



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO Bangkok
Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau
for Education

What are key education policy and management concepts?
How can an education system be analyzed?
How can critical policy areas be identified?
How can an education system be monitored?
What is an education policy cycle?
What is a sector-wide approach to education?
What are key modalities for cooperation?

UNESCO Handbook on Education Policy Analysis and Programming

Volume 1

Education Policy Analysis

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Use of this handbook

The education sector can seem vast and complex to analyse. This handbook proposes a systematic and structured method that facilitates analysis of education policy and programmes across the areas of access, quality and management of education and across the major cross-cutting issues, for all levels and types of education within the national context.

The handbook provides a conceptual framework for education policy analysis and for engaging in policy dialogues with national counterparts and development partners. This framework is especially useful when planning or attending policy conferences, meetings and workshops and when commenting on policy documents provided by governments and donors.

Drawing on the expertise, experiences and insights of UNESCO specialists, Volume I of this handbook presents the key issues that UNESCO staff should be aware of when conducting analysis for UNESCO National Education Support Strategies (UNESS), United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) and UNESCO Country Programme Documents (UCPD). This volume also presents the guiding questions that can be asked during education policy analysis. It should be noted that not all the content of this handbook will be relevant to all countries, nor does this handbook aim to cover all possible issues. UNESCO staff are encouraged to select the key issues and guiding questions relevant to the contexts and needs of the country concerned.

Volume II of this handbook demonstrates how to use these concepts, issues and questions in practical terms. Using the UNESS process as an example, it presents a step-by-step guide to conducting a full education policy analysis, supported by an online tool.

This handbook is a work-in-progress and will be further improved based on the comments received. Please send your comments and feedback to:

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Acronyms

| | |
|----------------|--|
| CCA | Common Country Assessment |
| ECCE | Early Childhood Care and Education |
| EFA | Education for All |
| EMIS | Education management information system |
| EPR | Education Policy and Reform Unit (of UNESCO Bangkok) |
| ESD | Education for Sustainable Development |
| FIT | Funds-in-Trust |
| FO | Field office |
| FTI | Fast Track Initiative |
| HQ | Headquarters |
| IDP | International development partner |
| ISCED | International Standard Classification of Education |
| M&E | Monitoring and evaluation |
| NFE | Non-formal education |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PISA | Programme for International Student Assessment |
| RB | Regional bureau |
| SWAp | Sector-wide approach |
| TIMSS | Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| UNCT | United Nations Country Team |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNESS | UNESCO National Education Support Strategy |

*Source: UIS Glossary: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/Glossary.aspx> (Accessed on 11 February 2013).

Introduction

This UNESCO Handbook on Education Sector Policy Analysis and Programming responds to the lessons learned in the Regional Evaluation of the UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) performed by UNESCO Bangkok in 2010.¹ The evaluation suggested a need for practical guidance for UNESCO field offices (FOs) in carrying out education sector policy analysis and programming.

This handbook consists of two volumes. Volume 1 provides a conceptual framework for education policy analysis and explains the key issues that UNESCO staff should be aware of when conducting analysis for preparing UNESS, United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) and UNESCO Country Programme Documents (UCPD) and for engaging in policy dialogues with national counterparts and development partners. This volume of the handbook also provides guiding questions for conducting policy analysis, and includes references to useful resources. The handbook has a modular design so that readers can select the specific sections that are relevant to their analyses.

Volume 2 of the handbook provides a methodological approach together with practical tools to document and organize information for education policy analysis, using a set of matrices. By systematically gathering relevant information, issues and insights and inputting these into the matrices, the matrix-chain analysis process facilitates the detection of policy gaps and niches that can help to identify strategic areas for UNESCO's country cooperation strategy, and for mobilizing government commitments and support from development partners.

¹ UNESCO. 2010. *Regional Evaluation of UNESCO National Education Support Strategies (UNESS) - Final Report*. UNESCO. Bangkok.

Purpose of the handbook

As the only United Nations (UN) agency with a sector-wide mandate in education, UNESCO is often called upon to provide technical advice on education system issues and to help identify key bottlenecks in education sector policy, planning and management. To fulfil UNESCO's core functions and to effectively perform the role of an honest advisor to governments, field staff are expected to engage in critically reviewing education sector policy and interventions in order to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. Policy analysis is also a necessity in preparing UNESCO National Education Support Strategies as well as UNDAF, inputs for Common Country Assessments (CCA), and other education sector-wide approach (SWAp) initiatives and complementary analysis linked to poverty reduction strategies (PRS).

No one is expected to be an expert in all aspects of the education sector. While many methodological documents and training materials already exist on education sector diagnosis and analysis, FO staff lack hands-on guidelines on how to conduct education policy review and analysis in practice, what kind of issues to focus on and the key questions to be asked.

This handbook is designed as a practical tool to help UNESCO staff more actively engage in policy dialogues with government counterparts and development partners on education sector policy issues, and to assist UNESCO field staff in conducting education sector policy analysis. The handbook will also aid in identifying those programme areas where UNESCO can bring added value to national education development.

Regular use of the guiding questions and methodology presented in this handbook can help the UNESCO FOs to continuously build upon and update their knowledge base and capacities in education policy analysis in order to more effectively support the education development in each Member State.

Scope of the handbook

In accordance with the approach suggested in the Guidance Note for preparing UNESS,² this handbook will support UNESCO field staff to:

- Critically analyse the policies underlying the design and implementation of national education plans and programmes.
- Assess critical gaps in policy design, management capacity and development co-operation.
- Identify strategic areas for co-operation.

This handbook builds upon and goes beyond the 2006 UNESS Guidance Note by offering practical support on how to engage in education sector-wide policy analysis and education sector-wide approaches.³

This handbook provides:

- An education policy analysis framework.
- A list of key education issues and guiding questions.
- A set of matrices to be used as a tool for policy analysis

While this handbook provides a useful method for conducting analysis, it is not exhaustive and its limitations are recognised.

What this handbook does:

- It concisely explains key education policy and management concepts.
- It describes essential contexts and components of education systems and the key issues.
- It provides guiding questions for the FOs to ask when analysing national education policies and strategies, and to ask when reviewing and updating their UNESS and contributions to UNDAF/PRS plans/CCA. It provides links to UNESCO resources and other documents for use by field staff when conducting in-depth analysis of a national education system or a particular sub-sector.
- It equips field staff with a practical tool that can be used to identify critical policy areas, issues and needs that require priority attention. What this handbook does not do:
- It does not claim to be comprehensive in all matters of education policy analysis. It does not cover aspects and issues that are unique to some countries. It does not provide ready-made solutions to challenges faced by countries, for example to address policy coherence, relevance, inclusiveness or other problems.

It does not constitute a “trouble-shooter” for giving out ready-made advice, or as a blueprint for preparing a programme document, including the UNESS.

2 UNESCO. 2006. *Building a UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) Document: 2008-2013 - Guidance Note*. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001485/148566e.pdf>

3 UNESCO. 2007. *Education Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAs) – Background, Guide and Lessons*. see: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001509/150965e.pdf>

How to use this handbook

A practical way to use this handbook is to browse quickly through Volume 1 to become familiar with the overall structure and main contents, without yet going into the more detailed descriptions, key issues and guiding questions. Follow this by reading Volume 2 to understand the matrix-chain analytical approach and how to organize and use information in these matrices. Then, when conducting reviews of policy documents and consultations with government counterparts and development partners the users of this handbook can then refer back to the relevant key issues and guiding questions in Volume 1 so as to identify policy gaps, needs and priorities. This will help the reader to continuously update information in the matrices about key issues and possible causes and solutions.

Volume One of the handbook comprises two parts. Part One contains the definitions of key concepts concerning education policy analysis, such as the distinctions between education policies, strategies and plans. This part also presents the education policy cycle and describes the national and international contexts of education development and cooperation. Part II elaborates on the issues that are often raised in education policy analysis and provides related guiding questions. These questions are classified into three categories: education sub-sectors, analytical dimensions and cross-cutting themes. It is hoped that field staff will deploy creativity and pragmatism when using this handbook, and use the tools in accordance with the scope of their work.

Part I

Key concepts in education policy analysis

Part I covers selected key concepts and issues to consider when conducting education policy analysis. In this section, international and national contexts that affect development of education policies are also discussed, and some guiding questions are posed for use in analysing such contexts.

