack of data on Early Childhood Education and Education Financing were identified as two areas of weakness in relation to EFA monitoring. We would argue this reflects the

appropriate relationship between a statistical agency and policy organizations, provided discussions and collaborative activity remain on-going.

A survey of UIS stakeholders asked about their level of awareness of UIS's role in developing new methodologies, concepts and standards. Most stakeholders had a reasonable level of awareness, with almost three quarters of respondents saying they were *very or moderately aware* of these activities (see Appendix 3 for full survey results).

In terms of the effectiveness of UIS in the development of new methodologies, concepts and standards, just over a third of stakeholders rated UIS as *very effective* and a further 52 percent rating UIS as *moderately effective*. While these results are encouraging, there is still room for improvement in this area.

Figure 3: Stakeholder views on effectiveness of UIS in the development of new statistical concepts, methodologies and standards



Source: Survey of Stakeholders

A number of stakeholders identified a need for further work in this area. By way of an illustration, one stakeholder suggested the UIS needed:

'to review and better communicate the methodology for compiling education indicators with individual countries to facilitate mutual understanding and to take into account special characteristics of respective countries.'

This comment touches on two areas where UIS could strengthen their efforts. First, the visibility of UIS's activities in the development of methodologies, concepts and standards could be expanded to a wider audience. There is evidence of the collaborative networks and partnerships UIS has developed in this area with technical experts and international agencies in most sectors. Beyond these networks, UIS might also consider promoting their efforts in this area, particularly where they respond

directly to the needs of developing countries or pertinent policy issues in different regions.

Second, UIS could focus more efforts on developing indicators and methodologies in consultation with regional staff, regional networks, and Member States in order to improve the relevance of the instruments to the needs of specific regions and countries. As identified in a World Bank evaluation of the international comparability of education statistics:

The longer term success of the Institute depends on its ability to strengthen its sphere of influence to improve and quality of national data collections... UIS has made progress in this area, particularly among WEI countries. However, there is room for greater exploitation of regional strengths to provide consultations with participating countries regarding their technical needs, developing regional and national special interest reports, and customizing UIS data collection instruments to better suit the nations' abilities to provide the data. (Campbell, 2004)

However, while further regionalization and tailoring of methodologies and standards is ideal, this needs to be balanced with the need for UIS to promote and maintain the international standards and comparability of data collection. Furthermore, where UIS does engage in targeted regional activities, these activities need to be planned and prioritized at an Institute wide level, in consultation with regional offices and all relevant units of the Institute. The challenges now facing UIS in the future work programme for the LAMP project provides a useful illustration of the potentially resource intensive nature of such activities.

It is first important to acknowledge the important contribution that has been made to the future measurement of literacy and education outcomes, in developing countries and internationally, through the creation of LAMP. This project was identified by many people, both within and external to UNESCO, as a clear example of leadership by UIS in the development of new methodologies and indicators. The development of LAMP in partnership with pilot countries to tailor the survey instruments to reflect both the technical and policy needs of the country is also viewed as exemplary. "This form of indicator development could be considered as "best practice" for the future development of realistic and accepted indicators in critical policy areas." (UIS, 2004). Member States have also shown significant interest in this programme, with more countries expressing an interest in piloting LAMP than UIS is able to accommodate.

The challenge for UIS has been to manage the expectations of what this programme can deliver, both from the international community and Member States, in the short to medium term. The resources required to support the six countries piloting the LAMP alone have already exceeded expectations. This partly reflected the additional statistical capacity building efforts required in some countries to enable them to ensure the integrity of data collected through the survey instruments. Additionally, the participating countries and UIS have struggled to secure the necessary funding to advance the project, despite the strong interest in this work from development agencies.

Following validation of the survey instruments in the pilot countries, the proposed next stage of LAMP is full-scale implementation in 30-50 countries, with assessments to begin in late 2007. Relative to the overall size and work programme of UIS, such an undertaking represents a disproportionately high level of human and financial resources and presents a risk to the successful implementation of LAMP and to the ongoing reputation and financial viability of the Institute more generally. This remains a valid concern even if UIS secures substantial amounts of extra-budgetary funding for the programme, due to the significant logistical and organisational challenges associated with a large roll-out of LAMP. Beyond the financial investment of around 15% of total UIS spending, the pilot stage of LAMP has required significant efforts on the part of UIS to provide technical assistance to develop the capacity of countries to a point where they are able to apply the LAMP methodology and collect the requisite data.

Given the broad mandate and limited resources of UIS, the evaluators consider it is a priority for UIS to build a broader constituency in the implementation of LAMP and engage partners, at international and regional levels, to take ownership of the projects and oversee implementation. The core strength and competitive advantage of UIS lies in its statistical expertise in developing methodologies and indicators to allow international comparisons and support the monitoring and advancement of international development goals. It is our understanding that other agencies with an interest in LAMP, such as the US-based Educational Testing Service (ETS), could contribute experience, established networks, and more resources to facilitate the country level implementation of the LAMP. This evaluation highlights the strength of UIS in developing collaborative international and regional networks from its creation. This early strategy of UIS recognized the limited human and financial means of the Institute relative to its broad mandate and sought partnerships to progress the influence of the Institute in developing the international comparability of data in its spheres of influence. We consider that successful implementation of LAMP will

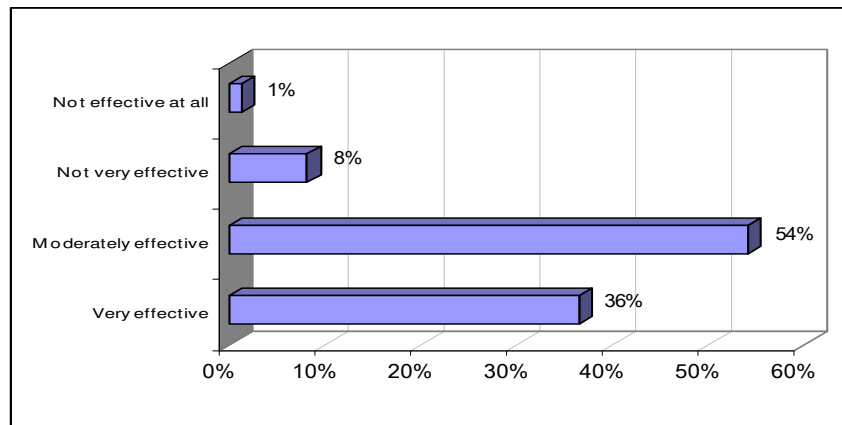
require a similar strategy of partnership and collaboration and, therefore, support the new Director’s proposal to reassess the role of UIS in LAMP and to convene a group of LAMP stakeholders to discuss the way forwards. We also consider that whatever path forward is chosen by stakeholders, the UIS should continue to play a leadership role in the ongoing development of methodologies and indicators and in the promotion of related international standards.

Analysis and Interpretation of Cross-National Data

Among non-UNESCO stakeholders there is significant use of UIS analyses and publications. In the survey of stakeholders, almost half of the respondents (47 percent) reported using UIS’s analytical reports and a similar proportion stayed informed of UIS activities through their publications (see Appendix 3 for full survey results).

Non-UNESCO stakeholders were generally positive about the effectiveness of UIS in analyzing and interpreting cross-national data. Figure x shows that just over half the respondents rated UIS as *moderately effective* in this role and a further 36 percent rated UIS as *very effective*.

Figure 4: Stakeholder views on effectiveness of UIS in analyzing and interpreting cross-national data

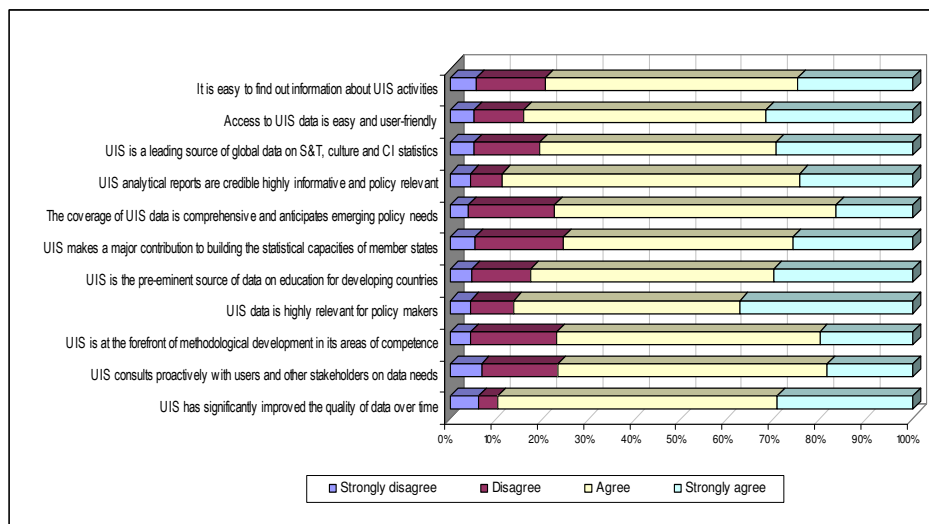


Source: Survey of Stakeholders

Stakeholders also rated the overall performance of UIS against a number of criteria outlined in Figure 5 below. This allowed us to gauge the relative satisfaction or stakeholders with various components of UIS’s work programme. Almost 90 percent of respondents *agree* or *strongly agree* with the statement that “UIS analytical reports are credible, highly informative, and policy relevant” – second only to the proportion of

stakeholders who agreed that “UIS has significantly improved the quality of data over time”.

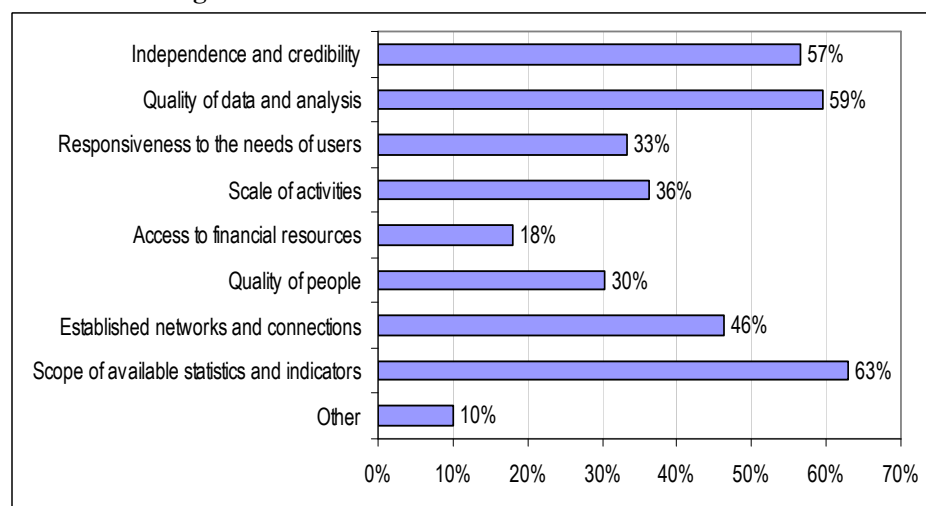
Figure 5: Stakeholder views on overall performance of UIS



Source: Survey of Stakeholders

Stakeholders were also asked to identify areas of comparative advantage for UIS relative to other statistical agencies. As shown in Figure x, the *quality of data and analysis* was one of the top three characteristics viewed as a comparative advantage of UIS.

Figure 6: Stakeholder views on the UIS comparative advantages relative to other statistical agencies



Source: Survey of Stakeholders

In our interviews with programme staff and members of the GMR team, the analytical capability of UIS was described as strengthening over the evaluation period. In particular, the GMR team highlighted the progress that had been made in recent years. It is understood that when UIS initially adopted the role of EFA Observatory, agreement was reached with the GMR team that in addition to providing the data and statistical annexes of the report, UIS would contribute to the drafting of analytical sections of the report. In early reports, the quality of analysis did not meet the expectations of the GMR team and required substantial efforts by them to revise and sharpen the analysis provided. This led to a change in the nature of the contribution by UIS, with the GMR team assuming full responsibility for the drafting of analytical chapters in the annual report. However, the GMR team noted that UIS had been responsive to issues raised and improved both the quality of data and contributions to the analytical sections of the report. Programme staff in the education sector were unanimous in their praise of the quality of analytical reports produced by UIS, although some reported concern at the lack of consultation by UIS in determining the key policy issues and findings in the major thematic reports. Furthermore, they did not have a clear sense of how these projects had been selected or prioritised by the UIS.

Overall, the UIS appears to have been effective in growing its analytical capability and increasing its relevance to the needs of key international stakeholders. However, given limited resources in this area relative to the demand from both internal and external stakeholders for increased activity in areas such as education outcomes, education financing and literacy projections, UIS needs to develop a clear strategy about the areas it intends to target.

In supporting the core function of UIS as a clearing house and capacity builder, analytical activities should ideally contribute to improvements in data quality and enabling Member States to understand the relevance and usefulness of data they provide. UIS should prioritise activities that are relevant to policy and decision-making needs of regions or Member States. To do so, a greater degree of consultation is required with UNESCO Headquarters and regional UIS staff. Overall, it is difficult to assess, and probably too early to tell, the extent to which the interpretation and analysis of statistical data by UIS has informed the policy- and decision-making in Member States but a greater regional focus in the analysis and interpretation of cross-national data may assist UIS to further this objective.

Overall, while there is a need for greater prioritization of efforts and alignment with the core functions of UIS and UNESCO, it is apparent from the survey results and our

interviews that the analytical activities of UIS have been well received by stakeholders and have added a layer of visibility and credibility to the more technical work of UIS.

Other challenges

Further to the issues highlighted above, UIS also faces a challenge in adequately fulfilling their mandate to develop new methodologies, concepts and standards across the non-Education sectors of UNESCO. This is a particular issue in the areas of Culture and Communication and Information statistics.

A thematic meeting on Measurement of ICTs preceding WSIS in 2005 re-emphasized the need for internationally comparable indicators in ICT and concluded that:

The Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development should continue its valuable work on improving the availability of information society indicators in developing countries by addressing its three main objectives:

- Further elaboration on a common list of core ICT indicators including on other relevant sectors (such as culture, education, e-government, health);
- Assisting developing countries in their statistical work on ICT indicators; and
- Building an international database on ICT indicators and making it available on the Internet.

A representative of the Intergovernmental Committee of UNESCO's Information for All Programme (IFAP) believed the opportunity exists for UIS to play a more central role in these activities but described their involvement over the evaluation period as limited and the Institute as lacking visibility in the field of CI statistics.

Similarly, in the field of culture statistics, stakeholders we spoke to in the UNESCO Secretariat and external to UNESCO expressed a need for UIS to re-engage in the field of culture statistics. Following the meeting of international experts in 2002, little progress was made on revising UNESCO's Framework of Culture Statistics. Currently, there is no other international agency collecting culture statistics at a national level but there is significant demand for global statistics in areas such as cultural diversity.

In 2005, towards the end of the evaluation period, the UNESCO General Conference passed the Convention on Cultural Diversity of Expressions and it will come into force in 2007. The Convention of 2005 calls upon UNESCO and its existing mechanisms, namely the UIS, to facilitate and develop measures to track progress in the Conventions implementation. If the UIS is to adequately respond to this demand,

it urgently requires the Institute to reinforce the internal human and financial resources available and develop a clear action plan in the field of culture statistics.

Recommendations

8. The UIS should develop wider constituencies of support and adopt more of a partnership-based approach to significant new initiatives, such as LAMP. In doing so the UIS should aim to leverage off the substantial experience and resources of development partners, given that its core strength is its intellectual expertise and its capacity to manage new large scale surveys is limited.
9. The UIS needs to build critical mass in non-education sectors to enable it to adequately fulfil its mandate in respect of the development of new frameworks for data collection (indicators, methodologies, standards).

CLEARING HOUSE

“UNESCO has a role in gathering, transferring, disseminating and sharing available information, knowledge and best practices in its fields of competence, identifying innovative solutions and testing them through pilot projects.”

What activities are included and what were the expected outcomes?

In the 2002 – 2007 Medium Term Strategy for UIS, the ‘Guardianship of cross-national data’ is the first programme priority of the Institute. This comprises the collection, validation, and dissemination of statistics and indicators of cross-national data across all UNESCO sectors. The maintenance, regular collection and reporting of statistics and on-going improvement of the UNESCO International Statistical database is arguably the core function of UIS.

Expected results of this function have been outlined in various documents including the 2002-07 UIS Medium-Term Strategy and the UNESCO biennial programme and budget (C/5s). In the capacity of *clearing house*, UIS is committed to improving the quality, coverage and timeliness of UIS data across all sectors. In practice, proposed outcomes in support of this objective include:

- To develop and improve statistical surveys in order to gather more complete, timely and reliable data
- To improve the data content and quality in the UNESCO statistical database
- To ensure greater policy relevance of information provided in all areas
- To promote better user access and utilization of the data

Table 2 summarizes the main activities and expected outcomes of UIS in its capacity of ‘clearing house’.

Item	Activities	Description	Expected Outcomes
Annual education surveys	Survey administration and data collection	Administration of the UIS surveys in education, science, and communications and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set and achieve targets for improvements in coverage and speed of data collection • Data is cross-nationally comparable and complies with standards such as ISCED
Biannual science and technology survey			
Press and broadcast media surveys	Data processing	Internal quality assurance processes to validate data received from UIS surveys, UNESCO/OECD/Eurostat (UOE), and WEI data. UIS also liaises and follows up with Member States to confirm and adjust results where necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align statistical information systems where possible to improve correlation of data from questionnaires and the UIS database. • Improved and where possible automated data verification and data cleaning processes
	Statistical analysis and production of datasets	UIS regularly provides education data and analysis to Member States and major customers including the EFA Global Monitoring Report team, World Bank, UNDP, USAID, UNICEF, UNSD, and ILO. UIS also responds to ad-hoc queries for education data from other interested parties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy relevant, complete, timely and reliable data provided to Member States and other key users.
Maintenance and development of UNESCO Statistical Database		Validation and cleaning of historical UNESCO data and data from other providers for inclusion in the UNESCO Statistical Database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the coverage of data in the UNESCO Statistical Database

Item	Activities	Description	Expected Outcomes
Dissemination and external communications	Publications and information outputs	UIS produces a limited number of publications and analytical products for a range of users. These include the annual UIS flagship publication, “Global Education Digest”, thematic reports, working papers, and analytical contributions to publications led by partners and clients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User-friendly print and electronic publications using cross-national data to inform priority policy issues • Research partnerships with institutions and agencies developed • Distribute a wider range of statistical material for a variety of users at national and international levels
	Website	The website offers access to the UIS Statistical Database and allows viewers to access data at country, regional and international levels. The website also provides information on the programme priorities, projects and partnerships, and publications of the Institute.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved electronic access to data and use of UIS statistics • Improve the coverage, timeliness and quality of UIS data available on-line • Range of new data presentation tools for different levels of users developed • Improve accessibility of data for web users in countries with restricted speeds of internet access
	Resource and documentation centre	The centre was established to respond to enquiries for information and publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve availability of UIS information and publications, including historical • Improve internal document management systems

What activities has UIS delivered?

This section covers three main areas of activity that comprise the clearing house function of UIS: the operation of UIS surveys; maintenance and development of UNESCO's International Statistical Database; and the dissemination and communication of information outputs and UIS activities.

UIS Surveys

Annual Education Survey

The collection and dissemination of education statistics has a long history at UNESCO. Prior to the creation of UIS, the UNESCO Division of Statistics was responsible for the administration of international education surveys. However, a lack of resources and statistical expertise within the Division led to an observed decline in the credibility and reliability of UNESCO's education statistics. When UIS was established, one of its primary objectives was 'to establish stronger procedural and consultative foundations to ensure that the trust of Member States and of organizations is established in our capacity to deliver reliable, comparable worldwide statistical data'. (UIS/GB/II/3).

Under the direction of UIS, the first annual education survey was conducted in 2000. Since 2000 the questionnaires have been made available in electronic and paper versions, allowing data providers to choose their preferred method of response. Although a major revision of the survey was planned for 2002, at the time of this evaluation, the review was underway but had not yet been completed.

At present, the survey comprises four questionnaires including:

- Questionnaire A – Pre-primary, primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education
- Questionnaire B – Educational finance and expenditure
- Questionnaire C – Tertiary Education
- Supplementary questionnaire on primary school graduates and dropouts.

The education survey collects administrative data from Ministries of Education and National Statistical Offices. UIS is directly responsible for collecting data from more than 140 countries and works with OECD and Eurostat to gather data from the remaining countries.

Data collection

The annual cycle of the education survey represents a major undertaking for the survey operations unit of UIS. The survey has been carried out in each year since 2000. The data collection and reminder process involves frequent informal and formal written reminders and, where responses are not forthcoming, the assistance of regional UIS staff and phone calls to country contacts.

In order to assist in the quality of data received and promote the surveys to improve response rates, UIS has also conducted training workshops in each year except 2004. These workshops have the overall aim of improving the quality, timeliness and international comparability of education statistics. The workshops have been used to:

- discuss issues relating to the survey and ways to improve data quality;
- provide information and training on ISCED and work with countries to understand how their national data corresponds; and
- better understand the needs and capacities of particular countries and the problems faced by national statisticians.

The initial objective was to hold a workshop in the 12 UIS regions or sub-regions once per year, however since 2004 the revised goal is to visit each region once every two years. This decision reflects the significant resource and time commitment required by the workshops.

The first UIS education survey in 2000 resulted in 166 responses, or 80% of countries (including data provided through data-sharing agreements). This compared with responses from 97 countries in the last education survey conducted by the UNESCO Division of Statistics. The rapid improvement probably reflected a combination of heightened awareness among Member States, as a result of the UIS regional workshops, and the longer time period allowed for countries to submit their responses. Since then UIS has maintained or slightly improved this level of responses in most years, despite tightening the response period considerably.

Data processing and quality assurance

Following the survey close off, UIS undertakes a process of survey tracking, data entry, cleaning and verification of data and indicators. This regularly requires consultation of other data sources to clarify country data and sending feedback to countries to incorporate their explanations or revisions. Where data is not available, UIS attempts

to estimate as much missing data as possible or find and use national publications to fill data gaps.

The systems and procedures for carrying out these processes have seen marked improvement over the evaluation period. In 2003, UIS established a Data Process Task Force which led to:

- a revised format for the database with three data series (reported, clean and estimated) and developed a clearer definition of the intended content of each
- An automated Error Reporting System – valuable for detecting errors in current surveys and previous years' data and reducing the amount of human input required in error correction
- new written instructions and staff training – essential due to number of new staff recruited following move to Montreal
- new procedures for entering data using the electronic survey
- a new set of standardized footnotes – this was reduced from over 400 variations to 50 with accompanying instructions.

UIS has also adopted a process for early consultation with Member States where this is required as part of the validation process. Following the verification and estimation process, UIS prepares country tables for review and provides copies to Ministries of Education and others ahead of the provisional release. Where received, feedback is incorporated into the database and data is rechecked.

Regular data outputs and dissemination

In its role as the EFA Observatory, a priority for the Institute is the timely release of data to a number of major clients on an annual basis. The Global Monitoring Report is an annual publication that predominantly relies on the administrative data collected by UIS. Another key client for UIS data is the World Bank. Following the data verification process, preliminary, revised and final releases are now made to the World Bank on an annual basis. Other major users of UIS data throughout the year include UNICEF, UN Statistical Division, UN Population Division, MDG's, USAID, and UNESCO.

Over the evaluation period UIS has made significant improvements in the timeliness of data dissemination. It is likely that the early delays reflected the lack of resources and upheaval generated by the creation of the Institute and subsequent relocation to Montreal. In 2004, the Development Committee of IMF and the World Bank

commended UIS on reducing the time lag of published data for a given year from four years to two years.

Since 2003 UIS has produced an annual Global Education Digest which provides the most recent education indicators from early childhood to higher education. While narrower in focus, this is arguably the successor to the Statistical Yearbook that was previously published by the UNESCO Division of Statistics. The GED takes significant steps forward in terms of the quality and coverage of education data provided. However, it does not appear to be as well recognized at this stage and would benefit from increased marketing and publicity. This publication is made available in both printed and electronic forms.

UIS has improved the timeliness of this publication relative to the close off of responses to the education survey and other international publications also using UIS data. In 2004 the Global Education Digest was published in April, just 8 months after the September launch of the Global Education Digest in 2003. The April deadline has been maintained in subsequent years and in 2006 UIS were the first to publish their own education indicators. Previously the World Bank's World Development Indicators was the first publication to report on UIS education indicators.

Science and Technology Survey

In 2004, UIS undertook its first Science and Technology survey on research and development (R&D) personnel and expenditure. The questionnaire was experimental in that it was administered as a web-based survey. This allowed for the automation of managing and monitoring survey responses and sending of acknowledgements for responses received. The science and technology team experienced some difficulties in data collection, as many country contacts and networks had been lost in the time since the last science and technology survey was completed by the UNESCO Division of Statistics in 1993.

This first survey achieved an overall response rate of 53% or 113 countries. Publishable data was received from 106 countries. This data was reported in several international publications:

- World Development Indicators (World Bank)
- UN Statistical Yearbook
- Human Development Report
- UNESCO Science Report

In 2005, UIS delivered two training workshops in Uganda and India which were well attended by a number of countries in each region. The Science and Technology team also participated in workshops in Indonesia, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Kazakhstan. These workshops have helped UIS staff to develop a greater appreciation of the issues facing developing countries and national statisticians in the science and technology area.

In 2006, UIS launched its second research and development survey and data collection was underway at the time of this review.

Other UIS surveys

In late 2005 and June 2006, UIS re-launched the newspaper and broadcast surveys respectively. Early versions of these surveys were previously conducted by the UNESCO Division of Statistics. It is too early to evaluate the outcomes of this process.

A literacy survey of all countries was organized and implemented in April 2003 to obtain the most recent national literacy statistics for inclusion in the UIS model.

UNESCO Statistical Database

In its capacity as guardian of cross-national data, UIS is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of UNESCO's International Statistics Database. This means improving the timeliness, relevance, validity, and completeness of existing cross-national statistics. In addition to the data collected through UIS surveys, historical data and data from other sources contribute to achieving this.

UIS has established data-sharing agreements with a number of other statistical agencies including OECD and Eurostat in the education sector, and OECD Eurostat and the Ibero American Network on Science and Technology Indicators (RICYT) in the S&T sector. Across all sectors, work has progressed on cleaning and verifying historical data for inclusion in the UNESCO Statistical Database. In culture and communication, despite the absence of new survey data, the validation and editing of time series for past data was undertaken. At the request of external stakeholders, this included data from countries around the world through surveys on printed press, book production, museums, libraries, film and cinema.

The introduction of a new data dissemination environment for the website in 2002 led to increased accessibility for external users of UIS data and better internal management of data releases. In particular, the system ensures the consistent presentation and reporting of figures across all publications and data sources. This system has also added user functionality through the installation of Beyond 20/20 data analysis and visualisation software.

Improving the accessibility and usability of the UIS database was also a priority of the Institute over the evaluation period. In 2004, alongside online access to the main database, UIS introduced online country profiles that were presented in a graphical and user-friendly manner for a non-technical audience. Another development was the introduction of 'Fast Facts' to give users a quick overview of the most recent statistics in key interest areas. These facts are summarized from UIS's Global Education Digest, EFA Global Monitoring Reports, and other major UIS/UNESCO publications such as the 'International Flows of Selected Cultural Goods and Services, 1994-2003'.

The Institute is currently in the process of introducing further enhancements to its online dissemination environment, including developing enhanced access for different types of users (e.g. to cater to non-technical users who want access to country profiles as well as meeting the needs of researchers who need access to full statistical tables).

Dissemination and external communications

Publications and information outputs

A modest number of publications and documents have been produced by UIS throughout the evaluation period. The number of major publications and other documents produced by UIS are shown in Table 3 from 2003 onwards, when regular reporting began. In addition to the number of publications, an increasing number have been translated into languages other than French and English. In the last financial year, UIS reached an agreement with the UNESCO publication services to sell all recent UIS reports on-line and distribute them through their global network of publication outlets.

Table 3: Publications by UIS

Year	Number of publications
2003	6
2004	15
2005	15
2006	9

Source: UIS GB Activities Reports

It is also noteworthy that UIS has been an regular attendee at international and regional meetings, conferences, and workshops. Papers and presentations were often submitted by UIS for these engagements but inconsistencies in the method of reporting make it difficult to compare the intensity of these efforts year by year. To illustrate the extent of these activities, we note that between October 2003 and December 2004 the UIS reported attending 109 external meetings, conferences and workshops, and delivering 63 presentations. In the following year, a further 41 presentations were given by UIS staff.

Website

The website of UIS is an important conduit for data and information users to access UIS data and publications, and otherwise remain informed of the activities and programme priorities of UIS. The website also gives Member States access to survey questionnaires, operational instructions and manuals in down-loadable and on-line formats.

UIS developed the website over several iterations to improve both the ease of access and usability of information resources available. Efforts have been made to adapt to the needs of users with limited on-line capacity and restrictive connection speeds in some developing countries. Data tables have been made available in a format that will download quickly for users.

An email alert system was introduced in 2005 to allow UIS to send email notifications to registrants about new UIS data releases and publications. UIS also uses the information supplied by subscribers to improve their responsiveness to the needs and interests of the user community. In the first four months of introducing this service, approximately 500 information users from all parts of the world have subscribed.

Resource and Documentation Centre

The resource and documentation centre is responsible for:

- responding to enquiries from the general public for information and publications;
- providing in-house services to obtain publications needed by staff; and
- maintaining the stock of publications, reports and books held by UIS.

In a reorganization of the centre in 2004, the documentation and books were indexed and filed according to UNESCO's Library Co-operative Cataloguing Project.

How effective are these activities in contributing to UIS and UNESCO objectives?

Perhaps the most well known function of UIS is its collection, production, and dissemination of education statistics. When UIS was created in 1999, one of the priorities was to improve the quality of data available within UNESCO's International Statistical Database. As outlined above, significant efforts have been undertaken to improve the reliability, timeliness, relevance and coverage of data across all sectors, but particularly in the area of education statistics.

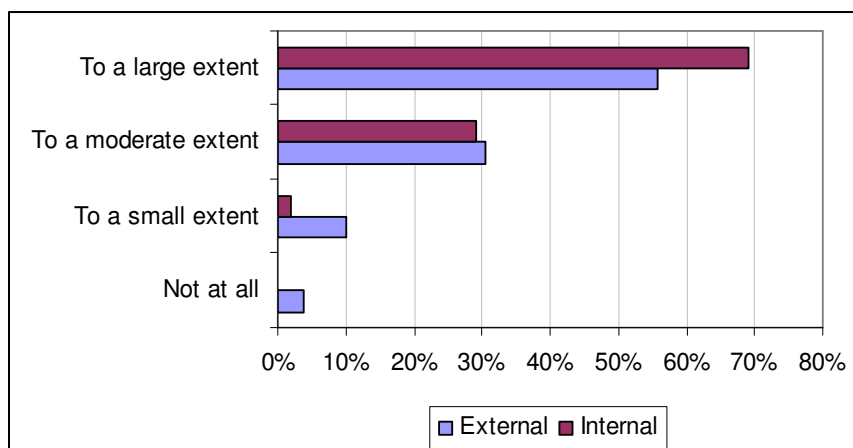
In this section we evaluate the extent to which this has been achieved by examining the following four areas:

- Awareness
- Relevance
- Overall effectiveness
- Data quality

Awareness

As might be expected of a statistical institute, the 'clearing house' function of UIS is the most well known of its core activities. The vast majority of respondents to both the survey of UNESCO stakeholders in the field (98%) and of external stakeholders (85%) considered they had a high or moderate level of awareness of the programme.

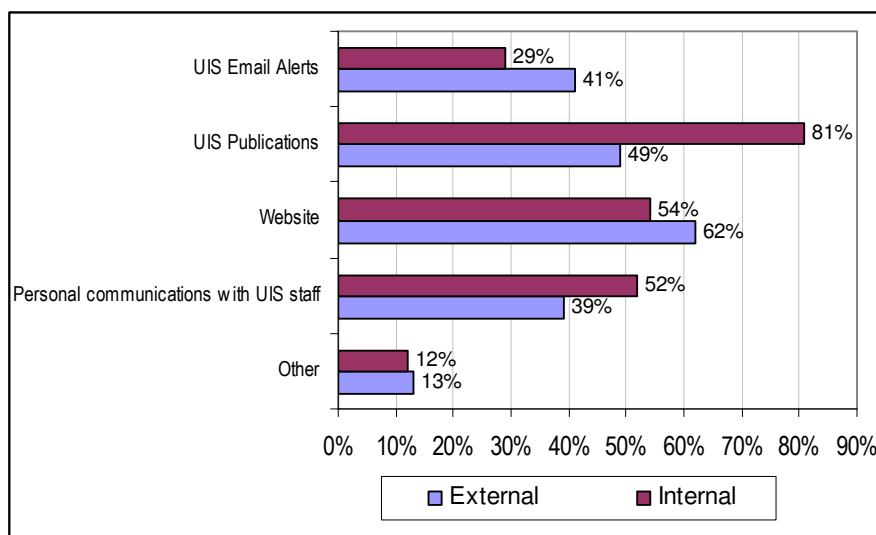
Figure 7: Awareness of UIS role in collection, validation and dissemination of cross-national statistics



Source: Surveys of External Stakeholders and UNESCO field offices, institutes and centres

UIS publications and the UIS website were also the most likely means by which both UNESCO and external stakeholders remained informed of UIS activities. For UNESCO stakeholders in the field, 81% kept informed through UIS publications and 54% used the website. External stakeholders were most likely to use the UIS website to keep informed (62% used this mechanism) and almost half used UIS publications.

Figure 8: Awareness of UIS role in collection, validation and dissemination of cross-national statistics



Source: Surveys of External Stakeholders and UNESCO field offices, institutes and centres

Personal contact is also an important means of awareness-raising but the survey findings suggest UIS staff are less visible or accessible than their products for the majority of stakeholders. This is to be expected to some extent, given the significant

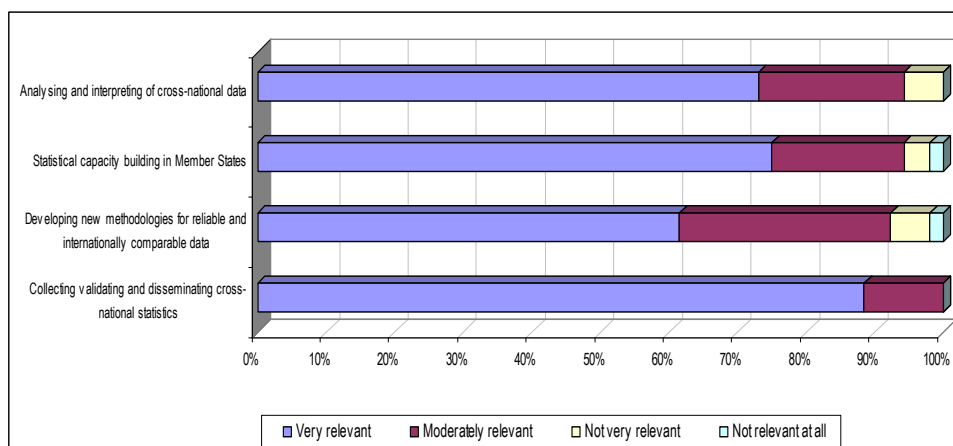
number of stakeholders relative to the size of UIS. However, people we interviewed both within and external to UNESCO raised concerns or frustrations about their limited interaction with UIS staff, in part due to their lack of knowledge on the most appropriate contacts within UIS. To address this, a very simple improvement might be to expand the information available on-line about the structure of UIS and provide profiles of key contacts within the Institute.

This finding also highlights the importance of continuing to develop the external communications strategy for UIS, particularly in relation to the website and launch of new data releases and publications. Several respondents mentioned that UIS education data is often used in other agencies publications without recognizing UIS as the provider. Until 2006, UIS were also producing their flagship publication, the Global Education Digest, after the data had already been released by clients such as the World Bank, World Indicators Report and the EFA Global Monitoring Report. In continuing to grow the reputation of UIS and UNESCO as the premier source of internationally comparable cross-national data, the UIS needs to raise awareness of the pivotal role of UIS in these publications, further develop its brand and more proactively promote its own annual publication.

Relevance

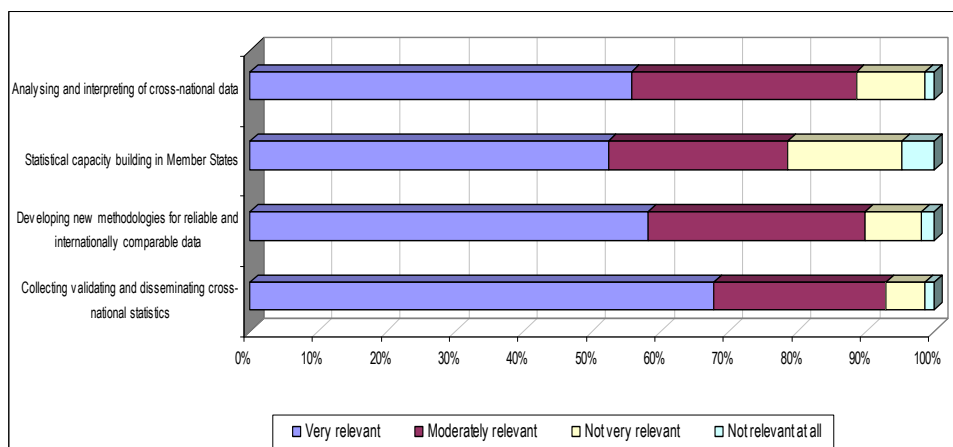
Most stakeholders we interviewed shared the opinion that the ‘clearing house’ activities of UIS were highly relevant to both the needs of UNESCO and the international community. Overall, survey respondents rated the collection, validation and dissemination of reliable and internationally comparable data as the most relevant function of UIS to their needs. This applied similarly to UNESCO and external stakeholders, although external stakeholders were slightly more distributed in their views.

Figure 9: Relevance of UIS functions to UNESCO stakeholders



Source: Survey of UNESCO field offices, institutes and centres

Figure 10: Relevance of UIS functions to external stakeholders



Source: Survey of external stakeholders

While stakeholders we spoke with agreed that the clearing house function had high potential relevance to Member States, some individuals and organizations believed that, in practice, there was room to improve the relevance and usefulness of UIS data to Member States. Key concerns in this regard were:

- the transparency of data processing and statistical analysis, in terms of the indicators published relative to the raw data provided by countries;
- the effect of significant time lags on the relevance of data eventually published in documents such as the EFA monitoring report and posted on their web-site
- the limited relevance of international comparisons in education data when country contexts and national education systems are so diverse

The issue of data timeliness was also an issue for development agencies, who use UIS data to inform decisions about the progress and capacity building needs of countries. For UIS and the EFA Global Monitoring Team, issues of timeliness have created significant political tensions at times. First, in relation to Member States arguing the data due for release no longer reflects the true state of the education system in their country. Second, UIS has also received pressure from development agencies for updated information on countries and use of alternative data sources such as household surveys to provide faster information.

Overall effectiveness

Of the four core functions performed by UIS, stakeholders identified the collection, validation and dissemination of cross-national data as the role in which UIS was most effective. UIS was described as *highly* or *moderately effective* by approximately 90% of external stakeholders and close to 100% of internal UNESCO stakeholders.

In the surveys of stakeholders, respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements about the overall performance of UIS. External stakeholders were most likely to agree with the following statements:

- ‘UIS has significantly improved the quality of data over time’; and
- ‘UIS analytical reports are credible, highly informative, and policy relevant’.

For both of these items over 90% of external stakeholders either *agreed* or *strongly agreed*.

Internal UNESCO stakeholders were most likely to agree with the following statements:

- ‘UIS analytical reports are credible, highly informative, and policy relevant’
- ‘UIS data is highly relevant for policy makers’
- ‘UIS has significantly improved the quality of data over time’

Over 90% of UNESCO agreed with the first two statements and almost 90% agreed that UIS had significantly improved the quality of its data

Furthermore, when asked to describe the main achievements and strengths of UIS, the majority of responses also referred to dimensions of the clearing house role of UIS.

The following are good illustrations of many comments received:

‘To maintain a team of experts to collate and disseminate useful cross-national statistics/ indicators and analyses. The data validation procedures seem to have been enhanced in recent years.’

'Collecting, analyzing, condensing, and distributing a broad spectrum of data that serves nations and individuals in formulating a comprehensive and unbiased understanding of diverse populations and philosophies'

Data quality

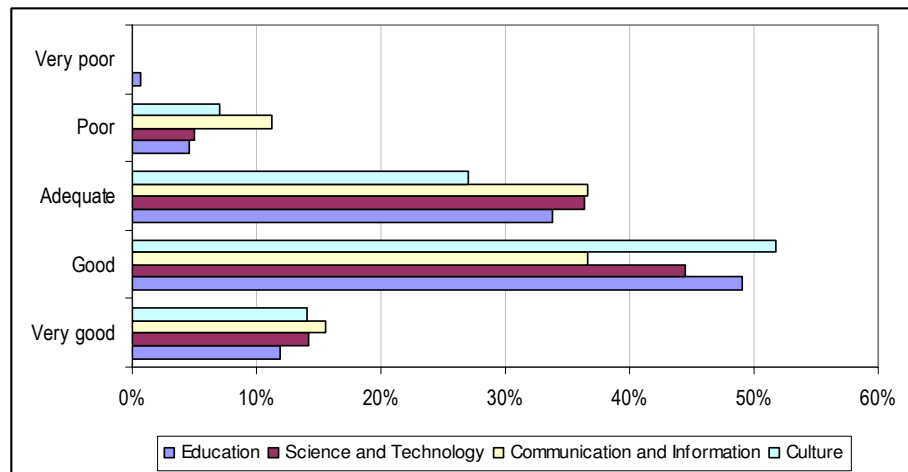
This section considers the effectiveness of UIS with respect to the following aspects of data quality:

- Timeliness
- Relevance
- Accessibility
- Accuracy
- International comparability

Timeliness

The survey of external stakeholders asked respondents to rate the five dimensions of data quality for each of the four sectors UIS is responsible for. Figure 11 below shows that stakeholders were reasonably positive about the timeliness of UIS data and was relatively similar between sectors. For all sectors, over 50% of stakeholders rated the of UIS data as *good* or *very good*.