1.1 What is education policy?

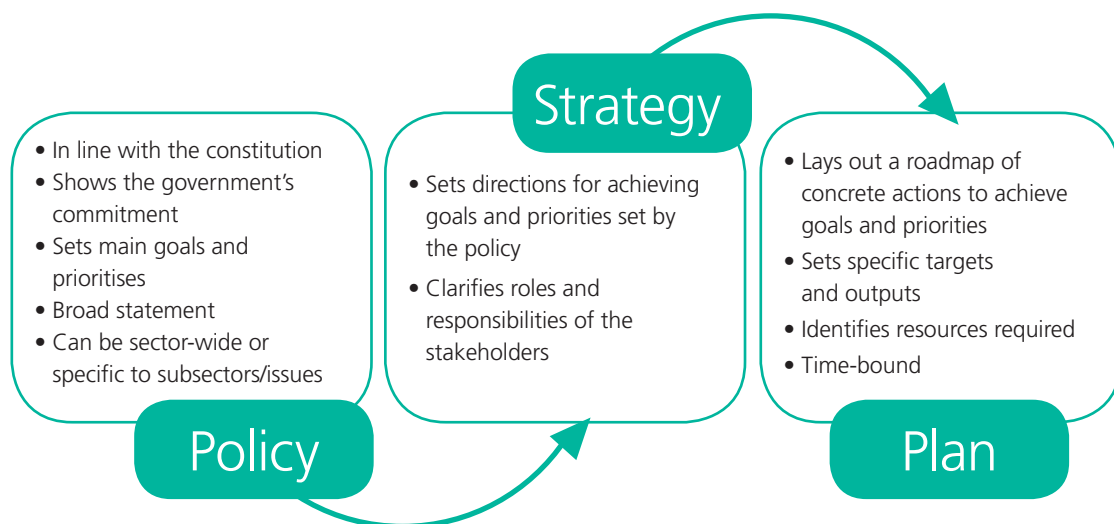
1.1.1 The differences between policies, strategies and plans⁴

In the process of education policy development, various documents (e.g. policies, strategies and plans) are produced. To distinguish clearly between them, below is a brief operational description of these three types of policy documents:

- A national education policy establishes the main goals and priorities pursued by the government in matters of education – at the sector and sub-sector levels – with regard to specific aspects such as access, quality and teachers, or to a given issue or need.
- A strategy specifies how the policy goals are to be achieved.
- A plan defines the targets, activities to be implemented and the timeline, responsibilities and resources needed to realize the policy and strategy

The relationship between the three types of documents is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Relationship between policies, strategies and plans



⁴ Adapted from: Jallade, L., M. Radi and S. Cuenin. 2001. *National Education Policies and Programmes and International Cooperation, What Role for UNESCO?* UNESCO, Paris.

1.1.2 What is a policy?

A policy is a broad statement that sets out the government's main goals and priorities. It is in line with the country's constitution and can be sector-wide (e.g. education sector policy) or specific to a sub-sector (e.g. primary education) or to a certain issue (e.g. low enrolment rates).

A policy defines a particular stance, aiming to explore solutions to an issue. A major policy statement may be relatively general, for example: "To provide high quality basic education for all children by 2015." This sort of broad statement assumes a multitude of other, more specific, policy objectives covering the education sector or sub-sectors (e.g. basic, secondary and tertiary education). Policy objectives can pertain to a wide range of areas, including curriculum, teacher/professional development, learning materials, management and assessment.

Policy-making should be preceded by research, evidence-collection and debates on the identified issue or need, as well as on the proposed vision, options and means to address such issues or needs.

The findings of research, evidence-collection and debates can be used to draft a policy that can then be reviewed and discussed with relevant stakeholders or their representatives, such as the parliament, or in policy dialogues with relevant government agencies, international development partners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders.

Policies must take into account factors that may limit their feasibility, such as those listed below:

- Are there sufficient institutional capacity and human resources to implement the policy?
- Are the management structures appropriate?
- Are there sufficient financial resources to enable achievement of the policy goal?

Such limitations will influence decisions to be made on the priorities, trade-offs and phasing of activities. But policies can also announce various remedial measures and increase in resources and capacities in order to attain the policy goals.

In summary, to be effective policies have to be:

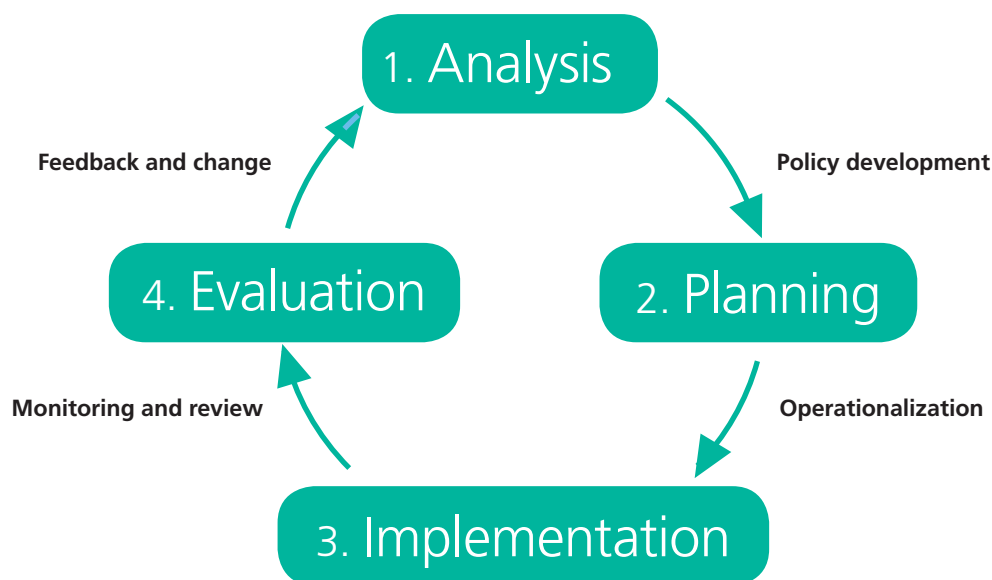
- Built on evidence
- Politically feasible
- Financially realistic
- Agreed to by the government and relevant stakeholders.

In the education sector, UNESCO works with various partners engaged in policy preparation, planning, programme delivery and monitoring, including the government, non-state actors such as NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs), and international development partners. All these stakeholders bring their knowledge and resources to the policy development process, with their specific mandates, emphases and priorities. Education ministry staff may be overburdened in trying to co-ordinate and manage all these inputs. It is hoped that this handbook will help UNESCO field staff to play a more active and important role in advising the government in managing such situations.

■ *Education policy cycle*

Figure 2 outlines the stages of a typical policy cycle for the education sector.

Figure 2: Education policy cycle.



Step 0 (Vision): Before the start of a policy cycle, a strategic intent, often called a “vision”, is formed. For instance, once a political party wins a majority of seats in parliament and forms a government, they define their strategic intent for education which, for instance, may be: “Increase participation of youth from lower socio-economic backgrounds in tertiary education.”

Step 1 (Analysis): Once the vision is defined, a policy cycle begins with analysis of the current situation and agreement on the policy directions to attain the vision. Policy options are then formulated, costed and appraised, resulting in priority setting and phasing.

Step 2 (Planning): Based on the policy directions and priorities identified, an implementation strategy is designed and activities are specified and budgeted. During this step, a series of concrete outputs, targets, actions and timelines are defined, as well as the roles and responsibilities of each concerned party, plus the resources required. A monitoring and evaluation framework should also be clearly defined during this step.

Step 3 (Implementation): Planned and budgeted activities are implemented according to the agreed timeline and responsibilities to achieve the targets.

Step 4 (Evaluation): The activities are regularly monitored and reviewed, and adjustments are made when necessary. Various aspects such as relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, are evaluated.⁵ The results of the evaluation then provide inputs for informing and improving future policies.

1.1.3 What is a strategy?

A strategy sets the direction for achieving the goals and priorities set by the policy. This document also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders.

1.1.4 What is a plan?

A plan lists specific targets and outputs, and sets out a roadmap of concrete actions to achieve these targets and outputs, so as to ultimately achieve the goals and priorities that are described in the policy. A plan also lists the resources required for each activity and the length of time to be spent on each activity.

1.2 Understanding the context

The education sector does not function in isolation but regularly interacts with other sectors in the country as well as regionally and internationally. Reforms in the education sector can affect other sectors. Sometimes, such impact on other sectors can be hidden and takes effect only after a certain time. Education policy reform often responds to identified needs, and is also influenced by global and regional education development agendas. This section describes some of the most far-reaching global priorities in education that can influence national education policies.

⁵ For more technical information on evaluation, refer to: UNESCO. 2007. Evaluation Handbook. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001557/155748E.pdf>

1.2.1 Global priorities: EFA and the MDGs

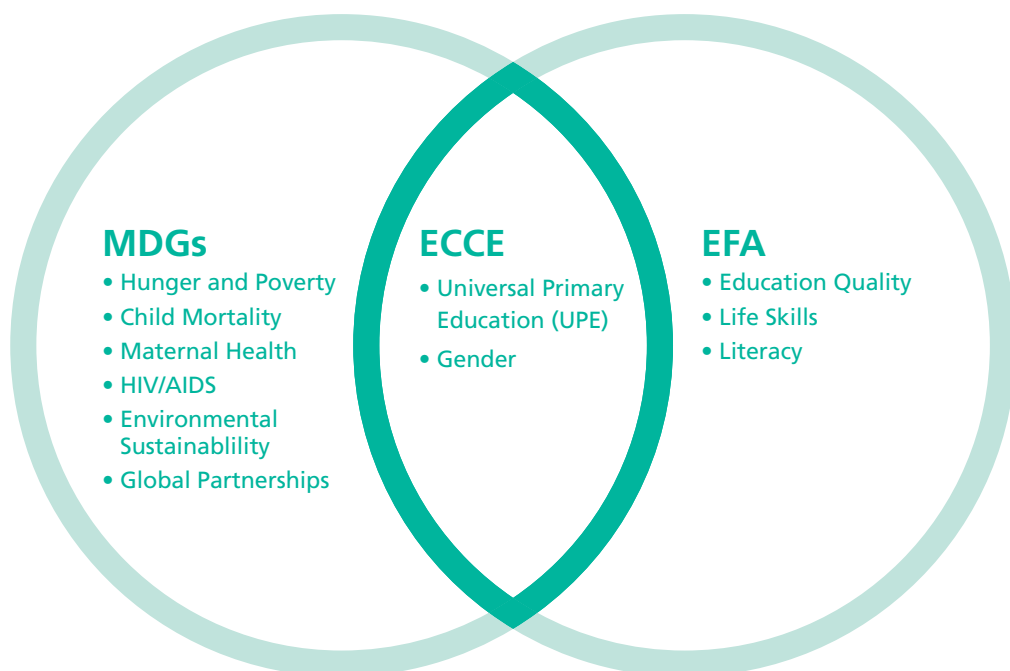
Education for All (EFA) is an international commitment to provide high quality basic education for all children, youth and adults. It was first launched in 1990 and was reconfirmed in April 2000 together with six specific education goals to be reached by 2015. In September 2000, a new set of eight development goals, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), was announced, with specific targets for the year 2015.

The MDGs and the EFA goals provide important international development frameworks against which progress at the global, regional and national levels is measured and compared. Most countries have included these goals in their development policies and monitoring systems. Since 2000 the MDGs and the EFA goals have driven national policies and development in many countries, and have been a basis for mobilizing resources for education.

The MDGs cover the topics of poverty, education, health, equality, environment and partnership. Significantly, education is key to achieving all of the MDGs. The EFA goals can thus be considered preconditions for achieving the MDGs.

The EFA goals are linked with the education-related MDGs, but they place a strong emphasis on the quality of education and expand the scope of the education-related MDGs to a lifelong learning perspective (see Figure 3), while also incorporating aspects of health. For example, the EFA Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) goal (Goal 1) covers both the health and education aspects of a child's development.

Figure 3: Linkages between the MDGs and the EFA goals



There is a risk that the EFA goals can be overlooked when countries focus on achieving the MDGs. For instance, because both MDG2 and EFA Goal 2 emphasize access to primary education, other areas of education such as adult literacy and life skills, post-basic education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) tend to be neglected by donors and governments. Another example is the goal to improve the quality of education, which is EFA Goal 6. The MDGs do not explicitly mention the quality of education, so it tends to be given a lower priority than access to education. But when the EFA goals are overlooked, this can cause imbalanced development within the education sector.

Analysis of national education policies in relation to the EFA goals raises a number of questions, including the following:

- To what extent do national education policies integrate commitments to achieve the EFA goals? If none or very little, what is being done to deliver on such commitments?
- Has the country committed adequate resources in line with international expectations for achieving the EFA goals?
- Is the country actively managing progress towards the EFA goals? If yes, what has been achieved and what are the remaining gaps? Are there policies and actions to accelerate the progress in EFA?
- Has past emphasis on certain aspects of education exerted a distorting effect on overall education policy? Has the focus on access compromised quality and a balanced approach to secondary and tertiary education?

1.2.2 International conventions related to education

In addition to the global initiatives such as MDGs and EFA, there is a wide range of international agreements that also help shape country-level thinking on education policy and reforms.

The international agreements include:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26 (1948)⁶
- The Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)⁷
- The International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)⁸
- The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)⁹
- The Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989)¹⁰

6 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. <http://www.udhr.org/udhr/default.htm>

7 Convention against Discrimination in Education. http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=12949&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

8 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cerd.htm>

9 The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>

10 The Convention of the Rights of the Child. <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

There are also international and regional conventions and agreements of a standard-setting nature directly related to education and adopted under the auspices of UNESCO solely or jointly with other international organizations. UNESCO has a mandate and responsibility to promote those conventions and monitor their implementation.

The conventions include:

- The Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials, with Annexes A to E and Protocol annexed (1976)¹¹
- The Convention on Technical and Vocational Education (1979)¹²
- The Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific (1983)¹³

When analysing national education policies and their implementation, it is useful to verify the extent to which these international and regional conventions and agreements are respected and implemented, and what remedies can be introduced in case of deficiencies.

1.2.3 The national policy context

Education is a key sector of national development. To be effective, education policies must be designed in conjunction with other sectors' development policies. For example, early childhood care and education (ECCE) involves education, health and community development. TVET closely links education to the economy and job market. Education policies must, in the first place, take into account and reflect a country's geographic, demographic, economic, social, cultural and political contexts.

■ **Geography and demography**

Geographical features such as mountains, seas, lakes, rivers, roads and climate and demographic characteristics (population structure, distribution, growth, etc) can inform decisions not only about the numbers and locations of schools, training and deployment of teachers, production and dissemination of learning materials, etc., but also the investment priority and trade-offs within the education system. Knowing the ethnic, religious and linguistic composition of the population can help education policies to give due consideration to different languages, beliefs, customs and practices of the various groups within each country. Key geographic and demographic data for each country are readily available from various national and international sources, including national statistical offices, the United Nations Population Division¹⁴ and the World Health Organization.¹⁵

11 Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001145/114589e.pdf#page=138>

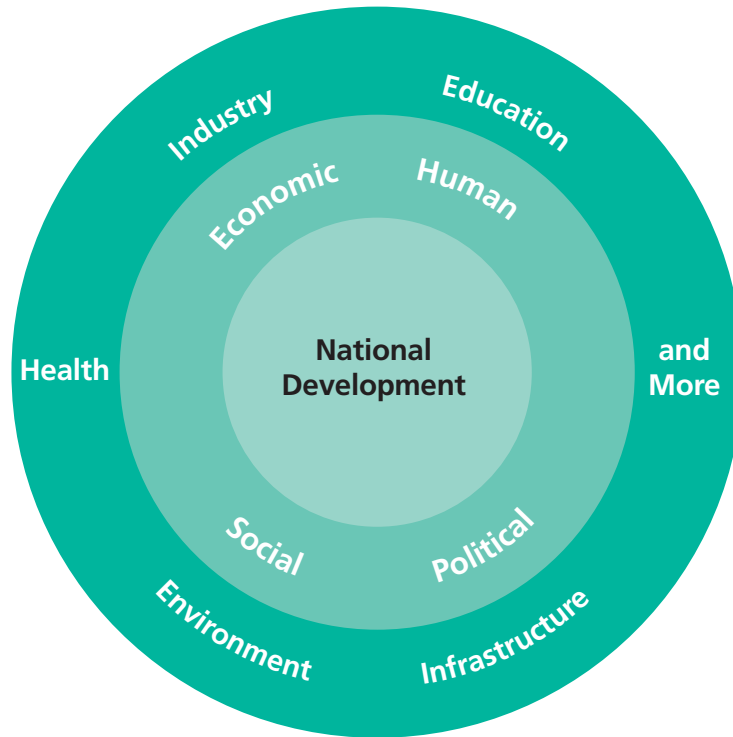
12 Annex I: Conventions and recommendations <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0008/000846/084696e.pdf#page=235>

13 The Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0005/000593/059308mo.pdf#page=14>

14 United Nations Population Division. <http://www.un.org/esa/population/>

15 World Health Organization. Global Health Observatory Data Repository. <http://www.who.int/gho/database/en>

Figure 4: Concept of national development



Analysing the linkages of education policies to geographic and demographic contexts raises questions such as:

- Which main features of the country's geography can affect education? In what way? Which levels and aspects of education are affected by these features?
- How is the population distributed in relation to these geographic features? What major demographic changes have occurred in recent years? What other changes may occur in the future?
- What are the main demographic (sex and age), socio-economic, ethnic, religious and linguistic characteristics of the population? Are there marginalized population groups? What is their level of participation in education? What obstacles do they face in terms of access to education?
- How well have existing national education policies taken into account and reflected the country's geographic and demographic characteristics? What are the remaining geographic and demographic disparities and gaps in education?
- What is the current Human Development Index (HDI) ranking for the country? How has it changed over the years? What are the main constituent factors pulling down or pushing up the country's HDI ranking?

*Source: UIS Glossary: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/Glossary.aspx> (Accessed on 11 February 2013)

■ **Economy**

The structure and characteristics of the national economy play an important role in influencing education policies. Changing production and employment patterns in terms of the share among agriculture-industry-service sectors are key factors in human resource development and education policies. Income levels can affect access to education and learning outcomes. The economic climate can also determine the budget and financial resources available to the education sector. Education policy analysis must therefore closely keep abreast of the many interactions between education and the economy.