Figure 11: Timeliness of data by sector



Source: Survey of external stakeholders

This is a good result for UIS given the significant issues surrounding the timeliness of data in the first few years of operation. Stakeholders we interviewed all commented on the improvement of UIS in this area, with particular reference to education statistics. It was suggested to us by members of management and Governing Board of UIS that there was a balance to be found between the quality assurance processes and the timeliness of data. It was argued that UIS chose to prioritize improvements to the reliability, accuracy, and completeness of data provided over the timeliness of data and, in doing so, may have tipped the balance too far in favour of non-timeliness aspects of data quality.

Timeliness, however, remains an on-going issue for users, both in the international community and Member States, who continuing to ask for shorter time lags. There is a risk to UIS that if their data is perceived as not reflecting the current situation for countries, users may bypass UIS data and search for data that offers more up-to-date information regardless of whether it is internationally comparable. The UIS is currently considering changes to internal processes, including shifting to a rolling collection cycle, which may assist this but, ultimately, timeliness is dependent on the speed with which data is provided by Member States, over which the UIS has limited control. To that end, UIS is developing a data collection system which will allow countries to submit data more than once in a year prior to the formal release.

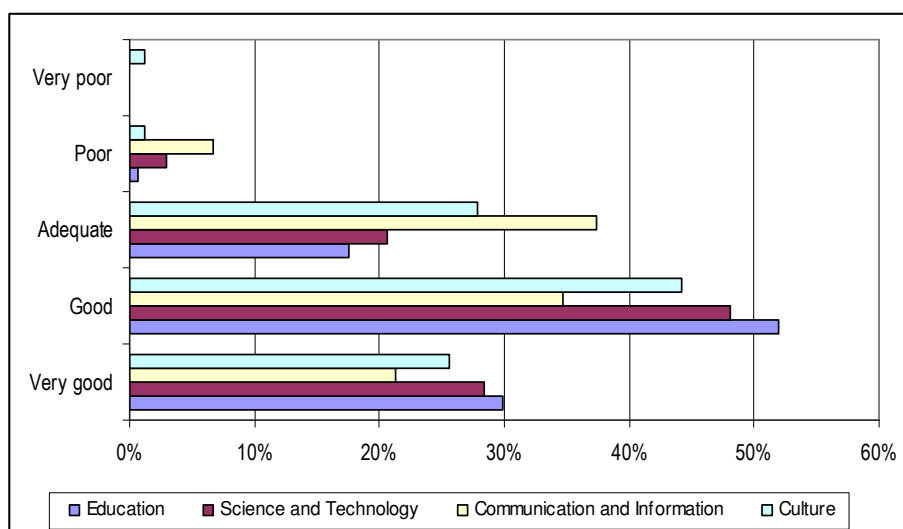
It is our view that first and foremost, the point of distinction and comparative advantage of the UIS as an international statistical agency is the collection and dissemination of cross-national comparable data. In fulfilling this role, their ability to reduce the time lag of data releases will inevitably be constrained.

UIS should seek to make improvements to the timeliness of data where possible but not at the expense of the credibility or international comparability of the data produced.

Relevance

Overall, external stakeholders were less positive about the relevance of the UIS data than they were about the broader clearing house function of the Institute. However, the result was still positive. In particular, over 80% of stakeholders rated the relevance of education statistics as *good* or *very good*.

Figure 12: Relevance of data by sector



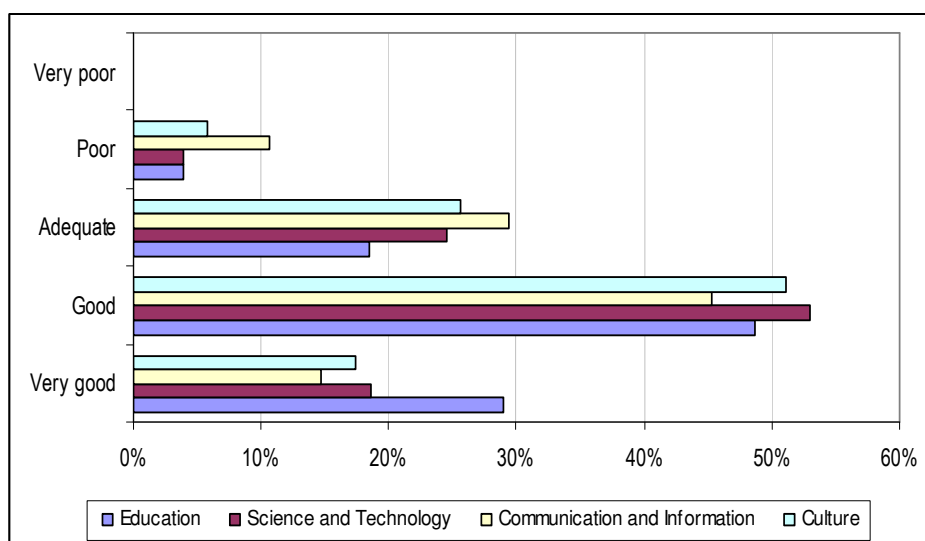
Source: Survey of external stakeholders

Communication and Information (CI) statistics were rated mostly poorly, with stakeholders most commonly rating the relevance of CI data as ‘adequate’. It is likely this reflects both the age of CI data available in the UIS database and the substantial gap in information on new forms of communication. The two World Summits on the Information Society in 2003 and 2005 gave visibility to the growing need for the measurement of the availability, access to, and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) worldwide. In contrast, the data collections of UNESCO historically measured traditional communication and information channels. The UIS is currently working to develop indicators to measure the use of ICTs in education. However, the Communication and Information team within the UIS is severely under-resourced which, if not addressed, is likely to hamper progress in this area.

Accessibility

The accessibility of the UIS’s data was the quality dimension rated most highly by external stakeholders, with just over three-quarters describing the accessibility of data as *good* or *very good*. While all UIS data is accessed through the same on-line system, the sheer volume of data available on education statistics, along with the country tables, education indicators, fast facts, and greater range of publications may all contribute to this finding. The introduction of the Global Education Digest, which is available in hard copy as well as on CD Rom and on-line, also makes education data more accessible to external users.

Figure 13: Accessibility of data by sector



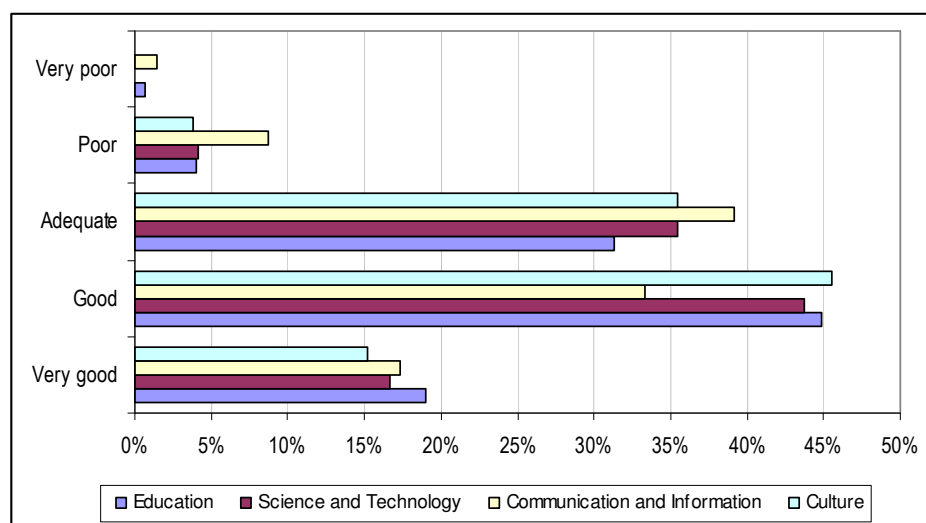
Source: Survey of external stakeholders

Communications and Information data rated the most poorly in terms of accessibility. An examination of the UIS statistical database showed the coverage and completeness of data available on communication and information and culture areas to be weak. This is compounded by the age of data with only the press and broadcast surveys having been conducted since 2000. This was a key issue for stakeholders we spoke with in both sectors. While accessibility may not be an issue, the paucity of data available is. As discussed elsewhere in this report, if there is to be any significant change in this area, the capacity of the CI and CLT teams within the UIS needs to be strengthened.

Accuracy

Improving the accuracy of data produced by UNESCO was another key priority for the Institute when it was formed in 1999. External stakeholders were most likely to rate the accuracy of education and culture data as *good* or *very good*.

Figure 14: Accuracy of data by sector



Source: Survey of external stakeholders

In general, stakeholders we spoke with paid tribute to the work of the institute in improving the accuracy and reliability of data over the evaluation period. These comments were made with particular reference to the in-house data processing and validation procedures, including improvements in the cross-checking of data which is handed in by Member States rather than just accepting it as valid.

The in-house systems UIS has developed to improve the accuracy of data are specific to the UIS education survey and have not all been fully documented. At the time of this evaluation, UIS is considering the establishment of a new processing unit that would service the data collection and processing activities across UIS. One of the main benefits of the proposed new processing unit is to further extend the use of these practices to non-education sectors and, by documenting the estimation and other procedures, improve transparency of the data quality and integrity processes for the institute as a whole.

There was concern from some that UIS has not been so effective in setting standards for data quality delivered by Member States and enforcing these consistently. As one respondent commented:

While UIS has improved its services and the quality of its data base work, it has not effectively met the expectations in terms of quality control within the Member States. All statistical agencies have two roles to play, a supply side and a demand side role. The UIS has been excellent in supplying new services, but not very good

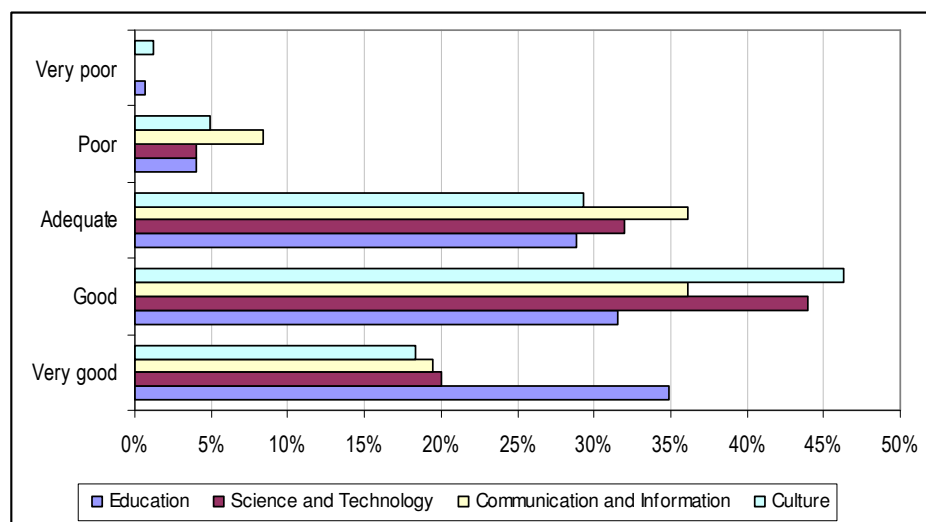
at improving the quality of the product before it is handed in by Member States... as a result, education statistics from many parts of the world continue to be untrustworthy and often useless for purposes of comparison.

Similar comments were made by former Governing Board and management representatives who argued strongly that UIS needed to continue to assert its independence and right not to accept or publish data that does not comply with international standards. Furthermore, the support of the Director General in the past was identified as a key factor in UIS's ability to maintain this position and that it was importance for the UNESCO executive to continue to support UIS in this way. The credibility of the data and core publications which use the data rely on the ability of UIS to remain vigilant in this regard.

International comparability

International comparability is the cornerstone of the clearing house function of the UIS. Stakeholders judged education statistics to be the most internationally comparable, with just over two-thirds rating them as *good* or *very good*.

Figure 15: Accuracy of data by sector



Source: Survey of external stakeholders

The UIS has carried out a number of activities to improve the international comparability of statistics over the evaluation period. In particular, the regional training workshops administered in each year except 2004 were used to introduce countries to the ISCED and assist them in mapping their national education data to

the international standards. Regional advisers have also been involved in providing technical advice to countries on completion of questionnaires from time to time, although the extent of this type of statistical capacity building is not well understood and differed between regions.

As the comment above notes, there is concern from some stakeholders that this support has been insufficient for the needs of many countries and this is reflected in the unreliability of data for some Member States. Regional advisers we spoke with saw a strong rationale for a greater decentralization of the data collection process to counter these issues. It was suggested that on-the-ground knowledge and networks were critical to the Institute's capacity to genuinely assess the accuracy of data provided.

Another aspect of international comparability is the harmonization between the methodologies of different statistical agencies that UIS relies on for country data. Over the evaluation period, the relationships formed with OECD and Eurostat have strengthened and the UIS has been able work with these organizations to improve the alignment between systems.

Notwithstanding the issues raised above, in comparison with its predecessor, the UNESCO Division of Statistics, the UIS has made great strides in the international comparability of its education data. The extent of international comparability in other sectors remains less clear and is less relevant given the infancy of the survey processes being undertaken. By their very nature, CI and Culture statistics are harder areas in which to establish agreed international indicators and to enforce conformance to an international standard.

Recommendations

10. The UIS needs to continue to develop its external communications strategy, particularly in relation to the website and launch of online data releases and publications, to raise its profile and cement its reputation as the premier source of internationally comparable data in its fields of competence.
11. The UIS should continue to seek improvements in timeliness of data as a paramount objective, while not jeopardising the potential validity and international comparability of that data.
12. UNESCO needs to remain vigilant in its protection of the independence of UIS, especially in the event that the UIS enforces its professional right to publish (or not publish) data that may be contested by an individual country.

STANDARD-SETTER

“UNESCO will serve as a central forum for articulating the ethical, normative and intellectual issues of our time, fostering multidisciplinary exchange and mutual understanding, working – where possible and desirable – towards universal agreements on these issues, benchmarking targets and mobilizing international opinion.”¹⁴

What activities are included and what were the expected outcomes?

In the Principles and Guidelines for Category One Institutes, the purpose of an institute “may encompass standard-setter (e.g. in the areas of classification and accreditation) as well as with respect to methodologies”. In the UIS’s Medium-Term Strategy 2002-07, one of the programmatic priorities is to develop appropriate methodologies and standards in new data areas and to revise and upgrade the existing international standard definitions and classifications. In particular, the UIS is responsible for the maintenance of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and produces materials and guidance for Member States on the application and interpretation of ISCED.

On-going activities related to this function include:

- To improve dissemination of best practice guidelines, methodological descriptions and quality standards; and
- To develop and improve international statistical methodologies and quality standards.

Table 4 describes the main activities and expected outcomes of UIS in relation to its standard-setting role.

¹⁴ C/4 Medium term strategy 2002/7, UNESCO.

Table 4 describes the activities and expected outcomes of UIS in relation to its role as a standard setter

Item	Description	Expected Outcomes
<p>Maintain and revise existing statistical frameworks or standards</p>	<p>Maintain and revise existing statistical standards for the collection of statistics in UNESCO’s fields of expertise. In most fields, this will occur in collaboration with other international organizations.</p>	<p><u>Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going maintenance and support of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). This involves continuing to assess adaptations or changes that might be required in the future <p><u>Science & Technology</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to OECD and EuroStat-led evaluations of international classifications relating to science and technology data. <p><u>Culture</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise and update the Framework for Culture Statistics to provide the conceptual and methodological basis for national and international collection and dissemination of statistics on culture <p><u>Communication and Information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a network of agencies and institutions already collecting and disseminating international statistics on communication to harmonize and improve statistical measurement methodologies in use and identify existing gaps in data collection.
<p>Develop materials and guidelines on the application and interpretation of statistical standards</p>	<p>Develop and disseminate best practices, guidelines, methodological descriptions and provide support for Member States who choose to apply them. This aims to assist in improving the international comparability of data collected by UIS.</p>	<p><u>Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize and disseminate ISCED Operational Manual and provide relevant training to assist Member States in implementing ISCED to improve international comparability of educational data. <p><u>Science & Technology</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop methodological guidelines for developing countries to accompany OECD manuals on S&T subjects.

ISCED

The main responsibility of the UIS in the area of standard-setting is to maintain and support the implementation of the revised International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-97).

ISCED was first designed by UNESCO in the 1970s to serve ‘as an instrument suitable for assembling, compiling and presenting statistics of education both within individual countries and internationally’. Developments and changes in education, and difficulties experienced by national authorities and international organizations in applying ISCED, led to an update and revision of the classification in the mid-1990s. The present classification, known as ISCED 1997, was approved by the UNESCO General Conference at its 29th session in November 1997 and first used in UNESCO’s collection process for education data in 1999.

The responsibilities of UIS include: (i) continuing to review and monitor ISCED to ensure the statistical framework remains relevant to areas of policy interest in the field of education; and (ii) assisting Member States in the mapping of ISCED to their national education systems. In this second capacity, UIS is responsible for developing operational manuals and guidelines to support the efforts of individual countries to align their national education statistics with ISCED. In the ISCED 1997 publication it states:

“ISCED rests on three components: (i) internationally agreed concepts and definitions; (ii) the classification systems; and (iii) an operational instructional manual and a well-defined implementation process. Comprehensive and detailed operational specifications are an integral part of ISCED – that is, inseparable from the basic taxonomy. The same applies to the implementation process. The operational manual will give specific and operational instructions. Without them, no individual country, no matter how strong its intention to facilitate international comparisons is in a position to determine whether its method of assigning programmes to international categories is compatible with the methods of other countries.”

Mapping country level data to conform to the ISCED system of classification is particularly problematic for less developed countries, with many countries struggling to identify their own education structure reflected in the ISCED. This lends further weight to the need for UIS to develop operational guidelines and to support Member States on a bilateral basis in implementing the classification system.

While it has remained a formal priority of the Institute, in practical terms UIS has made slow progress in the development of operational guidelines and instructions. Only in the last year has the UIS increased the level of dedicated resources to finalize the operational manual to accompany ISCED and develop a strategy for on-going work in this area.

However, while work on the operational manual for ISCED has been slow, the UIS has regularly engaged with Member States through regional workshops designed to develop networks with national statisticians and strengthen the quality, timeliness and international comparability of core national education data. One of the aims of these workshops has been to assist countries to interpret the ISCED in a consistent way, thereby increasing the cross-national comparability of data UIS receives. Similarly, some of the regional programmes of UIS also provide 'hands-on' technical support and advice to country statisticians in mapping national level data to the ISCED classifications in the annual education surveys. For example, through its Statistical Capacity Building programme, UIS has worked with a number of countries to redesign their school census and related education questionnaires.

Standard-setting in Science, Communication and Information and Culture Sectors

The UIS does not formally oversee any other international standards but the Institute has sought to play an influential or coordinating role in the revision or development of standards in other sectors.

The Science and Technology team at UIS has performed a limited standard setting role over the evaluation period. The re-engagement of UIS in the network of international and regional organizations responsible for the collection of science and technology statistics was an early priority of the S&T work programme. The overall goal of the S&T programme was to set standards in order to improve the policy relevance of science and technology statistical systems and, more specifically, improve the availability and quality of science and technology statistics available in developing countries.

The UIS has re-engaged in two international working groups on classifications in which UNESCO used to have a leading role. These are the:

- Eurostat task force for the revision of NABS 1992 (Nomenclature for the Analysis and Comparison of Scientific Programmes and Budgets, 1992 revision); and
- OECD task force for the revision of the Fields of Science classification.

The UIS S&T team was also active in issues related to ethics in S&T data. The Institute participated in the CODATA working group on Ethics.

In addition to establishing a UNESCO presence on these international working groups, UIS has also been active in drafting methodological guidelines for developing countries to accompany the existing OECD Frascati manual on Research and Development (R&D) Statistics and Oslo Manual on Innovation Statistics. In order to produce the guidelines for the Oslo Manual on Innovation Statistics, researchers in almost every UNESCO region were consulted.

Standard-setting has not been a strong feature of the work of UIS in either the field of Culture Statistics or Communication and Information Statistics. These two work programmes took longer to become re-established following the creation of UIS but since 2004 both have recently gained some momentum.

In Culture Statistics, UIS has undertaken to revise the 1986 UNESCO Culture Statistics Framework and funding has been provided by the UNESCO Secretariat for this purpose. The work started in 2006 and had not been completed at the time of this report. Further work is planned for 2007 in this area, but over the period of the evaluation UIS has essentially been inactive in a standard-setting capacity in culture statistics.

In Communication and Information statistics, UIS has actively contributed to the two consecutive World Summits on Information Society and undertaken to develop international indicators to measure progress in implementing the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by WSIS in 2003. As previously mentioned, UIS is also responsible for developing indicators to measure use of ICTs in education, a role arising from their participation in the Partnership for Measurement of ICTs. Work in both areas is in its early stages and it is too early to comment on the outcomes of these efforts in this report.

How effective are these activities in contributing to UIS and UNESCO objectives?

Overall this role has not been given priority by UIS, particularly early in the evaluation period. This is understandable given the breadth of the mandate of the Institute, the challenges it was facing to restore credibility to its education statistics collection, and the limited human and financial resources at its disposal. However, there is evidence

that standard-setting in statistical classifications and methodologies is becoming a more significant component of the work programmes for all sectors.

Standard setting is a critical role for UIS in developing the international comparability of statistics collected across all domains of UNESCO. Survey results suggest that international comparability continues to be viewed as an issue for UIS data – in all sectors. While these issues are not easily resolved, UIS is the international body most able to represent the differing needs of all countries and regions around the world, and in particular those of developing countries. This is a unique perspective which should be brought to bear on international standards irrespective of whether these standard setting activities are led by UIS or through a partnership of international agencies.

With regard to ISCED, the lack of progress in developing and finalizing the Operational Manual and guidelines is somewhat surprising given the importance attached by UIS to improving the international comparability of data and the need, therefore, to support countries to align their national data with ISCED. In the 2005 Governing Board report of UIS, the risk of this lack of activity is highlighted:

“For the past five years, the International Labour Organization (ILO), Eurostat and other international organizations have repeatedly asked that the UIS resume its lead on ISCED. If we fail to make relatively fast progress, the UIS risks losing its position as a standard-setter in this area.” (UIS/GB/VI/3)

While we recognize the complexity of developing guidelines that adequately address the diversity of national education systems around the world in a meaningful way, the development of operational guidelines and instructions to support the application of ISCED by Member States is now long overdue. Such instruments are likely to aid both countries and those in technical assistance roles to improve the international comparability of educational data. We recommend UIS prioritise the completion of the operational manual in collaboration UIS regional staff to ensure the guidelines respond effectively to the specific needs of different regions and, where possible, countries.

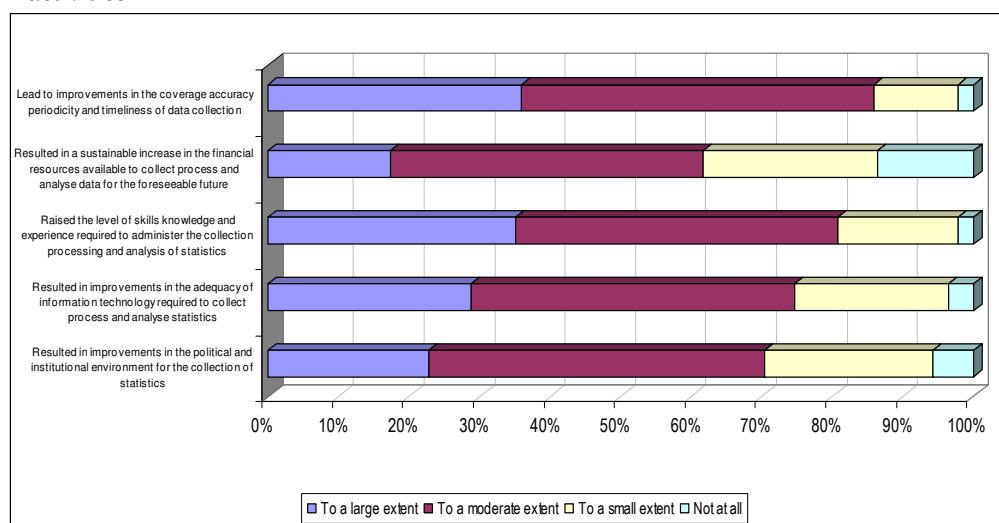
In place of such guidelines, training workshops and statistical capacity building activities have been the main means by which UIS has assisted Member States to map their national systems to ISCED in responding to the education surveys. Based on discussions with UIS staff and examination of annual reports, it appears that where training workshops are held, response rates and, anecdotally, data quality for the annual education survey improve significantly. The technical assistance provided by regional

staff was also valued by Member States and from the Institute’s perspective was useful in assisting countries to complete UIS questionnaires and improve the data quality, including international comparability.

Findings of the survey of stakeholders supported this conclusion. The results suggested the statistical capacity building efforts of UIS has been most successful in:

- raising the level of skills knowledge and experience required to administer the collection, processing and analysis of statistics; and
- leading to improvements in the coverage, accuracy, periodicity, and timeliness of data collection.

Figure 16: Stakeholder views on the impact of statistical capacity building activities



Source: Survey of Stakeholders

It is also our observation that no systematic process currently exists to assess the level of compliance by Member States to the ISCED classification system. Such a system would enable UIS to identify the level and nature of assistance required by different countries to improve the quality of data provided to UIS. Regional UIS staff are likely to have better knowledge in this regard but the wide geographic areas they cover and the regular changes in personnel at the country level may make it difficult to retain up to date information of national capacity.

In 2004, a World Bank evaluation of the Improvement of the Quality of International Comparable Education Statistics recommended the development of a meta-database that summarizes progress and identifies specialized regional requirements for statistical capacity building. The purpose of such a database would necessarily extend beyond

the difficulties or deficiencies of countries in applying ISCED, but information on compliance with ISCED might reasonably be collected and monitored as part of a wider system to prioritize the nature and extent of capacity building efforts.

We note the efforts of the UIS in the past year to collect more detailed information on national education systems as part of the annual education systems and the planned collection of country level information on the application ISCED in 2007. But as the biennium is not yet concluded, we cannot comment further on progress in this area other than to identify that UIS has scheduled work on this in the 2006/07 Programme and Budget.

Recommendation

- 13.** The UIS should consider implementing a systematic process for assessing Member States' compliance with ISCED, to inform assessments of international comparability and to identify priorities for targeted capacity building.

CAPACITY BUILDER

“UNESCO will organize international cooperation for servicing its stakeholders, especially its Member States, in building human and institutional capacities in all its fields of competence.”

The demand for relevant, reliable and timely statistics and indicators from policymakers and the international community has increased significantly in recent years, yet the experiences of the EFA 2000 Assessment and early UIS data collections show that a large number of countries suffer from a lack of adequate statistical capacity to produce and analyse data for policy development and monitoring purposes (32 C/5).

Reflecting this, building statistical capacity in Member States is one of the Institute’s priority areas. In particular, the UIS assists Member States by conducting national and sub-national capacity building activities and by providing technical support direct to countries in support of the production, analysis and dissemination of education statistics. In addition, the UIS contributes to capacity building through its programme of regional workshops, which entail training in the areas of education and, to a lesser extent, science and technology statistics. Besides these regional S&T workshops, the UIS is yet to develop significant capacity in the provision of technical assistance in fields other than education.¹⁵

What activities are included and what were the expected outcomes?

The main capacity building activities of the UIS fall within the scope of its Statistical Capacity Building (SCB) Programme. This Programme is intended to serve two primary purposes:

- To support Member States to meet their own needs for production and use of statistics in UNESCO domains; and
- To support the UIS core function of collecting high quality internationally comparable data in UNESCO domains.

The programme aims to contribute to these outcomes by building self-sustaining national and sub-national capacities in the production, collection, dissemination and use of statistics for the purposes of policy development and monitoring of progress

¹⁵ The Regional Workshops, while contributing to capacity building objectives, are primarily seen as part of the Institute’s survey production process and, as such, are considered within the Clearing House section of this chapter.

towards national and global goals. It is a medium- to long-term initiative and is intended to:

- Support countries to identify their needs for statistical capacity building;
- Help identify the real constraints faced by countries in building statistical capacity;
- Support countries to develop strategies and/or action plans to meet these needs and address the constraints;
- Facilitate government ownership of the strategies and action plans;
- Increase commitment by governments and other stakeholders to improve statistical capacity;
- Improve the political and institutional environment for the collection and use of statistics;
- Improve the adequacy of information technology required to collect, process and analyse statistics;
- Raise the level of skills, knowledge and experience required to collect, process and analyse statistics;
- Improve the coverage, accuracy, periodicity, timeliness and international comparability of education statistics; and
- Result in a sustainable increase in the financial resources available to collect, process and analyse data for the foreseeable future.

The above list comprises the broad outcomes or results that the SCB is expected to contribute to. These intended outcomes have been deduced from various SCB publications and are not generally listed as clearly or succinctly as they are here. We note that the C/5s also include expected results for the SCB Programme but these tend to be poorly specified and often describe outputs (e.g. development of a common framework to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of a country's statistical system and for monitoring progress of statistical capacity building efforts) rather than the results expected to flow from the delivery of those outputs. We therefore focus on the above list of intended outcomes in assessing the effectiveness of the SCB programme.

Supporting the achievement of these outcomes and results are a broad range of activities:

- Technical assistance missions to countries for the purposes of diagnosing the current state of collection, production and use of education statistics on a broad range of dimensions (e.g. institutional commitment and financing; quality of record keeping, data collection procedures, data processing technology etc)

- Technical assistance to support improvements in data collection instruments and methodologies;
- Technical assistance to support development and strengthening of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), including implementation of generalised EMIS software developed by UIS;
- Training in all aspects of the cycle of production, analysis and dissemination of statistics;
- Professional guidance on institutional capacity development (e.g. advice on establishment of national mechanisms for harmonisation of definitions, data quality assurance, best practices in user/producer dialogue etc); and
- Undertaking development initiatives to support the programme, including development of generalisable EMIS modules, methodology development, development of training materials and related research.

What activities has UIS delivered?

Given the wide range of capacity building activities undertaken by the UIS over the evaluation period, it is not possible (nor informative) for us to list everything here. Instead we aim to describe the main initiatives of the SCB Programme. Illustrative examples are used to provide more detailed of actual activities.

We organise this section to cover four aspects of the activities: the organisation of the SCB programme; main programme activities; regional differences in approach to SCB; and partnerships.

Organisation of the SCB Programme

The SCB programme is delivered on a decentralised basis through the UIS network of Regional Advisors and supporting staff, with global coordination undertaken by a small Montreal-based team overseen by the Head of the programme.¹⁶ The Regional Advisors are intended to play a broad role in the regions beyond the SCB programme, encompassing regional support to other elements of the UIS programme. In practice, the focus of Regional Advisors is predominately on SCB. Coordination between regional staff and UIS Head office is achieved through an annual meeting in Montreal, smaller regional meetings and informal mechanisms such as telephone and email.

¹⁶ At the time of this evaluation the position of Head of the SCB Programme, which is an ALD post, was vacant.

The UIS currently has four regional advisors based in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Dakar and Santiago. A fifth advisor was, until recently, affiliated with the UNESCO Apia Office, but the funding support for this position has expired. We understand a new follow up project in the Pacific is currently under consideration. The UNESCO ADG/Education has indicated the possibility of creating a sixth post in the Arab States region, as part of a broader initiative to ensure longer term stability in the funding for these posts.¹⁷

In addition to the Regional Advisors, the SCB programme engages Statistical Advisors, who are project-based staff, based at a country level. These advisors are typically based in UNESCO offices in the country or, where no country office exists, are affiliated with the nearest UNESCO office and hosted by another UN Organisation. As project based staff, they are funded by EXB for a finite period, typically around 2 years. In some instances, depending on the nature of the project, UIS may also hire an IT specialist. This person would normally be locally recruited (national staff) funded by EXB. The UIS currently has 24 posts in the regional offices and 18 project posts at country level.¹⁸

The SCB programme, including its staff, is predominantly financed by extra-budgetary funds, although some financial support to meet the costs of UIS Regional Advisors and other permanent staff is provided through the UIS core budget. Specifically, the shortfall in operating funding has been made up by the Regular Programme contribution from UNESCO and grants from CIDA and the World Bank Development Grant Facility. The UIS raises significant regional and country-level funding to cover costs of specific in-country technical assistance projects.

Main Programme Activities

While statistical capacity building was part of the mandate of the Institute's predecessor organisation, the UNESCO Division of Statistics, the Division was paying "significant lip service ... to the importance of service to Member States" in the 1990s. The Division's human and financial resources had declined to the point where it had little capacity to provide technical assistance directly to Member States.

¹⁷ The quid pro quo for this arrangement is that the UIS will reorient its regional network in order to align with the objectives of the Education sector reform.

¹⁸ A total of 14 posts are currently vacant. Furthermore, UIS posts are occasionally supplemented at country level by local contract staff funded by extra-budgetary funds.

Immediately following its transfer to Montreal in 2001, the UIS gave priority to re-establishing its credibility and reputation in its core function of education data collection and publication. Consequently, in the period 2001-03 it took only tentative steps towards establishing a capacity building programme. This is understandable since the UIS was essentially starting from scratch, including in relation to hiring personnel to set up and manage the programme.

The Governing Board reports in 2000 and 2001 illustrate that the UIS was only beginning to find its way in this area of programming. For example, in the November 2000 report, the Director noted that the UIS was “still in the process of defining our statistical capacity building strategy, in consultation with the concerned development agencies, institutions and experts” (UIS/GB/I/3). The 2001 report further notes that “work has recently begun in order to develop a strategy document which will guide us in the principles and practice of statistical capacity building” (UIS/GB/II/3).

Already in 2001 and 2002 the UIS was discovering that “the demand for assistance far outstrips the UIS capacity to respond” (UIS/GB/II/3) and “without significant additional resources, UIS can only have a limited impact” (UIS/GB/III/3). The 2002 Governing Board report concluded that “actions are required to put in place a team to develop a capacity-building strategy, to connect the strategy to those of partner agencies, and to organise its implementation” (UIS/GB/III/3).

In line with this, the capacity building activities of UIS prior to 2003 were restricted to support, through its Dakar office, of the WGES-NESIS project in Africa, and in this capacity the UIS played a role in assisting Sub-Saharan African countries to carry out the EFA 2000 Assessment (see box below). In addition, the UIS undertook a number of small one-off projects in various regions such as:

- The provision of technical assistance to Nigeria in the ongoing Baseline 2001 education survey and modernisation of the Education Data Bank, with financial support from the World Bank;
- Cooperation with the UNESCO Basic Education Division, the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) of Japan, and selected Member States – Tanzania, Cambodia and India – in launching pilot projects to establish management information systems for non-formal education;
- Cooperation with the Summit of the Americas Indicators Project (PRIIE) in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the provision of in country technical assistance in a number of countries in the region; and

- Participation in the Pan-Arab Project for Education (PAPED), a regional statistical capacity building initiative in the Arab States supported primarily by donors in this region and the World Bank DGF.

NESIS project of ADEA Working Group on Education Statistics

The NESIS project is an initiative of the Working Group on Educational Statistics (WGES) of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). The project has been running since 1991 and is intended to respond to the needs of African policy-makers for well-managed and responsive statistical information services in education. It is funded from a consortium of bilateral donors.

With the ongoing support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the UIS actively supported the NESIS project from 1999 to 2005. For most of this period UIS provided three staff members – two stationed in Harare and one in Dakar – who served as the secretariat and coordinators of the Working Group on Educational Statistics (WGES).

Through the WGES-NESIS, the UIS with partner agencies and Member States carried out a range of capacity building initiatives, such as hosting regional and sub-regional capacity building workshops, development of training modules (including CD-ROMs) and development of EMIS systems. Training and technical assistance activities were also conducted at country level, including support for implementation of EMIS. As coordinating agency, the UIS played a leading role in developing and implementing the capacity building programme of the WGES. A key strength of the project was the broad based support enjoyed by ADEA and the WGES, including from Member States and donor agencies.

In late 2002, two senior Harare-based staff left UIS, which put the programme on the back foot for some time. Although the lost personnel were replaced in late-2003 the programme began to experience difficulties, as the new staff did not necessarily operate according to the previously tacitly agreed principles. There was a feeling among some in WGES that the UIS was trying to take ownership of the WGES-NESIS rather than serving as a partner in support of its work. Because the resources of the WGES were essentially under the control of the UIS staff, and due to weaknesses in the ability of the WGES to clearly articulate how it wished UIS to operate, the approach began to diverge substantially from its original goals and philosophy. Consequently, non-UIS staff who had been involved in the work of the

WGES and NESIS became disenchanted and the work programme of WGES ground to a halt. In 2004, following a prolonged deterioration in the relationship between UIS and ADEA resulting from the stalled programme and differences in opinion over its future direction, the ADEA Secretariat requested UIS to step down from its role as coordinating agency for WGES.

ADEA has subsequently undertaken an internal review of WGES-NESIS to better articulate its identity, orientation and added-value and to reposition itself to adapt to new challenges facing the programme, including the need to implement ADEA's decision to institutionalise WGES-NESIS in Africa. Current relations between ADEA and UIS remain uneasy although there is willingness on the part of the UIS to rehabilitate the relationship. It is important that both organisations put their differences behind them and work towards renewing their partnership for the benefit of African countries.

The World Bank and several bilateral donors were early supporters of UIS technical assistance in support of national statistical capacity building. The UIS also participated in the inter-agency PARIS21 initiative throughout the early years of the Institute.

Notwithstanding the above, the SCB programme of UIS did not begin in earnest until 2003, following the recruitment of a senior programme specialist to develop and manage the programme. At around the same time, the Director decided to establish UIS Regional Advisor positions in the UNESCO Regional Education Bureaus in Dakar, Harare, Bangkok and Santiago. This reflected the need for a strong regional presence in order to support delivery of the programme in the field. In addition, two UIS staff were assigned to the newly established Montreal-based SCB team.

The UIS SCB programme has grown very quickly since 2003. A key early initiative was the European Union-funded SCB Project in 11 Fast Track Countries. This project spawned a large number of follow-on country-level technical assistance projects in the 11 participating countries and, through demonstration effects, has generated demand for similar projects from additional countries. More detailed information on the EU-funded SCB project in Fast Track Countries can be found in Appendix 7.

The EU-project, together with important programme-level funding from the World Bank DGF, also enabled the UIS to take major steps towards systematising its approach to SCB, including enabling investment in developmental initiatives. The developmental component of the SCB programme is concerned with the development

of new methodologies, EMIS modules and training materials. Significant initiatives have included the development of a full suite of generalisable EMIS modules, the development of a methodology for undertaking country diagnostics, including a Data Quality Assessment Framework developed jointly with the World Bank. As time passed, the sophistication of the programme has increased and these developmental initiatives have consequently become more specialised. For example, the UIS developed in collaboration with ED/BAS/LIT a methodology and systems for non-formal EMIS, which was subsequently piloted in a number of countries.

Regional Differences in Approach to SCB

The UIS has been active in statistical capacity building in all five regions of UNESCO – Asia and the Pacific, the Arab States, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean – however the emphasis has been on the African region and, to a lesser extent, the regions of Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Although we have not been able to explore this issue in detail, our conversations with UIS Regional Advisors and some other stakeholders suggests that UIS takes significantly different approaches to SCB in the different regions. This in part reflects the significant differences among the regions in terms of culture and systems development, which means that a regionalised and customised approach to capacity development is required (Campbell, 2004). However, it also partly reflects different approaches taken by the relevant Regional Advisors, some of whom appear to work quite independently from the SCB Programme office in Montreal.¹⁹ A full assessment of the statistical capacity building activities of the UIS cannot be carried out without briefly considering these regional differences.

Africa

In terms of human and financial resources, the UIS dedicates most of its SCB activities towards the African region. The UIS employs three Regional Advisors in Africa (2 in Senegal and 1 in Ethiopia) who report to the Head of the SCB Programme in Montreal. The Regional Advisors are supported by an additional 12 UIS field staff (5 in Senegal, 2 in Ghana and 1 in each of Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Tanzania). These personnel are in turn supported by locally hired consultants using extra budgetary funds on a project-by-project basis.

¹⁹ For example, the UIS Regional Advisor based in Bangkok reports directly to the Director of the Institute rather than via the SCB Programme Manager.

The UIS capacity building activities in Africa are heavily, although not exclusively, oriented towards the development of EMIS systems and provision of ‘hands on’ technical assistance. Many UIS staff members in Africa are specialists in EMIS development and Information Technology. The activities are largely country-level, project-based (in part because the activities are predominantly extra-budgetary funded) and are very ‘hands on’ (i.e. UIS staff do a lot of the implementation work in the countries). The Regional Advisors in Africa provide some support for non-SCB UIS functions but their role is primarily geared towards managing SCB programme activities. Aspects of the programme appear to operate largely independently of key regional- and sub-regional networks, such as ADEA WGES.