Key questions that can be asked may include:

- What are the main features of the current employment situation? What effects does this have on education policies?
- How are the national employment patterns expected to change in the coming years? How should education policies reflect such forecasted employment changes?
- What is the rate of incidence of poverty and how has it changed? In what way have education policies contributed to, or been influenced, by such changes?
- What are the shares of the education budget across the different education sub-sectors and as a percentage of total government budget and Gross Domestic Product (GDP)?
- Is there a medium-term fiscal and expenditure framework that provides multi-year projections against which the education sub-sectors can plan long-term development programmes and recurrent budgets?

Be aware that a high share of public education expenditure as a percentage of GDP or total government expenditure does not necessarily lead to better quality education. Effectiveness of spending and transparency and accountability in spending are key elements determining the value for money spent on education (see the “Finance” section in Part II).

■ **Society and culture**

The effectiveness of education, itself a major social service, is often affected by the social structure, which is a combination of such factors as income classes; castes; ethnic, linguistic and religious groups; and socially-deprived, marginalized and vulnerable populations. Some of these social groups may maintain different attitudes and values towards the utility of education, its priorities and the way in which it is delivered. Traditional cultural views may also exert an influence on schooling in terms of access and participation. Such views are often tied to the contents and methods of education including the language used in teaching and learning. Education policy analysis must therefore look into the many interactions between education and socio-cultural issues.

Key questions that may be asked in this regard include:

- What are the problems and issues regarding education for disadvantaged social groups?
- What kinds of cultural values and behaviours have been negatively or positively influencing participation in education? What is the scale of such cultural influence? In what way have past and present education policies tried to address these social and cultural issues and needs?
- To what extent has education contributed to social mobility and reduction of social disparities?
- What kind of proactive social and education policies will be needed to address the remaining social disparities and cultural biases related to education?

■ **Politics**

Policy is about politics. Policy-making in education must fit into overall national development policies and the political context (see next section 1.2.4 for a discussion of the national development priorities). An essential task when analysing national education policies is to first understand the political and administrative mechanisms, where and how decisions are made, who are the major players, what are their strengths and weaknesses, and what are the possible future changes in politics. An understanding of these factors will provide the basis for assessing how education policies and policy-making are influenced by the political context, and how education policy can proactively influence the political context in return. The administrative arrangements for education, including the degree of decentralization of policy-making can also have a profound effect on education. Some national ministries are very centralized and create and implement all policies. Other countries may have decentralized many policy-making and planning responsibilities to sub-national levels.

Some key questions to ask about the political context may include:

- What kinds of political and government institutional frameworks exist?
How decentralized is the political-administrative structure?
- How are national development priorities defined, monitored and adjusted?
Where are these priorities enshrined (e.g. the constitution, legal and regulatory frameworks; national and sectoral development plans; ordinances; decrees; etc.)?
- How does the political system function? Is it stable? If not, what are the implications?
- Who are the political elites (e.g. party members, high-ranking officials, military top brass, business leaders, village/community heads, etc.)? How do they work with and against each other? What are their key areas of interest? How do they view education? Do they support the education sector?

Additional useful information can be found in the following publications:

- National Education Policies and Programmes and International Cooperation: What role for UNESCO?¹⁶
- The Political Economy of Policy Reform: Issues and Implications for Policy Dialogue and Development Operations¹⁷
- World Bank country reports.
- MF reports, particularly the IMF Article IV reports that give an overview of the macro-economic situation of each country.

1.2.4 National development priorities

Each country has its own national development priorities enshrined in its constitution, policies, strategies and plans. Education is often included as a critical component of national development and poverty reduction priorities.

In order to analyse a country's priorities, one can ask the following questions:

- What are the key official documents and frameworks that define the country's policy directions and development priorities?
- What are these major national development priorities, policies and strategies? How do they respond to current and expected future needs of the country? What are the gaps and issues?
- How are these policies and strategies developed? What is the degree of participation of the various stakeholders in defining these policies and strategies?
- What is the place given to human resource development and education in the national development policies and strategies?
- What are the national strategies for achieving the MDGs and EFA goals?
- Is there a strategic framework that governs budgetary prioritization (e.g. Medium Term Expenditure Framework)? Does this prioritization match the nominal prioritization in the policy or plan?

Relevant information can be found in national policy and strategy documents, development plans, donor support programme documents, and through interviews and consultative meetings with key stakeholders.

¹⁶ Jallade, L., Cuenin S. and M. Radi. 2001. National Education Policies and Programmes and International Cooperation: What role for UNESCO? UNESCO. Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001226/122617eo.pdf>

¹⁷ World Bank. 2008. The Political Economy of Policy Reform: Issues and Implications for Policy Dialogue and Development Operations. World Bank. Washington D.C. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEV/Resources/Political_Economy_of_Policy_Reform.pdf

1.2.5 Key stakeholders for education

The key stakeholders for education in most countries include:

- The Ministry of Education and its departments and affiliated agencies
- Other related ministries and government agencies such as the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Interior/Internal Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Finance, the National Socio-Economic Development Board/Council, etc
- Members of legislative bodies (e.g. parliament and its education committee) Civil society organizations¹⁸ and national and international NGOs
- Sub-national governments and their education departments
- Provincial, district, local education committees, parent-teacher associations (PTAs) Teachers union and relevant trade unions, business leaders
- Eminent educationists
- Local community members, students/learners
- Donors and international development partners (IDPs)

These stakeholders influence policies at each step of the policy cycle (presented in Figure 2). It is therefore important to identify the key stakeholders, their political affiliations, their main areas of interest, etc. when trying to understand the political dynamics of education policies.

Questions may be asked about:

- Who has the highest decision-making authority in the government with regard to education and for the education sub-sectors?
- Is there a National Education Committee/Commission or equivalent high-level advisory body for education policies? Who are its members? What are their roles and responsibilities?
- To what extent is education policy-making decentralized to sub-national levels (e.g. provinces, districts and schools)? How do local communities participate in planning and managing education?
- How powerful is the teachers' union? Is it politically influential? How best can the teachers' union contribute to the development of education in the country?
- Which NGOs and CSOs actively support education in the country? Which level or type of education do they support? How do they complement and work with the government on education?
- Is the country's education system dependent on aid from external donors? Are there donors who promote a specific agenda in education?

¹⁸ See European Commission. "Civil society, a vital development partner". http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/who/partners/civil-society/index_en.htm

1.2.6 Donor co-ordination and aid effectiveness

With the donor community becoming increasingly diversified (e.g. emerging donors, private sector donors) there are greater risks of fragmented, uncoordinated and ineffective support to education in a country. Such fragmentation often drains already limited in-country human resources to cater to the requests from each donor (meetings, missions, monitoring, evaluation, etc.). In this context, the global community reached an agreement in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness regarding the central themes that should underpin all development cooperation. This was reinforced and updated in the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action (see Table 1).

Table 1: Core statements of the 2005 Paris Declaration and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action

| | |
|---|---|
| Ownership and alignment | Country ownership is key. When they have ownership, country governments will take stronger leadership of their own development policies and will engage with their parliaments and citizens in shaping those policies. Donors will support them by respecting countries' priorities, investing in their human resources and institutions, making greater use of their systems to deliver aid, and increasing the predictability of aid flows. |
| Harmonisation | Building more effective and inclusive partnerships. Together, all development actors will work in more inclusive partnerships so that all our efforts have greater impact on reducing poverty. |
| Managing for results and mutual accountability | Achieving development results – and openly accounting for them – must be at the heart of all we do. More than ever, citizens and taxpayers of all countries expect to see tangible results of development efforts. We will demonstrate that our actions translate into positive impacts on people's lives. We will be accountable to each other and to our respective parliaments and governing bodies for these outcomes. |

The outcome commitments for all partners are monitored by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and updated information is available on their website.¹⁹

Although there is a clear global commitment to aid harmonization and aid effectiveness, the situation is often complicated at the country level. Donors may have different agendas, priorities, management styles and administrative requirements, which can make working together difficult.

The majority of developing countries have Education Working Groups or the like. Most of these have been formally constituted, but some may have more ad hoc structural and operational arrangements. These groups provide important fora to help mitigate the challenges of in-country donor harmonization and alignment, taking into consideration the level of national governance and capacity.

¹⁹ OECD. Development Co-operation Directorate. http://www.oecd.org/department/0,2688,en_2649_33721_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

Inter alia the Education Working Group in a country may provide space for the following:

- Governments to lead their development agenda and coordinate donors/partners' interventions.
- Partners to share information on the work they are doing or are planning to do so as to iron out possible areas of duplication.
- Identifying the comparative advantages of different partners.
- Discussing concerns around accountability and visibility (for development partners to be able to demonstrate that the output of their inputs is politically important and should not be denigrated).
- Agreeing on the main policy areas for discussion with government institutions. Monitoring the performance assessment framework. Discussing joint programming, planning and working for the annual joint review process.