Asia

The UIS has one Regional Advisor in Bangkok, who is supported by three other permanent staff plus seven EXB-funded locally-hired non-UIS staff and volunteers. The Asia and Pacific Regional Office of UIS has established the Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Programme Unit to provide technical assistance, capacity-building and advisory services to Member States in relation to statistics collection and use for policy planning, monitoring implementation, evaluation and assessment. The office tries to support activities in all areas of UNESCO’s mandate with an emphasis on education. It works closely with key partners in the region including the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, the Office of the Regional Culture Advisor, the Statistics Division of the United Nations Economic and the Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Regional Thematic Working Group on EFA Statistics. AIMS is also actively involved in maintaining and strengthening two regional networks: the Association for the Development of Education in Asia Pacific (ADEAP), and the National Education Statistical Information Systems Asia-Pacific (NESIS-AP).

The Office regards itself as a bona fide regional office of UIS, in that it is intended to support the four core functions of UIS. Nevertheless, its main focus is capacity development of national statistical information systems and, in particular, national systems for monitoring progress towards EFA goals. Compared with the approach taken by UIS in Africa, the AIMS Unit appears to take a less ‘hands on’ approach to project implementation and instead focuses on playing a backstopping role through its support to regional and sub-regional networks as well as through country-level technical advisory services. The capacity building activities of the AIMS Unit are significantly oriented towards training (e.g. on reliable data collection, data processing and data analysis methods), mainly sub-regional training workshops, rather than

project implementation. Nevertheless, the Office also provides considerable technical assistance at country level (e.g. supporting Nepal to redesign the annual school census; providing advisory and training services for an EFA Monitoring and Evaluation Provincial Study in Guizhou province, China) including IT-related EMIS support.

The Pacific

Until recently the UIS had a Pacific Regional Advisor affiliated with the UNESCO Apia Office, but the funding support for this position expired - a new follow-up project is currently under consideration. The main activity of the UIS in the Pacific has been the management of a two year programme in Pacific Island states, funded by Japanese Funds In Trust (JFIT). Problems of data quality and coverage are serious in the Pacific region, as less than half of the countries complete the annual UIS education questionnaires on education. The JFIT-funded project involved the preparation of action plans for Member States to strengthen their capacities for production and use of information and supported implementation of these action plans through a regional training course in education statistics attended by all 15 Pacific Member States and through two site visits to each of nine countries to provide further training and technical advice.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The Latin America and Caribbean Regional Advisor was appointed in September 2003. Like the UIS Bangkok Office, the UIS LAC Regional Team works in an integrated fashion with the UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education (OREALC) in Santiago, Chile. The newness of the team, and its small size, limits its capacity to undertake significant country-level capacity building activities. Instead, the Office has tended to leverage its limited resources by formulating capacity building initiatives as part of regional education sector initiatives. Examples include the Summit of the Americas Regional Education Indicators project (discussed in the following sub-section) and the Regional Information System (SIRI) project coordinated by OREALC. The latter initiative is aimed at improving countries capacities to collect and use data for EFA monitoring purposes through facilitating information exchange and training. In recent years, the UIS LAC Regional Team has undertaken diagnostic missions in a number of countries to inform development of a comprehensive regional SCB initiative.

The Arab States

The UIS has had limited presence in the Arab States. It supported the PAPED regional statistical capacity building initiative in Arab countries but does not have a

permanent presence in the region. The Director of the Institute is currently in discussions with the ADG Education about how UIS might better integrate the role it plays in the regions with that of the Education sector. This may lead to UNESCO Education funding a permanent UIS regional advisor in the Arab States region.

Partnerships

The SCB Programme relies extensively on its relationships with development partners for both funding and technical cooperation.

In Africa, partnerships have been formed between UIS and the AfDB and IDB, with the help of the UNESCO Division for External Relations and Coordination (ERC). The UIS has also been actively involved in the UNESCO/AU initiative to define a 10 year action plan for Education in Africa with the regional advisor in Addis Ababa leading a sub-group on EMIS. As previously mentioned, relationships need to be urgently rebuilt between UIS and ADEA - a harmonised approach to statistical capacity building in Africa is unlikely to happen without cooperation between UIS and ADEA.

In Asia, the UIS Office has participated actively in regional and national CCA/UNDAF MDG, PRSP processes. The office is an active partner in the UNDAF programme in Thailand and is a member of the Working Group on Statistics in Lao PDR. It has played a formative role in establishing ADEAP and NESIS-AP, and maintains close relations with ESCAP. UIS Bangkok also participates annually in a joint programme at the UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, by offering a training course in Education Statistics and EFA-MDG monitoring.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the UIS works closely with OREALC and the Summit of the Americas project, and has worked as a technical assistance partner with the U.S. Department of Education through its National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES).

Globally, the UIS has also participated actively in the PARIS21 initiative, which is a partnership of policymakers, analysts, and statisticians from all countries of the world focused on promoting high-quality meaningful statistics for policy making. Furthermore, there has been a close collaboration between UIS and the World Bank in relation to SCB, including the joint development of the Data Quality Assurance Framework which is a key tool used as part of UIS country diagnostic studies.

How effective are these activities in contributing to UIS and UNESCO objectives?

The resources for this evaluation did not permit visits to countries where UIS has undertaken SCB Programme activities. This limited the methods available to us for evaluating the effectiveness of UIS in this area. Because of the country-level nature of operational activities, first hand accounts from those involved in projects would be the preferred method of evaluating these activities. Surveys and second-hand accounts are adequate for gaining impressionistic views but cannot provide the richness and depth of understanding of country-level impacts that can be gleaned from field-based study.

Our results in this section rely on a combination of previous evaluation findings, documentary review (including project completion reports), our own surveys of internal and external stakeholders and, importantly, telephone interviews with three UIS regional advisors, the former SCB Programme Head and a small number of country-level stakeholders. While we are reasonably confident in the views expressed here, it is our belief that the SCB programme is of a sufficient scale and importance to merit its own evaluation based on field visits to a number of the regions and the conduct of a number of country-based case studies.

In our consideration of the country-level impacts of the SCB Programme, we have predominantly focussed on the subset of 11 EFA Fast Track countries funded by the European Commission project. This is because the UIS SCB activities have been most concentrated in these countries and the efforts sustained for the longest period. Furthermore, we have constrained our analysis to two of these countries in particular (Niger and Ethiopia) owing to resource constraints. We do not claim to have undertaken an in-depth review of the SCB activities in these countries but believe we have captured the essence of the experiences of these countries.

Statistical Capacity Building Programme

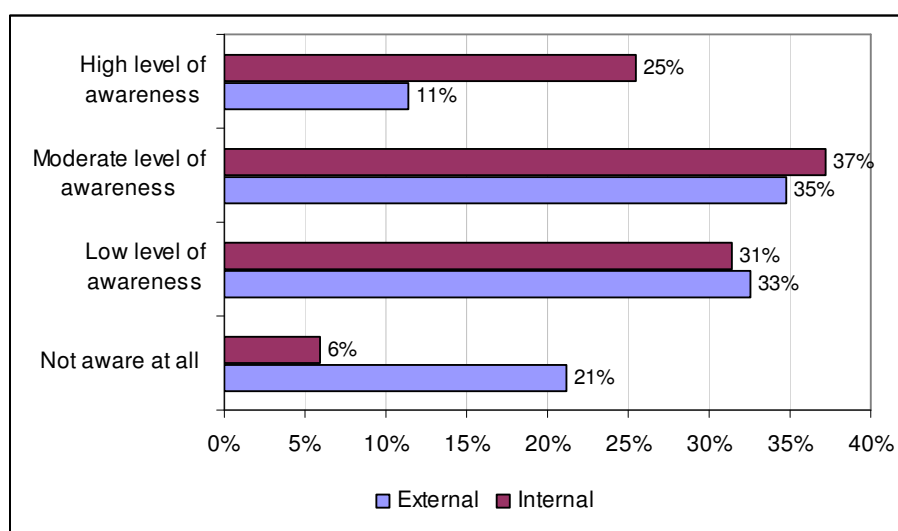
In this section we focus on the following dimensions of effectiveness:

- Awareness
- Relevance
- Achievements
- Programme Delivery
- Sustainability

Awareness

While the statistical capacity building programme is the least well known of the UIS functions among the stakeholders who responded to our Survey, in general there is a relatively high degree of awareness. Approximately 62% of UNESCO stakeholders in the field and 46% of external stakeholders considered they had a high or moderate level of awareness of the programme. The slightly lower level of awareness among external stakeholders, including among government officials in Member States, may reflect the uneven country-level presence of UIS in the field in the various regions.

Figure 17: Awareness of SCB Programme



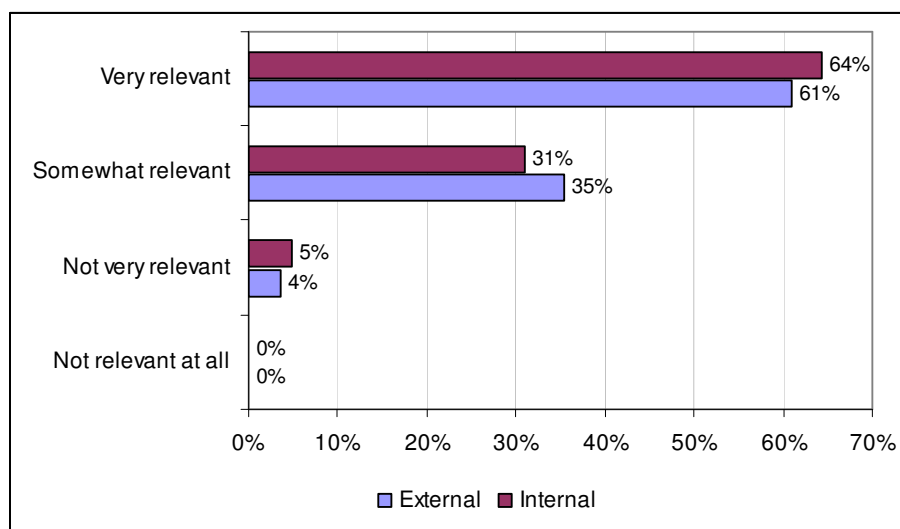
Source: Surveys of External Stakeholders and UNESCO field offices, institutes and centres.

The SCB Programme Head was very active in marketing the SCB programme at country level, particularly in Africa. Indeed, a number of interviewees noted that the UIS has made significant commitments and promises to undertake SCB projects in a wide range of countries, subject to financing. While this “sales-based” approach has generated awareness of the programme, and has contributed to raising its profile amongst donors, the “promise-first, fund-later” mentality has raised expectations in Member States that may be unrealistic and it has placed UIS Regional Advisors under pressure to deliver without the necessary human and financial backing. It has also generated demand for the programme from donors and countries that may not be underpinned by a genuine country-level commitment to build institutional capacity. Consequently, this approach has the potential to disappoint and sully the very good reputation of UIS in the field and among Member States in particular.

Relevance

Most stakeholders we interviewed, including representatives of Member States, development partners and members of the international statistical community, considered the statistical capacity building programme highly relevant to the needs of Member States. And these findings were backed up by our surveys of internal and external stakeholders.

Figure 18: Relevance of SCB Programme



Source: Surveys of External Stakeholders and UNESCO field offices, institutes and centres.

Most stakeholders we interviewed were quick to note the importance of SCB programme activities not just for building countries' own statistical capacities but for improving the quality of UIS data, which is a key factor in development/aid decision making. In many countries, particularly in the Pacific, Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia, statistical capacity in the field of education (and in other UNESCO fields of competence) remain extremely weak, and it is doubtful that data submitted in response to UIS education surveys by some countries provides a true reflection of the state of education within those countries. Consequently, the only real way to improve data quality is through making appropriate in-country investments in statistical capacity.

Achievements

In countries where UIS has been engaged in SCB for a period of time, there are obvious examples of significant improvements in data coverage and quality. For example, the EU-funded Project in 11 EFA FTI countries has assisted countries to pinpoint significant shortcomings in the systems of education data collection, capture, processing and dissemination and has facilitated the development of action plans to address those weaknesses. Moreover, the UIS has been successful in raising funds at country level to finance the provision by UIS of the necessary technical assistance, training and provision of equipment to implement those action plans to varying degrees. Indeed, the work of UIS has assisted countries such as Ethiopia and Niger to undertake a major overhaul of their education statistics environments, yielding significant improvements in timeliness, coverage and accuracy of statistics:

- Timeliness of education data – In countries where UIS is actively undertaking SCB activities, the UIS has enabled national authorities to complete UIS questionnaires and report their data in advance of the annual data request from the Education Survey Team. As a result, five countries (Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Nepal) published data based on the 2005 reference year (rather than the norm of 2004) in the 2006 edition of the Global Education Digest;
- Coverage of education data – in 2004 the percentage of indicators for which data were published at the country level was 24% in the 15 Pacific countries participating in the UNESCO-JFIT-funded project and 39% for the 11 EC-funded countries. By 2006, following intensive SCB activities, the rates had increased to 49% and 67% respectively;
- Timeliness of education data – In several countries, including Niger, Guinea and Ghana, there have been significant improvements in the release of data nationally promoting greater use by policy-makers in the planning cycle. Some countries (Uganda, Niger, Guinea and Ethiopia) now have longitudinal databases spanning several years which, combined with new user-friendly data query tools provided by UIS, have enabled the production of yearbooks incorporating analysis of key trends.

Although we have not been able to undertake field visits to countries where UIS has been engaged in SCB activities, and therefore cannot provide in-depth case-based assessments of achievements, we have through a mix of documentary analysis, interviews and analysis of individual survey responses managed to take a somewhat closer look at achievements in relation to two initiatives:

- The experiences of an EFA Fast Track country (Ethiopia) as a result of their participation in the EU-funded UIS SCB programme and follow-up donor-funded implementation activities at country level; and
- The Summit of the Americas Regional Education Indicators project (PRIE) in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

The former project demonstrates the significant short-term returns in data quality that can result from a relatively short (2-3 years) but intense period of investment in a country's technical statistical capacity. The latter project demonstrates a different type of capacity building initiative, focussed at regional level, which nevertheless involved in-country technical assistance. Both types of projects have generated concrete outputs in terms of new and improved data.

The experience of an EFA FTI country: Ethiopia

In 1997 the government of Ethiopia launched its first five year Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) to improve educational quality, relevance, equity and expand access with special emphasis on primary education in rural and under-served areas and education for girls in an attempt to achieve universal primary education by 2015. Despite important reforms in the Education Sector Development Plans I (1997-2001) and II (2002-05), performance indicators show that only access-related targets (such as gross enrolment of 65 percent by 2004/05) have been achieved so far (MoFED, 2005). However, the quality of primary education declined in most respects over the same period, with particular shortfalls in the numbers of qualified primary school teachers and access to textbooks, as well as increasing class sizes. This in turn contributed to a doubling of primary school dropout rates between 1999/00 and 2003/04 (Young Lives Ethiopia, 2006).²⁰

Consequently, the focus of EDSP III is on improving the quality of education. Reliable and timely data are an important input into monitoring progress in implementation of ESDP III. In particular, with the ongoing decentralization process in Ethiopia, there is an urgent need to look beyond average indicators currently derived from the aggregated dataset compiled by the EMIS unit of the Ministry of Education and to improve accessibility to a wider range of quantitative, qualitative and disaggregated data and indicators from its EMIS.

²⁰ Young Lives Ethiopia (2006) Children's educational completion rates and achievement: implications for Ethiopia's SDPRP II (2006-10).

Since 2003 the UIS has conducted several missions to Ethiopia, including two rounds of diagnostic analysis that thoroughly reviewed the EMIS infrastructure and its capacity with respect to data collection, production and use. The diagnostic study, published in August 2004, included a detailed critique of the incumbent EMIS system. The incumbent system had been developed by an external consultant with the financial support of the USAID-BESO Project. It was a “closed system” and, consequently, it was inflexible to changing user needs and the Ministry was reliant on the original consultant to make adjustments and fix problems as they arose. This situation represented a significant ongoing risk and cost for the Ministry of Education.

The UIS demonstrated to Ministry officials and donors that switching to the UIS generalisable EMIS system would be preferable to developing patches to upgrade the existing system. This solution was supported by the Ministry and local development partners. With the agreement of the Government of Ethiopia and the financial support of the Netherlands and UNICEF, the UIS is now undertaking a project to:

- Introduce a new EMIS based on the UIS generalized EMIS modules for the 2005-06 school year, which will meet the needs for monitoring ESDP III and the PRSP.
- Build capacities of national authorities at federal and regional levels to achieve national expertise and sustainability of the new system, including supporting regions to train head teachers in completion of the questionnaires and the importance of data quality;
- Implement a consolidated, multiyear database with a user-friendly query interface that will reside on the Ministry internet and on CD-ROM; and
- Undertake a situational analysis at the Woreda level to identify capacity development requirements, and to prepare a strategy for extension of EMIS to the Woreda level in the near future.

The role of the UIS is ‘hands on’ in that it provides EMIS software tools, methodology, expertise and best practices and assumes responsibility for the overall direction of the project and its execution. This assistance is provided through one senior UIS EMIS specialist and one Ethiopian IT specialist, both based locally in Addis Ababa.

Notwithstanding the relative newness of this initiative, there have already been concrete signs of progress in respect of data collection for the 2005/06 school year. With UIS technical assistance, new questionnaires have been designed for Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary and TVET levels of education. Ethiopia has also adopted the UIS data collection methodology, including training of head teachers in

questionnaire completion. A new national and regional-level EMIS has substantively been implemented, and work is underway to evaluate capacities and needs for EMIS at Woreda level. Response rates to the surveys are much improved on previous years and data collection and processing are more timely. The training of head teachers in questionnaire completion, which was planned and supervised by the regions themselves, has resulted in an improvement in data accuracy. Publication of the 2005/06 Education Statistics Yearbook is expected before the end of 2006.

Summit of the Americas Regional Education Indicators Project

Convinced that statistical information is a key element for the formulation, execution, and assessment of education policies, the Ministers of Education of the countries of the Summit of the Americas agreed that the Minister of Education of Chile, with the collaboration of UNESCO, would coordinate the design and implementation of a regional education indicators project. The objectives of the project were to construct a set of comparable education indicators for the Americas, strengthen national systems of education statistics through a technical cooperation programme; and publish indicators and foster their use in the design of education policies.

The technical co-operation part of the project was a collaboration between UNESCO and the U.S. Department of Education. UNESCO was represented by the UIS, OREALC and its Office for the Caribbean, in Jamaica. The U.S. Department of Education contributed through its National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). The Ministry of Education of Chile was also an active partner. Each of these organizations provided either financial support or in-kind resources for the technical assistance that was given to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The programme of technical cooperation as part of the project was designed to provide countries with the capacity to collect, process and deliver information according to the international standards required to properly fill out the questionnaires developed by UIS. It involved the provision of technical assistance in relation to the completion of UIS questionnaires to 14 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean from the middle of 2002 to the first quarter of 2003. Team of two technical assistants spent between three and four days on site in each country and produced a data plan that provided detailed instructions for countries to use existing data to complete the questionnaires and suggested methods to obtain missing data from new (or revised) data collections.

The collection of education data by international organizations rarely involves the type of technical assistance that was provided through the program of technical cooperation discussed above. Typically, questionnaires are sent to countries with a due date for response; problems or concerns raised by countries are addressed through mail, electronic communication, or a regional workshop; and countries' data submissions are discussed through similar means. Technical assistance, to the extent that it is provided at all, tends to be generic, rather than country-specific: it focuses on the structure and content of the questionnaires, not on ways countries can use their national data to complete the questionnaires.

The technical assistance strategy used in this project took the process to the next level by providing individualized assistance that was tailored to the specific organisation and content of data in each of the 14 countries. This was its major strength, but not its only one. Other strengths included:

- As a condition of participation, countries had to designate a national coordinator to work with technical assistants and involve appropriate officials and staff in the process. This person served as a point of contact for the substantive and logistical work during the site visit;
- Countries had to assemble a team of officials and staff from different offices in the ministry of education, the ministry of finance, and different types of educational institutions to work with technical assistants during the site visit. The team approach was vital to the success of the technical assistance, since completion of the UIS questionnaires requires assembly and processing of data from a variety of different sources;
- Countries were advised in advance of the site visit about the objectives of the technical assistance, the structure and organization of the sessions, and the expected outcomes of the site visit (i.e. the data plans). This enabled country staff to organise relevant material and prepare more fully for the discussions;
- Technical assistants used material provided by national coordinators in advance of the site visits to prepare preliminary data plans. This advance preparation permitted more focused discussions and enhanced the efficiency of the technical assistance process;
- The technical assistance was provided on site in the country. The presence of technical assistants on site for three to four days required the ministry of education staff devote their full attention to the technical assistance process and provided the opportunity for extensive discussions of different issues. The use of two-person teams was beneficial to the process since it facilitated communication, contributed to efficiency in the conduct of the work, and supported the validation of information about countries' education and data systems; and

- The culmination of the technical assistance process was a detailed data plan for each country that specified procedures for using available data to complete the questionnaires, estimating missing data, and collecting new data to fill in the critical gaps. The data plan should therefore serve as a permanent record of the technical assistance and as a guide to staff in completing the questionnaires in future years. Ministry staff should not have to reinvent the wheel each year when they work on the UIS questionnaires and the data submissions should be more consistent from year to year.

Although the technical assistance project produced a host of positive effects, it was not without flaws. Some of the project's weaknesses were:

- The process did not build in a formal mechanism of communication between the technical assistant and the national coordinator to review the country's data plan. Although countries generally received a draft data plan between two and six weeks after the completion of the site visit, other professional commitments often made it difficult for national coordinators to provide feedback on the plan. Technical assistants also did not have the opportunity to find out whether ministry staff were able to use the data plan to complete the UIS questionnaires and, if they did, whether the plan was adequate for the task; and
- The process did not build in a review of the UIS questionnaires that were completed based on the directions in the data plan by the technical assistants before the questionnaires were submitted to the UIS. With this added review, technical assistants might have been able to identify problems already present in the data and advise countries about ways to correct the problems before the UIS began processing the data and producing the indicators.

In summary, the technical assistance process opened up new channels of communication, led to a broader perspective on the education system, and in some cases resulted in a modification of internal data collections to improve data coverage and quality. However, the lack of follow-up precluded an assessment of countries' use of their data in completing the UIS questionnaires and a validation of countries' actual data submissions. Notwithstanding the weaknesses, the project is an excellent example of a region-wide collaborative capacity building project and offers many insights for future capacity development projects in Latin America and the Caribbean and, potentially, other regions.

Source: Summit of the Americas (2003) *The Experience of the Regional Indicators Project 2000-2003*, Santiago, Chile.

The immediate benefits of improved data coverage and quality illustrated by the above examples are backed up by our survey of external (internal) stakeholders. More than 80% (60%) of respondents reporting that they believed the SCB programme had led to improvements in the coverage, accuracy, periodicity and timeliness of data collection to a moderate or large extent.

In general, there were positive stakeholder perceptions in relation to other intended outcomes of the SCB programme (see Appendix 3). In general, internal UNESCO stakeholders in the field were less positive and more varied in their responses than external stakeholders. It was noted that both external and internal stakeholders were in agreement that the SCB programme contributed the least to the outcome of a sustainable increase in the financial resources for the collection, processing and analysis of statistics. Full survey results are provided in Appendix 3.

Programme Delivery²¹

SCB programme delivery is based around the UIS regional network, which has grown significantly over the evaluation period to the point where there is now a reasonably extensive network of staff working on statistical capacity building in Africa, Asia and, to a lesser extent, Latin America and the Caribbean. Ongoing UIS representation has not yet been established in the Arab States or the Pacific.

The existence of this network, which at times has developed opportunistically (e.g. the Regional Advisor position in Addis Ababa was established on the back of a country-level project in Ethiopia), represents a reasonably solid base from which to deliver regional and, to a lesser extent, country-level statistical capacity building initiatives. In effect, it extends the Institute's influence deeper into the national level statistical production and generates useful intelligence in relation to country-level data quality. UIS Regional Advisors are much better positioned than headquarters staff to encourage country commitment to the international data collection process (Campbell, 2004). Consideration should be given to giving Regional offices a stronger role in data collection and validation in collaboration with UIS Montreal.

One concerning aspect of programme delivery relates to the funding of the programme, including of the network of regional staff. The establishment of the network has benefited from programme-level funding provided by the World Bank DGF and CIDA, although it continues to require funding from the UNESCO Regular

²¹ This section draws extensively on Campbell (2004).

Programme. While expansion of the programme is intended to be entirely EXB funded, the Institute has from time to time been caught out by both delays in funding and insufficient funding (UIS/GB/VII/3). For example, there are frequently delays between reaching an in principle agreement with a country/donor and the conclusion of an MOU with secured financing. On occasion, the UIS has committed existing staff to prospective work, thereby incurring costs, without the necessary funding materialising (e.g. work in Democratic Republic of Congo). Furthermore, the UIS has occasionally underestimated the true costs of delivering a project and, as a consequence, has had to subsidise projects from core funding. The UIS must therefore implement improved mechanisms for evaluating the likely cost of undertaking projects (including allowance for overheads) to ensure that the process of taking on new projects does not give rise to financial liabilities. The new Director of the Institute is aware of this issue and has taken measures to introduce a new project costing template for SCB and other EXB projects.

A related problem is that of delayed payments associated with signed agreements with developing countries, which causes cash flow problems for the Institute and consequent delays in programme activities. In 2006 this was the case with the Ministries of Education in Ghana and Sierra Leone. This situation will need to be monitored carefully, particularly given the relatively limited financial reserves of the Institute.

One major weakness in the current delivery model is the lack of mechanisms for monitoring countries' progress towards building sustainable capacity. While Regional Advisors have a relatively good feel for progress in this regard, there should be a formalised framework for assessing country-level statistical capacity and semi-regular monitoring of progress towards capacity building, focussing on the outcomes of SCB activities rather than the outputs delivered. It is important that this management tool go beyond routine measures of technical capacity (e.g. number of EMIS team members trained) and assess factors that relate to the underlying sustainability of the initiative (e.g. strength of governance of the statistical system, culture of statistics, adequacy of human and financial resources etc). This type of tool will help to ensure a strong focus on sustainability and will provide a mechanism for refreshing the capacity building strategies used at a regional and country level.

Sustainability

Sustainability is the most important criterion by which to judge the effectiveness of capacity building initiatives and one of the most frequently neglected aspects of

programming. Notwithstanding the generally positive responses to the Survey questions in relation to sustainability (e.g. improvements in the political and institutional environment and local ownership of the strategies and action plans for improving statistical capacity), this method of inquiry is not well suited to investigation of sustainability. For a start, it is too early to conduct an evidence-based assessment of the sustainability of the UIS SCB programme, as none of the country-level action plans have been fully implemented yet. Moreover, the perception of stakeholders do not evidence sustainability, rather the proof of the pudding is in countries demonstrating that they can support an effectively functioning statistical system without significant UIS or other external technical support. Capacity building is a long term progress and it will be many years before we can judge the long-term sustainability of the current UIS SCB activities.

Nevertheless, there are some concerning aspects of the approach taken to statistical capacity building by the UIS, which are particularly reflected in the way the programme is being implemented in Africa, that raise significant sustainability concerns:

- The UIS typically takes a very ‘hands on’ project management role in all stages of the SCB process including: the diagnostic phase; development of strategies and action plans; and the implementation phases of the work. For example, the UIS is heavily involved in the development and implementation of EMIS projects in Africa, where the work is often done for countries rather than by countries. Training is provided by UIS in various aspects of the administration of EMIS, but this is targeted at individual officials and administrators and tends to be “one off” rather than ongoing. The high staff turnover of these individuals means capacity can easily be lost, which implies the need to focus on building capacity at an institutional level rather than at the level of individual teams. As noted below, the development of capacity at an institutional level is a weakness of the statistical capacity building activities, particularly in Africa;
- The SCB programme, as it operates at country-level, is essentially managed as a series of inter-linked extra-budgetary funded projects. Progress from one phase to the next is therefore heavily dependent on the ongoing support of donors, who have their own priorities (e.g. more regular and timely data) and may only be willing to fund certain aspects of implementation, notwithstanding that other unfunded activities (e.g. training and institutional capacity development) may be central to the attainment of sustainable outcomes. For example, in relation to the EU-funded project, progress on implementation of country action plans has been uneven and *ad hoc*, with some aspects of action plans being progressed and others not. This is further exacerbated by human resource and other capacity constraints

at UIS, which is noted below as a further factor that is likely to inhibit sustainability of the country-level ‘hands on’ approach;

- While the experience is varied from country to country, the SCB programme in Africa does not appear to be building strong institutionalised capacity and ownership at a political and senior official level. Stakeholder groups, where they exist, appear to be relatively informal and do not have a high level of commitment, instead springing up in various forms around significant donor-funded projects. The risk with this approach is that the country-level stakeholder groups that form are transitory and cease to function once the funded projects have been completed, as has happened with some of the National Technical Committees formed as part of the EU-funded project;
- The SCB programme of UIS, as it operates in Africa, appears to be heavily geared towards the development and implementation of generalisable EMIS software (i.e. common software that, while customisable, is intended to be used in multiple countries). The software is open source and provided free of charge to countries by UIS. It has been developed in-house by UIS and, in a sense, represents a “product” that UIS “markets” to donors and countries. While we do not dispute that an EMIS is a critical tool for providing high quality, timely and accurate country level data, we question whether the UIS should be promoting the use of its own in-house developed software, particularly without committing to investing in the provision of ongoing support. It is our understanding that the EMIS software has a relatively limited shelf life (3-5 years), reflecting the need to upgrade the software as supporting technology platforms change, and as the user requirements and/or education systems of the countries change. While efforts are made by UIS staff to train local IT experts in EMIS support and development, in practice the UIS shoulders much of the burden associated with developing, installing and supporting the systems, which raises questions about the sustainability of the technology. In the private sector, the typical business model for supporting non-bespoke customisable software involves centralised provision of support for both business-as-usual and future development requirements. While this partly reflects the proprietary nature of the software, which is not a concern with free open-source software, it also reflects the specialist technological expertise and critical mass required to sustain the ongoing support and development of these systems. This capacity takes time to develop and, where there is insufficient critical mass, it can be lost when individuals change jobs etc. It is unlikely to be efficient for each agency or country to develop this EMIS development capacity. Indeed, in most developed countries, national statistical agencies use third party provided and supported software and databases to manage

their data collection, production and dissemination activities. The implication is that, if UIS is to continue down this track of installing its own in-house EMIS software in developing countries, it needs to consider how it is going to provide ongoing support to those countries. This is not currently part of the SCB programme delivery model and would impose a heavy burden on the UIS in an area that is not its core business.

- The SCB programme in Africa is not focused on capacity building at a regional level. In this regard it is particularly concerning that UIS is no longer an active or welcome partner in the Association for the development of Education in Africa (ADEA). ADEA, through its Working Group on Education Statistics and its capacity building vehicle, NESIS, is the main regional channel through which statistical capacity building initiatives and projects have been coordinated and supported in the region since the early 1990s. It makes no sense for UIS to be undertaking statistical capacity building activities in Africa independently of WGES. The integration of SCB with regional and sub-regional networks, particularly established and strongly supported networks like WGES, is a key mechanism for leveraging individual capacity building initiatives for the benefits of all countries in a region.
- Institutional capacity building is a resource-intensive process in both financial and human terms, and at a country level the need for support is huge and ongoing. The experience gained by UIS to date in providing technical assistance to countries suggests that on site expertise in the form of a UIS EMIS expert, and in some countries a locally recruited UIS IT specialist, is required for the full duration of the project – which would typically be 3-5 years depending on the size and complexity of the country. Consequently, it is not feasible (or desirable) for the UIS to impact on institutional capacity at a regional level simply by expanding the number of countries it works with - the human and financial resource implications are truly massive. In addition to the inherent un-sustainability of providing substantial country-level human and technological capacity directly to the country for a finite period, it is simply not feasible from a logistical or organisational perspective to allow the programme to expand in an organic manner. The risks with unrestrained expansion are very large indeed and have the potential to compromise the overall viability and reputation of the Institute. The UIS is not first and foremost a capacity building institute - capacity building is only one of four major functions it performs. When viewed from this perspective, the UIS is already ‘unbalanced’ in terms of the weight of human and financial resources devoted to statistical capacity building. The UIS therefore needs to

rethink its approach to statistical capacity building and find ways to support this function using a model that imposes a lighter load on the organisation;

- As a final area of concern, it appears to us (although with perhaps less certainty than the above findings) that the country-level implementation initiatives of the SCB programme are potentially more donor-driven than country-driven. Country ownership and commitment is a critical success factor for any large scale institutional capacity building initiative, yet it is easy for countries to agree to participate in initiatives with obvious short-term payoffs and where donor funding is readily available. Unless there is demonstrable commitment by the governments of Member States that goes beyond passive reception of the programme, the likelihood of building ongoing sustainability is relatively low. For this reason, it is important that capacity building efforts should be predominantly country-driven and owned. In this sense, it is not the role of UIS to “market” its SCB programme to countries and donors. Rather it should be up to the Member States to request support and demonstrate that they have a genuine commitment to the process. Only then should a plan for statistical capacity building be developed by the country, with the support of UIS and other partners, and arrangements made with donors for the country to implement the plan with appropriate backstop technical assistance from UIS. Such an approach would relieve the heavy burden of expectation currently weighing on the programme.

We are not saying that the SCB programme has not yielded significant positive results for participating countries. The experience in Niger and Ethiopia, for example, demonstrates how much can be achieved in a short space of time in terms of improving the timeliness, coverage and quality of education data. However, these concrete short-term benefits need to be balanced against the potentially high long-run costs associated with the provision of ongoing support or, worse, the need to start all over again should the current efforts prove unsustainable. We believe the above concerns are sufficient to merit a significant re-examination of the basis and underlying premise of the SCB programme of the UIS, with a particular focus on the way it is implemented in Africa. We do not know how radical a rethink is required but there are enough early signals of problems with sustainability to merit a review. In the mean time the UIS has a significant challenge on its hands to restore expectations about what can be delivered at a country level in Africa to reasonable levels.

In reconsidering the orientation of the SCB, we recommend that the UIS bear the following considerations in mind:

- The term “capacity-building” is often used far too loosely in development discourse, including within UNESCO. When it is interpreted as synonymous with “training” and “technical assistance” it underplays the organisational and political factors that so often constrain capacity. This evaluation has found that the capacity building activities of the UIS are frequently planned as short-term interventions involving the development and implementation of new statistical systems, with associated intensive training for the administrators of those systems: there are few instances in which UNESCO has taken a lead in institutional capacity building, with the exception of efforts in Asia and Latin America to build partnerships and networks at a regional and sub-regional level in support of statistical capacity building; and
- Capacity building must address the three prongs of statistical capacity if it is to be sustainable in the long-run: changing the culture surrounding statistics; improving management of national statistical systems; and improving technical capacity (Oxford Policy Management, 2003).²² The first prong requires capacity builders to understand the environment in which they are operating and, based on that understanding, employ appropriate strategies to promote awareness and educate country level political and institutional actors about the need for efficient and effective statistical systems. The second prong requires capacity builders to focus on the governance of statistical systems, including ensuring that the governing bodies provide adequate resources for the collection, production and dissemination of statistics while at the same time preserving the transparency and independence of that system. The third prong comprises the conventional approach of building technical statistical capacity, which must take full account of the capacity of the statistical system to absorb new approaches and technologies, including in relation to the human and financial resources required to administer those systems.

²² The first prong requires capacity builders to understand the environment in which they are operating and, based on that understanding, employ appropriate strategies to promote awareness and educate country level political and institutional actors about the need for efficient and effective statistical systems. The second prong requires capacity builders to focus on the governance of statistical systems, including ensuring that the governing bodies provide adequate resources for the collection, production and dissemination of statistics while at the same time preserving the transparency and independence of that system. The third prong comprises the conventional approach of building technical statistical capacity, which must take full account of the capacity of the statistical system to absorb new approaches and technologies, including in relation to the human and financial resources required to administer those systems.

Recommendations

14. The UIS should consider commissioning a more in-depth field-based evaluation of its statistical capacity building programme, in particular exploring questions of sustainability. The results of the proposed evaluation should be used by UIS as an input into re-examining the underlying principles and design of its statistical capacity building programme, and the development of a revised strategy for SCB.
15. For significant future capacity building initiatives, the UIS should put in place mechanisms for monitoring countries' progress towards building capacity, including assessing environmental factors that are associated with sustainability.
16. The UIS needs to move to rebuild its relationship with the ADEA Working Group on Education Statistics to ensure a harmonised approach to statistical capacity building in Africa. More generally, the Institute should adopt more of a consistent approach to capacity building across all regions, utilising a partnership-based and catalytic approach rather than the current 'hands on, turn key' approach being used in Africa in particular.
17. The UIS needs to better define and reinforce the role of UIS Regional Advisors as representing UIS as a whole and serving all of Institute's core functions, not just capacity building. In this respect, there are opportunities and potential benefits to be gained from further decentralisation of some UIS functions, including aspects of survey follow up and validation of responses.

CATALYST FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

“UNESCO as a technical multidisciplinary agency will assume a catalytic role for development cooperation in its fields of competence. To that end it will seek to ensure that the objectives, principles and priorities it promotes are followed suit by other multi- and bilateral programmes and that projects are implemented, in particular at regional and national levels, through innovation, effective interventions and wise practices.”

What activities are included and what were the expected outcomes?

As the guardian of UNESCO’s International Statistical Database and a significant provider of statistics and information to the international community across UNESCO’s fields of expertise, the UIS plays a fundamental role on behalf of UNESCO as a ‘catalyst for international cooperation’. Beyond the need to serve the needs of Member States, other parts of UNESCO and members of the international community, this role requires UIS to foster partnerships to further the goals of UIS and UNESCO. In the Medium-Term Strategy of UIS 2002-2007, the need to foster and reinforce partnerships with Member States, the international community, with national and regional networks, NGOs, and researchers was a recurrent theme throughout the document. This objective informed the development of an organisational culture of strategic partnership and cooperation from the very beginning of the Institute’s existence.

Table 5 describes the activities and expected outcomes of UIS in relation to its role as a catalyst for international cooperation

Item	Description	Expected Outcomes
International and regional co-operation	Co-operation with international and regional statistical and development agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions to establishing and maintaining a range of international networks and partnerships aimed at improving international measures of progress towards development goals.
EFA Observatory	Supports Member States and the international community to monitor and further progress towards achievement of the targets and goals of the EFA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ internationally comparable data to monitor progress towards EFA goals; ▪ contextual national data and analysis to inform Member States in policy and decision making; ▪ data and indicators to assist development agencies to prioritise their efforts in development and capacity building.

Item	Description	Expected Outcomes
World Education Indicators (WEI)	UIS and OECD jointly led project on World Education Indicators with 19 middle income countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical and analytical capacity of participating countries developed and broadened • Networks and collaborative activities established and strengthened between participating countries
International co-operation in Science & Technology	Representation of needs of developing countries and regions to enable cross-national data on science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networks and data-sharing agreements established with other international and regional organisations in order to focus UIS efforts on extending the collection of science statistics to regions of the world not already covered. • Strengthened quality and relevance of cross-national data on science.
Partnership for Measuring ICT in Development	UIS led side event at WSIS 2003 on ICT measurement in collaboration and the formation of a multi-agency partnership to improve the measurement of ICTs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led development of an agreed set of indicators to measure ICTs in education as part of the International Partnership.

What activities has UIS delivered?

From its establishment in 1999, UIS gave high priority to the development of strong relationships in the international and regional organisations. UIS has built relationships both within the international statistical community and with agencies involved in development and capacity building activities at country and regional levels. UIS is formally represented on a wide range of international committees, including but not limited to: the UN Statistics Commission; UN International Co-ordination Committee for Statistical Activities; OECD Statistics Committee; UNSD/UNDP Millennium Development Goals Inter Agency Group; EFA Editorial Board; and PARIS21. UIS has established working relationships and data-sharing agreements with OECD and Eurostat in an effort to reduce duplication and focus the efforts of UIS on improving the quality and comparability of data collected from developing countries.

UIS has also developed strong relationships with a number of key international development agencies including UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank, IMF; and bilateral relations with CIDA, SIDA, DfID, NORAD and USAID. While not exhaustive, these relationships represent significant effort on the part of UIS to establish itself as a professional and responsive international statistical institute for UNESCO.

As well as fostering relationships with the international community, the establishment of a network of UIS regional advisers in 2003, helped extend the relationships and influence of UIS at a regional level. These relationships are mainly aimed at

supporting the statistical capacity building function of UIS. In particular, UIS has developed strong regional relationships in the regions where they have a larger capacity building programme and UIS offices. These are Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, and Africa. Examples of regional networks in which UIS has played an active role are the:

- Development of Education in Asia Pacific (ADEAP)
- National Education Statistical Information Systems Asia-Pacific (NESIS-AP)
- Summit of the Americas Regional Education Indicators project (PRIE)
- Working Group on Educational Statistics (WGES) of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).

The wider networks and partnerships at the regional level are discussed in more detail in the section on statistical capacity building.

EFA Observatory

In its capacity as the EFA Observatory, UIS is responsible for working with countries, regions and the international community to monitor progress towards the EFA goals to 2015 agreed in Dakar. UIS is also responsible for monitoring progress on education-related Millennium Development Goals. In this capacity UIS has strived to maintain a balance between maintaining the set of existing indicators to measure progress and responding the demands of key partners, such as World Bank and UNICEF, for the development of new indicators. UIS has collaborated with both international and regional partners (e.g. UNICEF, World Bank, OREALC) in the development of new education indicators.

Joint projects to extend the capabilities of more developed UNESCO countries such as WEI and PISA PLUS are also good examples of UIS's contribution to international cooperation. Further details on the WEI project are summarised below.

Illustrative Example: World Education Indicators

The World Education Indicators project focuses on a group of 19 middle income countries for which a more extensive range of education statistics are collected, and more complex projects and analyses undertaken. WEI is a joint OECD and UIS project, funded by the World Bank, which has helped forge a close working relationship between statisticians in the two international organizations, and allowed national statisticians to build on the experiences of both OECD and the UIS. WEI is an excellent model of how developing countries can be supported to provide more comprehensive data by adapting the OECD data package as appropriate to their needs.

The project has produced significant benefits for all parties in the form of:

- improved data quality both in terms of scope and of coverage;
- a strong support network of statisticians across the countries;
- improved the national statistical and analytical capability in participating countries
- greater policy relevance of the data, with the raised profile of the project leading to increased attention being paid to the data by national policy-makers and the media; and
- closer cooperation between UIS and OECD.

The WEI offers the opportunity to further develop the national statistical and analytical capacities of participating countries. The development of a survey of primary schools provides a useful illustration. National coordinators decided to carry out a survey of primary schools to focus on issues related to the quality of education and to the equity of its provision. Considerable effort was expended by UIS, OECD and the 14 countries who elected to participate on organizing the pilots of this survey. The questionnaire includes information on teaching style and infrastructure and will result in a unique source of cross-nationally comparable data on school conditions.

Critical issues for the future of the project include the on-going funding of the project and how to extend the project to allow other countries to benefit from this successful approach

How effective are these activities in contributing to UIS and UNESCO objectives?

The importance of UIS's role in providing data and indicators to inform the development efforts of a wide range of stakeholders was clearly summarised in the Strategic Plan for the Strengthening of UNESCO's Statistics Programme and Services (152 Ex/6), which proposed the creation of the UIS:

“Users want sufficient and accurate data as well as contextual information from which they can make more sophisticated policy judgements. Governments, an enlarged number of non-governmental, professional and scholarly organizations, and economic development agencies now depend crucially on a more complex, timely and relevant body of data as a basis for public policy, international aid, social reform, and infrastructure development and planning.”

In particular, the role of UIS as the EFA Observatory provides critical support to international and regional efforts to further progress achievement of EFA and MDG goals. In this regard, the establishment and strengthening of the relationship with the EFA GMR team and contribution of the base data and statistical analyses for annual publications of the Global Monitoring Report has been an important achievement over the evaluation period. Beyond regular data collection and dissemination, international development agencies have also expressed interest in the development of new indicators in areas such as quality of education, education outcomes, primary completion rates, education financing, and children out of school. These demands reflect their desire to improve the capacity of the international community to monitor progress and prioritise funding and capacity building efforts.

UIS has played an influential role in the revision and development of a number of indicators, while upholding the objectives, principles and priorities of UIS and UNESCO. In collaborations with a number of agencies UIS has maintained a clear position of working to ensure that, where possible, indicators also reflect the information needs of Member States, do not overburden them in terms of providing additional data, and allow reliable international comparisons to be made.

“Statistical indicators, on their own, are often limited in their ability to influence the development of policies and programmes within countries. Participating countries sometimes reject the comparative analysis of indicators as they have difficulty recognizing their own data once they have been adjusted to international standards and definitions. To have impact on domestic policies and to influence change in

education systems, customized analysis is required to situate the indicators with the countries' respective operating environments. (UIS, 2004)

Observations of stakeholders were generally positive concerning the efforts of UIS to network and develop collaborative relationships with other international agencies. Representatives of the World Bank Development Data team observed that, "The collaboration of the World Bank, UNICEF, and UIS has improved the capacity of the international community to monitoring the MDGs." The role of UIS in developing networks that bring together country experts from developing countries was also identified as a strength in the stakeholder survey.

As part of the statistical capacity building programme of UIS, regional offices and UIS Montreal have also endeavoured to develop effective regional networks. This has been important both to maximize the impact UIS regional staff can have given limited resources, and in allowing country-level outcomes to benefit the wider region. The UIS has also participated actively in the PARIS21 initiative, which is a partnership of policymakers, analysts, and statisticians from all countries of the world focused on promoting high-quality statistics, making these data meaningful, and designing sound policies. There has been a close collaboration between UIS and the World Bank in relation to Statistical Capacity Building which led to the joint development of the Data Quality Assurance Framework. This is a tool which has subsequently been used to undertake a number of UIS country diagnostic studies.

In general, UIS has been effective in establishing networks at regional and international levels that seek to improve the effectiveness and reach of capacity building efforts. As an exception to this, comments from some regional stakeholders raised concerns about the approach adopted by UIS in Africa. In this region, the work of UIS has heavily oriented towards the development of EMIS systems and provision of related technical assistance, with a country-level rather than regional focus. It was suggested that the approach of intensively working with countries on an individual basis likely to be fundamentally unsustainable for an organization the size of UIS. Furthermore, such as approach was described as 'old-fashioned capacity building' which does not facilitate increased cooperation between countries and maximize the reach of assistance efforts. The most sustainable outcomes are likely to be the result of longer term regionally based initiatives based on partnerships between development agencies and Member States of the region, rather than the diagnosis and quick fix approach that has arguably been adopted by UIS in the African region.

Recommendation

18. The UIS should strengthen its participation in regional and sub-regional statistical networks, in order to effectively facilitate cooperation between international agencies and Member States in support of the Institute's mandate.

QUALITY OF INTERACTION AND COORDINATION

In this section we consider the quality of interaction and coordination between UIS and other UNESCO entities, as well as the quality of partnerships with other stakeholders including Member States, donors and the international statistical community. The section is divided into two parts: the first considers the relations between UIS and other UNESCO stakeholders; the second considers relations with non-UNESCO stakeholders.

QUALITY OF INTERACTION AND COORDINATION WITHIN UNESCO

We expected UIS to have a significant degree of interaction and exhibit coordination with the following UNESCO entities:

- UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, across all sectors
- UNESCO field offices, particularly where there is a UIS staff presence and/or where the UIS was undertaking technical assistance activities; and
- To a lesser extent, other UNESCO institutes, notably IIEP.

Interaction and Coordination with Headquarters

Our assessment of the quality of interaction and coordination between UIS and the UNESCO Secretariat is largely informed by our interviews with staff of the Secretariat and the UIS and the survey of UNESCO stakeholders. As well as current and former UIS staff, we spoke to a number of key people within each of the four main UNESCO sectors, including programme specialists and senior staff (e.g. Section Chiefs, Directors). In addition, we spoke to representatives of the Bureau of Strategic Planning, the Division of Extra-Budgetary Funding Source, and the Bureau of Field Coordination.

Given the significant emphasis on education in the work programme of UIS, we were particularly concerned with incorporating perspectives from as many divisions of the Education Sector as possible. Appendix 2 of this report contains further details on information sources for this evaluation.

Context

In considering the degree of interaction and coordination between UIS and the UNESCO Secretariat, it is important to recall the historical context which led to the establishment of UIS as a semi-autonomous body within UNESCO, and the implications of the subsequent relocation of the Institute from Paris to Montreal. Consideration should also be given to the unique mandate for this Institute, as a cross-sectoral organisation with a direct reporting relationship to the Director-General. Without taking account of these factors, a nuanced understanding of the current state of interaction and coordination cannot be obtained.

In particular, the relocation of UIS from Paris to Montreal in 2001 resulted in a significant loss of human capital and institutional memory, with only six staff choosing to transfer to the new location in Montreal. While new UIS staff were recruited rapidly, most were new to UNESCO and the UN community. In terms of relations between UIS and UNESCO Headquarters, this has presented on-going challenges on both sides as very few personal contacts were sustained following the move to Montreal.

The location of the Institute in Montreal also presented genuine logistical challenges for maintaining links between UIS and UNESCO Headquarters. While such issues might at first seem superficial and easily surmountable given the technological resources now available, in practice the physical distance and six hour time difference had a significant impact on the ease and fluidity of communications in both directions. The efforts of the UIS leadership, particularly the Director at the time, to sustaining a close relationship with HQ is worthy of mention. The frequency of travel undertaken between Montreal and Paris represented a significant cost to UIS, both in terms of finances and time, including time away from the internal management of the Institute. This level of commitment to maintain connectedness does not appear to have been reciprocated in like kind by UNESCO HQ, with visits to Montreal and efforts to include UIS in meetings through video conferencing and other means being the exception rather than a regular occurrence over the evaluation period

Furthermore, at the same time as the Institute's location in Montreal strengthened its independence from UNESCO Headquarters, it proved favourable for developing stronger relations with other significant external stakeholders and donors with a presence in North America. This included organisations such as the World Bank, United Nations Statistical Commission, and many of the large Development banks. It was identified by several interviewees that, while developing close relations with the

broader international and statistical community was vital and beneficial for UIS, particularly as some of these institutions are large donors to the UIS, it may have exacerbated problems retaining the links with UNESCO Headquarters.

It is also relevant to highlight the fact that UNESCO is undergoing a significant process of change, guided by the decentralisation and results-based management oriented reforms. Many aspects of the past and current state of interaction and coordination between UIS and UNESCO HQ can be easily understood once the contextual factors above, and previously outlined in this report, are taken into account. However, the future ambition of UNESCO is to operate in a way that is quite different from the current reality. As UNESCO implements its reforms to become an effectively functioning decentralised and results-oriented institution, its constituent parts (the secretariat, the institutes and centres and the field offices) must change and evolve to suit the new environment. What may have been a sensible way of operating in the past may no longer be appropriate for the future. In this context, all entities in the UNESCO system must be prepared to reappraise their mandates and roles in light of the reform process.

Bearing the above in mind, we now turn to the evidence on the quality of coordination and interaction between UIS and the UNESCO Secretariat:

- Overall, the level of interaction between UIS and UNESCO Headquarters over the period of the evaluation has been weak, although there have been a number of instances of good collaboration on projects. Where there was contact with UIS, individuals we spoke with at Headquarters generally described UIS as responsive and professional and spoke highly of the work produced by the Institute in general terms, but there was a lack of a clear understanding of the role and work of UIS vis-à-vis UNESCO Headquarters. The general perception of UNESCO HQ staff was that UIS has been, and remains, too distant, with most interviewees suggesting the location of UIS in Montreal impacted negatively on the level coordination between their division or sector and UIS.
- Although not strictly part of UNESCO, the EFA Global Monitoring Report team is housed at UNESCO HQ in Paris and closely linked to the UNESCO Education Sector. The relationship between the Global Monitoring Report (GMR) team and UIS offers an example of the potential for good collaboration between UIS and teams at UNESCO HQ. This relationship is arguably the most formalised, reflecting the inter-dependency of their respective work programmes, with the GMR team being one of the predominant users of UIS education data on an

annual basis. While some sources of tension continue to exist in relation to data coverage, timeliness and accuracy, relations have improved over recent years and a mutual understanding of the GMR Team's needs has been developed. Where issues are identified, members of the GMR team described UIS as proactive and professional in their responses to these. The regular interaction between the GMR team and UIS has been supported by the use of video conferencing and two-way travel between Paris and Montreal. UIS is also regularly invited to attend the annual GMR retreat.

- In contrast, relations with Education Sector divisions have varied over the evaluation period and appeared to substantially rely on the existence of personal contacts. In some areas (e.g. Literacy and Non-Formal Education; Higher Education Division, Section for Teacher Education) there were useful examples of interaction in relation to specific projects. However, divisions largely identified personal contacts as being critical to the on-going relationships. For example, the Literacy and Non-Formal Education Division had decentralised funds to utilise the expertise of a particular individual at UIS to assist in the development of a Non-Formal Education – Management Information System (NFE-MIS). In other areas of the Education Sector, the level of engagement was marginal or non-existent. This may also partially reflect the variability in the statistical orientation of some sections and sectors at UNESCO HQ and associated with this, the lack of an evidence based culture in policy formulation.

A number of representatives of the Education Sector expressed a sense of frustration at the “distance” of UIS from the sector and perceived that the Institute placed too much weight on its own independence from UNESCO. Furthermore, some Education Sector stakeholders claimed UIS was not sufficiently engaged in working with the sector to identify data needs and develop its collections. Many of the same frustrations were felt by staff of UIS, who believed the Education Sector was not well organised to articulate its statistical needs.

- The Science sector, the Science Policy and Sustainable Development Division offers another good example of on-going interaction between UIS and UNESCO HQ. Following its creation, the UIS gave priority to the collection of statistics on research and development and human resources in the science sector. In working to re-establish these collections, the relevant UNESCO HQ division reported significant and on-going consultation and collaboration between themselves and UIS. The UIS team led the work but actively involved the Division in the

development of the framework for the design of the survey instruments/questionnaires and in disseminating the results through workshops run jointly with UIS. The Divisional representative we interviewed expressed a great deal of satisfaction with the level of service they had received from UIS.

- Interactions between UIS and the Communication and Information (CI) Sector were described as having vastly improved of the evaluation period. While staff we spoke with at UNESCO HQ spoke positively about the present level of interaction and engagement of UIS with the CI sector, reference was made to the extended period of ‘reorientation’ which was perceived as having taken too long. Between the relocation of UIS in Montreal and 2004-05, the Sector reported very limited contact with UIS. It is likely that this reflects the limited resources UIS initially could or would invest in this area, following the Institute’s decision to prioritise the redevelopment of the Institute’s lead role in international education statistics.
- The Culture Sector similarly referred to the move to Montreal and significant emphasis by UIS on Education statistics, as having led to the needs of their Sector being under-resourced within UIS, with a flow on effect for the level of interaction. In terms of culture statistics, UIS and the Culture sector had jointly worked to produce two consecutive reports on International Flows of Selected Cultural Goods and Services. However, beyond these projects the level of interaction between UIS and the Culture Sector could best be described as ad-hoc and non-committal. It was perceived by UNESCO HQ staff that the culture sector within UIS was under-resourced and lacked the subject expertise necessary to develop a programme for the collection of culture statistics. The culture sector has continued to engage with UIS, with UIS staff being regularly invited to culture sector retreats and in latter years, money being decentralised by the culture sector to undertake statistical projects on their behalf. While progress was described as being slow, the level and frequency of interaction with UIS was described as having improved in the last 12 months with changes in personnel responsible for this area within UIS.
- Interactions between UNESCO HQ and UIS were frequently characterised by mutual frustration about a perceived lack of consultation or limited capacity. To some extent the UIS staff is regarded by UNESCO HQ as ‘outsiders’ who do not share the same organisational culture. A number of representatives expressed a sense of frustration at the “distance” of UIS and perceived that the Institute

placed too much weight on its own independence from UNESCO. Furthermore, several stakeholders within UNESCO HQ claimed UIS was not sufficiently engaged in working with their sectors to identify data needs and develop statistical collections.

- At the same time, the general failure of the Sectors to identify and adequately articulate their statistical/data needs to UIS in a coherent and timely fashion, and to decentralise adequate resources for data collection, was raised as an issue both within Headquarters and by staff of UIS. While some Sectors or Divisions regularly invite UIS to participate in their annual retreats, there appear to be few formalised processes for exchanging information on the strategic and programmatic priorities of UIS and the various Sectors.
- Overall, we were left with a strong sense that the level of engagement between UIS and UNESCO HQ was not institutionalised and instead depended predominantly on the existence of personal contacts (i.e. those with established personal relationships were more likely to have more frequent contact and, at times, some personalities within UNESCO Headquarters acted with hostility towards UIS). This is clearly problematic in an organisation where the number of personal contacts was severely diminished by the move to Montreal, and has waned further with the departure of several key personnel from UIS. While inter-personal relationships will always be an important part of the institutional fabric of UNESCO, this finding suggests an urgent need for UIS-HQ relationships to be better cemented at an institutional level (e.g. through Memoranda of Understanding between the various sectors and UIS that set out the respective roles and areas for joint work);
- We also observed that there was also no clearly shared or articulated understanding of UIS's role in relation to the UNESCO Secretariat, beyond recognition of the very visible role in providing data for the Global Monitoring Report team. A common theme in our interviews and the survey of internal stakeholders was the limited visibility of UIS's strategic direction and work programmes. Accompanying this was a sense of frustration regarding a lack of formal opportunities to have input into these decisions and influence the work programme of UIS.
- With specific regard to the Education Sector, we saw evidence of a strong commitment to address these weaknesses at both headquarters and regional levels,

by the ADG Education and the new Director of UIS. As part of the reform process underway in the Education Sector, UIS has been asked by the ADG Education to lead a global UNESCO network for monitoring, assessment and evaluation of education, with a focus on the development of consistent approaches to reporting and data collection of key education indicators in each region and country. It is envisaged that, along with the UNESCO Education Institutes, UIS will become better integrated with the work of Education Sector particularly at the regional level. To this end, efforts are also being made to ensure UIS is closely integrated and aligned with the Education Sector at a strategic level, with the Director of UIS actively participating in the ADG Education's leadership forum.

- While this is likely to represent a significant step forward in the coordination and integration of UIS and the Education Sector, it may serve to create further imbalances in the level of resources devoted to the work of the Education Sector relative to other UNESCO Sectors. At the same time, increasing demands are being placed on the Institute from non-Education Sectors, particularly in relation to monitoring of aspects of Cultural Diversity and the Information Society. While there is no expectation of an equality of resources across sectors, the current resourcing of non-education sectors within UIS is below the minimum threshold required to respond to the needs of these sectors.
- It is our assessment that it is highly unlikely to be either feasible or desirable, from a UNESCO-wide perspective, for UIS to relinquish its responsibilities in relation to non-Education sectors. On this basis, we recommend UIS undertake a comprehensive reassessment and reprioritisation of its sector related activities, and work in close partnership with UNESCO HQ sectors to build joint work programmes and where possible, mobilise core funds in support of sector statistical priorities. In this regard, it is necessary that UNESCO sectors play a leadership role to determine what the data needs are, and work with UIS to explore what is feasible and what an appropriate and acceptable development plan looks like.

The issue of overlap between the roles and activities of UIS and of the UNESCO Secretariat did not arise as a significant concern during this evaluation. However, there was minor concern expressed by some stakeholders that UIS was not clearly recognised by UNESCO HQ as the UNESCO organisation with primary responsibility for overseeing the collection, production and dissemination of statistics

across all sectors. There was a feeling that the Institute needed to work hard to remain in the consciousness of the UNESCO HQ, with UIS staff needing to frequently travel to Paris to attend meetings in person in order to maintain linkages. Furthermore, it was suggested that in the absence of a physical presence at Headquarters, some divisions had considered or were entering this area of work and carrying out statistical work without consulting UIS. One comment received through the survey of external stakeholders of UIS also highlighted this issue:

“We sometimes receive data requests from other parts of UNESCO, for example a recent exercise about compliance with a non-discrimination treaty... In that exercise there was a poorly-specified request for statistical information. It did not appear that UIS had had input to the exercise. One important thing that UIS could do is to strengthen its influence within UNESCO.”

- In the early years of the UIS, it was felt that the “rule” that no UNESCO sector would collect its own data was frequently in danger of being broken. This risk seems to have largely subsided notwithstanding that there remains some data collection within UNESCO that does not involve UIS, such as the collection of data for the World Water Report. In this and other similar situations, a pragmatic approach is warranted. It is not necessary that the UIS participate in all data collection activities as long as acceptable rigour is applied. However, it is reasonable to expect that UIS statistical expertise and input be sought in relation to any significant data collection effort within UNESCO and that an agreement as to the way forward be reached.

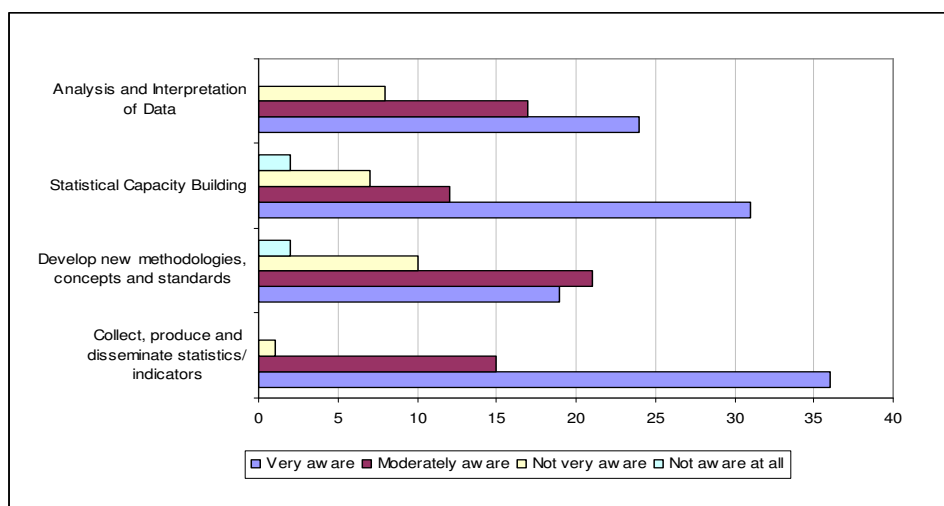
Interaction and Coordination with Field Offices, Institutes and Centres

Our assessment of the quality of interaction and coordination between UIS and UNESCO field offices, institutes and centres is based largely on interviews with UIS staff and a survey of field offices, institutes and centres. The survey was administered online and was sent to all UNESCO field offices and Category I education institutes and centres. The survey was completed by the office directors or, where appropriate, programme specialists. The number of usable responses was 53, a response rate of 71%. A full set of survey results is included as Appendix Three.

The first pre-requisite for good levels of interaction and coordination is awareness. Our survey found generally high levels of awareness of UIS activities, in particular of the core function of the collection, production and dissemination of statistics. The

Institute’s role in developing new statistical concepts, standards and methodologies was the least well known with around 25% of respondents indicating they were either not aware of these activities. This is not surprising since this function is often not “visible” to data users, particularly those that do not have a statistical background. We would therefore anticipate that members of the statistical community would be more likely to be aware of the activities of UIS in this area. It is possible, of course, that this finding may also reflect the lower levels of resourcing expended on these activities by UIS during the evaluation period and may suggest a need for UIS to promote and raise the awareness of stakeholders about its efforts in this area. This is particularly important where the Institute has adopted a leading role, for example in the improvements to ISCED or the adaptation of the Frascati manual to enable the collection of research and development statistics in developing countries.

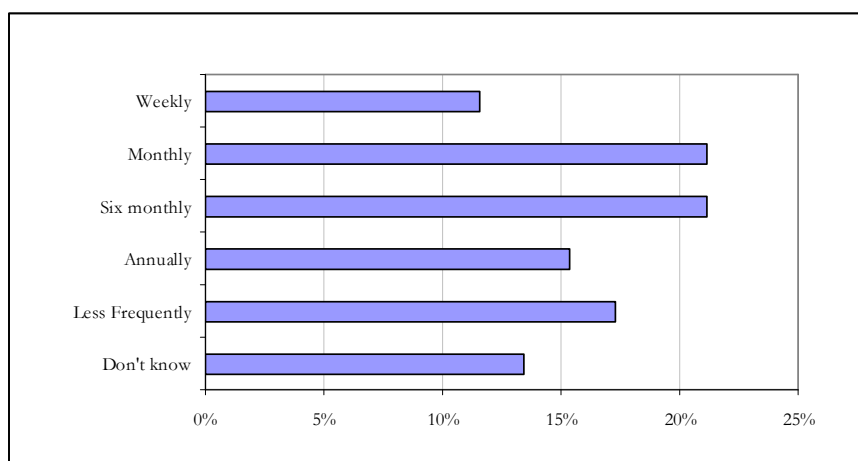
Figure 19: Awareness of UIS



Source: Survey of Field Offices, Institutes and Centres

The second pre-requisite for high quality interaction and coordination is regular engagement. Figure 20 shows that almost a third of field offices, institutes or centres engaged with UIS on a monthly or more frequent basis. A further 20 percent reported engaging with UIS on at least a six monthly basis. While it is somewhat difficult to assess the appropriateness of this level of engagement in isolation of the specific activities being carried out in a given region or country, given the size and geographical spread of the field office network, we consider this to be a relatively high level of engagement. We note that this level of contact compares favourably with that reported in previous evaluation of Category I education institutes and centres.

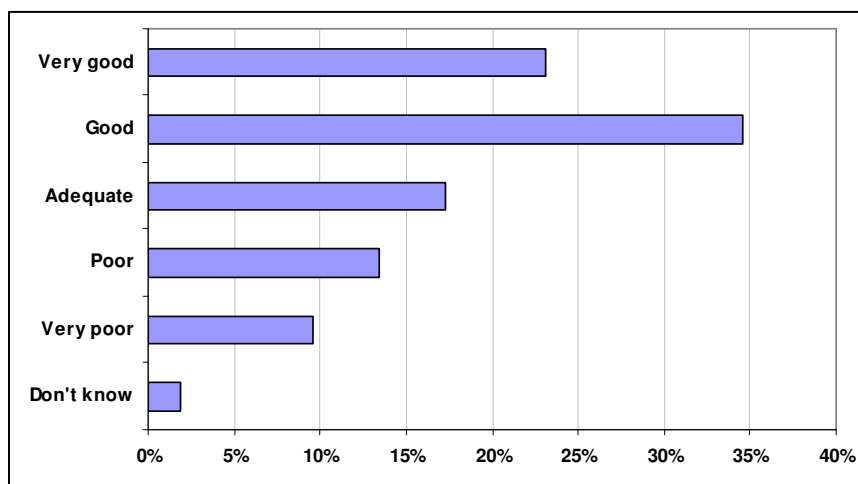
Figure 20: Frequency of Engagement with UIS



Source: Survey of Field Offices, Institutes and Centres

The third pre-requisite for high quality interaction and coordination with field offices, institutes and centres is the effectiveness of the engagement. The survey of field offices, institutes and centres asked respondents about the quality of their engagement with UIS. Figure 6 shows that survey respondents were generally positive about the quality of their engagement with UIS with almost 60 percent rating it as good or very good. It was also noted that where respondents described the quality of their engagement with UIS as poor or very poor, they were also more likely to report having infrequent contact with UIS, or to be unsure about the frequency of contact.

Figure 21: Quality of Engagement with Field Offices, Institutes and Centres



Source: Survey of Field Offices, Institutes and Centres

This regular level of engagement for a majority of respondents probably reflects a combination of several components of the UIS programme:

- **Statistical Capacity Building:** In 2003 UIS established a Statistical Capacity Building programme which included the development of a regional presence for UIS. A small network of UIS regional advisers are based in regional offices along with a number of project posts at the country level.
- **Regional Workshops:** UIS administers regular regional workshops aimed at assisting countries with responding to education surveys and providing training on specialist topics. The majority of workshops are focussed on education although a limited number are also carried out in the Science and Technology field.
- **Annual surveys:** To a lesser extent, cooperation with regional or field offices, to gather intelligence on the countries and identify appropriate contacts, has been carried out to improve completion rates and assess the quality of data received from countries for UIS surveys. Ideally this would occur more frequently than many interviewees suggested it had in practice, and consequently this may not be a significant factor in explaining the survey results.

Despite some strong reservations about the rapid growth of the Statistical Capacity Building programme, most interviewees spoke positively about the value of establishing a network of UIS regional advisers in the field. Currently, regional advisers are located in Bangkok, Dakar, Santiago and Addis Ababa, with placements also likely in the Apia Office and the Arab States region. When these regional positions were first established there were some initial administrative and other difficulties regarding the dual responsibilities of UIS staff located in regional offices and, more practically, the responsibility for ongoing overhead costs associated with their placement. However, key principles have been developed between UIS and the Bureau for Field Coordination to address these concerns. Where tensions persist, they are generally outweighed by value added through the presence of a senior UIS staff in the region. As the following quote illustrates, the expertise of UIS regional advisors is generally highly sought after in field offices:

As a small field office, we have been benefiting [from] the technical support from the UIS Regional Advisor's office. However, since they have to cover the entire region, they are too busy to attend closely to the requests of the field offices.

The regional presence of UIS is now fairly large relative to the total size of the Institute, with 24 posts in field offices and 18 project posts at the country level having been established. Notwithstanding this, from the perspective of the regional advisors,

the field capacity remains limited in relation to the demand from the field. The demand for technical support from Member States was described as significant and far exceeding the current capacity of UIS to deliver. Alongside capacity building activities, ideally UIS also requires the support of a regional network to help inform data quality through providing regional and country-level contextual knowledge. However, while there are some differences between regions, overall the existing structure and funding base of this regional network is also largely confined to statistical building activities and is not well connected or resourced to serve the more general needs of UIS in core activities. In addition to these roles, some UIS Regional Advisers have carried out joint regional work directly with UNESCO Secretariat – a particular example of this is work in Africa with the non-formal education and literacy section.

Regional advisers consulted in the process of this evaluation considered that a field presence for UIS is vital to the core functions of the Institute and supported a move towards further decentralisation of UIS, in line with the reform of the Education Sector. They also expressed frustration in terms of their inability to meet all expectations and deliver on promised activities, which may partly explain some of the less positive survey responses in terms of the frequency and quality of engagement with UIS.

Current and former UIS staff based in Montreal also spoke highly of the value added by the regional network of UIS. One staff member highlighted the advantages of a three-way division of work involving a UNESCO policy person at the regional or cluster level, the statistical expert in Montreal and a UIS adviser with ‘on-the-ground’ knowledge of the countries. However, there was some incongruence between the assessments of the quality of coordination from UIS staff based in Montreal and regional staff. In general, staff in Montreal spoke positively about the level of coordination with regional advisers and offered as evidence the recent attendance of regional staff at a UIS retreat. Regional staff were more varied in their assessment of the interaction and coordination with UIS in Montreal. One regional adviser argued that UIS staff in Montreal would benefit from increased collaboration with their regional advisers when conducting workshops or analytical projects. There was also some concern about the extent and ad-hoc nature of commitments which had been made by senior staff of UIS that regional staff were not adequately resourced to deliver. This suggests an overly centralised approach to decision-making despite the local knowledge held by UIS regional advisers. Given these concerns, we consider there would be significant value in increasing the level of dialogue, mobility and coordination between UIS in Montreal and the regional network in both the strategic

prioritisation of statistical capacity building activities and other regular field activities of the Institute.

From the perspective of UIS staff, the quality of interactions and collaborations with field offices is somewhat mixed. UIS senior management indicated that the Institute's experiences working with field offices varied significantly depending on the capabilities and strengths of the different offices. For example, in smaller offices such as the Windhoek office and in Nigeria, UIS had formed strong collaborative relationships but other field offices have not been so helpful. There were mixed experiences from UIS in the assistance provided by field offices to set up regional workshops. It was suggested that field offices often missed opportunities to participate in the workshops alongside UIS.

There was limited evidence of interaction between UIS and other Category I UNESCO Institutes. IIEP is the institute with whom the UIS shares the greatest commonalities but there was not a significant emphasis placed on this relationship by the people we interviewed. Many individuals acknowledged the obvious potential synergies between the educational planning activities of IIEP and statistical capacity building work of UIS but in practice there was limited interaction between the two Institutes. UNESCO and IIEP collaborate on some specific projects at country level, particularly in relation to EMIS system development and training, but generally speaking the relationship is underdeveloped. This will need to change given the capacity building coordination role that is envisaged for IIEP within the context of the Education Sector reform.

Notwithstanding these observations, the 2005 evaluation of IIEP found positive examples of coordination between UIS and IIEP. For example, both run courses on EMIS, with UIS focusing on how to collect data and IIEP on how to analyse it. There is some potential for overlap of mandate but this is managed through the maintenance of contact between the Institutes and field offices. As one survey respondent suggested:

The IIEP trains many of the people who work in the areas that are required to complete UIS questionnaires. And IIEP uses UIS products. Therefore greater cooperation would be beneficial to all. We should in future find a way whereby UIS can contribute to our ATP Training Programmes (just like they did before moving to Montreal).

QUALITY OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH NON-UNESCO STAKEHOLDERS

In terms of stakeholder engagement, we expected to see evidence of close working relationships and partnerships with:

- Member States, particularly senior representatives of ministries of education, but also ministries responsible for science and technology, and national statistical agencies;
- International statistical and research institutions; and
- Aid agencies and NGOs working in the field of statistical capacity building, and in particular, education statistics

In terms of context, the need for UIS to maintain a focus on the needs of the broader international community was consistently mentioned by individuals we interviewed. This objective was at the heart of recommendations by the BISCE report that informed the decision to re-establish UNESCO's statistical function as a semi-autonomous, independently managed Institute:

UNESCO should articulate and legitimise a broader mission for its statistics branch, reflecting more worldwide interest in education statistics than characterised UNESCO at its founding, and embodying a broader sense of audience and responsibilities than the expectations articulated for the Division of Statistics in 1974.

The broad mandate of UIS within the international community is also encapsulated in the Basic Texts of the Institute:

The prime objective of the Institute shall be to serve the needs of Member States through its core-work programme. In addition, it shall be responsive, depending on additional finances, to other needs or demands emanating from other parts of UNESCO and other users in Member States and international organizations.

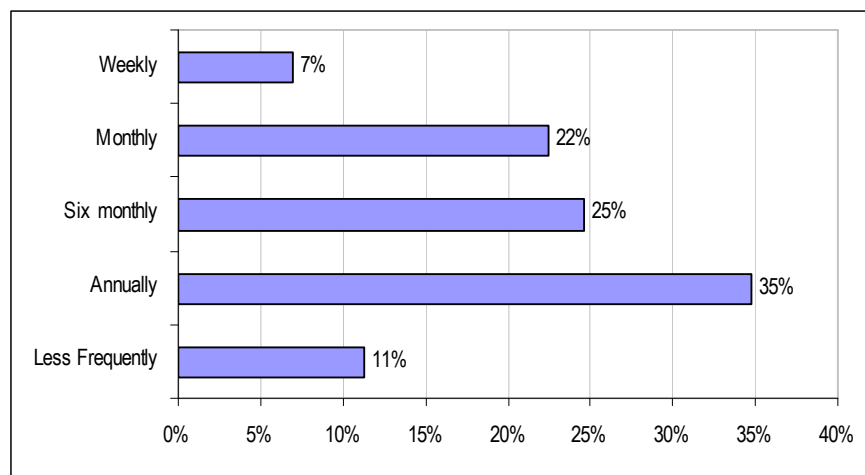
The primary responsibility of the UIS, as outlined above, is to the Member States of UNESCO. This responsibility involves winning and maintaining the trust and confidence of countries with regard to the use and accuracy of country data reported. UIS is also required to assist Member States both in the process of providing data to UIS and the analysis of statistics, indicators and analytical reports produced by UIS to inform decision-making.

As a Category I Institute of UNESCO, there is also an expectation on UIS to secure extra-budgetary funding as the primary means for growth and capacity building. The international community also placed high expectations on UIS to deliver reliable, timely, and internationally comparable country level data in order to measure progress towards the education-related Millennium Development Goals and six Dakar goals of Education for All. In order to achieve each of these objectives, it was crucial for UIS to build partnerships and networks within the international statistical community and become recognised as a credible statistical institution.

In order to assess the quality of interaction and coordination with such a broad range non-UNESCO stakeholders, we conducted an extensive survey of UIS contacts.

In our stakeholder survey, we asked respondents how frequently they or their organisation were in contact with UIS. Figure 22 illustrates that over 50% of stakeholders were interacting with UIS on a six monthly or more frequent basis.

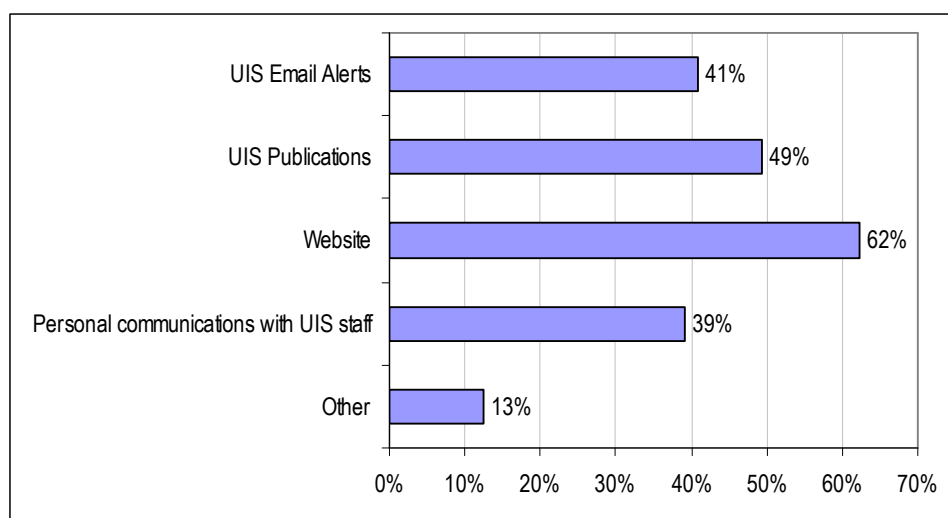
Figure 22: Frequency of contact with UIS



Source: Survey of Stakeholders

Stakeholder awareness of with UIS activities is mostly maintained through the Institute’s website. Figure x shows that for just over 60 percent of respondents the website helped to keep them informed of UIS activities, although other channels such as UIS Publications, UIS Email Alerts, and Personal communications with UIS staff were also used by significant numbers of stakeholders. Further analysis showed that representatives of Member States were more likely than other stakeholders to report using personal communications with UIS staff to stay informed of UIS activities.

Figure 23: Methods used to remain informed of UIS activities



Source: Survey of Stakeholders

A common theme from the majority of individuals we spoke to, both within and external to UNESCO, was the strong role the former Director, Denise Lievesley, had played in building relationships with Member States and more generally raising the international profile of UIS. Following her departure in 2005, many tributes were paid by Member States with regard to the work of the Director in successfully establishing the UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

In terms the quality of interaction and coordination between UIS and Member States, the following comments by representatives of Member States are illustrative of responses we received:

The sharing of international best practice and regional methodologies at workshops and by UIS staff in personal emails is one of the main strengths of UIS

I don't get much chances of meeting UIS staff frequently, the UIS website has become a very good source of information as a technical guide as well as a source of cross national data

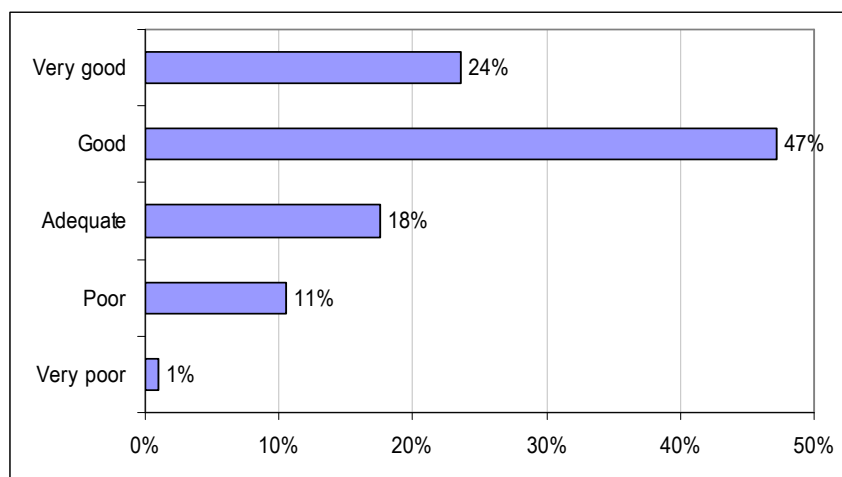
Their main achievement is to build capacity by conducting workshops and making people from different countries change their ideas

The provision of reports on various areas of education such as literacy, education for all, to name a few, are very useful

The most common request from representatives of Member States, in terms of their relationship with UIS, was for more frequent training workshops and statistical capacity building activities within their countries.

Amongst all stakeholders, the quality of engagement with UIS was generally viewed positively. Figure x shows that more than two-thirds of respondents described the quality of engagement as good or very good.

Figure 24: Quality of engagement of non-UNESCO Stakeholders with UIS



Source: Survey of Stakeholders

In early years following the creation of the Institute, UIS leadership worked hard to develop relationships within the international development and statistical communities. Staff were encouraged to develop networks through participation in international committees and attend meetings and conferences relevant to their work. UIS has also been very responsive to the demands of the international statistical and development communities in providing presentations on the work of the institute or statistical issues. Individuals we interviewed both within and external to UIS highlighted the rapid benefits accrued through these activities and the particular role of the first Director and key members of the Governing Board in assisting to develop strong international connections and partnerships.

At the international level, UIS now enjoys a wide network of funding and programme related partnerships across its areas of expertise. In terms of donors, the Institute has attracted core and project-based funding from both bilateral and multi-lateral organisations. Voluntary Government contributions have been or are currently

provided by a number of countries including Canada, Norway, Denmark, United Kingdom, Sweden, Netherlands, Japan, and the USA.

Significant partnerships have also been established with a number of multi-lateral statistical and development agencies including UN agencies such as UNDP, UN Statistics Commission, UNICEF, ILO, and other multi-lateral agencies such as the World Bank, European Commission, Eurostat, OECD.

In particular, the World Bank was a significant proponent of the creation of the Institute for Statistics within UNESCO and has remained an important stakeholder of UIS. This is in the capacities of a representative on the Governing Board of the Institute, a significant funder of UIS activities, and as a user of education statistics produced by UIS. Over the period of the evaluation, it is understood that issues have arisen between the World Bank and UIS in relation to the timeliness and quality of statistics produced. However, UIS is generally described as being responsive to these criticisms. In a 2004 communiqué of the Development Committee of the IMF and World Bank, the efforts of UIS were acknowledged:

“The UNESCO Institute for Statistics has taken measures to improve data quality and timeliness. The annual EFA Global Monitoring produced by UNESCO is a welcome source of information about education trends in EFA countries. The data time lag has been reduced to under two years, a substantial improvement over the four-year time lag that prevailed in the recent past...”