UNESCO can be well positioned to facilitate the mapping of partners' interventions in the education sector.

When mapping and analysing donor's interventions, useful questions to ask, especially from an aid effectiveness perspective, may include the following:

- What is the status of donor harmonization and alignment in the country? What donor co-ordination mechanisms are in place? Which agency is the lead agency for education? How was it selected and agreed upon? How does it exercise its role? What role does the government play in donor co-ordination on education? How does UNESCO participate in these exercises?
- Who are the major development partners (multilateral and bilateral agencies, NGOs, etc.) supporting education in the country? What are the priority areas of their interventions, funding resources, the extent and duration of their involvement, and the aid modalities used? Do their interventions use national institutional mechanisms and processes, or are they run by distinct administrations with parallel processes? What are the pros and cons of the different aid modalities deployed?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the NGOs and CSOs supporting education? How do they influence and co-operate with respect to national education priorities and aid effectiveness?
- Are donor interventions divided geographically, thematically or by education sub-sector? How have any such divisions been defined or decided?
- What national capacity development is being carried out and/or planned by the major development partners? How are the priority areas and modalities of capacity development determined? Has there been any effort to combine these contributions into a comprehensive, joint capacity development plan? What are the obstacles to any such effort?

The types of activities among donors and international development partners may differ from one country to another, depending on the priorities and strategies set by each donor and the government. More information on country-level aid modalities can be found in Annex I.

Further information can be found in the resources listed below:

- Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness²⁰
- Accra Agenda for Action²¹
- Aid Effectiveness Portal²²
- Education Sector-Wide Approaches: Background, Guide and Lessons²³

20 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. <http://www.aideffectiveness.org/Themes-The-Paris-principles.html>

21 Accra Agenda for Action. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/58/16/41202012.pdf>

22 Aid Effectiveness Portal. <http://www.aideffectiveness.org/>

23 UNESCO. 2008. *Education Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAs): Background, Guide and Lessons*. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001509/150965e.pdf>

Part II

Understanding Education Systems

In Part II of this publication the education system is briefly explained as a whole, followed by descriptions of the four dimensions of education, together with the key issues to be considered and some guiding questions that can be asked during policy analysis. The issues and questions listed in this section do not aim to be exhaustive. Additional issues and questions specific to each country can be added during the analytical and consultation processes. Additional resources for further information are provided at the end of each sub-section.

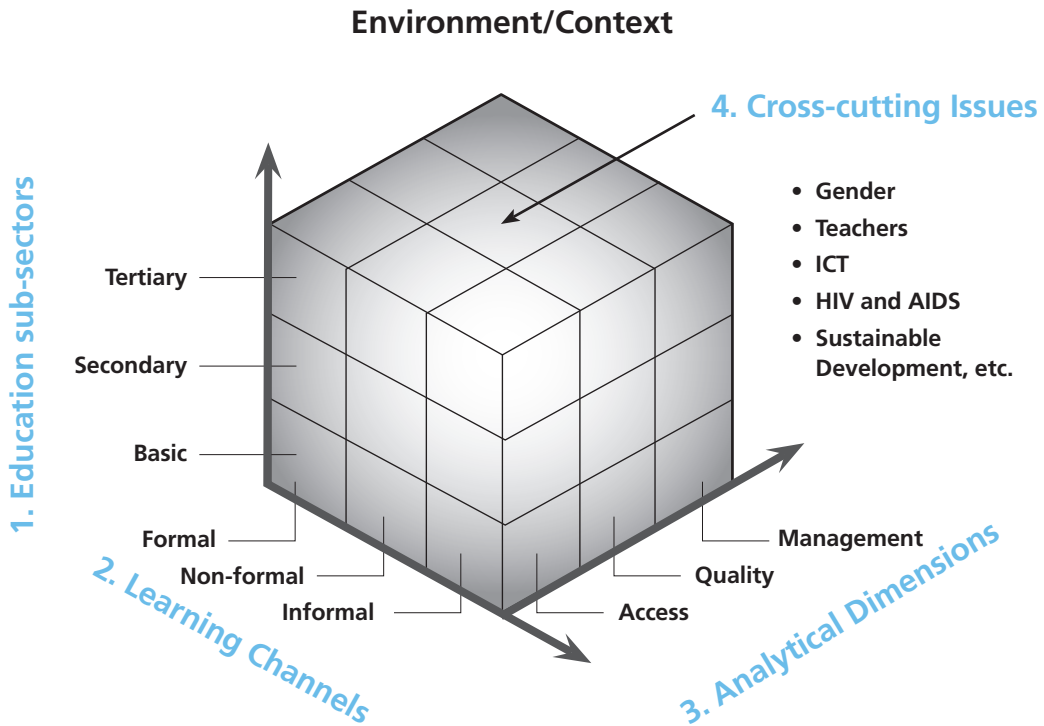
Most national education systems are structured by levels of education, from early childhood education, primary and secondary education, to higher education and adult education. These education levels constitute sub-sectors of the education sector, and they interact with and influence each other. For example they interact in terms of the flow of students from one level of education to another, and in terms of the graduates of higher levels of education teaching students at lower levels. When conducting sector-wide education policy analysis, a typical approach is to “deconstruct” the education sector and analyse the situation and issues relating to each of these sub-sectors, as well as their interactions and mutual influence. As well as having levels, education systems have channels: formal, non-formal and informal. These channels often also interact.

The education system can therefore be analysed along four dimensions, as shown in Figure 5:

- (1) sub-sectors
- (2) formal, non-formal and informal channels
- (3) analytical dimensions such as access, quality and management
- (4) cross-cutting themes, such as gender, teachers, use of information and communication technology (ICT), education for sustainable development, education about HIV and AIDS, and so forth.²⁴

²⁴ Note that this diagram does not capture all the diverse components of the education system. Rather, it explains the various angles from which an education system can be viewed and analysed.

Figure 5: Dimensions for sector wide education policy analysis



Analysis will also take into account the contextual environment in which education takes place (as described in Section 1.2.3).

2.1 National education context, priorities and strategies

As suggested in the UNESS Guidance Note and Section 1.2.3, analysis of national education sector policy begins with understanding the national context (geography, demography, economy, society, culture and politics) and the issues that influence the various dimensions of education described in Section 1.2.3. This is Step 1.

Step 2 of the analysis reviews the national vision, aspirations and development priorities as reflected in: the constitution and legislation; national development policies, strategies and plans; and the country's commitments to international development goals.²⁵ A critical review can be made of how these official documents take into account and address the contextual issues, what are the remaining gaps, and whether adjustments and new priorities can be introduced in the light of ongoing and forthcoming contextual changes.

²⁵ See Section 1.2.1.

The constitution provides a framework for education policy and outlines the roles and responsibilities of the state. For example, the constitutions of most nations guarantee children the right to education. Depending on the level and type of education in the country, the role of the government may vary. In some countries the government is an education provider, while in other countries the government not only provides education but is also responsible for quality assurance.

The aims and structure of the education system, and the roles and responsibilities of agencies, individuals, communities and private providers, are often formalized in education legislation, such as the National Education Law. Legislation may cover the whole of the education sector or just specific sub-sectors. For example, university education and TVET are frequently framed in specific legislation. Many countries have legislation that makes the government responsible for designing relevant and good quality learning materials and for providing teachers.

Policy analysis includes looking into how a policy has been developed and the extent to which policies have been based on sound analysis and research evidence. Equally important is the scope of consultations and dialogue with relevant stakeholders during the policy development process. For instance, a potential policy on school-based management should first be discussed with the key constituencies, such as school heads and administrative personnel, local community leaders, teachers, teacher trainers, teacher unions and other relevant partners, to gather inputs and build consensus on what the priorities, gaps, issues, possible remedies and future directions are (See also Part I on “Policy cycle” and “Key stakeholders”).

■ **Key issues**

- **Evidence-based policy-making:** Founding policy action on solid and reliable evidence is crucial not only for ensuring that policies are effective and efficient, but also for ensuring that they are acceptable and implementable at the practical level. Yet, what constitutes sound evidence can be debatable, particularly where there are multiple sources and disagreement regarding interpretation of key data and information. Policy analysis must therefore pay close attention to verifying the degree to which a policy has incorporated clear and unambiguous assessment and research evidence about the issues and needs within the country's context, and about existing implementation capacity.
- **Consistency among different policies, plans and strategies:** A country may have various policies, plans and strategies developed by different departments and supported by a number of donor programmes. Policy analysis must examine the consistency of these official documents and identify any conflicting priorities, and check whether there are any duplications (e.g. between the EFA National Action Plan and National Education Sector Plan) and whether there are competing demands for resources and implementation capacities.