Where differences have arisen, with international partners, it is our understanding that these are more likely to reflect differences of professional opinion or priorities on substantive issues. The joint project with UNICEF on measuring children out of school is an example of this. Tensions have arisen between the two organisations in their efforts to develop a methodology which combines the use of administrative and household survey data. A few stakeholders identified this as an on-going issue about which they were disappointed by the limited progress. On matters of substance, we would suggest conflicts of interest and opinion will be unavoidable at times but efforts to remain professional in interactions and openly communicate and consider possible solutions or alternative recommendations is crucial over the longer term.

In terms of relationship management, UIS was consistently described as professional and attuned to the needs of external clients. The quality of interactions with UIS compares favourably to interactions with internal sectors of UNESCO. Staff of the Division of Extra-Budgetary Funding Sources within the UNESCO Secretariat

reinforced the views of others that UIS enjoyed an excellent reputation amongst donor organisations, and in particular multi-lateral development banks. UIS was described as having a good reputation for being technical experts, being able to deliver on projects in a timely and professional manner, and as consequence “made UNESCO look good”.

Beyond relationships with the international community, UIS has also developed a large statistical capacity building programme. The success of this programme and sustainability of outcomes relies extensively on its relationships with development partners for both funding and technical cooperation. This imperative has led to the formation of strong relationships in the regions where UIS has a strong presence.

In the Asia and Pacific region, UIS participates actively in a wide range of regional partnerships and played a formative role in establishing the Association for the Development of Education in Asia Pacific (ADEAP) and National Education Statistical Information Systems Asia-Pacific (NESIS-AP). Examples of other key partners include the Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, the Office of the Regional Culture Advisor, the Statistics Division of the United Nations Economic and the Regional Thematic Working Group on EFA Statistics

The UIS Latin America and Caribbean Regional Team works in an integrated fashion with the UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education (OREALC) in Santiago, Chile. Given the relative newness of the team, and its small size, its capacity to undertake significant country-level capacity building activities is limited. This has led to the Office adopting a strategy of contributing to the capacity building initiatives to wider regional education sector initiatives. Two examples of this are the Summit of the Americas Regional Education Indicators project and the Regional Information System project (SIRI).

In Africa, UIS has formed strong relationships with the African Development Bank and Islamic Development Bank. UIS also initially developed a strong and active relationship with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) as the coordinator of the Working Group on Educational Statistics (WGES). Through this network, the UIS played a leading role in developing and implementing the capacity building programme of the WGES-NESIS project. However, the manner in which UIS delivered on this coordinating role presented some significant challenges for both parties over the course of the evaluation period. These issues are briefly summarised below.

However, changes in UIS personnel in the Harare office and differences of opinion regarding the future programmatic direction of the programme, led to UIS being asked to step down from its coordinating role of WGES. This was requested in order to allow the WGES to undertake a review of its role and develop a stronger identity and programme. However, it is our understanding that this outcome, also partially resulted from the directive, non-consultative way in which UIS's began to coordinate the activities of the network, with a perceived limited understanding of regional and country-level development issues and needs. Despite this significant disruption, the importance of regional alignment and coordination to leverage country-level results for the wider benefit of the region makes it essential that UIS and WGES find a way to re-engage in collaborative activities. In re-establishing this relationship, care should be taken to develop a clear Memorandum of Understanding which establishes the intended nature of the partnership and areas of responsibility.

The value of regional networks can not be understated, particularly if UIS is to fulfil its principle responsibility to meeting the needs of Member States in the areas of statistics. Wherever possible, UIS should continue to foster and support these networks, in order to both leverage off and support improved connectedness between the work of development agencies and Member States at the regional level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to enhance the quality of UIS interaction and cooperation, we make the following recommendations:

19. UIS should review its regional operations in consultation with regional staff, and assess the adequacy of current interaction and coordination between UIS Montreal and regional offices, in order to identify areas for increased collaboration and engagement.
20. UIS should consider opportunities for developing stronger relationships with other category one institutes, particularly IIEP, to exploit complementary capacities and further the strategic and programmatic priorities of UNESCO.

In respect of the financial and organisational management of the Institute, we were asked to:

- Analyse the funding patterns, mechanisms and their impact on sustained institutional capacity, viability and sustainability;
- Assess the process by which extra-budgetary resources are sought and obtained and to what extent the extra-budgetary funding is aligned to the strategic objectives of UNESCO;
- Analyze the funding pattern for the Institute in terms of its sustainability and evaluate the approach to managing resources to deliver the expected results;
- Assess whether the additional financial resources attracted by UIS compare favourably with those of other category I Institutes;
- Evaluate the management of inputs to deliver expected outcomes, bearing in mind available resources; and
- Examine the quality of organizational management and the impact of the extent of functional autonomy provided.

We analyse these issues under three broad headings: funding patterns and extra-budgetary funding; financial and organisational management; and governance.

FUNDING PATTERNS AND EXTRA BUDGETARY FUNDING

Funding Patterns

Table 6 illustrates the key patterns in funding sources for UIS over the period 1999 to 2005. More detailed information on funding sources is provided in Appendix Five.

The key points to note are that:

- Overall funding increased by an average of 17% per annum between 2000 and 2005, with most of this growth coming from extra budgetary sources. In particular, Member State voluntary contributions increased substantially, from less than \$50,000 in 2000 to more than \$3 million in 2005;
- The rapid increase in external funding is reflected in the sharp increase in the ratio of extra budgetary funding to UNESCO regular programme, which rose from \$0.28 per regular programme dollar in 2000 to \$0.77 in 2005;

- The increase in financial resources was by no means smooth, with most of the year-on-year growth occurring in 2001-02 and 2002-03. Available funds increased by \$1.8 million (42% increase) and \$2.1 million (34% increase) in those two periods respectively;
- Other Contributions and Contracts were a volatile funding source, with large absolute changes in the level of this income stream from year to year. Similar patterns were observed in evaluations of UNESCO education institutes and centres, suggesting that this form of revenue is inherently more volatile than other types of contributions; and
- Other Miscellaneous Income, while also volatile, is much smaller in absolute terms and so does not have the potential to adversely impact on the financial stability of the Institute.

In addition to income received through the UIS Special Account, the UIS also accesses other resources for the purposes of delivering its programme. These sources include funds received by UNESCO on behalf of UIS (e.g. Participation Programmes, FITOCA and Associated Experts), UNESCO decentralised funds and in-kind contributions from Member States and other institutions. These funds have grown significantly over the period, as illustrated in table 7. In 2005 they represented almost 20% of the total consolidated resources of UIS.

Fund Raising

Extra budgetary funds are those that do not form part of the assessed contributions of Member States to the UNESCO regular budget. The Director General is authorised to receive such funds for the implementation of programmes and projects consistent with the aims, policies and activities of UNESCO.

Throughout the UN system, extra-budgetary funding has been growing in importance since the 1980s and has become a significant source of funds for UNESCO. Since the 1990s, UNESCO category one institutes have been encouraged to increase extra-budgetary funding as a means of increasing capacity, particularly in the context of constrained regular programme funding. Indeed, there is a general expectation among staff at the UNESCO Secretariat that extra-budgetary funding should be the main source of funding for the institutes.

Table 6: Summary of UIS Funding Patterns

INCOME	1999*	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006**	2007***
I. REGULAR INCOME									
UNESCO Financial Allocation	1,909,889	3,395,400	3,395,500	3,410,000	3,410,000	4,510,000	4,510,000	4,510,000	4,510,000
Voluntary contributions									
- Governments	-	44,285	952,031	1,949,979	1,869,451	1,982,774	3,059,561	2,811,058	2,294,409
- Others	400,000	1,492,919	14,000	850,000	2,936,500	1,218,512	197,099	1,667,500	1,800,000
- Contracts & MOUs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	458,132	330,003
Revenue generating activities	-	-	334,919	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Regular Income	2,309,889	4,932,604	4,696,450	6,209,979	8,215,951	7,711,286	7,766,660	9,446,690	8,934,412
II. OTHER INCOME									
Reimbursement of services	24,440	14,009	-	1,160	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of publications	14,550	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Currency exchange adjustments	-	-	(2,707)	(29,648)	51,616	37,268	38,983	25,000	50,000
Bank Interest	-	-	-	11,982	15,615	83,942	184,996	300,000	200,000
Other Income	-	-	1,129	7,888	527	3,552	7,003	13,013	-
Total Other Income	38,990	14,009	(1,578)	(8,618)	67,758	124,762	230,982	338,013	250,000
TOTAL INCOME	2,348,879	4,946,613	4,694,872	6,201,361	8,283,709	7,836,048	7,997,642	9,784,703	9,184,412

* Covers the six months to 31 December. ** Estimated as at 30 September 2006. *** Projected as at 30 September 2006.

Table 7: Summary of UIS Funding Patterns

Other Resources	2002	2003	2004	2005
Other Contributions ¹	55,000	5,000	-	-
In Kind Contributions (Countries/Other)	446,537	1,008,952	1,062,918	1,134,830
UNESCO Decentralised Funds ²	132,959	377,100	491,347	801,901
Total Other Resources	634,496	1,391,052	1,554,265	1,936,731
% of Total Special Account Income	10%	17%	20%	24%
% Growth in Total Other Resources	N/A	119%	12%	25%

1 Funds collected by UNESCO on behalf of UIS (e.g. Participation programmes, FITOCA, Associated Experts)

2 Funds allocated to UNESCO sectors and decentralised bodies used to purchase UIS services

As we saw from the previous analysis, UIS has managed to substantially raise its share of extra budgetary funding over the period 1999 to 2005, with extra budgetary funding averaging 47% of total UIS Special Account income during the four years to 2005.

One aspect of our Terms of Reference requires us to assess whether the additional financial resources attracted by UIS compare favourably with those of other category one institutes. The most obvious approach is to compare the intensity with which the various Institutes and Centres use extra-budgetary funding. As noted in previous evaluations of education institutes and centres, these intensities can be expected to vary across the various organisations for a variety of reasons including their age and location. Table 8 provides an indicative comparison of EXB intensities for the eight education institutes and centres and the UIS:²³

Table 8: Extra-Budgetary Funding for UNESCO Category I Bodies²⁴

Institute/Centre	Location	Year	Total Funding	% of EXB	Average EXB %
			2002-03	2002-03	96/97 – 02/03
UNEVOC	Bonn	2000	1,947,353	92%	85%
UIE	Hamburg	1952	6,915,000	73%	66%
IIEP	Paris	1963	15,822,188	65%	62%
IITE	Moscow	1997	2,488,400	56%	35%
UIS	Montreal	1999	14,485,070	53%	34%
IICBA	Addis Ababa	1999	3,755,000	47%	33%
IBE	Geneva	1969	8,563,413	46%	25%
CEPES	Romania	1972	2,560,600	22%	18%
IESALC	Caracas	1998	2,418,380	9%	5%

As the table shows, the fund raising performance of UIS compares relatively favourably with other UNESCO institutes and centres. Only IIEP raises more extra-budgetary funding in absolute terms although, when measured proportionately, the UIS share of extra budgetary funding is about average. Nevertheless, one should not read too much into this comparison, particularly given the Institute's relative youth and the rapid upward trend of EXB which, as we will show later, has outpaced the Institute's capacity to expand its human resources and programmatic expenditure.

Notwithstanding the Institute's success at attracting funding support from donors, our interviews with key staff and Board Members left us with a strong impression that the fund raising activities of UIS were *ad hoc* and decentralised to programme level. For example, there have been significant attempts by the UIS to raise money for statistical capacity building technical assistance projects and for the LAMP initiative at a country level. These fund raising efforts have not been tied into a formal, institution-wide

²³ There are potentially significant measurement problems associated with reported shares of extra-budgetary funding, such as under-reporting owing to in-kind contributions and co-funding arrangements that do not involve receipt of revenue. These figures are therefore indicative only.

²⁴ This data is not routinely collected by UNESCO. The most readily available comparative figures are therefore some years out of date.

fund raising strategy and have been led by programme staff rather than the Director of the Institute. This has created a 'disconnect' between the Institute's overall priorities and its capacity to service them at an individual programme level.

This decentralised approach to fundraising has placed the Institute under financial pressure because the funds raised for programmatic initiatives have at times been insufficient to meet the full cost of undertaking the initiatives. In some areas the Institute has been scaling up activities while at the same time creating a drain on the core resources of the Institute. In some areas, such as LAMP, the UIS has expanded activities on the expectation that resources would follow, when in practice resources have been slow to arrive. A more prudent approach would be to make commitments only when there is a binding funding agreement in place.

There is a clear need for the Institute to formalise responsibilities for fund raising within the Institute and to develop a fundraising strategy, linked of course to the Institute's new Medium Term Strategy. For reasons related to the long-term financial viability and sustainability of the Institute, which we discuss further in the next subsection, it is important that the Institute try to attract more multi-year general budgetary support. Such arrangements are already in place with some donors (e.g. the Window One Development Grant Facility arrangement with the World Bank). The Institute should also look to replicate some of the advanced fundraising practices used by other UNESCO Institutes, particularly the IIEP. For example, IIEP has developed an annual Partners Day, at which it makes presentations to partner organisations and potential donors about the recent achievements of the Institute and its strategic direction. IIEP also targets donors through the networks it supports, such as ADEA.

In recent years there has been a trend in the donor community towards decentralisation of aid to country-level, which has complicated the funding environment for multilateral agencies in general and the UIS in particular. In response to this trend, UIS must work hard to remain attractive to funding agencies and other partner agencies at country level, through developing compelling funding propositions tailored to needs at regional and sub-regional level.

One issue of concern for bilateral donors is perceived competition between UN agencies for funds. This is probably less of an issue for UIS given its relatively unique mandate within the UN system and, more generally, within the international development community. However, the increasing emphasis on extra budgetary funding brings to the fore the potential for harmful competition between agencies. Lack of inter-agency cooperation can have a negative impact on global priority setting

and implementation of development assistance. UIS should explore, with the UNESCO Division of Cooperation with Extrabudgetary Funding Sources and other UNESCO institutes and centres, how it can undertake ‘joined up’ fund raising efforts where appropriate.

Viability and Sustainability of Funding

An important element to consider in assessing the viability and sustainability of the current funding patterns is the diversity of the funding base. Over the period 1999 to 2005, the Institute has increased the number of individual donors, as illustrated by Table 9. However, the lumpy nature of fund raising means that one should not read too much into such figures.

Table 9: Number of Individual Donors (by category of revenue)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Voluntary Contributions	2	1	4	5	4	5
Other Contributions and Contracts	2	1	1	4	4	4
Total	4	2	5	9	8	9

Source: UIS Financial Statements.

Notwithstanding the improvement in the diversity of the funding base, by any standards the total number of donors contributing extra-budgetary funding to the UIS Special Account is low. IIEP, by comparison, has more than 50 individual donors who provide a mix of voluntary contributions and contracts.

The above data masks the relative importance of a small number of very generous donors. For example, the top 5 donors – four Member States and one UN agency – contributed a total of \$15.8 million or 90% of total extra budgetary funding over the period 2000-2005. The small number of donors in total, and the very high concentration of extra budgetary resources in only five donors, points to vulnerabilities in the financial situation of the UIS. These donors are contributing funds that cover the costs of the core functions and staff of the Institute. Should a major donor withdraw its financial support of the Institute, it would leave a large hole in the UIS budget.

This risk is mitigated somewhat by the stability and medium-term nature of its funding agreements with some donors. For example, the World Bank, which was the largest single donor to the Institute over the period (contributing almost 40% of the total

extra-budgetary funding of the Institute), has entered into a Window One funding agreement under the Development Grant Facility.²⁵ This funding arrangement is tied to the education statistics programme of UIS but nevertheless is used for fairly general purposes subject to the annual agreement of priorities between UIS and the World Bank. The agreement also reflects the World Bank's view that UIS should be the umbrella agency responsible for improving the quality of education statistics in the developing world:

“The core objective of DGF support for UIS has been to assist in the transformation of the former UNESCO Department of Statistics into a quasi-autonomous institute (UIS) that will develop capacity to manage the design, collection, selective analysis and dissemination of data that are high quality, policy relevant, and timely in nature. As this is fundamentally an institutional development challenge, it is expected that DGF support will be required through FY06.²⁶ Bank support will help to strengthen the credibility of UIS and would be a catalytic agent for increased financial support from bilateral and other international development assistance organizations.”

Another aspect of funding sustainability is volatility of income. Although the Institute's total funding has increased significantly over the period, it has not increased steadily every year. The largest year-to-year increases occurred in 2001-02 (total income increased by \$1.5 million or 32%) and 2002-03 (total income increased by \$2.1 million or 34%). However, funding also fell significantly during the evaluation period – 2004 funding was \$450,000 (5%) down on previous year. Extra-budgetary funding has accounted for most of the volatility in funding during the period.

Volatility in funding presents the risk of having to downsize or upscale activities (including hiring and firing staff) at short notice, unless the Institute builds up reserves during periods of strong income growth to draw down during periods of income reduction. Indeed, this is exactly what happened during the initial years of the Institute's existence – the financial resources of the Institute grew faster than the capacity of the Institute to expend resources, particularly due to the time required to hire high quality staff. Consequently, the Institute built up more than \$4 million (56% of total income) in reserves by the end of 2004.

²⁵ The World Bank introduced a two-window approach to grant making under the DGF in 2002 in order to more clearly differentiate between programs to be supported through grants in the medium and long term from those to be supported for a limited time. 'Window One' is reserved for medium-and longer-term programs whose prospects for disengagement are reviewed in the context of progress being made and for which there is no defined exit strategy.

²⁶ DGF support has subsequently been extended to 2010.

In 2005 and 2006, the Institute's capacity to spend finally caught up and, in fact, overtook its capacity to generate income. Consequently, the UIS for the last two years has been consuming these Reserves (although it maintains its policy of adding to its Stabilisation Reserve). The Certified Accounts of the UIS Special Account show a cash shortfall of approximately \$900,000 in 2005 and current projections are for a significant cash shortfall in 2006 - provisioned as approximately \$2 million as at 30 September 2006. These shortfalls have substantially eroded the Reserves and lessened the financial strength of the Institute. Furthermore, the UIS is now at risk of a 'structural deficit', in that it may be difficult for the Institute to significantly reduce its spending further without compromising its ability to deliver on its commitments.

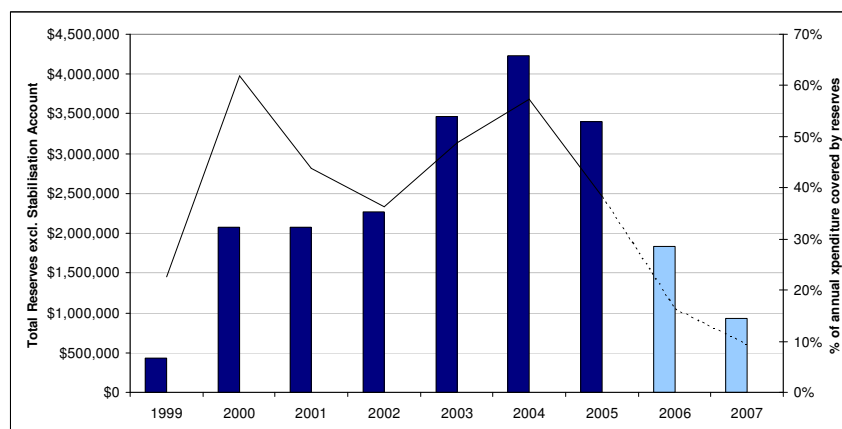
The new Director, Administrative Officer and Board of the Institute are well aware of financial predicament of the UIS. Indeed, the original appropriation for 2006 was \$11.4 million, which was revised down to \$10.1 million during the course of the year. This prudent action substantially lessened the estimated shortfall for 2006 and the Institute is now on course for a 'soft landing' in 2007. Nevertheless, the Institute will need to further cut back its programmatic expenditure in 2008 and beyond unless additional financial resources are found.

In order to cover the payment of termination or separation benefits to departing staff members of the UIS, the Institute has maintained a policy since its inception of contributing 5% of its payroll to a Stabilisation Reserve Account.²⁷ This Account may also be used to fund programme and project costs when the payment of expected funds is delayed for unforeseen reasons or circumstances, but only on the understanding that the amount transferred is to be returned to the Account in the same financial period or during the next two consecutive financial periods.

Given this Account is effectively "off limits" for the purposes of general financial management, the financial strength of the UIS is best assessed by the adequacy of the Total Reserves excluding the Stabilisation Reserve. Figure 25 shows the actual growth and then decline in those Reserves such that, in 2007, the Institute projects it will only be able to cover 9% of its total annual expenditure (approximately one month's expenditure) in the event of a significant adverse liquidity event. This is a slim margin by which to manage an Institute of this size and needs to be rectified urgently.

²⁷ This is consistent with UNESCO Financial Regulations.

Figure 25: Reserves of UIS (1999-2007)



Source: UIS Financial Statements and 2006 Governing Board Papers.

In summary, significant challenges remain for the Institute to diversify its funding base, reduce the volatility of funding, and secure the Institute’s long-term financial viability and sustainability. While the Institute has taken significant steps to achieve a credible scale, and has put itself on a relatively stable financial footing during the early years of its existence, the data clearly shows that it remains vulnerable to a significant shift in donor sentiment. It therefore needs to place significant efforts over the next two years on further stabilising its short- to medium-term financial position.

It is our understanding that this view is shared by the new Director of the Institute. Indeed, significant progress has been made in this area recently in the form of a new supplementary contribution from Montreal International to UIS towards headquarters operating costs of CAD \$512,000 per year for a period of five years.²⁸ This decision reflects “a commitment to a long term relationship with the Institute’s Montreal headquarters” by the Board of Montreal International. The Administrative Officer of the UIS forecasts funding needs on a regular basis and anticipates when negotiation of new funding agreements is required. The planned reorganisation of the Institute also has the potential to yield significant savings, which will reduce the short term funding pressure on the Institute. As previously mentioned, steps have recently been taken to reduce the projected deficit in 2006 and pave the way for a ‘soft landing’ in 2007.

²⁸ This contribution is on top of a one-off contribution of CAD\$ 1,000,000 by Montreal International towards the costs of relocation and fit-out of a new office annex space, and renovation of existing offices, and a 5 year contribution of CAD\$143,000 per year to offset lease rental costs associated with the new annex.

Recommendations

21. The UIS also needs to improve the diversity of its funding base and, in doing so, should focus on the attraction of multi-year general budgetary funding as a first priority over one-off project-based funding.
22. The UIS should improve mechanisms for evaluating the full cost of extr-budgetary projects and systematically incorporate an appropriate allowance for overhead and technical infrastructure support as part of its project-based extra-budgetary funding agreements to ensure that the Institute's core funding is not used to subsidise such projects.

FINANCIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The financial and organisational management of the Institute is the responsibility of its Director, supported by the management and administrative staff of the UIS. The Institute is bound by UNESCO regulations in respect of its financial and human resources management practices but otherwise enjoys significant financial and administrative autonomy.

Administrative Management

In general, the Board reporting of the Institute places little weight on coverage of administrative management. Furthermore, changes in Institute personnel and the relatively recent appointment of the current Administrative Officer mean it was difficult to obtain an historical perspective on the administrative management of the Institute over the evaluation period. Consequently, significant gaps remain in our understanding of the administrative management of the Institute.

The principal administrative challenge of the Institute in its early years was associated with the change in location from Paris to Montreal:

- In 2001, the main objectives of the Director and the Office of the Administrator were to finalise the negotiations with the Canadian authorities, and to plan and coordinate the physical shift of the Institute to Montreal in September of that year. The UIS administrator transferred to the Science Sector in June 2001, and an interim replacement proved difficult to find. Consequently, a heavy load of administration fell on the then Director, Denise Lievesley;
- Key achievements were the conclusion of negotiations with the Federal and Provincial Governments, the negotiation of a lease agreement with the University

of Montreal and the finalisation of a Memorandum of Understanding with Montreal International. The UIS worked closely with the architect and University authorities concerning the refurbishment of accommodation and the purchase of furniture and equipment. Arrangements were made to transfer the Institute's archives and records from Paris to Montreal; and

- The UIS faced several problems when it moved to its new premises in Montreal. For example, the telephone and IT infrastructure were not immediately available. These problems were dealt with expeditiously and did not greatly affect the operations of the Institute.

Strategic Management

The strategic planning and management of the Institute has been an area of weakness over the evaluation period. To some extent this is inevitable since the UIS, in organisational terms, is very much an 'adolescent'. Like an adolescent, the UIS has grown rapidly and disproportionately across its various programmes. For example, resources for education statistics have grown out of proportion with resources for other sectors. And some parts of the Institute, such as the Statistical Capacity Building programme, appear to have taken on a life of their own. Given that the UIS is now emerging from its adolescence, it is important that its future growth and development become less haphazard and more shaped by a strong strategic view of what the Institute ought to be. This will require the Board and management to develop that strategic view, which does not yet exist, and build support for it amongst stakeholders.

It is worth recalling that shortly after the Institute's establishment, the new management team embarked on the development of the Institute's key strategic document – the UIS Medium Term Strategy. This strategic document, which covered the period 2002-2007, remains the most current articulation of the Institute's strategy.

While it is common practice in UNESCO to produce a medium-term strategy every 6 years, our view is that planning for the "medium-term" is about looking beyond the immediate horizon of the Institute and, therefore, requires a rolling horizon approach. That is, the medium-term strategy should set out the Institute's strategic plan at a particular point in time and should evolve and adapt it as circumstances change. For this reason, we consider the development of a revised Medium Term Strategy for the UIS is well over due, particularly given the huge amount of internal and external change over the last five years.

The new Director noted in his November 2006 report to the Governing Board that the UIS is beginning to prepare the framework document for the next medium-term strategy. This is a timely and critically important initiative for the Institute as it represents an opportunity for it to reconsider its strategic and programmatic priorities as well as how it organises itself to carry them out. It is therefore important that the Institute take a carefully considered and consultative approach to the development of this strategy and we have every faith that it will do so. In particular we think it is important that the UIS take the time to consult with and listen to its stakeholders to ensure the Institute's future direction remains relevant to their needs.

The lack of an up to date strategy extends to the lack of a fund raising strategy for the Institute. As previously noted, while UIS has been successful in raising extra-budgetary funds, it has gone about fund-raising in a relatively *ad hoc* fashion and has been driven more by the need to respond to donors than by its own strategic priorities. The Institute has not been effective at developing and marketing the UIS as a whole, instead focussing on raising funds for specific projects and initiatives. While gaining general budgetary support from donors is challenging for any international agency, UIS has a better chance than most given the 'bedrock' statistical services it provides. We therefore recommend that the UIS give priority to the attraction of multi-year general budgetary support over one-off project-based funding.

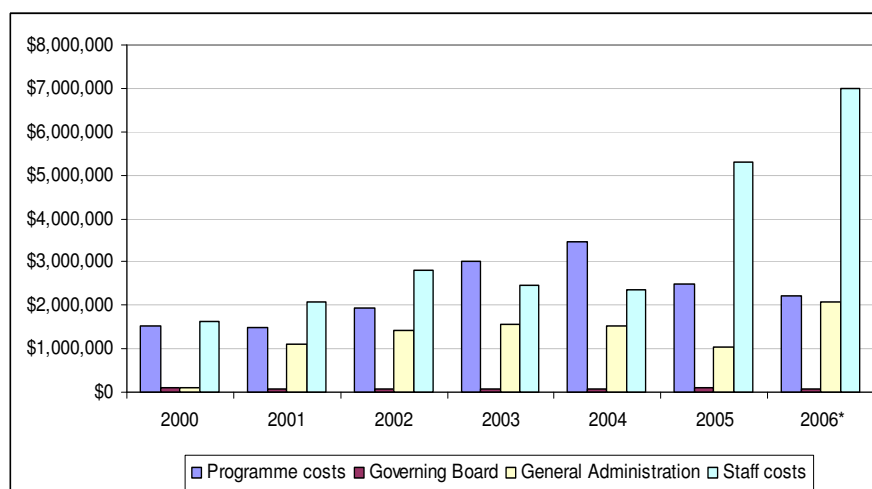
In concert with the relatively weak strategy and planning function of the UIS, there are also significant weaknesses in the area of results-based management. We observed very little in the way of self-evaluation activity by the Institute. For example, formal feedback is not sought from participants in UIS regional workshops and there are few (if any) internal evaluations of UIS programmes. There have, on occasion, been external evaluations of particular projects commissioned by outside donors, notably the World Bank, but such evaluations do not provide sufficient insight into the activities of the UIS to inform management and board-level decision making. This evaluation too, is insufficient for programme management purposes given its broad scope and high-level nature.

The UIS makes use of the SISTER programme management and monitoring tool. However, as with most other UNESCO institutes, it is seen as an external reporting tool and is not particularly useful for results-based management purposes.

Figure 26 shows changes in the composition of expenditure by UIS over the period 2000–2006. In particular, it demonstrates:

- Significant growth in the expenditure of the UIS over the evaluation period, particularly in terms of staff costs²⁹;
- Staff costs (48% of total costs) represent the largest single component of total costs over the evaluation period, followed by programme costs (33%) and general administration costs (18%). Costs related to the Governing Board represented 1% of the total running costs of the Institute; and
- It should be noted that the large increase in general administration costs in 2006 represents a one-off contribution from Montreal International of CAD \$1,000,000 to renovate and upgrade existing and new premises. Excluding this extraordinary expenditure, general administrative costs average 16% over the period. This is broadly consistent with the average level of overhead of 13% observed in previous UNESCO Institute evaluations and is consistent with a relatively lean organisation, particularly given the specialist IT requirements of the UIS.

Figure 26: Composition of UIS Expenditure (by expenditure type)



Source: UIS Financial Accounts

It should be noted that the UIS receives contributions from the governments of Canada and the Province of Quebec to support the administrative costs of the Institute, including the rental of its premises in Montreal. Other significant general

²⁹ There have been changes in reporting of staff costs over the period which complicates this analysis. The staff cost reported for 2004 only includes permanent staff, with non-permanent staff allocated to programme costs. For 2005 and 2006, 'staff costs' includes all staff, which explains the large jump in reported 'staff costs' in 2004-05.

administration costs, including outsourced IT and related support services, are subject to periodic contestable tender processes in accordance with UNESCO regulations.

By allocating staff costs to the relevant programme areas, we should be able to get a picture of how the composition of Institute's programme activities has changed over time. Unfortunately, there have been significant changes to the way that programme expenditure has been classified and reported over the period (see table 10), which makes it difficult to track changes over time.

Table 10: Composition of UIS Programme Expenditure (including Staff Costs)

	2,000	2,001	2,002	2,003	2,004	2,005	2006*
Regional and international cooperation	154,256	230,411					
Collection of comparable international statistics	756,122	1,231,942					
Building statistical capacity in Member States	844,626	732,031					
Information and publications	367,115	509,332					
Special projects	512,277	423,910					
Guardianship of cross-national data			571,961	1,463,282	1,276,675		
Development of appropriate methodology and standards			773,072	1,042,820	1,283,472		
Capacity building in the collection and use of statistics			1,570,650	940,691	1,277,332		
Analysis and interpretation of cross-national data			733,676	1,446,856	1,153,704		
EFA Observatory			432,373	180,496	241,314		
Education Statistics						2,070,809	1,928,963
Data Analysis and Communications						1,375,022	-
Education Statistics - Statistical Capacity Building						1,107,350	1,183,043
Science & Technology, Culture & Communication Statistics						967,580	834,439
Literacy, Non-formal Education Statistics (including LAMP)						965,121	1,198,675
Cross Programme Activities						-	2,856,039
Total Programme Costs	2,634,396	3,127,626	4,081,732	5,074,145	5,232,496	6,485,882	8,001,159

Source: UIS Financial Accounts

Nevertheless, by some manipulation of the data it can be seen that the UIS has spent on average:

- around one third of its budget on the collection of statistics (across all sectors). Expenditure on education and non-education sectors was reported separately from 2005 and demonstrates that UIS spends more than twice on education statistics what it spends on statistics for all other sectors combined;
- around one quarter on its statistical capacity building activities although, notwithstanding the significant absolute growth in the programme, this appears to have shrunk in recent years from a peak of 38% of total programme expenditure in 2000 to around 15% in 2005;
- around one fifth on the analysis, interpretation and dissemination of data and research; and
- The balance on other cross-programme support, including development of methodology.

Spending on literacy and non-formal education statistics, including LAMP, has been reported separately since 2005, since this has become a significant programme area of the Institute in its own right. In 2005 and 2006, spending on this area accounted for approximately 15% of total programme spending, notwithstanding that the

programme is still to raise significant funds from donors other than a US \$1,000,000 contribution announced recently by the United States.

Also in relation to financial management, on 1 January 2002 UNESCO ceased using its existing accounting system and began implementation of the FABS/SAP project. Due to the need to stage the implementation of the new system's introduction, the UNESCO field offices, institutes and centres were initially left outside of the first stage of system implementation. The UIS was therefore required to put in place its own financial and budgetary system from scratch at relatively short notice. As an interim solution, the UIS adopted the IIEP accounting and budget management system (FBSI). UIS subsequently contributed to the development costs for FBSI. The UIS migrated to UNESCO's FABS/SAP accounting system on 1 January 2006. This process went relatively smoothly and was facilitated by adequate on-site technical assistance provided by UNESCO finance personnel.

Human Resources Management

The human resources practices of the UIS remain relatively under-developed, particularly given the size of the Institute. The new Director and Administrative Officer are planning to institute more rigorous human resources practices over the course of the next 12-18 months.

The focus of the human resources section during the first few years of the Institute's existence was on the recruitment of new staff. Given the scale of recruitment, as illustrated in Table 11, this was a huge task for the small but able human resources team. This task was exacerbated by the significant number of staff that left the Institute over the period and the fact that only six staff employed by the Institute in Paris transferred to Montreal. It is testament to the skills of the HR team, the then Director and senior management of the Institute that this large recruitment phase was achieved while retaining a strong focus on quality. Many of the stakeholders we interviewed and surveyed have commented on the very high calibre of UIS staff.

Table 11: Number of staff employed by the UIS

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Staff numbers	35	40	41	49	57	75	98	95

Source: Governing Board Reports.

In other areas of human resources, such as induction of new employees, staff performance management and training and development, the Institute's practices are under-developed and unsystematic. The new Director has instituted, for the first time in 2006, compulsory annual performance reviews for staff. Prior to this, performance reviews for staff were not routine. Some managers conducted reviews for their staff whereas others did not, leading to inconsistencies in treatment of staff. That is not to say that the performance of staff was not managed. However, the Institute lacked a systematic process for performance review. This is unusual for an Institute the size of UIS and should be rectified as quickly as possible, although realistically it will take time to develop a culture of performance appraisal and management and staff will require training in performance management.

Similarly, in relation to career development and training, the Institute does not appear to have a well developed approach. Weaknesses in career development were recognised by the previous Director and senior managers as an issue and an internal working group was formed following a staff retreat to develop ideas to address this issue. However the timing of the group's report, which included recommendations to establish a training programme for UIS staff, coincided with the departure of the then Director and, consequently, little action has been taken to address these issues. In relation to training, the main investments by the Institute have been in language training and general purpose IT training for most staff, while a smaller number of staff have benefited from advanced statistical training.

Information Technology

IT Services are crucial for the efficient and effective work of UIS, given the advanced technological requirements of a modern statistical agency. In considering the effectiveness of the Institute's IT Services, it is important to differentiate between:

- Operational systems and related support, comprising the provision of functional desktops, email services, network administration and file services; and
- Statistical systems and related support, comprising development and administration of systems for data collection, processing and dissemination.

The *operational IT environment* at the time of the Institute's transfer to Montreal was described by UIS staff as non-functional in a number of critical respects:

- there were significant problems with stability of the email system, including emails being lost in both directions (sending and receiving);
- the file services provided by the University of Montreal were frequently testing the capacity of the system and the support offered by the University was unreliable (e.g. limited support during the University's Summer break); and
- Inadequate back up and file recovery services resulted in more than one instance of data loss and, consequently, lost productivity.

Over the period 2001–2004, the Institute undertook a number of initiatives to address these issues:

- Email services were contracted out to an external provider, which has resulted in a significant improvement in service quality for little additional expense;
- The Institute put in place its own servers and back-up infrastructure, which means that file services have improved dramatically and, in the event of failure, data can be restored in a fraction of the time previously achieved.

By the end of 2004, the UIS had achieved a high level of stability and efficiency in its operational IT services and little further investment has been required since then. One remaining weak point in operational IT services is the limited support available to UIS regional staff, including constrained access to UIS shared resources. IT support for these staff is the joint responsibility of UIS and the UNESCO Regional Offices where staff are based. However, adequacy of IT support is at times overlooked as part of the process of establishing UIS regional advisors in the field.

Significant development work has also been conducted by UIS in relation to its statistical systems. The in-house statistical systems inherited from the Division of Statistics had largely been developed in isolation for each programme area. While these systems were functional, there were significant gaps and errors and the systems were not contributing positively to data quality and timeliness.

The initial focus of the UIS was on stabilising these systems before undertaking a sustained four year development programme towards a common statistical information system that meets the needs of all UIS programme areas. Since 2002 there have been a number of initiatives to improve specialist statistical IT services including:

- The migration of the various data collections to a common database;
- Enhancements to electronic data capture infrastructure based on off-the-shelf technologies that support questionnaire design and multiple delivery methods in all six UN languages;
- Development of a general tool for managing and monitoring survey response rates and acknowledgements;
- Development of new tools to automate and improve data processing capabilities in the main production surveys, including installation of a new data verification and data cleaning system; and
- Harmonisation of processes and methods used across survey areas;

While a number of the above changes are still bedding down, they can be expected to improve survey delivery and processing and reduce the cost and complexity of collecting, processing and disseminating data. The enhancements can also be expected to improve respondent satisfaction, response rates, timeliness of data collection and data quality.

Occasional enhancements have also been made to the online dissemination environment (hosted on the UIS website) over the evaluation period. Early in the period, data was available in manually created spreadsheet files, which led to a number of errors and inconsistencies. This practice has since been automated and improved user functionality has been added through the installation of data analysis and visualisation software. The Institute is currently in the process of further enhancing its online dissemination environment, including developing enhanced access for different types of users (e.g. to cater to non-technical users who want access to country profiles as well as meeting the needs of researchers who need access to full statistical tables). This new system should be available in February 2007.

The Institute does not yet have a consistent approach to statistical standards and methods (e.g. questionnaire design, meta-data standards) across the various collections. There is an opportunity to make more effective use of IT to improve standardisation in this area. The Institute's senior management is currently considering moving towards a new structure that would place more emphasis on use of IT to achieve

greater efficiencies and accuracy in data processing, and free up resources for further investments in data quality. This is a direction that we would endorse.

It is expected that the Institute's specialist IT services, as well as its operational IT support, will need regular review and upgrading in order to keep pace with changing technology and evolving user requirements. In order to plan for these developments, particularly given limited resources, we would recommend that the Institute develop a medium-term IT plan required to give effect to the Institute's key strategic priorities. This plan should, of course, derive from the Institute's revised Medium Term Strategy.

Recommendations

23. The UIS needs to improve its strategic planning by taking a carefully considered and consultative approach to the development of the next Medium Term Strategy. Once this revised strategy is in place, the UIS should keep it up to date by periodically reviewing progress and adapting to changes in the external environment.
24. Once the new Medium Term Strategy is complete, the UIS needs to develop a formal institution-wide fund-raising strategy, and formalise the responsibilities for implementing that strategy. In doing so, the Institute should look to replicate the best practices adopted by other Institutes, notably IIEP, including potentially implementing an annual Partners day. The UIS should explore, with the UNESCO Division of Cooperation with Extra-budgetary Funding Sources and other UNESCO institutes and centres, how it can undertake 'joined up' fund raising efforts where appropriate.
25. In support of the Medium-Term Strategy, the UIS should develop an annual business plan that outlines the operational implications of the strategy for the management of UIS. This should address key issues such as initiatives to build organisational capacity, human resource management and IT development priorities.
26. The UIS also needs to improve its results-based management practices, including by undertaking more self-evaluation and through the implementation of performance management system that focuses on a 'vital few' performance areas.
27. The UIS should take steps to improve its human resource management practices, including moving quickly to implement a staff performance review system and formal training and staff development programme, and to increase its investment in staff training, including in non-technical and managerial areas such as fund-raising and relationship management.

GOVERNANCE

As part of our evaluation we conducted an in-depth review of reports prepared for the Governing Board and interviewed four current and three former board members (including the current and two former Board Chairs). In addition, we were fortunate to observe the Board in session at its November 2006 meeting. The current and former Directors of the Institute were also able to shed light on aspects of the Governance of the Institute.

Like other category one UNESCO institutes, the UIS has a unique governance structure. The Institute is governed by its own Board, within the mandate set out in its Statutes and by its own Rules of Procedure. The Board consists of twelve members, each appointed for a four year term, of whom six are designated by the Director-General and six are elected by the General Conference. The Board is responsible for electing its own Chairperson.

The role of the Board is both strategic and fiduciary. Its key functions are to approve the general policy and nature of the Institute's activities, set guidelines for the development of the programme, provide direction on the balance of priorities and funds, approve the annual programme and budget, and examine reports of annual expenditures and the execution of the programme. The Chair of the Board reports on the activities of the Institute to the General Conference of UNESCO at the end of each biennium.

The Board is required by its Statutes to meet at least once annually, and current practice is for the full Board to meet in November each year, with the main business being a review of the past year's activity and financial statements and approval of the annual budget and programme for the coming year. The Board also has a Policy and Planning Committee, comprising of four members plus the chair of the Institute, which meets approximately once per year between Board sessions, principally to consider the programme and budget of the Institute in more detail and to make adjustments based on changes in the financial situation or other circumstances that may arise.

Our findings in relation to the governance of the Institute are:

- Relations between the Governing Board, the Directors (past and present) and senior managers of the Institute appear to be characterised by a high degree of trust and mutual respect, where Members feel free to raise issues with the Director and staff;

- As is to be expected with international Boards that have a mix of elected and designated members, many of whom are appointed for their technical skills, the level of Board members governance skills and experience is varied. We believe that in order to fully satisfy their role as Board members, new Members ought to receive a proper induction and, if required, specific governance training upon their appointment or election. This ought to be a joint responsibility of UNESCO and UIS;
- The Board spends the majority of its time in session performing its fiduciary functions (e.g. reviewing the prior period performance and approving the programme and budget, election of officers etc) rather than discussing the strategic direction of the Institute. The annual frequency of Board meetings hampers the Board's ability to engage with the Director and staff of the Institute on strategic matters. We believe that the Board's lack of Board activism in relation to strategic issues has flowed through to the lack of focus on strategic matters by the senior management of the Institute. While the staff and management of the Institute will often have a better understanding than Board members of the context within which UIS operates, it is important that the Board drive and challenge the Director to develop a coherent and appropriate medium-term strategy and plan;
- In light of the above, we believe the Board should consider making more active use of committees as a mechanism for improving the quality of the engagement between the Board and the management of the Institute on matters of strategic importance. We do not wish to overburden the management of the Institute with another layer of oversight but believe the Institute could benefit, at least in the short term, from a strategic collaboration with an appropriate subset of its Board members;
- The quality of reporting to the Board has improved over time but still leaves much to be desired. A number of Board members have indicated that the reports it receives are too detailed and not sufficiently focussed on analysis of strategic issues facing the Institute. Board members feel they are asked to provide direction without a full analysis of the options in front of them. The Board reporting is not "results oriented" and needs to spell out more clearly how the effectiveness of the Institute and its activities will be measured or otherwise evaluated on a regular basis. For its part, the Board could make clearer representations to the Director about the changes it would like to see to the Board reporting. This is something that could potentially be taken up by the Policy and Planning Committee;
- Communication between the Board and management of the Institute is predominantly oriented towards preparation for and participation at Board

meetings. Board members are supplied with full documentation in advance of those meetings in order to assist in their preparation. With the exception of the Chair of the Institute and members of the Policy and Planning Committee, there is limited contact between Board members and the Director or management of the Institute between sessions of the Board. Some Board members would like more involvement, so the Institute should investigate how it might make more use of informal means of communication to better keep its members informed. This would have the benefit of bringing the members closer to the Institute and would improve their understanding of the UIS and, consequently, the quality of their input at Board meetings;

- Board meetings are not routinely attended by a representative of UNESCO, although the November 2006 meeting was attended by the UNESCO Comptroller. The attendance of a staff member from UNESCO was greatly appreciated by the Board members we spoke to. Given the importance of the relationship between the Education Sector and the UIS, we believe the Director General should consider asking the ADG Education (or his nominee) to attend future meetings of the Board; and
- The Board followed a very robust process for the recent appointment of the new Director of the Institute. An advertisement for the position was circulated widely and, according to the current Chair of the Board who participated in the recruitment process, was well known among professional statisticians. A selection team reviewed the applications and, based on an initial assessment against pre-determined and publicly announced criteria, drew up a short-list. These candidates were interviewed by the selection panel according to pre-determined questions collectively developed by the panel. The recommendations of the selection panel were subsequently put to, and accepted by, the Board before submission to the Director General of UNESCO for approval.

Our overall conclusion is that, given the size of the Institute and its stage of development, the Institute could benefit from enhanced activism on the part of the Board. However, there are trade-offs. The Board consumes resources and without an improvement in the quality of board engagement, greater board activism may restrain rather than support the Institute. For this reason we prefer an approach that would involve greater use of board sub-committees in appropriate circumstances. The Chair of the Board should consider these matters carefully before arriving at any decisions.

Recommendations

28. UNESCO and UIS should consider the provision of a one-day customised induction and governance training programme for new Board appointees to ensure they are equipped to fulfil their fiduciary and other duties.
29. The Board of UIS should consider making more active use of Board committees as a mechanism for improving the quality of engagement between the Board and the management of the Institute on matters of strategic importance.
30. The Board, through the Policy and Planning Committee, should consider clarifying the expectations of the Board in relation to Board reporting, so that the future reporting of the Institute better matches the needs and expectations of the Board.
31. The UIS should investigate how it can make more and better use of informal means of communication to better keep its Board Members informed about the activities of the Institute between the annual sessions of the Board.
32. The UNESCO Director General should consider asking the Assistant Director General – Education (or his nominee) to attend future meetings of the Board, given the special importance of the relationship between the Education sector and UIS, while not undermining the interests of other UNESCO Sectors.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

This section briefly summarises the most important achievements and challenges identified in this evaluation.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Relevance

In normative terms the mission of the UIS remains extremely important. Given the emphasis by the international development community on the measurement of progress towards EFA goals and MDGs, and in the increasing role of statistics in policy-making and aid allocation, the Institute's core data collection, production and dissemination function is arguably more important today than at any time in the history of UNESCO. Outside of education too, there is an increasing focus on the need for policy-relevant statistics and indicators.

In assessing the relevance of UIS in positive terms, one needs to recall that the declining relevance of its predecessor organisation, the UNESCO Division of Statistics, was the very reason that led to the Institute's establishment. Immediately prior to the creation of UIS there was "widespread scepticism within the international community of data users about the quality of data published by UNESCO" (BISCE, 1995, Ch. 3, p. 3). While not widely known outside of UNESCO at the time, the reputation of UNESCO's statistical function had reached such a nadir that other international organisations were considering starting their own statistics collections.

The establishment of the UIS averted the immediate crisis but the need to reassert its relevance by addressing the concerns about its independence and data quality, represented the key challenge for the Institute during the evaluation period. By this yardstick, UIS has made extremely important strides since its establishment and, according to one of the founding fathers of the Institute, "has done far better than ever could have been expected" in reasserting its relevance.

Contributing to this has been a range of factors including the "fresh start" that was afforded to the UIS by: its establishment as a statutorily independent agency with its own governance and considerable autonomy; the relocation of the UIS to Montreal

which, despite the increased distance from UNESCO Headquarters and loss of staff, gave new impetus to the organisation; and the recruitment of a very high calibre staff of professional statisticians. Also important were the Institute's commitment to re-establishing its independence from the UNESCO Secretariat and Member States, including upholding its right to not publish data submitted by countries where it was not judged to meet minimum quality standards, and its unceasing investment in all aspects of data quality. As a result of these efforts the UIS has in a short space of time established a record of independence, professionalism and high quality work.

Results Achieved

The UIS has made positive contributions towards all aspects of its organisational mission but particularly in relation to its role as a guardian of cross-national data. In the view of most stakeholders we spoke to, this role of collecting, validating and disseminating internationally comparable statistics across its fields of competence is the core function of UIS. Given limited human and financial resources, the Institute's Governing Board and management has given priority to this function above all others, and this is reflected in its strong performance in this area.

The collection, validation and dissemination of reliable and internationally comparable data is the UIS function that stakeholders are most aware of, regard as most relevant to their needs and consider the UIS to be most effective in fulfilling. And the reasons for this are evident in the significant advancements in all aspects of data quality – timeliness, relevance, accessibility, accuracy and international comparability. It is also evident in the efforts that UIS has put into improving its dissemination environment, and is supported by its roles of standard-setting, methodological development and capacity building. It must be noted that the significant achievements in this area are largely limited to the Institute's education statistics activities. The UIS has made positive yet tentative steps in the other UNESCO sectors, but has very limited human and financial resources dedicated to these areas and faces tough challenges in building a stronger footing in these areas. Results in other core UIS functions (e.g. methodology development, standard-setting, statistical capacity building, analysis and interpretation) have been more modest but, on the whole, the UIS has taken positive steps in all of these areas.

Two programmatic areas where the UIS needs to take stock of progress and re-evaluate its role are in the areas of statistical capacity building and data collection initiatives in the areas of student assessment and measurement of learning outcomes, including literacy. In these areas the demand from Member States and development

partners is high, but the logistical, organisational and financial implications of developing substantial programmes in these areas needs to be weighed carefully given the other priorities of the Institute and its stakeholders.

Quality of Interaction and Coordination

This evaluation has found mixed results in terms of the quality of interaction and coordination with its main stakeholders.

There has been relatively weak interaction and cooperation with the UNESCO Secretariat, although there have been instances of good collaboration on projects. There has also been noticeable improvement in the frequency and quality of engagement in the last two years, as UIS has shifted from an inward-looking orientation during its establishment years to a more outward-looking focus. Relationships with all UNESCO Sectors nevertheless require improvement and the basis for these relationships needs to become institutionalised rather than driven by individual UIS and Secretariat staff. The Secretariat has to better organise itself to articulate in a coherent manner its needs and priorities in relation to data collection. Relations with UNESCO field offices are generally much better than with Headquarters, as the UIS regional network is widely regarded as making a valuable contribution to UNESCO's field presence.

Relations between UIS and non-UNESCO partner agencies are generally very good, and the UIS enjoys a very positive reputation amongst the international statistical and development community. There are good examples of close collaboration with a range of stakeholders, including but not limited to the independent EFA Global Monitoring Report team, the World Bank, OECD and Eurostat.

UIS also enjoys a very positive reputation amongst countries in which it has worked to build statistical capacity and pilot programmes such as LAMP. One risk in this area relates to promises and commitments that UIS has made in relation to statistical capacity building and the LAMP programme, which unless delivered on may sour the good reputation that UIS enjoys in the field. There is also significant room for improvement in the development and utilisation of regional and sub-regional networks and partnerships. Given the Institute's relatively small size, it needs to emphasise its role as a catalyst and look to mobilise Member States, partner agencies and donors in support of its overall mission.

Governance and Management

The UIS is well governed from a fiduciary point of view, although the Board could be more active in relation to strategic direction-setting for the organisation. The UIS has benefited from some high quality leadership throughout the evaluation period although management practices in the areas of strategic planning and human resource management are underdeveloped reflecting the youth of the organisation and its very rapid expansion. The early years of the Institute can be characterised as a ‘baptism of fire’, during which the management and staff of the Institute were frequently stretched to their limits. It is understandable, in this environment, that some aspects of good management practice were overlooked.

The new Director and Administration Officer are bringing much needed discipline in this area, which should eventually pay dividends in terms of the quality of the work environment and the stability of the Institute. The Institute is currently in a period of transition from ‘adolescent’ to ‘mature’ organisation and it is important that it take a measured and systematic approach to the management of its future development. There are some key challenges for the Institute in this regard, which we will return to later in this chapter.

One area of concern is the vulnerability of the organisation to an adverse shift in donor sentiment, which is particularly acute given the low Reserves of the Institute and the narrowness of its funding base. The management of the Institute is very aware of this issue and is taking appropriate steps to rectify this situation.

CHALLENGES

While this evaluation has uncovered a number of challenges for UIS, three sets of issues stand out as particularly important.

The need to forge closer relations with UNESCO Sectors

A range of factors have contributed to the relatively weak relations between UIS and the UNESCO Sectors. These include: the physical distance and time zone differences between Montreal and Paris; the lack of knowledge within the Secretariat about UIS and *vice versa*; the lack of a strong culture of statistical use within parts of the UNESCO Secretariat; a culture of independence within the UIS; and a general failure on the part of the Secretariat, notwithstanding some exceptions, to seek to understand and influence the priorities of the UIS.

These factors mean it will not be easy for UIS and the UNESCO Sectors to forge closer and better working relationships. Any solutions will need to address the disparate causes of ineffective relations identified above, none of which on their own are insurmountable but which collectively represent a significant challenge.

We were encouraged by the commitment we saw on the part of the Director of UIS, and by the ADGs of the Education and Culture sectors, to work more collaboratively. However, it will take a concerted and sustained effort on both sides if there is to be any chance of significant progress in this area. As previous evaluations of UNESCO category one institutes have demonstrated, high quality interaction and coordination is not a strong point within the UNESCO system and relations will most likely continue to remain under-developed unless the commitment at leadership level is translated into significant and sustained actions across a broad range of fronts, starting with identification of respective priorities and negotiation of joint work programmes.

The need to develop a more focussed strategy and improved results-based management

This evaluation has found that strategic planning and management of the Institute has been weak throughout the evaluation period. To some extent this is inevitable since the task of establishing and rapidly growing the UIS required a high degree of focus, fleet-footedness, opportunism and sheer determination. Without this dynamic period, the Institute would not have realised the significant achievements documented here. Yet this period can also be characterised by elements of *ad hoc* explosive growth in some areas, and an organisational structure that reflects programmatic silos rather than an integrated whole.

It is now time for the UIS to catch its breath and develop a strategy that takes stock of changes in the environment, recognises its strengths and weaknesses, and reflects these in a more focussed plan of action that will cement its role as the premier international statistical institute in its fields of competence. Such a strategy should provide the basis for reorienting the Institute, both programmatically and organisationally. It will require some tough choices and bold decisions, such as what roles to play in areas such as statistical capacity building, assessment of student achievement and learning outcomes, and development of non-education statistics. It is important that the development of the strategy be undertaken in an open and transparent manner with invitations extended to key stakeholders to express their goals and priorities. Without this

external input, the UIS cannot ensure it will gain the support of its stakeholders, including the donors it relies so heavily on.

The current process to refresh the Institute's Medium Term Strategy is very timely in this regard. Indeed, it is well over due given the huge amount of internal and external change since the last strategy was completed in 2000. Given the dynamic international education environment, it is important that any strategy developed be kept under review and refreshed periodically to ensure it remains current.

We also strongly believe that any strategy should be capable of being monitored and evaluated. For this reason, clear and specific objectives should be set as to what the strategy is intended to achieve, not only in terms of the actions to be performed but in terms of the outcomes those actions are intended to contribute to. Once these outcomes are defined, efforts should be made to determine how progress towards them will be measured, and a performance management system put in place to provide the management of the Institute with information on how they are progressing. This need not be an elaborate or burdensome system. Rather, a strategic approach requires a focus on a 'vital few' key performance indicators.³⁰

The need to improve its relevance to Member States

Related to the need to develop a focussed strategy that is relevant to the needs of its stakeholders, the UIS faces a significant challenge in improving its relevance to Member States. This represents something of a dilemma, since the Institute's strength and comparative advantage is in the collection of international comparable data, yet international comparisons are often, although not universally, regarded as of limited relevance at country level because of the huge diversity in country contexts. A balance needs to be found between the promotion of global education indicators, and the development of indicators and methodologies that are relevant to the needs of specific regions and countries.

One issue to consider in achieving this balance is the type of statistics that UIS is collecting. Data requirements for monitoring progress towards MDGs and EFA goals are different from data required for national-level policy making purposes. It is increasingly recognised, for example, that a focus on traditional education indicators – such as primary enrolment and completion rates – can neglect the important dimension of educational quality (i.e. what children learn while at school). This creates

³⁰ These indicators need not be quantitative measures.

increased demand for efforts to improve the development of national and international systems for measuring learning outcomes, to support improved policy, monitoring and evaluation.

Different challenges exist in the area of statistical capacity building, where the dilemma relates to a trade-off between the short-term benefits from intensive and costly country-level technical assistance projects, and the slower but potentially more sustainable outcomes that come from a less 'hands on' approach. Countries and donor organisations are not necessarily the best judges of what is required in this regard, and it is important that the UIS develop, in consultation with stakeholders, a model that it believes is sustainable and will produce results in a reasonable timeframe.

The UIS faces tough choices in deciding how to respond to these challenges. The Institute has to date enthusiastically accepted the challenges to develop capacities in these areas, but it has typically done so without considering the financial and logistical implications for the Institute as a whole. Both the SCB and the LAMP programme, for example, have weighed heavily on the organisation financially, notwithstanding that they are supposed to be largely funded from extra-budgetary sources. As part of its strategy development, the UIS must consider how best to respond to the needs of Member States, while at the same time ensuring that any associated risks to the ongoing effectiveness and viability of the Institute are kept to reasonable levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS TO UIS

UIS Strategic and Programmatic Planning

1. In developing its next Medium Term Strategy, and on an ongoing basis, the UIS needs to take note of key trends in the environment for international statistics, particularly the changing needs of statistics users and policy makers. The UIS needs to be more proactive in identifying emerging issues and developing indicators in data collections in new areas, such as measurement of learning outcomes and educational quality.
2. The UIS should critically assess the level of resources available for non-education sectors as part of the prioritisation and planning process for the next Medium Term Strategy, with a view to increasing the capacity of these teams at UIS.
3. The UIS needs to improve its strategic planning by taking a carefully considered and consultative approach to the development of the next Medium Term Strategy. Once this revised strategy is in place, the UIS should keep it up to date by periodically reviewing progress and adapting to changes in the external environment.
4. In support of the Medium-Term Strategy, the UIS should develop an annual business plan that outlines the operational implications of the strategy for the management of UIS. This should address key issues such as initiatives to build organisational capacity, human resource management and IT development priorities.

UIS Regional Network

5. The UIS should strengthen the collaboration between Montreal and regional staff to improve regional support for core UIS functions including data collection and analysis. More generally, the UIS faces a major challenge in improving its relevance to Member States and must consider how it can produce more value to Member States through the performance of its core functions.
6. The UIS needs to better define and reinforce the role of UIS Regional Advisors as representing UIS as a whole and serving all of Institute's core functions, not just capacity building. In this respect, there are opportunities and potential benefits to

be gained from further decentralisation of some UIS functions, including aspects of survey follow up and validation of responses.

7. UIS should review its regional operations in consultation with regional staff, and assess the adequacy of current interaction and coordination between UIS Montreal and regional offices, in order to identify areas for increased collaboration and engagement.

Interaction and coordination between the UIS and UNESCO entities

8. UIS should consider opportunities for developing stronger relationships with other category one institutes, particularly, IIEP, to exploit complementary capacities and further the strategic and programmatic priorities of UNESCO.
9. The UIS should engage UNESCO sectors, in particular the non-education sectors, in a more regular and systematic manner when developing its annual work programmes, biennial programme and budget, and Medium Term Strategy to ensure the relevance, alignment and appropriate prioritisation of resources.

External communications of the UIS

10. The UIS needs to better promote its brand and flagship products, such as the Global Education Digest, in order to raise its profile and cement its reputation as the premier source of internationally comparable cross-national data.
11. The UIS needs to continue to develop its external communications strategy, particularly in relation to the website and launch of online data releases and publications, to raise its profile and cement its reputation as the premier source of internationally comparable data in its fields of competence

External partnerships

12. The UIS should develop wider constituencies of support and adopt more of a partnership-based approach to significant new initiatives, such as LAMP. In doing so the UIS should aim to leverage off the substantial experience and resources of development partners, given that its core strength is its intellectual expertise and its capacity to manage new large scale surveys is limited.
13. The UIS should strengthen its participation in regional and sub-regional statistical networks, in order to effectively facilitate cooperation between international agencies and Member States in support of the Institute's mandate

Data Quality

14. The UIS should continue to seek improvements in timeliness of data as a paramount objective, while not jeopardizing the potential validity and international comparability of that data.
15. The UIS should consider implementing a systematic process for assessing Member States' compliance with ISCED, to inform assessments of international comparability and to identify priorities for targeted capacity building.

Statistical Capacity Building

16. For significant future capacity building initiatives, the UIS should put in place mechanisms for monitoring countries' progress towards building capacity, including assessing environmental factors that are associated with sustainability.
17. The UIS should consider commissioning a more in-depth field-based evaluation of its statistical capacity building programme, in particular exploring questions of sustainability. The results of the proposed evaluation should be used by UIS as an input into re-examining the underlying principles and design of its statistical capacity building programme, and the development of a revised strategy for SCB.
18. The UIS needs to move to rebuild its relationship with the ADEA Working Group on Education Statistics to ensure a harmonised approach to statistical capacity building in Africa. More generally, the Institute should adopt more of a consistent approach to capacity building across all regions, utilising a partnership-based and catalytic approach rather than the current 'hands on, turn key' approach being used in Africa in particular

Financial and Human Resource Management of the UIS

19. The UIS also needs to improve the diversity of its funding base and, in doing so, should focus on the attraction of multi-year general budgetary funding as a first priority over one-off project-based funding.
20. The UIS should improve mechanisms for evaluating the full cost of extra-budgetary projects and incorporate an appropriate allowance for overhead and technical infrastructure support as part of its project-based extra-budgetary funding agreements to ensure that the Institute's core funding is not used to subsidise such projects.
21. Once the new Medium Term Strategy is complete, the UIS needs to develop a formal institution-wide fund-raising strategy, and formalise the responsibilities for

implementing that strategy. In doing so, the Institute should look to replicate the best practices adopted by other Institutes, notably IIEP, including potentially implementing an annual Partners day. The UIS should explore, with the UNESCO Division of Cooperation with Extra-budgetary Funding Sources and other UNESCO institutes and centres, how it can undertake ‘joined up’ fund raising efforts where appropriate.

22. The UIS needs to build critical mass in non-education sectors to enable it to adequately fulfil its mandate in respect of the development of new frameworks for data collection (indicators, methodologies, standards).
23. The UIS should take steps to improve its human resource management practices, including moving quickly to implement a staff performance review system and a formal training and staff development programme, and to increase its investment in staff training, including in non-technical and managerial areas such as fund-raising and relationship management.
24. The UIS needs to improve its results-based management practices, including by undertaking more self-evaluation and through the implementation of performance management system that focuses on a ‘vital few’ performance areas

Governance of the UIS

25. UNESCO and UIS should consider the provision of a one-day customised induction and governance training programme for new Board appointees to ensure they are equipped to fulfil their fiduciary and other duties.
26. The Board of UIS should consider making more active use of Board committees as a mechanism for improving the quality of engagement between the Board and the management of the Institute on matters of strategic importance.
27. The Board, through the Policy and Planning Committee, should consider clarifying the expectations of the Board in relation to Board reporting, so that the future reporting of the Institute better matches the needs and expectations of the Board.
28. The UIS should investigate how it can make more and better use of informal means of communication to better keep its Board Members informed about the activities of the Institute between the annual sessions of the Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNESCO

1. The next UNESCO Medium Term Strategy should make greater reference to the statistical function of UNESCO and the specific role that statistics plays in contribution to each of its major programmes.
29. All sectors of the UNESCO Secretariat need to engage in more frequent and open discussions with UIS about their statistical priorities, with a view to both influencing the priorities of UIS and identifying opportunities for joint work. The sectors should also support the UIS by assisting the Institute to mobilise funds in support of these priorities.
30. UNESCO needs to remain vigilant in its protection of the independence of UIS, especially in the event that the UIS enforces its professional right to publish (or not publish) data that may be contested by an individual country.
31. The UNESCO Director General should consider asking the Assistant Director General – Education (or his nominee) to attend future meetings of the Board, given the special importance of the relationship between the Education sector and UIS, while not undermining the interests of other UNESCO Sectors.

APPENDIX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

UNESCO has established eight Institutes as Category I Institutes over the course of its history. Institutes are semi-autonomous organizations with their own governing bodies. Both serve in their fields of expertise as international reference centres to provide services and technical assistance to Member States, cooperation partners and also within the network of UNESCO field offices. In this context, the Institutes are expected to contribute directly to attaining the strategic objectives and programmatic priorities of UNESCO's programme.

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (hereinafter UIS) located in Montreal, Canada is one of these Institutes. It was established in 1999 by the UNESCO General Conference to meet the growing needs of UNESCO Member States and the international community for a wider range of policy-relevant, timely, and reliable statistics in the fields of education, science, culture and communication.

The mission of the UIS is provide statistical information on education, science, culture and communication which helps decision-making in Member States and facilitates democratic debate in UNESCO's areas of competence, employing to that end the highest professional standards and intellectual independence in data collection and analysis.

The Institute's activities involve:

- (a) To foster the development of international statistics in its fields of competence which reflect the changing policy contexts in those fields and which are reliable, of worldwide comparability, robust and feasible to collect;
- (b) To arrange for the collection, production, analysis and timely dissemination of policy-relevant statistics, indicators and related documentation based on the development work in subparagraph a) above;
- (c) To support the development of the statistical and analytical capabilities of Member States not only for their own purposes, but also as a contribution to the achievement of the objective set in the subparagraph b) above; and
- (d) To provide analysis services within the context of the Institute's mission, taking into account the needs of the Member States..

In the context of ongoing reform toward decentralization, the Executive Board at its 162 session (162 EX/18) raises a series of questions with respect to the Institutes and Centres, which can be applied to UIS as follows:

- Does UIS enhance UNESCO's overall effort as a specialized United Nations agency, and if so how?
- Do the activities of UIS reflect UNESCO's programme priorities?
- What are the roles, contribution and comparative advantages of UIS in the context of decentralization; and
- To what extent does UIS meet the criteria defined specifically for category 1 Institutes in paragraph 29 of 171 EX/18?

PURPOSE

The purpose of this evaluation is to inform relevant entities and units including the UIS Governing Board, UNESCO Task Force on Category I UNESCO Institutes and Centres; UNESCO Task Force on Decentralization; Programme Sectors of UNESCO; Member States of UNESCO; and UIS cooperation partners, regarding the following points:

- Relevance of UIS's activities to UNESCO's programme priorities and to the needs of the international community for statistics in UNESCO's areas of specialization;
- Results achieved by UIS, and its contribution to UNESCO's efforts in achieving its organizational mission;
- Quality of coordination and interaction between UNESCO Headquarters, Member States, national partner institutions, as well as other Institutes, Field Offices, and UIS with regard to planning and implementation of programmes; and
- Funding patterns, mechanisms and their risks for sustained institutional capacity, viability and sustainability, organizational structure, and quality of organizational management and programme implementation systems adopted by UIS.

SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation covers the period between 1999 and the present.

In order to meet the purpose of the evaluation described above, the following evaluation parameters shall be considered in the process of designing a detailed analytical framework and developing appropriate performance indicators:

(a) Relevance of UIS's activities to UNESCO's programmes

- Determine whether UIS's programmes are in clear and explicit alignment with the UNESCO's strategies and goals in the respective fields, as defined in the Medium Term Strategy (C/4) and the approved programme and budget of UNESCO for the biennia 2002-2003 and 2004-2005 (31 and 32 C/5);
- Identify the comparative advantage of UIS among other UNESCO Institutes and Centres in the context of decentralisation and assess the ways in which UIS and other UNESCO Institutes complement each other;
- Analyse whether the same kind of services, with equal or better quality, can be provided in a more efficient way, by alternative programme delivery mechanisms or different institutional arrangements; or whether the same or additional extra budgetary could be ascertained with alternative mechanisms or institutional arrangements;
- Examine to what extent the UIS meets the criteria defined for category 1. Institutes in 171 EX/18 i.e.: serving as a laboratory of ideas, as a centre of excellence and experimentation for the organization; functioning as a clearing house and reference centre to advance, deepen and impart knowledge and capacities and to employ novel modalities pertaining to a specific strategic objective or sub-objective of UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy; mobilizing, in an innovative setting, a critical mass of specialized expertise, know-how and skills that cannot be made available within UNESCO's regular Secretariat structure;
- Determine to what extent UIS has adopted UNESCO's results-based programming and management (RBM) and tools used for RBM such as SISTER and FABS.

(b) Results Achieved

- Assess to what extent UIS has achieved its organizational objectives, as evidenced by the achievement of the expected results set out in UNESCO's Programme and Budget (C/5) and against the UIS "Medium-Term Strategy 2002-2007;

- Examine whether the tools used by UIS, such as dissemination of statistical data, publications, analysis and interpretation of cross-national data, regional workshops, technical support and capacity building, and the promoting of international partnerships, are effective in attaining UIS's and UNESCO's organizational objectives;
- Assess to what extent UIS contributes to UNESCO in achieving Education for All goals and Millennium Development Goals;
- Assess the degree to which data produced by UIS is used by donors and international agencies in identifying priorities for aid and assistance;
- Assess whether the results achieved by UIS have reinforced UNESCO's overall decentralization strategy by providing a better and more timely response to the needs of Member States;
- Analyse to what extent UIS's capacity building programme has contributed to improving Member States' capacities to collect and analyse data of relevance to their policy initiatives;
- Analyze to what extent regional infrastructure that has been set up as part of the capacity building programme, meets the demands of Member States;
- Assess the quality of statistical data and publications provided by UIS; and
- Assess to what extent the statistical data and publications provided by UIS are used by Member States and targeted audiences.

(c) Quality of coordination and interaction with relevant entities

- Assess the quality of coordination between UIS and Headquarters;
- Assess the effectiveness of the Regional Advisors, which are set up as part of the Statistical Capacity Building programme;
- Assess the effectiveness of coordination and interaction with UNESCO Headquarters, the other Institutes and Field Offices in order to analyse whether they play complementary and/or overlapping roles; and
- Assess the quality of partnerships with other entities including partner agencies, other UN agencies, bilateral and multilateral development agencies.

(d) Funding pattern and quality of organizational management

- Analyse the funding patterns, mechanisms and their impact on sustained institutional capacity, viability and sustainability;

- Assess the process by which extra-budgetary resources are sought and obtained and to what extent the extra-budgetary funding is aligned to the strategic objectives of UNESCO;
- Analyze the funding pattern for the Statistical Capacity Programme in terms of its sustainability and evaluate the way of managing the resources to deliver the expected results;
- Assess whether the additional financial resources attracted by UIS compare favourably with those of other category I Institutes;
- Evaluate the management of inputs to deliver expected outcomes, bearing in mind available resources (a key question to be answered is whether the activities undertaken could be delivered in a more efficient way); and
- Examine the quality of organizational management and the impact of the extent of functional autonomy provided

APPENDIX 2: INFORMATION SOURCES

INTERVIEWS AND CONSULTATIONS

UIS GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Current Board Members

- Ms Heli Jeskanen-Sundström (Finland), Chair of UIS Governing Board and Director General of Statistics Finland (Designated Member until 2007)
- Mr Yvon Fortin (Canada), Director-General, Quebec Institute for Statistics (Designated Member until 2009)
- Mr Jaroslav Novák (Czech Republic), Czech Statistical Office (Elected Member until 2007)
- Mr Khalifa Abdullah Al Barwani (Oman), Deputy Director-General, Census of Population, Housing and Establishments, the Ministry of National Economy of Oman (Elected Member until 2007)

Former Board Members

- Dr Jozef Ritzen (The Netherlands), Inaugural Chair of UIS, currently President, Universiteit Maastricht
- Mr Jean-Louis Sarbib (France), Immediate Past Chair of UIS
- Dr Ivan P. Fellegi (Canada), Chief Statistician of Canada.

UIS STAFF

Current Staff

- Mr Hendrik van der Pol, Director
- Mr Thierry Dentice, Chief of Section, Management and Administration
- Ms Filiz Aktas, Human Resources Officer
- Ms Rahel Teferra-Belay, Assistant Finance and Budget Officer
- Mr Albert Motivans, Chief of Section, Analysis and Information

- Mr Michael Bruneforth, Specialist – Data Policy, Analysis Section
- Mr Ian Denison, Public Information Officer
- Mr Yanhong Zhang, Assistant Programme Specialist, Analysis Section
- Mr Bertrand Tchatchoua, Programme Specialist
- Mr Ko-Chih Tung, Regional Advisor – Bangkok
- Mr Nyi Nyi Thaung, Programme Specialist, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
- Mr Thierry Lairez, Regional Advisor – Dakar
- Mr Marc Bernal, Regional Advisor – Addis Ababa
- Mr Simon Ellis, Chief of Section, Education Special Projects
- Mr S. Venkatraman, Programme Specialist, Culture and Communication Section
- Mr Ernesto Fernandez Polcuch, Programme Specialist, Science and Technology Section
- Ms Alison Kennedy, Chief of Section, Education
- Mr Saïd Belkachla, Programme Specialist, Education
- Ms Anuja Singh, Assistant Programme Specialist, Education
- Mr Brian Buffett, Chief of Section, Information Technology
- Ms Diane Stukel, Chief of Section, Methodology

Former Staff

- Ms Denise Lievesley, formerly Director of UIS
- Mr Doug Drew, formerly Head of the Statistical Capacity Building Programme at UIS
- Mr T. Scott Murray, formerly Director of Learning Outcomes at UIS, in charge of the LAMP and ALO programmes

UNESCO HEADQUARTERS STAFF

- Mr Peter Smith, Assistant Director-General, Education Sector
- Mr Alexander Sannikov, Education Sector – UIS Focal Point
- Ms Vittoria Cavicchioni, Consultant – Education Sector
- Ms Ranwa Safadi, Programme Specialist, Education Executive Office

- Ms Françoise Rivière, Assistant Director-General, Culture Sector
- Ms Guiomar Alonso Cano, Programme Specialist, Division of Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue, Culture Sector
- Mr Eduardo Martinez Garcia, Science and Technology Sector
- Mr Axel Plathe, Chief of Section, Information Society Division, Communication and Information Sector
- Ms Lamia Salman El Madini, Director, Bureau of Field Coordination
- Mr Michael Millward, Director, Science Executive Office, formerly Interim Director of UIS.
- Mr Jean-Yves Le Saux, Senior Programme Specialist, Bureau of Strategic Planning
- Mr Mineo Salvatore, Programme Specialist for cooperation with the European Community, Sector for External Relations and Cooperation
- Mrs Jessica Jeavons, Programme Specialist for cooperation with Multilateral Development Banks, Sector for External Relations and Cooperation
- Section for Teacher Education (Combined Response)

OTHER

- Mr Nick Burnett, Director, EFA Global Monitoring Report Team
- Ms Nicole Bella, Programme Specialist, EFA Global Monitoring Report Team
- Ms Laure Beaufils, Education Programme Specialist, UK Department for International Development (DFID)
- Mr Wim Hoppers, Visiting Professor, Institute of International Education, Stockholm University
- Mr Adamu Gnaro, EMIS Panel Head, Ethiopia
- Sir John Daniel, President and CEO, Commonwealth of Learning
- Mr John Gordon, Head of Culture and Art-related Activities, Statistics Directorate, OECD
- Mr Laurence Zwimpfer, President of the Intergovernmental Council for UNESCO's Information for All Programme
- Ms Shaida Badiee, Director, Development Data Group, World Bank
- Mr Eric Swanson, Program Manager and Leader of the Global Monitoring Cluster, Data Development Group, World Bank

- Ms Misha Belkindas, Mr Neil Fantom, and Ms Sulekha Patel, Data Development Group, World Bank
- Stephen P. Heyneman, Professor, International Education Policy, Vanderbilt University

KEY DOCUMENTS

Pre-Establishment UNESCO Documents

- 159 EX/36 Report by the Director-General on the choice of the location of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)
- 160 EX/43 Progress report by the Director-General on the negotiations to reach an agreement with Canada concerning the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)
- 161 EX/52 Progress report by the Director-General on the negotiations to reach an agreement with Canada concerning the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)
- 152 EX/6 Strategic Plan for Strengthening UNESCO's Statistical Programme and Services
- 154 EX/5 Report by the Director-General on the creation of a UNESCO International Institute for Statistics
- 155 EX/33 Report by the Director-General on the creation of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics
- 156 EX/24 – Report on the Creation of UIS (circa 1999)

Post-Establishment UNESCO Documents

- Executive Board Reports on the Activities of the Institute (162 EX/48, 165 EX/42, 167 EX/46, 170 EX/31, 172 EX/50, 175 EX/45)
- Biennial reports to the General Conference on the activities of the Institute (31C/REP/21, 32C/REP/20, 33C/REP/20)
- 162 EX/18 and 162 EX/INF.8 Overall Strategy for UNESCO's Institutes/Centres and their Governing Bodies
- 171 EX/6 Part III Report by the Director-General on the Reform Process: Decentralisation
- 171 EX/18 Report by the Director-General on the principles and guidelines regarding the establishment and operation of Category 1 UNESCO Institutes and Centres

UIS

- UIS Basic Texts
- UIS Medium-Term Strategy 2002-2007
- Annual Reports of Activities to the Governing Board 2000-2006 (UIS/GB/[I-VII]/3)
- Background paper for review of EFA Global Monitoring Report by UNESCO Executive Board. September 2004
- UIS Statistical Capacity Building Medium-Term Strategy 2005-08 (Draft)
- Education Management Information System Capacity Building for Ethiopia, Final Report for DFID, November 2006.
- Project for EMIS Enhancement for the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Partnership Document between Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UIS.

Other

- Board on International Comparative Studies in Education (1995) 'Worldwide Education Statistics: Enhancing UNESCO's Role', Guthrie, J.W. and J. S. Hansen (eds.), National Research Council, Washington, D.C.
- Heyneman, S. (1999). The sad story of UNESCO's education statistics. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 19, p. 65-74
- Campbell, K. (2004). Improvement of the Quality of International Comparable Education Statistics Project Evaluation.
- Universalia. 2006. Formative Review of the Education for All Global Monitoring
- Thomson, A., C. Willoughby and R. Chander (2003), 'The World Bank's Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building: An Evaluation', Oxford Policy Management, Report for the World Bank.
- Education for Change (2006), 'Evaluation of UNESCO Support to National Planning for EFA', Report to UNESCO Internal Oversight Service, IOS/EVS/PI/53.
- Summit of the Americas (2003) The Experience of the Regional Education Indicators Project 2000-2003.

APPENDIX 3: SURVEY RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

Two online surveys were administered during November. The purpose of the surveys was to gather the views of stakeholders about their relationship with UIS and the results achieved by the Institute. Separate questionnaires were developed for UNESCO and non-UNESCO stakeholders. Survey respondents included:

UNESCO Stakeholder Questionnaire

- Directors or designated staff within UNESCO field offices;
- Directors or designated staff within UNESCO institutes and centres; and
- UNESCO Secretariat staff that were unable to be interviewed in person.

Non-UNESCO Stakeholder Questionnaire

- Representatives of Member States, including officials responsible for the collection, production and use of statistics in their respective countries;
- Representatives of partner organisations, including donors and NGOs; and
- Researchers and other stakeholders in the international statistical community.

The remainder of this Appendix describes the survey methods and the main results from the surveys.

SURVEY METHODS

An on-line survey instrument was chosen because of the large number and wide geographic distribution of UIS stakeholders and because time and resources limited field visits to UIS regional offices and Member States. It is also more cost effective than mail or phone-based survey methods.

Questionnaire design

The nature of the data to be collected (stakeholders' perceptions about UIS) led us to use two broad types of evaluative questions:

- Open-ended questions aimed at collecting descriptive data; and

- Specific qualitative questions with either multi-choice or Likert-type unique response scales depending on the nature of the question.

The questionnaires were kept relatively short so as to keep item non-response to a minimum. The external stakeholder questionnaire was developed in English and French.

Survey administration

In terms of survey procedure, it was not possible to pilot the questionnaire due to the limited time available to conduct the survey. Respondents were sent the survey by email which contained a hyperlink to the survey form. The use of unique identifiers allowed us to track responses, which permitted follow-up emails to be sent to increase response rates. Two follow-ups were completed for both surveys.

The surveys were self-administered and instructions for completion were included in the email (in English and/or French depending on the survey). Participants were told that UIS and UNESCO would not have access to individual responses. Some respondents encountered problems accessing the survey and were sent a copy of the survey as a Microsoft Word document. These responses were manually input into the survey database on receipt.

Sampling and response rates

The surveys were non-probabilistic reflecting their purpose as stakeholder surveys. There is no valid or reliable population on which to base probabilistic sampling. The lists of stakeholders were obtained from each section of UIS and relevant staff members were encouraged to provide complete lists of contacts. In addition, we utilised the UIS email alert database, which reduces potential bias since participants in this mailing list are self-selected. In relation to the Survey of internal stakeholders, the IOS provided a full up to date list of UNESCO contacts.

The Survey sample sizes (adjusted for invalid email addresses and out-of-office replies) and response rates (adjusted for duplicate and invalid responses) for each of the surveys are shown below:

Survey	Sample Size	Valid Responses	Response Rate
UNESCO Stakeholder Survey	78	53	70%
Non-UNESCO Stakeholder Survey	661	244	37%
- French	99	33	33%
- English	562	211	42%

These response rates compare very favourably with the typical response rate of 26% for online surveys.³¹

Limitations

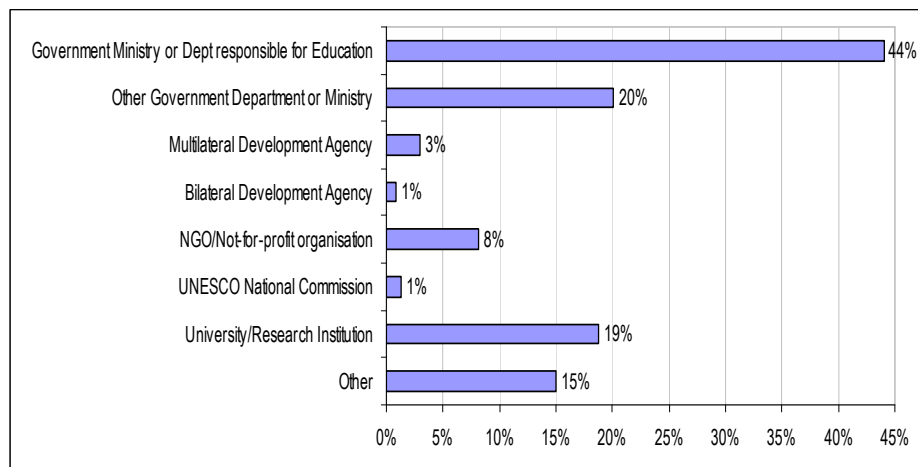
The major limitations of our survey method are:

- The non-probabilistic method of sample selection may mean the sample is not representative of the target population groups, which may limit the generalisability of results. However, there was no suitable population frame for the use of probabilistic methods. We are confident that the samples provided comprehensive coverage of the target populations;
- Even if the sample was representative of the population groups, response rates lower than 80% give rise to potential for selection biases. Our response rates are good for online surveys, which minimises the risk of selection biases. Our surveys also obtained good coverage in terms of respondent types; and
- Mis-attribution of cause and effect by survey respondents.