- **Balanced development:** Policies, plans and strategies should define clear priorities, so that the country's limited resources are directed towards achieving the country's main objectives. One such priority in many countries is universal primary education, which has major support from donors. The many interactions among the different sub-sectors of education (as mentioned above) imply that expanding enrolments and completion in primary education should be accompanied by commensurate expansion of capacities in the other education sub-sectors. Analysing the extent to which policies ensure balanced development of the education system is an important part of policy analysis.

■ **Guiding questions**

Evidence-based policy-making

- To what extent are recent education policies based on information and research evidence?
- What kinds of information and research data are available to support the policies? How is this information and data produced? How can they be obtained and used? How reliable are the information and data sources?
- Do policy and information gaps still exist? How can evidence-based policy-making be improved in the future? What actions need to be taken?

Consistency among policies and plans

- Have systematic efforts been made or mechanisms implemented to ensure consistency among the various pieces of education-related legislation, and the various policies, plans and strategies? If yes, how well did that work? If no, why not?
- In what way are the education policies and plans:
 - Consistent with overall national development priorities and strategies?
 - Realistic in the sense that the aspirations are achievable (being consistent with existing capacity, human resources, structures and finance)?
 - To what degree are the existing legislation, policies, strategies and plans consistent with each other? What are the remaining inconsistencies, especially in terms of policy goals and implementation strategies?

Balanced development

- Do the policies, strategies and plans provide for balanced development across the education sector? Are there any neglected or non-prioritized areas or aspects that may emerge as potential problems or bottlenecks?
- What have been the roles of the various actors and stakeholders in education policy-making and planning? Have these processes been participatory and consultative?

Have they allowed all relevant stakeholders to voice their concerns? If not, why not?

- What kinds of mechanisms and communication channels have been used for promoting participatory and consultative education policy-making and monitoring?

■ **Resources**

- National education legislation and accompanying regulations
- National education sector plans
- UNDAF
- Education sector analysis documents by agencies and partners
- Studies and research on specific areas of education policy undertaken by government, think tanks, academics and development partners.

2.2 Analytical dimensions

The education sector and its sub-sectors can be analysed according to various key aspects or dimensions that are specific to education. Among them, access, quality and management of education are often used as analytical dimensions to review education policies. This section explains the main features of each of these analytical dimensions, together with suggested key issues, guiding questions and references.

2.2.1 Access and equity

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights²⁶ defines the right to education as one of the fundamental rights of all humans. Like health, education is a major public service, and the government's obligation to enable its citizens to access education is enshrined in the constitutions of most countries.

Key concerns in education policy analysis are about whether or not:

- There are adequate education facilities available in the country.
- Everyone can easily access such education opportunities.
- Everyone can fully participate in and equally benefit from education.

The degree to which existing education policies and plans address these concerns and related disparities is an important part of education policy analysis.

Availability of education is the extent to which the education facilities and materials are available in a country. This may include whether or not the government and/or private organizations in the country provides school buildings, teachers, text books, paper, pencils and other education facilities and materials.

26 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a3>

Access to education is the extent to which educational facilities and opportunities are accessible to all the people who need education. This may refer on the one hand to the location and size of schools, and whether they cover all the geographical areas and population groups within the country. On the other hand, it also refers to what percentage of the population can actually access and make use of various existing educational facilities and opportunities. For primary education, this can be measured by indicators such as the apparent intake rate and net intake rate, the gross enrolment ratio, the net enrolment ratio and the age-specific enrolment ratio, and for secondary education by the transition rate.

Participation in education is about to what extent the population fully takes part in and makes use of available education services, ideally throughout the duration of such services until completion of the education level concerned. It is not infrequent that some people cannot fully and effectively participate in and complete education. Commonly used indicators include completion rates and graduation rates, as well as student flow rates such as promotion, repetition and drop-out rates. Additional indicators of survival, retention, cohort completion rates, etc. can be calculated based on these flow rates. And the internal efficiency of an education system can be measured in terms of the number of years taken by a child to complete a particular cycle or level of education (e.g. primary, secondary, etc.).

Equity is another important aspect of education policy. The level of equity in the provision of education affects access to education and participation in education. Analysis of equity examines whether education services are provided equally to all groups, and involves paying particular attention to the actual access and participation by sub-groups. Analysing equity often involves disaggregating data by: gender (for girls and boys; and for men and women); administrative area (region, districts, etc.); geographical location (urban, rural and remote areas); socio-cultural groupings (social strata, ethnic and linguistic minority groups, etc.); income percentiles; education level (e.g. primary, secondary, TVET, higher education); and by type of providers (public, semi-public, private or community schools, etc.). It is also important to take into consideration any changes over time, such as past, present and future trends.

■ **Key issues**

Key issues related to educational access and equity include the right to education, the access/quality dichotomy, as well as measurement.

- **The right to education and the provision of education:** The right to education has been recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and numerous national policies and international conventions. But universal access to and participation in education continue to be major challenges in many countries. At the same time, the optimum level of education and learning that should be accomplished by the entire population is subject to continuing debate. While the government bears

the primary responsibility for providing education, how existing and future education policies can fulfil this fundamental goal of right to education is a key topic for education policy analysis, including how such policies define the scope and promote the role of non-state actors in providing education.

- **Access and quality:** With the aim of increasing access to education, many national education policies and plans allocate resources primarily to building more schools and hiring more teachers in order to expand coverage. But while this can increase the accessibility of education, participation in education can fall short of expectations if schools and teachers do not meet basic quality standards. A difficult issue facing most countries is how to improve both access to education and the quality of education (which affects participation) when resources are limited. Education policy analysis should look into how this issue has been considered at the policy level, and what the lessons learned are.
- **Measurement:** The reliability and comparability of indicators depends on the availability and quality of the underlying data. A vital task in education policy analysis is to verify whether student-level data have been collected from all schools throughout the country's territory. It is equally important that all such data are available disaggregated by the subgroups mentioned above (gender, administrative area, geographical location, socio-cultural groupings, education level and type of providers). Such disaggregated data is necessary for comparing access and participation by different population groups and for identifying those who are educationally disadvantaged, as well as the degree of equity and the scale of disparities in access to education. If available on a year-to-year basis, such data can enable the monitoring of changes over time and the identification of development trends. These trends can point to future policy priorities and guide more balanced development of the education system.

■ **Guiding questions**

The right to education and provision of education

- Is the right to education recognized and mentioned in the legislation, policies and public discourse in the country?
- Does the government provide free and compulsory basic education to all? Up to which grade?
- What are the main obstacles to ensuring the right to education is upheld in the country? How have these obstacles been addressed in existing education policies, strategies and plans? What are the remaining gaps and issues?
- Learning from past experiences, how should future education policies and plans pursue efforts to uphold citizens' right to education?

Access and quality

- In what way have existing education policies and plans addressed the issue of balancing resource allocation between increasing access and improving quality?
- What alternative solutions and innovations have been adopted in terms of providing access to good quality education for disadvantaged population groups? What have been the implementation experiences and lessons learned?
- How should upcoming policies and plans balance access and quality for different levels and types of education?
- Measurement Are education statistics and indicators (e.g. intake rates, enrolment ratios, repetition rates, drop-out rates and completion rates) disaggregated by gender, location, etc? If yes, for what kinds of disaggregation are data available? If no, why not?
- How have provision of education, access to education and participation in education evolved over time? Has this changed in terms of level of education, gender participation and other criteria (e.g. geographical location, socio-cultural, family income groupings)?
- How best should education coverage, access and participation be measured in the future? What other data needs to be collected? How can this be achieved?

Resources

- Indicators for educational planning: a practical guide²⁷
- Overcoming the obstacles to EFA²⁸
- Planning for successful alternative schooling: a possible route to EFA²⁹
- EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the marginalized³⁰
- EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009: Overcoming inequality: why governance matters³¹
- PISA 2009 Results: Overcoming Social Background. Equity in Learning Opportunities and Outcomes – Volume II³²

27 Sauvageot, C. 1997. Indicators for educational planning: a practical guide. UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001034/103407e.pdf>

28 Caillods, F., Phillips, M., Poisson, M., and Talbot, C. Overcoming the obstacles to EFA. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001849/184940e.pdf>

29 Farrell, Joseph P. and Hartwell, Ash. 2008. Planning for successful alternative schooling: a possible route to Education for All. International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001598/159851e.pdf>

30 UNESCO. 2010. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the marginalized. Paris. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2010-marginalization/>

31 UNESCO. 2009. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009: Overcoming inequality: why governance matters. Paris. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2009-governance/>

32 OECD. 2010. PISA 2009 Results: Overcoming Social Background. Equity in Learning Opportunities and Outcomes – Volume II. http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/pisa-2009-results-overcoming-social-background_9789264091504-en