³¹ Hamilton, M. B. (2005) Online Survey Response Rates and Times: Background and Guidance for Industry, SuperSurvey Whitepaper.

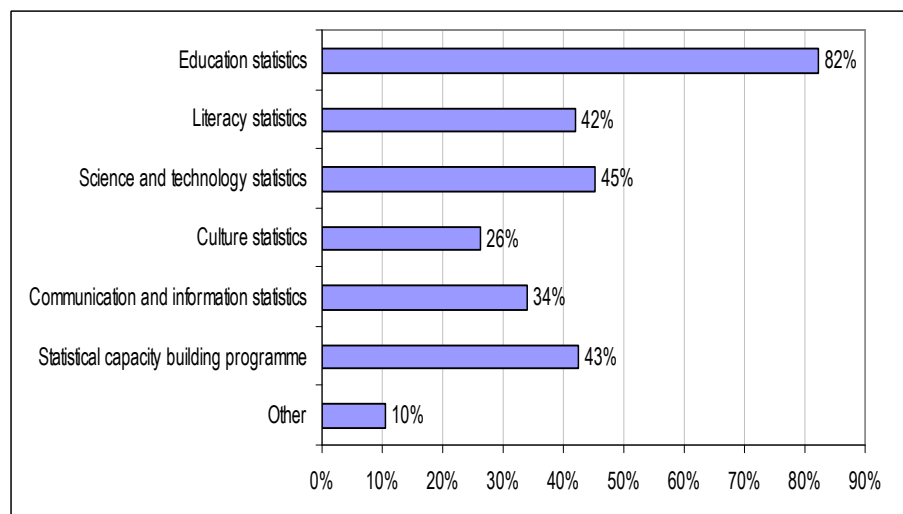
SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

*What type of organisation do you work for? *Mark all that apply*



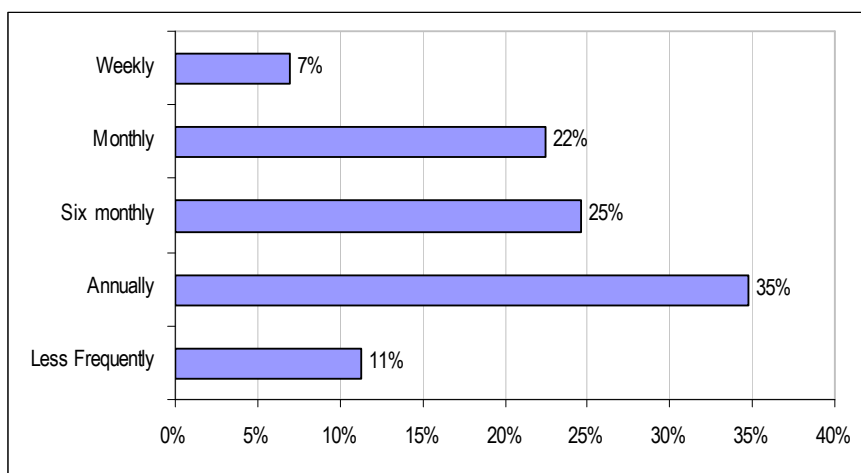
Total Respondents = 234

*What are your particular areas of interest in UIS? (e.g. education statistics) * Mark all that apply*



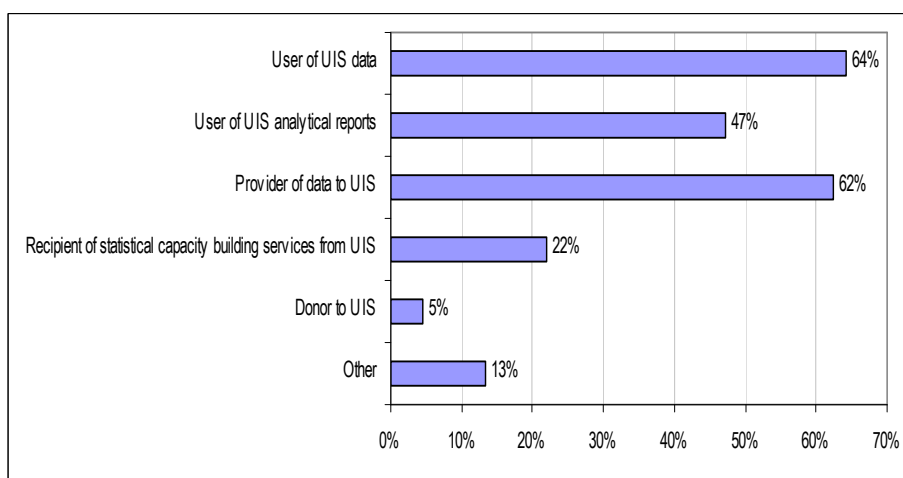
Total Respondents = 221

How often do you or your organisation engage with UIS?



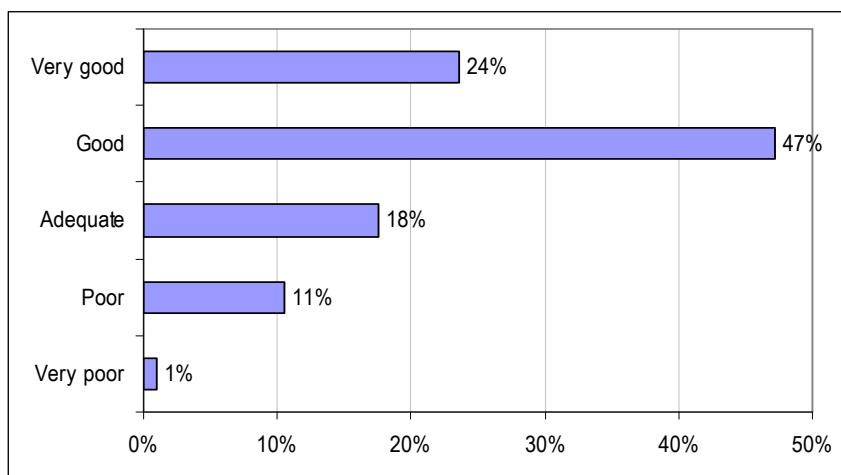
Total Respondents = 222

*What is the nature of your organisation's relationship with UIS? *Mark all that apply*



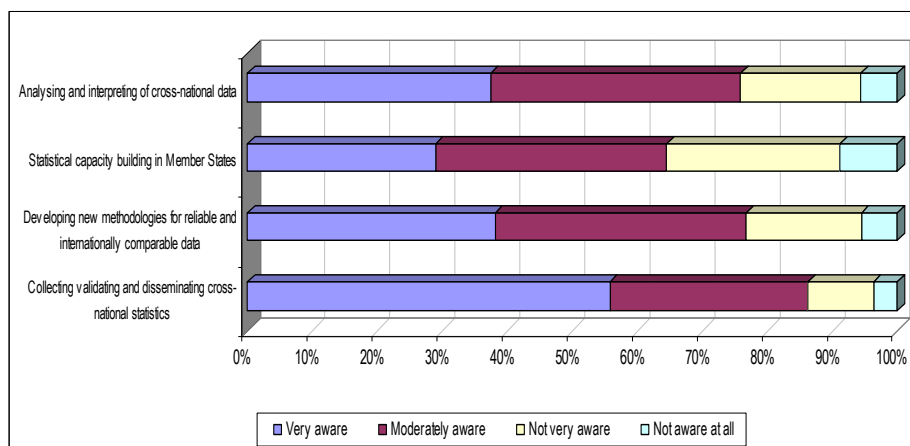
Total Respondents = 218

How would you rate the quality of your engagement with UIS?



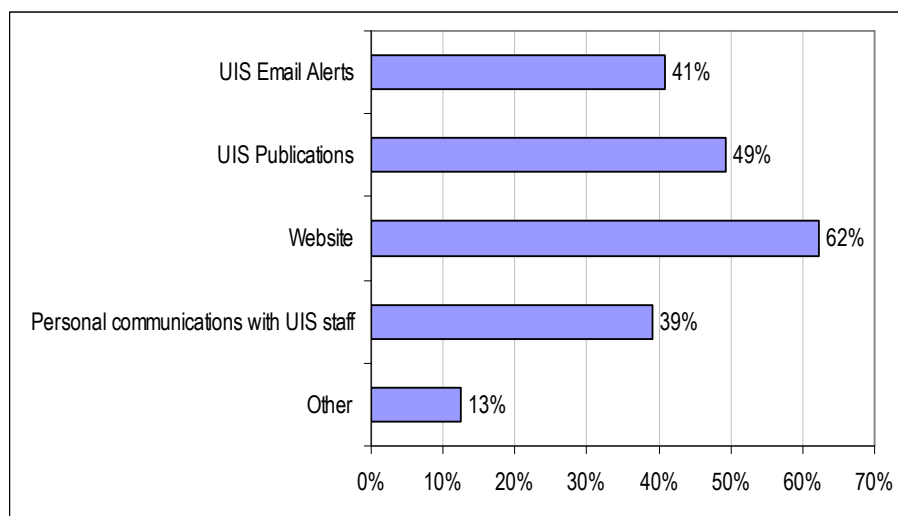
Total Respondents = 221

How aware are you of the following specific roles and activities of UIS?



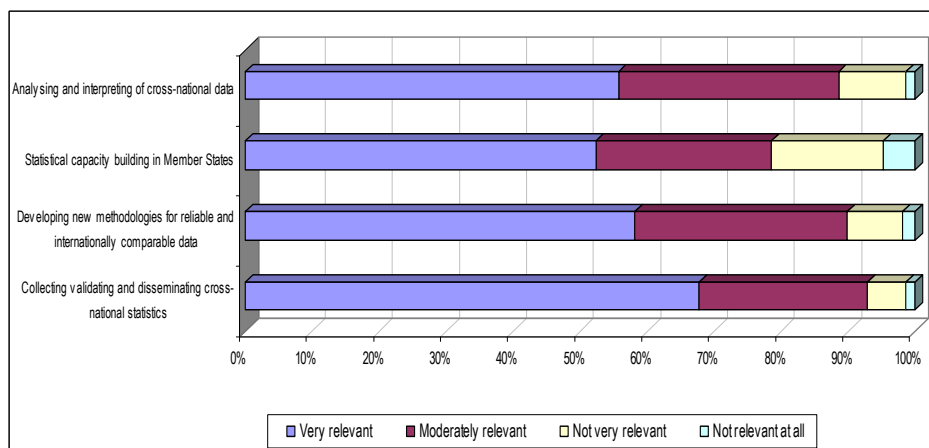
Total Respondents = 218

How do you stay informed of UIS activities? *Mark all that apply



Total Respondents = 215

How relevant in your opinion are the following UIS roles to your organization's needs and priorities?



Total Respondents = 214

Please add any explanations necessary to interpret your answers above

Example responses include:

- Cross national (and national statistics) are vital for: 1. As a necessary basis for policymaking on international/intergovernmental level and the measurement of the effectiveness of policy measures. 2. Monitoring the progress towards the millennium goals and the effectiveness of national and international policies in these areas

- In many countries, methodology and modalities for collecting information and data are not suitable with the world or UNESCO standards and criteria. Those from UNESCO will give ways for them to carry out their own collection of information and data, which will facilitate the compilation of a unified system of statistics.

While most responses were positive, there were a few challenging comments for the relevance of UIS's contribution. For example

- I personally don't see many of the connections between the data gathered and the path the country needs to take to improve education. I just see a bunch of statistics that are used to produce a handbook.

What do you consider are the main achievements and strengths of UIS?

The role of UIS in the collection, validation and dissemination of data (particularly in the areas of education and S&T) and improving the international comparability of data were mentioned most frequently. Related to this, improvements in the coverage, reliability and independence of education data were also commonly referred to. The roles of capacity building, development of methodologies and analysis and interpretation of data were also identified as strengths by some respondents. Other achievements/strengths of UIS identified were: the accessibility of data and development of the website; contributions to EFA; networking; calibre of staff; role in representing the needs of developing countries; and training workshops.

Example responses include:

- La production d'un annuaire international, la production des indicateurs comparables pour le suivi des plans et programmes de la scolarisation universelle. La plus grande force est de réussir à fédérer par groupe de pays tous les producteurs d'information statistique suite à des ateliers régionaux. La constitution de comité technique de renforcement des capacités statistiques de l'éducation.
- To maintain a team of experts to collate and disseminate useful cross-national statistics/ indicators and analyses. The data validation procedures seem to have been enhanced in recent years.
- This is the only body that has been able to capture from several developing and developed countries, and enable international comparisons. To that extent it has continuously evolved from a mere provider of statistics to an organisation providing value added analytical support as well.

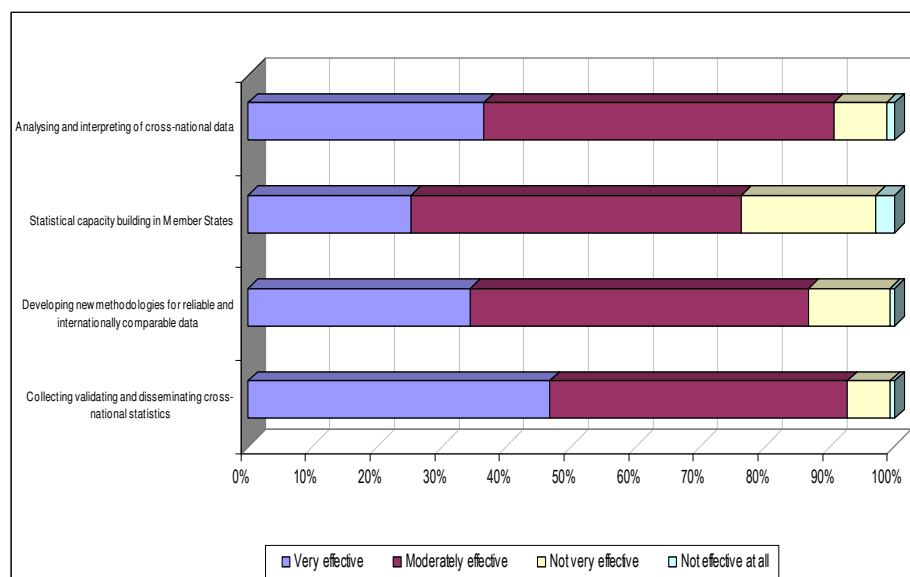
Are there areas where UIS is weaker or could, in your opinion, make a larger contribution?

Respondents most consistently referred to the need for UIS to provide more training, technical assistance, and capacity building activities within Member States. Related to this, were issues with the infrequency of communication between Member States and UIS, and suggestions that UIS needed to strengthen their ability to verify the completion and accuracy of data by Member States. Other areas mentioned by a number of respondents were: improve external communications, publicity and dissemination of analyses; collaborate more in research and analysis; more regular data collection in the areas of culture and communication and information.

Example responses include:

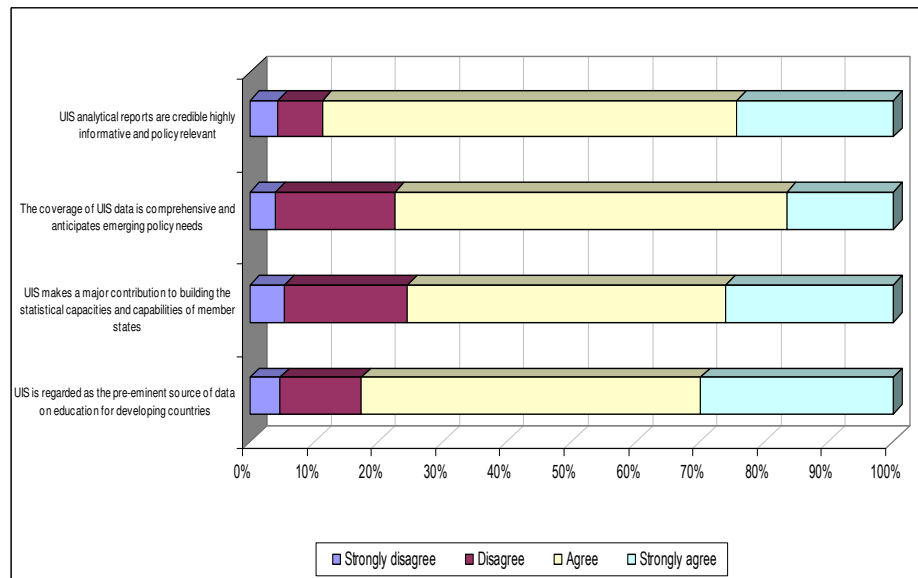
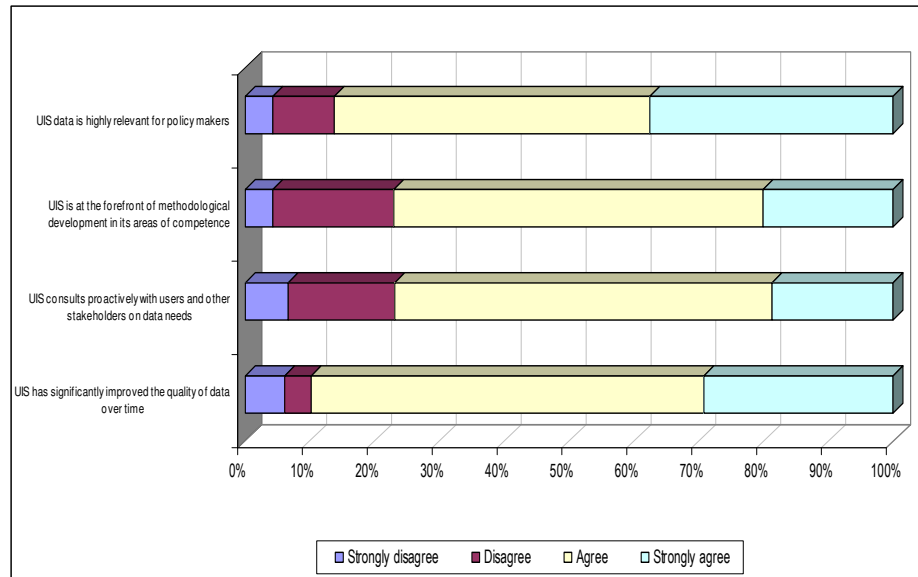
- UIS could conduct more training workshops to enhance the analytical and statistical capacities of their corresponding organisations in the Member States.
- Capacity building in the sense of helping countries to not only gather the data but also analyze it better for their own use.
- More regular data collection and analysis in the area of Culture and Communication
- Développement des outils informatiques standards pour les traitement et la diffusion de l'information

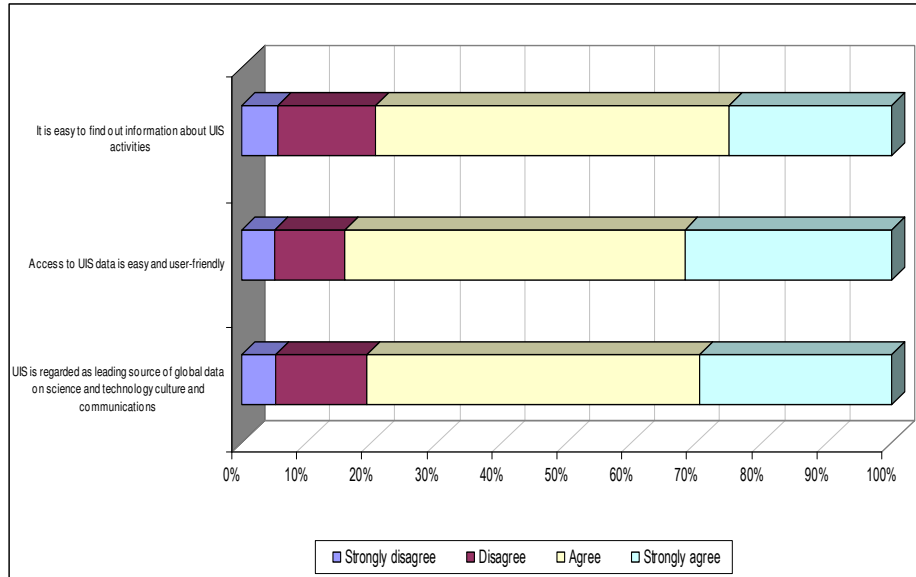
How effective is UIS in performing the following roles?



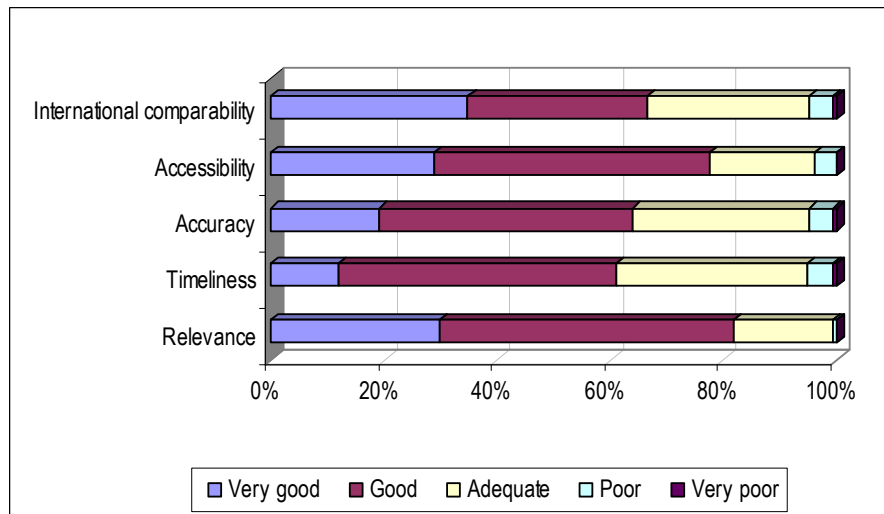
Total Respondents = 190

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:



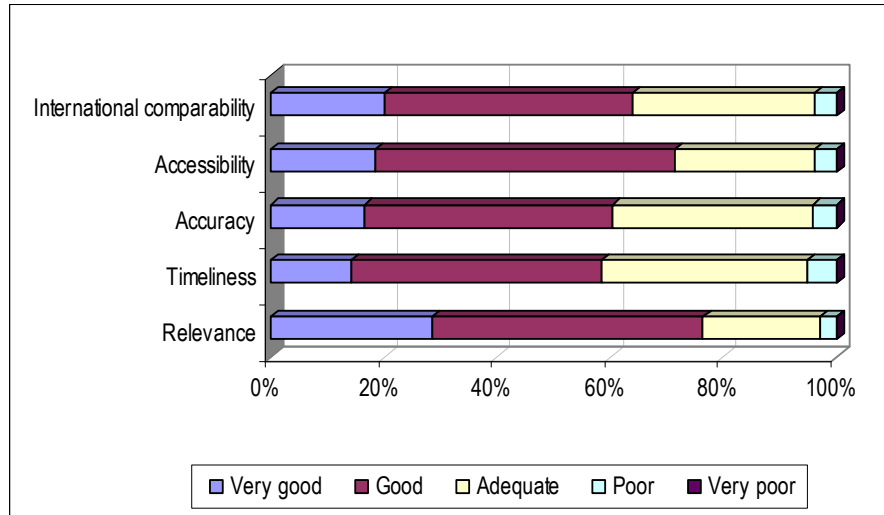


Education Statistics: How would you rate the quality of UIS Education statistics in terms of:



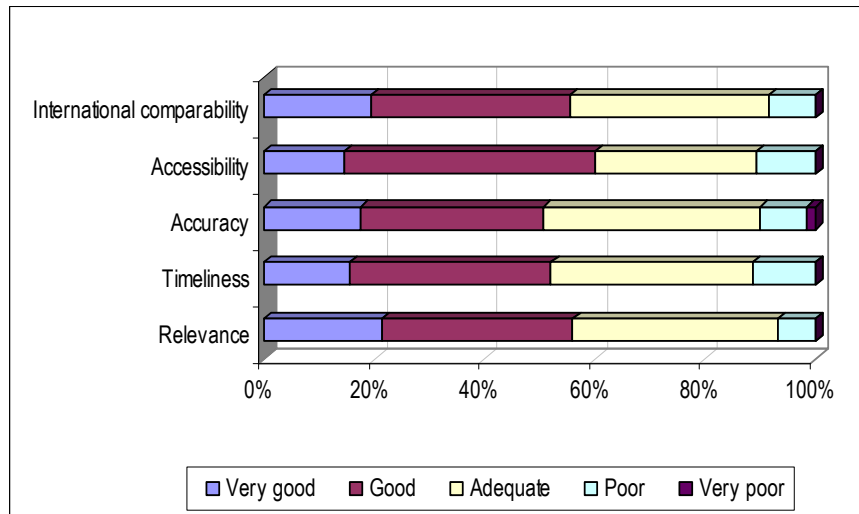
Total Respondents = 179

Science and Technology Statistics: How would you rate the quality of UIS Science and Technology statistics in terms of:



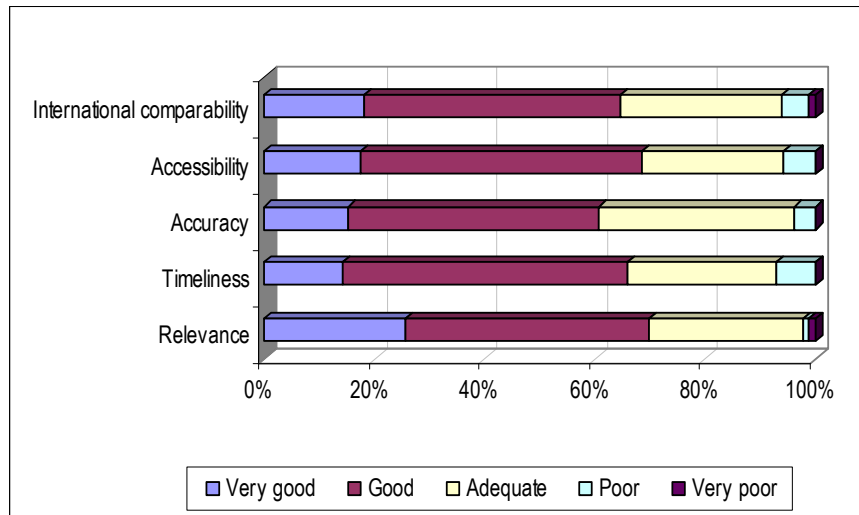
Total Respondents = 174

Culture Statistics: How would you rate the quality of UIS Culture statistics in terms of:



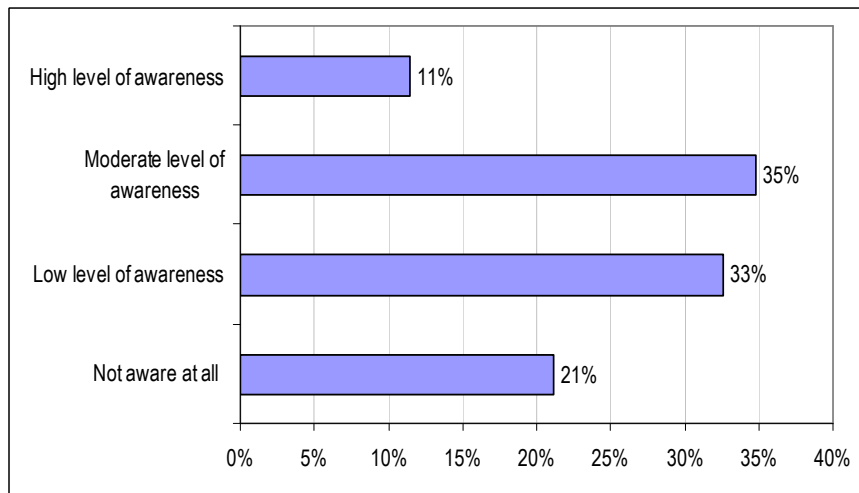
Total Respondents = 171

*Communication and Information Statistics: How would you rate the quality of UIS
Communication and Information statistics in terms of:*



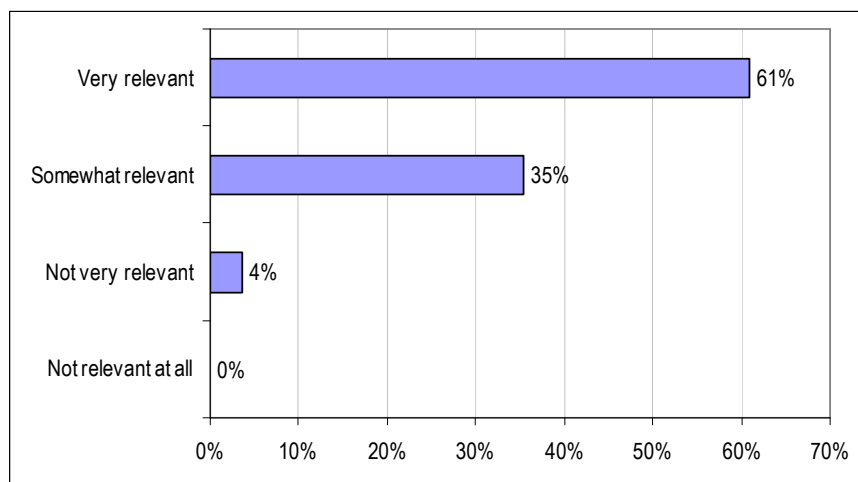
Total Respondents = 172

How aware are you of the Statistical Capacity Building programme of UIS?



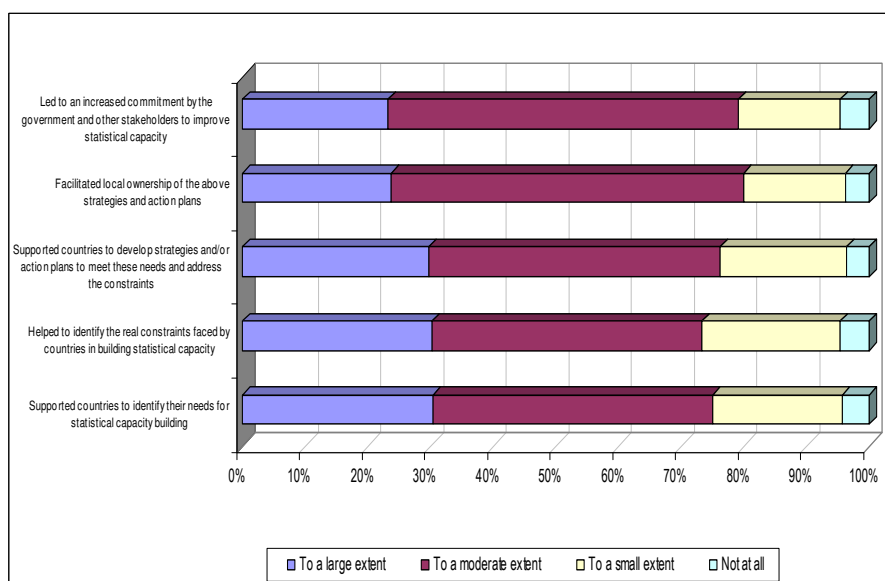
Total Respondents = 184

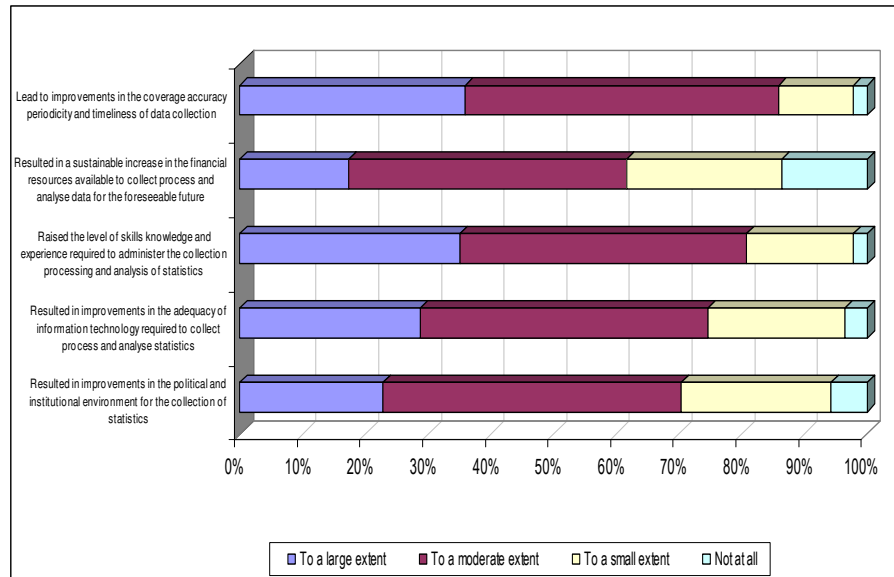
How relevant is the statistical capacity building programme to the needs of Member States?



Total Respondents = 136

To what extent has the statistical capacity building:





In your view, what are the main obstacles to building sustainable national statistical capacity?

Financial and human resources were frequently described as barriers to improving national statistical capacity, along with the lack of value placed on statistical data by governments and policy makers.

Example responses include:

- Entrenched procedures. Cultural barriers. Not wanting a true and accurate assessment of what is an already a less than ideal situation.
- The main obstacle is the organization of the public administration in less developed countries. The absence of a professional civil service imposes strong restrictions to sustainable statistical programs.
- Often one person gets trained in this area. In my country the lack of human resource is a big issue and once a person is trained in this area there is no guarantee they will stay long enough.

How well does the UIS Statistical Capacity Building programme address these obstacles?

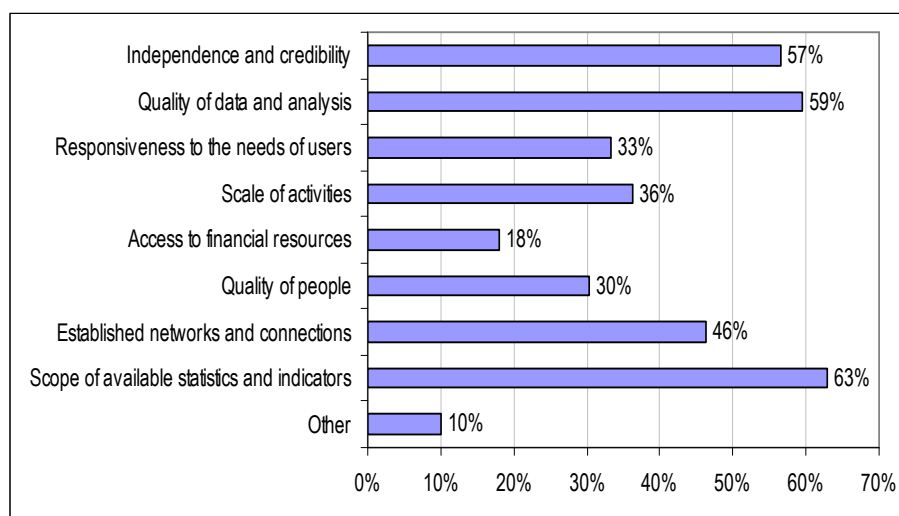
Views about the extent to which the UIS Statistical Capacity Building programme led to sustainable improvements in national statistical capacity were very mixed.

Responses tended to suggest the UIS Statistical Capacity Building was not overly effective in achieving sustainable outcomes but also recognised the complexities of doing so.

Example responses include:

- It gives an opportunity to discuss these issues with them if we have regular workshops (once in two years) at regional level. Also such workshops will help both parties in understanding terminology, overlapping of data etc., and workout questionnaires that are most relevant regionally.
- Provide more awareness about the importance of the national statistical capacity building and ask for more support from the donor's countries and agencies.
- Given the restrictions mentioned above, the Capacity Building programme may contribute to train people and carry out interesting projects, but I'm not sure that these initiatives lead to sustainable achievements.

*What if anything are the comparative advantages of UIS relative to other providers of statistical services? *Mark all that apply*



Total Respondents = 138

Are there any other comments about UIS you would like to make?

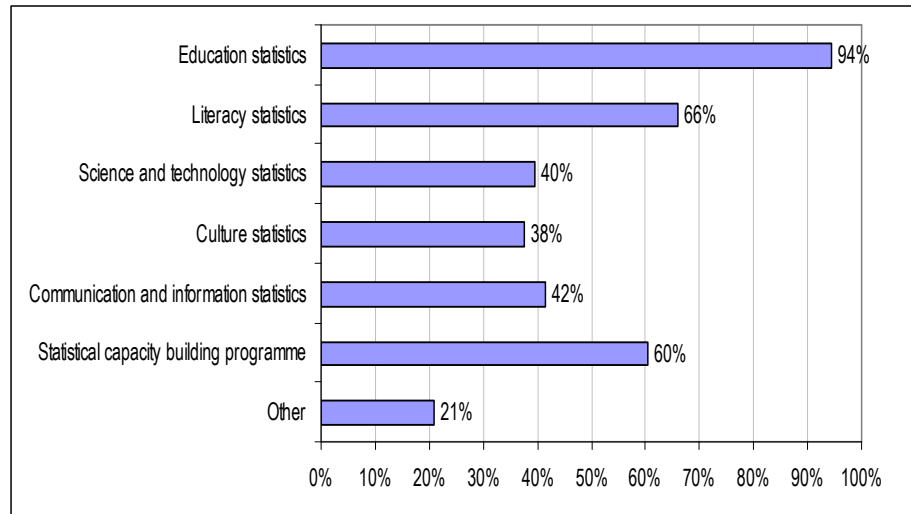
A number of respondents took this opportunity to note their appreciation for the work of UIS or provide suggestions for improvement. Others raised concerns about the level of communication with their specific organisation.

Example responses include:

- Your job is a difficult but essential one. Improve it. Develop your link with researchers. Become a centre for the new methodologies in educational researches adapted to developing countries like it was a long time ago...
- Set up a UIS Statistics Forum on UIS website for Member States to discuss statistical issues.

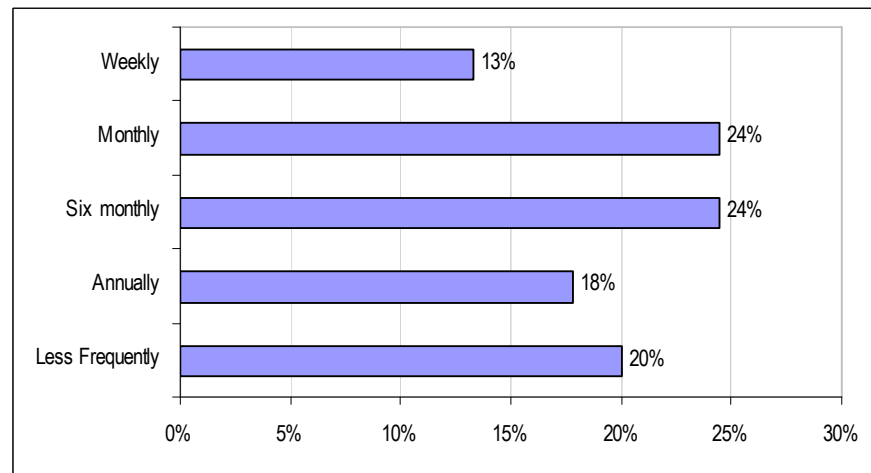
INTERNAL SURVEY RESULTS

*What are your particular areas of interest in UIS? (e.g. education statistics) * Mark all that apply*



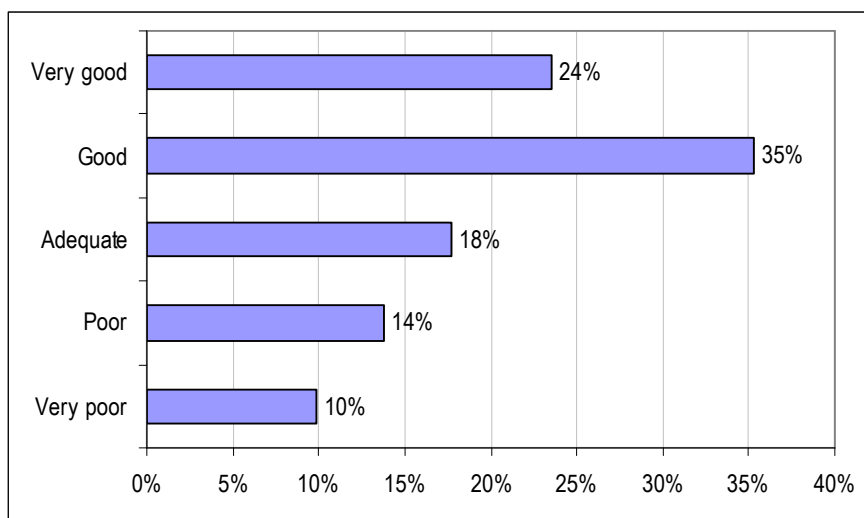
Total Respondents = 53

How often do you or your organisation engage with UIS?



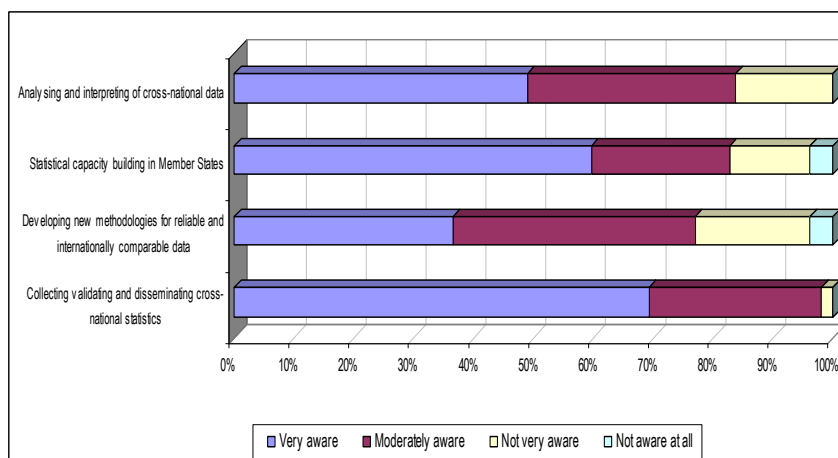
Total Respondents = 52

How would you rate the quality of your engagement with UIS?



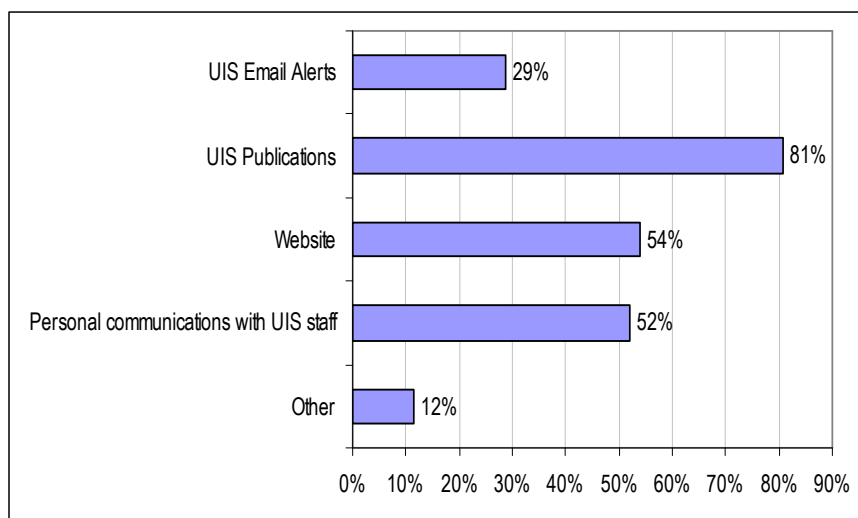
Total Respondents = 52

How aware are you of the following specific roles and activities of UIS?



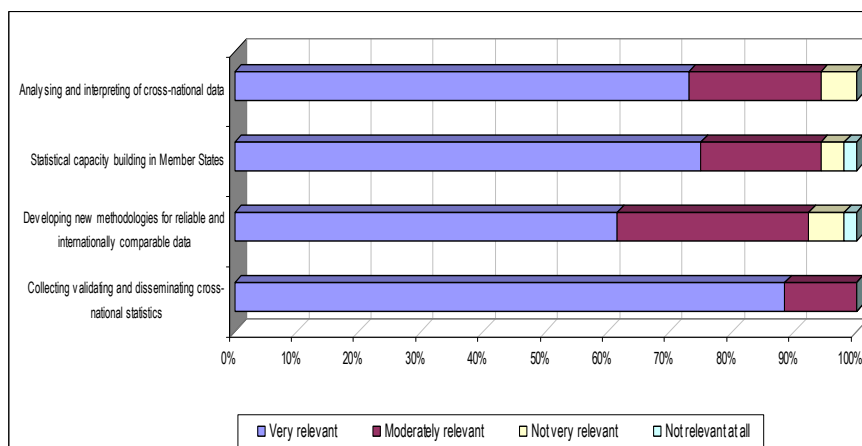
Total Respondents = 52

How do you stay informed of UIS activities? *Mark all that apply



Total Respondents = 52

How relevant in your opinion are the following UIS roles to your organization's needs and priorities?



Total Respondents = 52

What do you consider are the main achievements and strengths of UIS?

As with external stakeholders, the role of UIS in the collection, validation and dissemination of data and improving the international comparability of data was frequently highlighted. UNESCO stakeholders also commonly mentioned the value add of the thematic reports produced by UIS and the importance of their contribution to global monitoring of EFA goals.

Example responses include:

- Presenting the data as regional or thematic publications. This makes access to and use of the data much easier.
- To give a great step in the elaboration of comparable indicators among countries. The reduction of the times between the facts and their publications. The great dispensability and free condition of the information
- 1) playing a leading role in the production of global reports of international credibility; 2) providing an international arena for experts debates; 3) capacity building programmes for Member States

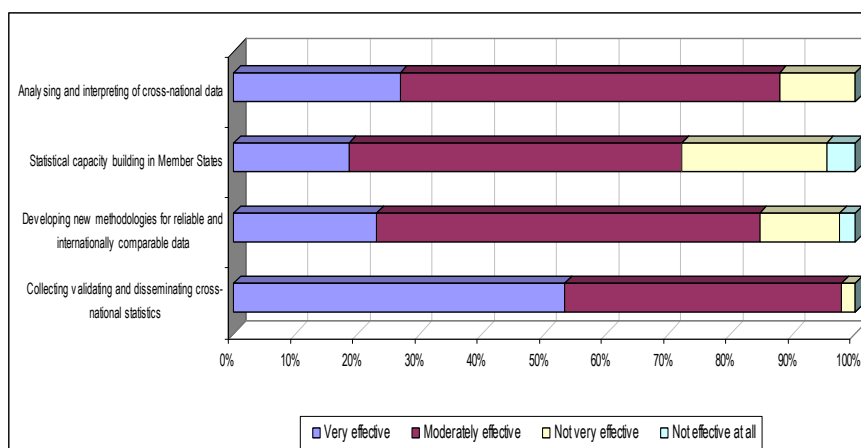
Are there areas where UIS is weaker or could, in your opinion, make a larger contribution?

Issues highlighted as weaknesses or areas for improvement included: inadequate resources for capacity building at country level; need for improved coordination with UNESCO Sectors to define information needs; more collaboration with UNESCO Institutes; need for more regular data collection in the non-education sectors; and better dissemination of its activities and information.

Example responses include:

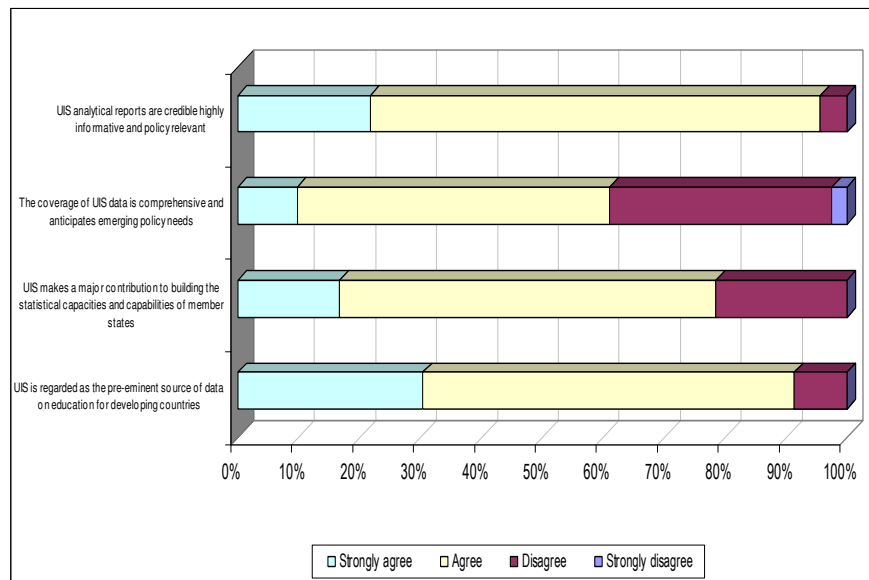
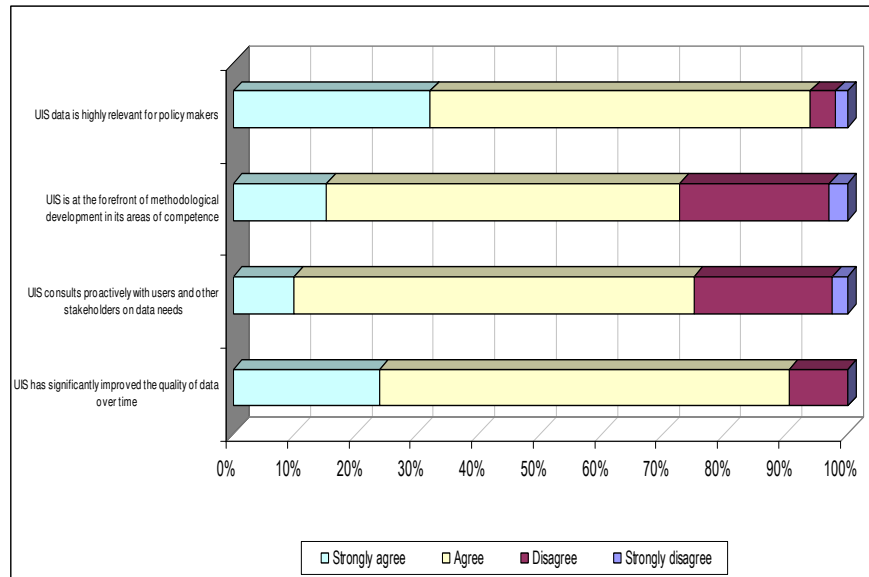
- Stronger dissemination of cross-national statistics, indicators and related documents in Culture, Natural Sciences, and Communication and Information.
- UIS could make an increased effort to share their analytical conclusions with public at large, through appropriate media releases and e-mal alerts to Media and NGOs. Such information on data will allow an engaged policy discussions particularly when data proves that national level results are well behind the expected levels.

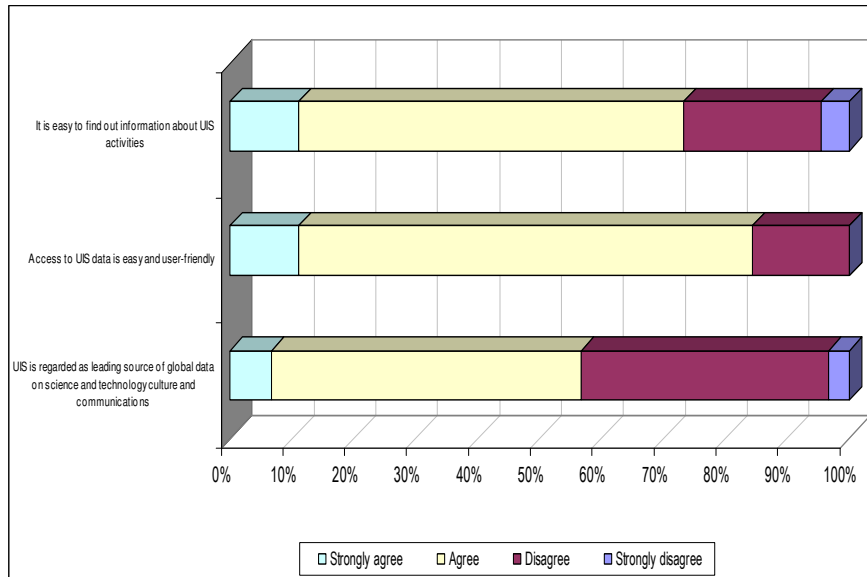
How effective is UIS in performing the following roles?



Total Respondents = 51

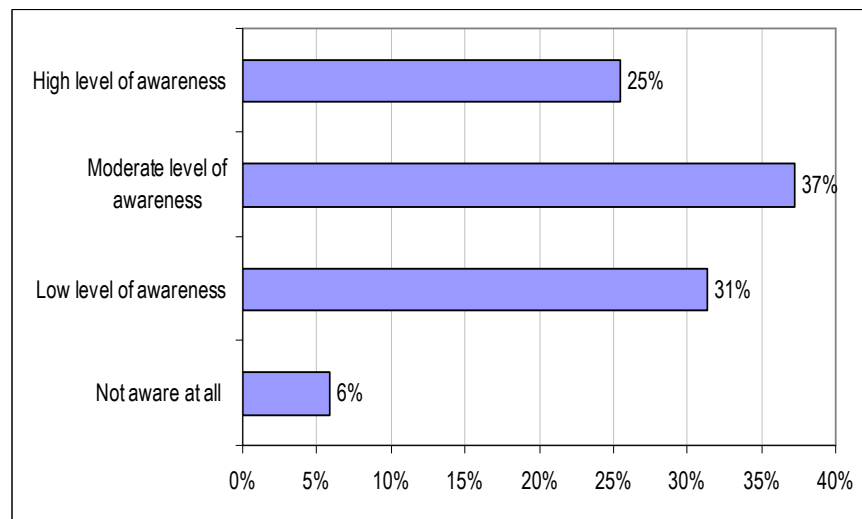
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:





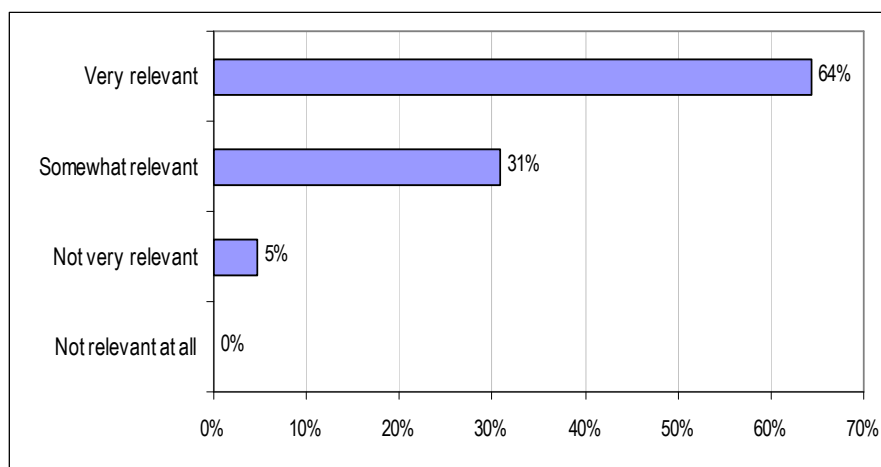
Total Respondents = 52

How aware are you of the Statistical Capacity Building programme of UIS?



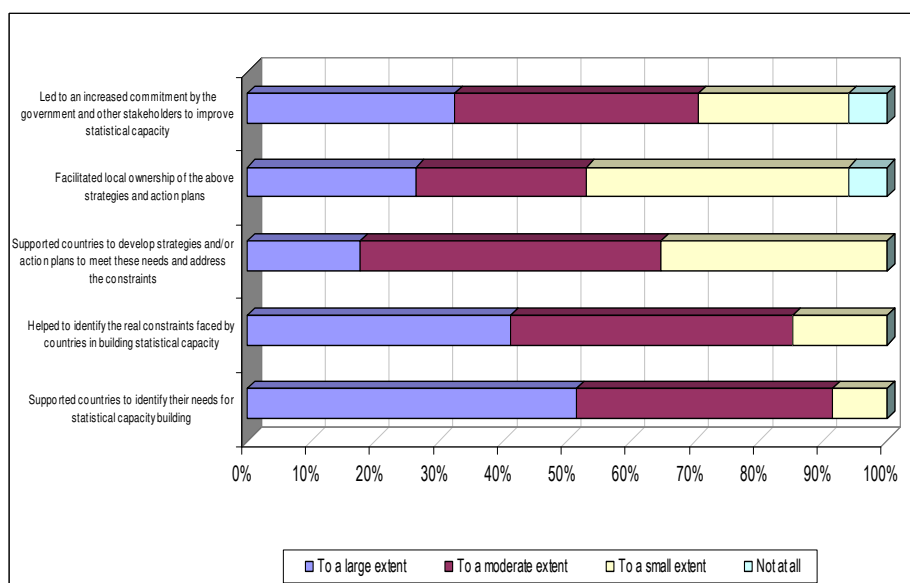
Total Respondents = 51

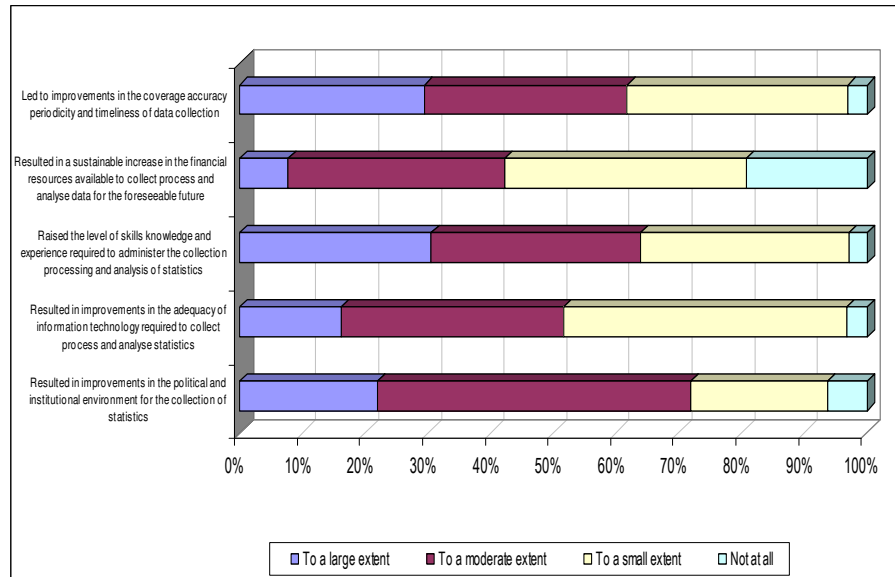
How relevant is the statistical capacity building programme to the needs of Member States?



Total Respondents = 46

To what extent has the statistical capacity building:





Total Respondents = 46

In your view, what are the main obstacles to building sustainable national statistical capacity?

Financial and human resources were frequently described as barriers to improving national statistical capacity, along with the lack of value placed on statistical data by governments and policy makers.

Example responses include:

- The frequent changes in the government officials in charge of the education statistics. - Inadequate collaboration between the Central Bureau of Statistics and the line ministries. - Limited budget
- Lack of human and financial resources. Lack of institutional stability at country level, which prevents a sustained effort. High turnover of statistics personnel in the countries.
- Ensuring real ownership of the process by the government and sustaining its commitment -- and that of UNESCO -- to the process.

How well does the UIS Statistical Capacity Building programme address these obstacles?

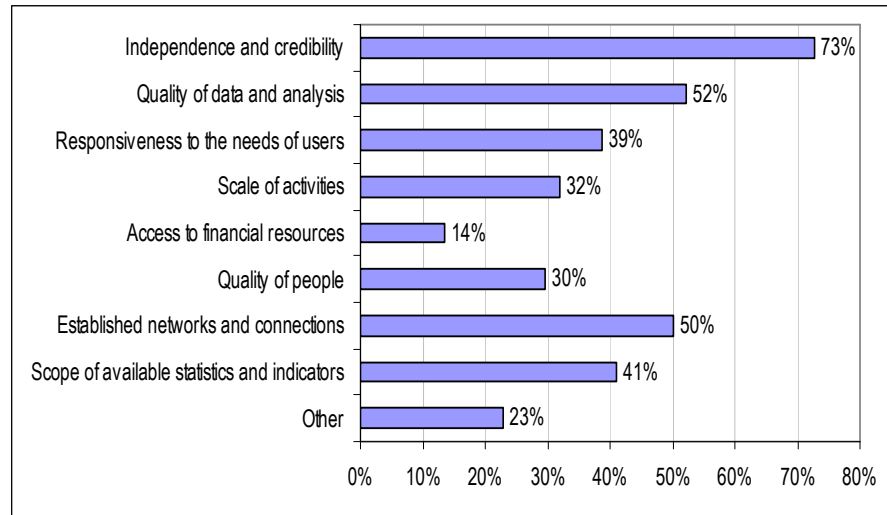
This question predominantly elicited suggestions for improvement from UNESCO stakeholders, suggesting that many identified room for improvement in UIS's current SCB programme.

Example responses include:

- They recognize that these are obstacles, but the Institute does not have enough resources (technically and financially) to address them thoroughly for maximum impact.

- More awareness raising in the UIS More technical support / capacity building to the Member States To strengthen communication and dialogue with Member States to improve mutual understanding and reach consensus
- Too top-down and prescriptive -- should be decentralised and handled out of regional offices of UNESCO

*What if anything are the comparative advantages of UIS relative to other providers of statistical services? *Mark all that apply*



Total Respondents = 44

Are there any other comments about UIS you would like to make?

A number of respondents mentioned the importance of maintaining and developing the regional presence of UIS, and for more coordination between UIS and UNESCO Field Offices.

Example responses include:

- Quality of UIS work and data, and hence UIS's credibility, depend on those at the source of data in the countries. A strong SCB programme that is well-resourced in expertise and funding, and a subsequent active international network for methodologies, data collection, analysis, quality assurance, dissemination and support to data use, will be key to the future of UIS.
- A chance must be given to the new Director to sort out the priorities and processes of the UIS -- and further support must be given to strengthening regional entities of the Institute.
- UIS needs to work more closely with Field Offices and Member States.

APPENDIX 4: UIS STATUTES

ARTICLE I – DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise stated in the text:

- **Board** means the Governing Board of the Institute;
- **Chairperson** means the Chairperson of the Board;
- **Committee** means the Policy and Planning Committee provided for in Article VI of the Statutes;
- **Director** means the Director of the Institute;
- **Director-General** means the Director-General of UNESCO;
- **General Conference** means the General Conference of UNESCO;
- **Institute** means the UNESCO Institute for Statistics;
- **Personnel** means the personnel of the Institute;
- Statutes means the Statutes of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics;
- **UNESCO** means the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

ARTICLE II – LEGAL STATUS OF THE INSTITUTE

1. A UNESCO Institute for Statistics is hereby established within the framework of UNESCO, of which it shall be an integral part. Within that framework the Institute shall enjoy the functional autonomy necessary to achieve its objectives.

2. All the activities carried out in exercise of the autonomy enjoyed by the Institute shall be in conformity with the Statutes as well as the relevant decisions of the General Conference and the Executive Board.

ARTICLE III – MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS

1. Within UNESCO's broad mandate to contribute to the advancement and sharing of knowledge and the free flow of ideas, the mission of the Institute shall be to provide statistical information on education, science, culture and communication which helps decision-making in Member States and facilitates democratic debate in UNESCO's areas of competence, employing to that end the highest professional standards and intellectual independence in data collection and analysis.

2. To that end, the Institute shall focus on the following objectives:
 - (a) to foster the development of international statistics in its fields of competence which reflect the changing policy contexts in those fields and which are reliable, of worldwide comparability, robust and feasible to collect;
 - (b) to arrange for the collection, production, analysis and timely dissemination of policy-relevant statistics, indicators and related documentation based on the development work in subparagraph (a) above;
 - (c) to support the development of the statistical and analytical capacities of Member States not only for their own purposes, but also as a contribution to the achievement of the objective set in subparagraph (b) above; and
 - (d) to provide analysis services within the context of the Institute's mission, taking into account the needs of the Member States.

3. The Institute shall perform the following functions:
 - (a) a development function comprising, as main tasks, the identification of future needs and the development of appropriate responsive and flexible data and indicators, paying attention to the appropriate quality standards;
 - (b) a collection and dissemination function; and
 - (c) a capacity-building function.

4. The prime objective of the Institute shall be to serve the needs of Member States through its core-work programme. In addition, it shall be responsive, depending on additional finances, to other needs or demands emanating from other parts of UNESCO and other users in Member States and international organizations.

ARTICLE IV – GOVERNING BOARD

1. The Board shall be composed of 12 members chosen for a term of four years and sitting in a personal capacity. The members shall be elected or designated in the following way:
 - (a) six members shall be elected by the General Conference, one for each electoral group of UNESCO; and
 - (b) six members shall be designated by the Director-General, after consultation with partner agencies, organizations and institutions, which are co-sponsors of the programmes of the Institute.

2. The elected members shall not be eligible for re-election for a second consecutive term.

3. The Board may invite observers as it considers appropriate.

4. The Board shall elect its Chairperson, from among its members, for a two-year term of office.

ARTICLE IV – FUNCTIONS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

1. The functions of the Board shall be:

- (a) to approve the general policy and the nature of the Institute’s activities, within the framework decided by the General Conference, including the Approved Programme and Budget and with due regard to the obligations resulting from the fact that the Institute is an integral part of UNESCO;
- (b) to set guidelines for the development of the programme, including an indication of the overall budget and of the balance of priorities within the programme;
- (c) in accordance with the provisions of Articles VII, VIII and IX, to examine and approve the yearly programme and budget prepared by the Director, on the understanding that the budget ceiling shall not exceed the total sum to be available during the financial year, including contributions and subventions to be paid, or provided in kind, to the Institute; administer the Institute;
- (d) to examine the annual and other reports on the activities and yearly expenditures of the Institute prepared by the Director and to advise the latter on the execution, evaluation and follow-up of the Institute’s programme and on any matters he/she may bring to its attention;
- (e) to submit their annual report on the Institute’s activities to the Executive Board and to the General Conference;
- (f) to make recommendations to the Director-General on the appointment of the Director.

2. The Board shall be consulted by the Director on the appointment of the senior officials of the Institute.

ARTICLE VI – OPERATION OF THE BOARD

1. The Board shall meet in ordinary session once a year. It may be convened in extraordinary session by the Chairperson, either on his/her initiative or at the request of four of its members, or of the Director.

2. The Chairperson and the members of the Board shall receive no compensation for their services; the Institute shall cover the costs of their travel and daily subsistence allowance, when they are on official travel on the Institute's business.
3. During their terms of office, the Chairperson and the members of the Board shall not be entitled to any fee or honorarium for any work carried out on the Institute's behalf.
4. The Board shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure.
5. The Board may deliberate and take decisions when at least six of its members are present.
6. The Board shall establish a Policy and Planning Committee, which shall be convened by its Chairperson, or by the Board, and shall meet as often as required by the needs of the programme. Its Chairperson shall be the Chairperson of the Board and it shall consist of four other members, in addition to its Chairperson, chosen by the Board from among its members. The Committee shall perform the function of providing the initial input and guidance for the planning and budgeting process of the Institute and any other functions as decided by the Board, either in its Rules of Procedure or during an ordinary session.
7. The Board may set up such other committees from among its members as may be required. Each such committee shall adopt its rules of procedure.
8. The working languages of the Board shall be English and French.

ARTICLE VII – THE DIRECTOR AND THE PERSONNEL

1. The Director of the Institute, who shall be a staff member of UNESCO, shall be appointed by the Director-General, upon the recommendation of the Board.
2. The Director shall be the chief executive officer of the Institute. In this capacity, the Director shall, by due delegation of authority by the Director-General:
 - (a) administer the Institute;
 - (b) prepare its draft programme of work and budget estimates and submit them to the Board for approval;
 - (c) subject to the Board's approval, draw up detailed plans for the implementation of the approved programme, and direct their execution;
 - (d) appoint, in accordance with UNESCO's Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, the staff members of the Institute and, in conformity with the applicable administrative and legal provisions, other members of the Institute's

personnel such as consultants and persons on secondment or under other contractual arrangements;

- (e) make payments in accordance with the financial regulations of the special account as provided in Article IX;
- (f) establish, without prejudice to the financial regulations of the special account for the Institute, financial rules and procedures in order to ensure effective financial administration and economy.

3. The Director and staff members of the Institute are subject to UNESCO's Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.

ARTICLE VIII – TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANELS

1. The Board may establish technical advisory panels, composed of high-level experts in the fields of statistics and policy analysis in order to:

- (a) advise the Institute on setting up and implementing standards and on validating procedures;
- (b) send to the Board recommendations on the programme of work prepared by the Director for the Board's approval;
- (c) offer any other advice in matters of policy and programmes as requested by the Board, or the Director, and in particular for any medium-term plan that the Institute may adopt.

2. One of the technical advisory panels should deal with issues relating to the use of statistics such as statistical and indicator needs for policy-makers, and another with issues connected with the supply of statistics such as the validity of collection methods and the reliability of data.

3. The members of the panels shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Board, on the basis of proposals prepared by the Director. Their Chairperson shall be chosen from among the Board's members. The panels shall adopt their own rules of procedure.

4. Unless on a special consultancy, the members of the technical advisory panels shall receive no compensation for their services; the Institute shall cover the costs of their travel and daily subsistence allowance, when they are on official travel on the Institute's business.

ARTICLE IX – FINANCE

1. The income of the Institute shall consist of:
 - (a) a financial allocation determined by the General Conference to cover staff costs, as well as direct and indirect programme costs;
 - (b) voluntary contributions from States, international agencies and organizations, as well as other entities allocated to it for purposes consistent with the policies, programmes and activities of UNESCO and the Institute;
 - (c) such subventions, endowments, gifts and bequests as are allocated to it for purposes consistent with the policies, programmes and activities of UNESCO and the Institute;
 - (d) fees collected in respect of the execution of projects entrusted to the Institute, from the sale of publications, or from other particular activities; and
 - (e) miscellaneous income.

2. The income of the Institute shall be paid into a special account to be set up by the Director-General, in accordance with the relevant provisions of UNESCO's Financial Regulations. This special account shall be operated and the Institute's budget administered in accordance with the above-mentioned provisions and the financial regulations of the special account.

3. In the event of a decision by the General Conference to close down the Institute its assets shall be vested in, and its liabilities taken over by, UNESCO.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

1. These Statutes may be amended by a decision of the General Conference taken by a simple majority of Member States present and voting.

ARTICLE XI – TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

1. The Director-General shall make all necessary arrangements for the Institute's entry into operation. For this purpose, pending the adoption of the Institute's first annual budget by the Board, the Director-General shall incur the necessary expenditure from funds voted by the General Conference, which shall be transferred to a special account established and administered in accordance with the Financial Regulations of UNESCO.

2. The General Conference of UNESCO shall elect at its 30th session the first six elected members of the Board. Their period of service shall be as follows: (a) three members to be decided by drawing lots until 31 December 2003; and (b) three members until 31 December 2001.

3. Three of the members designated by the Director-General shall serve until 31 December 2003 and the other three until 31 December 2001.

APPENDIX 5: UIS FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

INCOME	1999*	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006**	2007***
I. REGULAR INCOME									
UNESCO Financial Allocation	1,909,889	3,395,400	3,395,500	3,410,000	3,410,000	4,510,000	4,510,000	4,510,000	4,510,000
Voluntary contributions									
- Governments	-	44,285	952,031	1,949,979	1,869,451	1,982,774	3,059,561	2,811,058	2,294,409
- Others	400,000	1,492,919	14,000	850,000	2,936,500	1,218,512	197,099	1,667,500	1,800,000
- Contracts & MOUs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	458,132	330,003
Revenue generating activities	-	-	334,919	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Regular Income	2,309,889	4,932,604	4,696,450	6,209,979	8,215,951	7,711,286	7,766,660	9,446,690	8,934,412
II. OTHER INCOME									
Reimbursement of services	24,440	14,009	-	1,160	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of publications	14,550	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Currency exchange adjustments	-	-	(2,707)	(29,648)	51,616	37,268	38,983	25,000	50,000
Bank Interest	-	-	-	11,982	15,615	83,942	184,996	300,000	200,000
Other Income	-	-	1,129	7,888	527	3,552	7,003	13,013	-
Total Other Income	38,990	14,009	(1,578)	(8,618)	67,758	124,762	230,982	338,013	250,000
TOTAL INCOME	2,348,879	4,946,613	4,694,872	6,201,361	8,283,709	7,836,048	7,997,642	9,784,703	9,184,412

EXPENDITURES	1999*	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006**	2007***
A. By appropriation line									
PROGRAMME									
Regional and international cooperation	103,398	154,256	230,411						
Collection of comparable international statistics	704,045	756,122	1,231,942						
Building statistical capacity in Member States	459,501	844,626	732,031						
Information and publications	169,439	367,115	509,332						
Special projects		512,277	423,910						
Guardianship of cross-national data				571,961	1,463,282	1,276,675			
Development of appropriate methodology and standards				773,072	1,042,820	1,283,472			
Capacity building in the collection and use of statistics				1,570,650	940,691	1,277,332			
Analysis and interpretation of cross-national data				733,676	1,446,856	1,153,704			
EFA Observatory				432,373	180,496	241,314			
Education Statistics							2,070,809	1,928,963	1,802,300
Data Analysis and Communications							1,375,022	-	-
Education Statistics - Statistical Capacity Building							1,107,350	1,183,043	1,364,727
Science & Technology, Culture & Communication Statistics							967,580	834,439	854,542
Literacy, Non-formal Education Statistics (including LAMP)							965,121	1,198,675	1,121,899
Cross Programme Activities							-	2,856,039	2,290,375
Total Programme	1,436,383	2,634,396	3,127,626	4,081,732	5,074,145	5,232,496	6,485,882	8,001,159	7,433,843
GOVERNING BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION									
Governing Board	131,301	208,481	171,742	91,757	95,652	90,391	90,706	70,000	70,000
General Administration	348,556	528,443	1,441,985	2,073,820	1,949,039	1,843,810	1,973,608	2,057,627	2,172,002
Renovation of New and Existing Premises								884,956	
Total Governing Board and Administration	479,857	736,924	1,613,727	2,165,577	2,044,691	1,934,201	2,064,314	3,012,583	2,242,002
FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES AND DIRECTOR'S BUDGET									
						223,887	360,035	356,120	401,875
Total expenditure, by appropriation line	1,916,240	3,371,320	4,741,353	6,247,309	7,118,836	7,390,584	8,910,232	11,369,862	10,077,720

B. By category of expenditure	1999*	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006**	2007***
Programme costs	271,678	1,527,902	1,500,491	1,945,435	3,001,141	3,454,197	2,502,281	2,228,961	3,469,533
Governing Board	62,604	101,072	60,071	66,093	85,804	59,094	90,706	70,000	70,000
General Administration	98,870	110,145	1,094,354	1,422,057	1,557,590	1,450,887	848,867	2,009,834	1,206,037
Staff costs	1,483,088	1,632,201	2,086,437	2,813,724	2,474,301	2,350,335	5,288,795	6,982,147	5,232,150
Fund raising and Director						76,071	179,583	78,920	100,000
Total expenditure, by category of expenditure	1,916,240	3,371,320	4,741,353	6,247,309	7,118,836	7,390,584	8,910,232	11,369,862	10,077,720
EXCESS/(SHORTFALL)	432,639	1,575,293	(46,481)	(45,948)	1,164,873	445,464	(912,589)	(1,585,159)	(893,308)
Beginning of period Surplus	-	432,639	2,083,787	2,077,159	2,269,434	3,473,696	4,228,306	3,408,681	1,840,680
Savings on prior period obligations	-	21,527	39,853	238,222	147,893	490,308	358,230	358,230	250,000
Prior year's adjustment	-	53,117	-	-	40,144	13,228	6,526	-	-
Other adjustments to reserves and fund balances	-	1,211	-	-	(148,648)	(194,390)	(271,792)	(341,072)	(263,107)
End of period Surplus	432,639	2,083,787	2,077,159	2,269,434	3,473,696	4,228,306	3,408,681	1,840,680	934,265
Transfer to Stabilisation Reserve	-	81,610	86,399	127,045	148,648	158,458	211,216	341,072	263,107
Total Reserves and Fund Balances	432,639	2,165,397	2,163,558	2,396,479	3,622,344	4,386,764	3,619,897	2,181,752	1,197,372

* 6 months to December 31

** Revised Appropriation approved by the Governing Board in November 2006

*** Appropriation approved by the Governing Board in November 2006

APPENDIX 6: ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

ACCU	Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
ADEAP	Association for the Development of Education in Asia-Pacific
AfDB	African Development Bank
ALO	Assessment of Learning Outcomes
AMIS	Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics Programme Unit (UNESCO Bangkok Office)
ADG Education	UNESCO Assistant Director General – Education
BESO	Basic Education Strategic Objective
BICSE	Board on International Comparative Studies in Education
CCA/UNDAF	Common Country Assessment and UN Assistance Development Framework
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CODATA	The Committee for Data on Science and Technology
DfID	Department for International Development
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESCAP	Statistics Division of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme (Ethiopia)
EXB	Extra-budgetary funds
FABS/SAP	UNESCO's Finance and Budget System
GED	Global Education Digest
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
IBE	International Bureau of Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IDG	International Development Goals
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
JFIT	Japanese Funds In Trust
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LAMP	Literacy Monitoring and Assessment Programme
MDG	Millennium Development Goals

MESSRT	Ministry of Secondary and Higher Education and Research and Technology (Niger)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCES	U.S. Department of Education National Centre for Education Statistics
NESIS	National Educational Statistical Information Systems Project
NESIS-AP	National Education Statistics Information Systems – Asia-Pacific
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NTCs	National Teachers Colleges
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OREALC	UNESCO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
PAPED	Pan-Arab Project for Education
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PRIE	Summit of the Americas Education Indicators Project
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RICYT	Ibero American Network on Science and Technology Indicators
SCB	Statistical Capacity Building
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNDP	United National Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESCO MTS	UNESCO Medium Term Strategy
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEI	World Education Indicators Programme
WGES	Working Group on Education Statistics of ADEA
World Bank DGF	World Bank Development Grant Facility
WSIS	World Summit on Information Societies

APPENDIX 7: EU-FUNDED SCB PROJECT IN 11 FAST TRACK COUNTRIES

INTRODUCTION

In 2003 the UIS raised funds from the European Commission to lead a major project of statistical capacity building in support of monitoring progress towards EFA goals in 11 Fast Track countries. The 11 countries included 7 in Africa (Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Tanzania and Uganda), 3 in Asia (Bangladesh, Pakistan and Vietnam) and 1 in Latin America and the Caribbean (Honduras). The project was intended to be of 3 ½ years duration with the initial phases of each project in each country comprising:

- An initial mission to each country to establish a National Technical Committee (NTC) to manage the project, and to discuss the project with stakeholders including international and bilateral donors, officials in education and finance ministries, and the national statistical office;
- The conduct by UIS, in consultation with the NTC, of a diagnostic study of the current state of education statistics in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the entire chain of collection, production, dissemination and use of education data;
- Support to the NTC to develop a national action plan to strengthen capacities in areas of weaknesses identified in the diagnostic study; and
- The provision of technical assistance to national authorities for the purposes of implementation of the action plan, in partnership with in-country development partners who play a critical role in financing the associated implementation costs.

We briefly expand on each of these four major phases of the EU-Project below.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

Over the course of the evaluation period, the UIS established National Technical Committees (NTCs) in all 11 participating countries. These committees were typically chaired by the Permanent Secretary or Director of Planning and Statistics, and were supported by a secretariat responsible to the NTC. The composition of the committees included key producers and users of education data as well as representatives of the Ministry of Finance and the National Statistical Office.

CONDUCT OF DIAGNOSTIC STUDIES

The purpose of the diagnostic study was to examine:

- Information needs to effectively manage the education system at different levels, and to identify problems or gaps in available data;
- The chain for collection, production and use of data from school directors, via district education officers and/or provincial education offices, to the national Ministry of Education;
- EMIS needs at different levels of education, and to identify where existing EMIS capabilities need to be extended; and
- Data quality issues using a Data Quality Assurance Framework (DQAF) developed jointly by the UIS and the World Bank.

The process for undertaking a diagnostic involved a 2-3 week mission by UIS staff, including consultation with a wide range of players throughout the chain of education statistics collection, production and use. Depending on the country, this can involve interviews and information collection at both national and sub-national levels, and can even include visits to meet with school directors to examine the state of school registers. Emphasis is given to examination of the existing EMIS system.

At the conclusion of the diagnostic mission, the UIS presents preliminary findings of the diagnostic study to the NTC, key Ministry officials and local education donors. Following this, an initial draft of the diagnostic report is prepared by the UIS and, following comments by the NTC, the report is finalised. The final reports are disseminated widely by the UIS and a number of countries have also disseminated the reports on Ministry websites.

Since 2002, diagnostic studies have been completed for all 11 EFA Fast Track countries. While the situational analysis varies significantly from country to country, common findings include: significant problems with existing EMIS systems (e.g. inflexibility to make changes to questionnaires, databases, report generation and limited accessibility in terms of constrained ability to query the database in a user-friendly manner); and significant weaknesses in country capacities to use data.

PREPARATION OF NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

National Action Plans (NAPs) are intended to identify and prioritise the set of actions needed to address the development needs identified by the diagnostic studies. Ideally, the NAPs should be developed by the NTCs but, in practice, they often involve significant UIS input. Overall progress on the development of NAPs has been uneven, which is to be expected given that different countries face different challenges in developing these plans. In general, however, the formulation of action plans has taken longer than originally anticipated. As of September 2005, action plans had been prepared and finalised by national authorities with UIS assistance in Niger, Guinea, Ghana and Uganda and plans were underway in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Vietnam and Tanzania.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION PLANS

The UIS has provided country-level technical assistance in a number of areas:

- Methodology and EMIS Development – The UIS has developed generalised methodologies and EMIS modules in collaboration with the ADEA WGES, with financing from the World Bank Development Grant Facility. The modules are designed to cover all aspects of the collection, production, dissemination and use of data. UIS makes these modules freely available to countries.
- Questionnaire Development – The UIS helps national authorities examine the information needs of a country at national, provincial, district and school levels, and advises on the development of revised or new questionnaires. UIS also assists countries to apply ISCED and requirements for the purposes of national reporting on progress towards EFA goals and MDGs.
- Methodology for Data Collection – The UIS advises countries on the logistical process for completion of questionnaires at school level and their subsequent validation at district, regional and national level. The UIS methodology incorporates training for school directors in questionnaire completion and education officers in validation techniques.
- Training – The UIS has delivered training workshops to national authorities in a range of aspects of data collection, production and use including in the: use of UIS data modelling EMIS module and migration of historical data; questionnaire development; application of the UIS methodology for decentralised completion of questionnaires (training the trainers); use of EMIS modules for data entry and yearbook production; use of education data and indicators for planning and decision-making.

Under the EC-funded project, SCB technical assistance has been provided in Niger, Guinea, Mauritania, Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania. UIS methodologies and EMIS modules have been introduced in Niger, Guinea, Ghana and Mauritania. As a result of UIS technical assistance in these countries there has been significant improvements in the timeliness of national statistics and their dissemination. In 2006, UIS began to introduce methodologies and systems for the current school year in Uganda and Ethiopia. An agreement with the Government of Tanzania and local development partners (including UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA and the EC delegation) has recently been concluded to lead a project to develop a harmonised sector-wide EMIS.