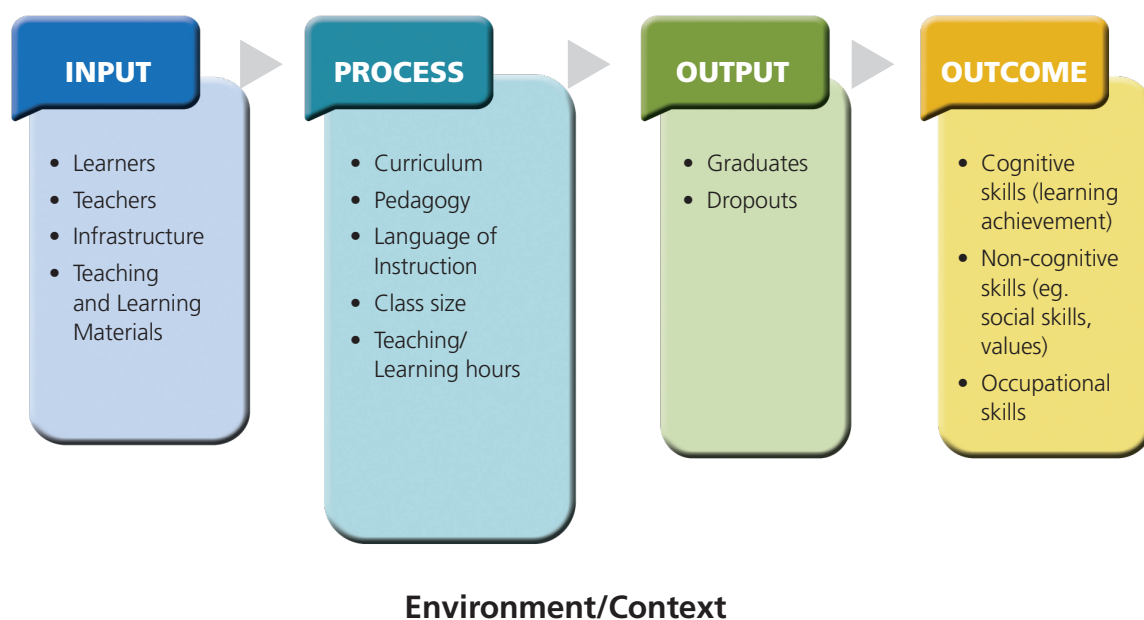
2.2.2 Quality

There is no universal definition of what constitutes good quality education; various definitions have been proposed. The Global Monitoring Report 2005 framed five major factors affecting quality: context, learners' characteristics, inputs, teaching and learning, and outcomes. In recent years, the quality of education has increasingly been approached from the lens of learning outcomes, including literacy, numeracy, critical thinking skills, occupational skills, responsible citizenship, etc. These can be grouped broadly into cognitive and non-cognitive skills (including social outcomes).

National education policies and strategies can be analysed to gauge the amount of attention given to quality, in terms of the quality aspects listed above, and others. Of particular interest is evidence about deficiencies in education quality and the causes of such deficiencies, and proposals for concrete measures to be taken to remedy these deficiencies. Such evidence may refer not only to inputs such as learners' characteristics, teachers' capacity and motivation, instructional materials and physical environments, but also to the way policies, institutions, managers and teachers phase in interventions to facilitate effective learning.

Figure 6 presents some of key issues in education quality along a production-result chain.

Figure 6: Education results chain



■ **Key issues**

When assessing the quality of education there are many issues to consider. Often they have to be addressed by adopting a holistic approach, as illustrated in Figure 6. Some issues include:

- Improving the quality of teachers: Teachers can constitute 80 to 90 per cent of total recurrent education expenditure. They are a major asset and are the main driving force in education. Teachers play a key role in improving the quality of education. Therefore, improving the training and motivation of teachers can make a decisive difference in stimulating and improving teaching and learning. [N.B. There are many issues surrounding teacher retention, remuneration and professional development policies that will be discussed in the “Teacher policies” section of this document.]
- Making the curriculum more relevant: Curriculum is at the heart of education. A curriculum translates expected learning outcomes into courses of studies and teaching-learning processes. It determines the kinds of learning materials and teaching aids to be designed, produced and used by teachers and learners. It also guides the teachers to impart learning in an organized manner, so as to help learners to achieve the desired learning outcomes. Taking into account pedagogy and language of instruction, the relevance of the curriculum is a critical factor for good quality education.
- Measuring and improving learning outcomes: Assessments of learning achievement are used as a proxy to measure the salient outcomes of education. While most countries continue to use examinations (e.g. entrance exams and graduation exams), others have begun organizing national assessments of learning achievement and have begun participating in international assessment surveys such as the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Such international standardized tests enable comparison across countries. It should be noted that such tests have limitations in assessing non-cognitive skills, such as values and behaviour.

■ **Guiding questions**

Education processes: curriculum and pedagogy

- Has there been a recent review of the national curriculum? What were the findings and recommendations?
- How is the national curriculum developed, updated and renewed in the country? How are the curricular contents decided? Does the curriculum development process involve all relevant stakeholders?
- Does the curriculum allow enough flexibility to incorporate local content at the sub-national or school levels, to meet the diverse learning needs of learners?

- Are there provisions for bilingual or multilingual education?
- Do the teaching and learning materials reflect the curriculum? How frequently are curricular materials reviewed and updated?
- What teaching-learning methods are most commonly used? Rote learning? Competency-based? In what ways do they hinder or facilitate student learning? Are teachers properly trained in using participatory and interactive teaching methods?

Education outcomes: learning achievement

- How is student learning achievement monitored in the country? Does the country organize national assessments of learning achievement? Is there continuous monitoring of student learning? What is the balance between formative and summative evaluations of student learning? How are the results of assessments used for policy and learning improvement?
- Does the country participate in international assessments such as PISA and TIMSS? How do the results compare with other countries and over time?
- Does the country have national (and sub-national) examinations? At which grade(s)? What are the main findings and issues? In what way have these exams and findings been used to inform or shape policies and/or to improve learning inputs, processes and achievement?
- Do students from any particular population group(s) under-perform in such examinations? If yes, why? Is the government taking any specific measure to address such under-performance? What are the results and impact of such measures?
- Is there regular measurement of performance indicators? For students and schools?

Resources

- A Global Perspective on Socioeconomic Differences in Learning Outcomes³³
- Examination Systems. Asia-Pacific Secondary Education System Review Series No.1³⁴
- Defining Quality in Education³⁵
- EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005: The Quality Imperative³⁶
- International Bureau of Education website. Curriculum development³⁷

33 Xin Ma. 2008. A Global Perspective on Socioeconomic Differences in Learning Outcomes. Background paper prepared for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009. UNESCO. Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001780/178025e.pdf>

34 Hill, P. 2010. Asia-Pacific Secondary Education System Review Series No. 1: Examination Systems. UNESCO. Bangkok. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001878/187826e.pdf>

35 UNICEF. 2000. Defining Quality in Education. Working Paper Series, UNICEF, New York. <http://www.unicef.org/education/files/QualityEducation.PDF>

36 UNESCO. 2004. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005: The Quality Imperative. UNESCO, Paris. http://www.unesco.org/education/gmr_download/en_summary.pdf

37 International Bureau of Education (IBE) website. www.ibe.unesco.org

2.2.3 Education sector management

Education sector management is about ensuring that policies and plans are implemented efficiently and effectively. It covers institutional management (planning, formulation and implementation of policies), process management (programmes and projects for service delivery), resource management (especially human and financial resources), and performance management (monitoring, evaluation and quality control). As such, the management agenda frequently involves complex issues for which there is no one right answer and no single way to solve problems. Improving all aspects of sector management (policies, structures and operations) is vital to achieving education sector development goals.

Public management focuses on the measurement of results regarding outputs. Public governance focuses on the way institutions interact in order to achieve a higher level of desired results. Therefore, the way agreements are reached and decisions are made, and the processes by which different stakeholders interact, are also seen as outputs or outcomes. In other words, processes matter.

■ **Key issues**

- **Provision of education services:** Inadequate provision of services is a visible sign of either lack of resources or improper management of the functioning of the education system. Inequitable provision of education, inaccessibility to education services, low quality of services, and in-affordability of services are some typical issues in this regard.
- **Capacity to lead and to manage the education sector:** Insufficient management capacity can be a major bottleneck in policy implementation. As defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), capacity resides within individuals, as well as in organizations (institutions) and within the enabling environment. These different levels of education management form an integrated system. Management capacity needs to be considered at each level.
- **Transparency and accountability:** It is not infrequent that parents and those in the community complain about the lack of information and transparency in education policy-making and management, both at the national and local school levels. When transparency and accountability is lacking, mismanagement can occur. Without shared information, it can be hard to determine the frequency and the area in which mismanagement occurs in the education sector.

■ **Guiding questions**

Provision of education services

- What is the current management structure of the education sector? How is that changing and what are the main reasons for those changes? What is the current level of decentralization of education management and governance? How are human and financial resources for the education sector managed? Who is managing what?
- How do the institutions and actors function and interact with each other in delivering education services?
- How adequate are the education services in terms of coverage, quality and affordability? What are the bottlenecks? In what way can government policies, legislation and management be strengthened to address these bottlenecks?

Capacity to lead and to manage the education sector

- To what extent do the actors at different levels of the education administration, including down to the school level, have the capacity to function as per the management duties they are supposed to perform?
- How is the ministry of education structured and staffed? Does this structure and staffing allow effective provision of education services? What is the gap, if any, in terms of management capacity of the education ministry and those concerned with education service delivery?
- Where it is needed, is there a clear strategy to strengthen management capacity? Is there a comprehensive capacity development plan? Is it adequately resourced? What areas and strategies of capacity development require urgent support?

Transparency and accountability

- How is information on education sector performance disseminated and used? What kind of information is disseminated to whom, when and how, at each level of the education administration?
- In what ways do local schools inform and involve local community stakeholders in school management?
- How transparent are the procedures for financial and human resource management? Are there any policies and measures in place to improve transparency and accountability?
- Is there an accountability system in place? What mechanisms are in place to hold public officials and service providers answerable for processes and outcomes? What sanctions are imposed if any specified outcomes and outputs are not delivered? How can this system be best made to work for all types of providers at all levels?

Resources

- International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) Documentation Centre: documents and training materials³⁸
- The Public Sector Consortium: Free online resources on management and leadership practices for public sector leaders³⁹
- UNDP Capacity Development: Research and Publications⁴⁰
- World Bank Public Sector Governance: Resources⁴¹
- Country specific reports on public expenditure review (PER) for the education sector.

2.2.4 Financing of education

Financing in the context of education sector policy can be understood as both a policy instrument in the pursuit of education development goals and also as a policy in itself as part of wider sector policy. It concerns the way financial resources are mobilized, allocated and used toward provision of education services. Any consideration of a financing system for education service provision should look simultaneously at three dimensions: availability and sources; allocation; and utilization. Quite often, the words “resources” and “funds” are used interchangeably, but the latter gives more weight to the financial resources. Ultimately, all types of resources required for achieving the education development goals can and should be converted into monetary terms in order to facilitate the education sector budgeting process and integrate education sector planning with the country’s broader socio-economic planning exercises.

A distinction should be made between the country’s budget and the actual expenditure. The budget is the amount of money that is planned and approved for doing something, while the actual amount spent is expenditure. In a perfectly planned and executed budgeting process, the budget and actual expenditure would be exactly the same. In reality, there is often a difference between what was budgeted for and what has actually been spent, which is called “budget variance.”

38 International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) Documentation Centre <http://www.iiep.unesco.org/index.php?id=18>

39 The Public Sector Consortium. www.public-sector.org

40 UNDP Capacity Development: Research and Publications. <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity-building.html>

41 World Bank Public Sector Governance: Resources. <http://go.worldbank.org/SGO4LFRSS0>

■ **Key issues**

- **Sufficient resources:** This concerns whether or not the amount of funding for education is sufficient for implementing the country's education policies. Proper functioning of needs-based budgeting has been an issue within the education sector. Funding gaps continue to exist and resources are always scarce. Therefore innovative ways to mobilize additional funds for financing education are needed.
- **Equity in resource allocation:** A key concern in education finance has been to ensure that resource allocation is equitable, predictable and sustainable. Various methods and mechanisms have been used to ensure that resources are allocated appropriately between education levels and functions, and to those who need them most, such as poor and vulnerable population groups. But experience has shown that such allocations are not always equitable.
- **Efficiency in resource utilization:** The way financial resources are used by the actors within the education system, and whether such utilization is cost effective are key issues in education finance. Cost-effectiveness in education is mainly concerned with how the resources have been utilized to improve access, quality, learning outcomes and management. It is not infrequent to hear about wastage in the use of resources for education. Understanding the extent of such wastage and the kind of solutions that can be introduced are important parts of education policy analysis.

■ **Guiding questions**

Sufficiency of resources

- How has public education expenditure evolved to meet the international recommendation of 6 per cent of national GDP? How does the government finance the education sector and what do they finance? Is the government budget for education predictable and sustainable?
- Do existing education policies and plans provide information on multi-year financial resource requirements for education development? How have such requirements been determined? How credible is the information?
- How are financial and human resources distributed across the education sub-sectors?
- Is there a funding gap? If so, how does the government plan to bridge the gap? To what extent are external donors, the non-government sector and local communities financing education in the country?

Equity in resource allocation

- What is the share of the education budget for the education sub-sectors? How does the percentage of funding for basic education compare to other education sub-sectors? Is there a policy to offset possible imbalances of resource allocations among education levels?
- What and how much are parents/households expected to contribute to the schooling of their children? How do parent/household contributions to the schooling of their children compare to their income level? Are fees and other costs hindering access to education? What specific measures have been introduced to address the financial burden for the poor (such as scholarships and loan schemes) and how effective have they been?
- To what extent are public resources distributed equitably for education, especially for disadvantaged groups? What equity measures are in place to support poor households?

Efficiency in resource utilization

- How are the resources for education utilized? In what way has each sub-sectors' share of budget been spent to improve access and participation, quality, learning achievement, management, and specific priorities of each sub-sector?
- Is there wastage in public expenditure on education? What kind of misuse of resources has been observed? To what extent is the government aware of the shortcomings in resource utilization? How does the government address these shortcomings?

Resources

- Costing and financing education in developing countries⁴²
- Education MTEF: Approaches, experience and lessons from nine countries in Asia⁴³
- Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies reference guide on external education financing⁴⁴
- National education management information systems (EMIS) and budget publications
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) Data Centre: Country Profiles⁴⁵

42 Cuenin, S. 2006. Costing and financing education in developing countries. UNESCO, Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001507/150705e.pdf>

43 Clarke, G. 2010. Education MTEF: Approaches, experience and lessons from nine countries in Asia, Asia-Pacific Education Review Series No. 3. UNESCO, Bangkok. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001915/191500e.pdf>

44 Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. 2010. INEE reference guide on external education financing. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001887/188784e.pdf>

45 UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre. <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/tableviewer/document.aspx?ReportId=143>

2.2.5 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is an integral part of the policy cycle, consisting of compiling and analysing information that enables actors to learn from each other's experiences and which indicates how to make improvements in policy and in practices (see section on "Education policy cycle"). M&E is used in various ways depending on the nature of a programme and the purpose of an evaluation. There are three main M&E classifications in use, relating to who is conducting the M&E, why it is being conducted and when it is being conducted.

Who: The first classification can be made depending on who is conducting the evaluation. M&E can be internal (if it is carried out by the persons belonging to the same institution as those managing the programme); or self-evaluation (as a form of internal evaluation done by those who implement the programme); or external (when the evaluation is carried out by those outside the institution).

Why: The second classification pertains to the purpose of evaluation. M&E can be formative (because the main objective of evaluation is to correct the course taken by a policy); summative (since it leads to conclusions about the value of the policy so that lessons can be learnt for the future); or ex-post (conducted a certain time after the completion of a programme in order to evaluate the impact and sustainability of the programme.)

When: The third classification relates to when evaluation is conducted.

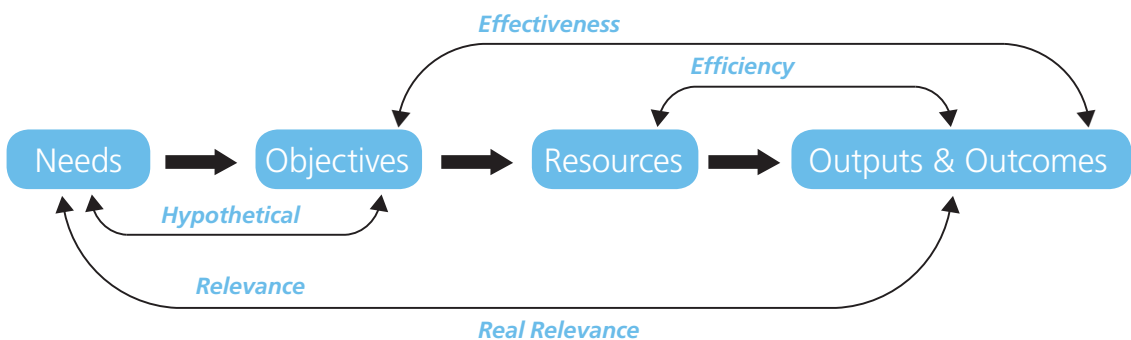
- *Monitoring:* Not an evaluation per se, it is a process whereby the activities are regularly observed and analysed, mainly focusing on efficiency (use of resources).
- *Review:* As for monitoring, it is performed by those who are responsible for the activities. It is carried out less frequently than monitoring and focuses on effectiveness by assessing whether the activities have delivered the expected outputs.
- *Evaluation:* Evaluation is an assessment of the outcomes, the impact of the programme and its sustainability, in order to learn lessons and apply them in future programmes.

Another form of evaluation is assessment of student learning outcomes consisting of assessing learning achievements in order to provide information that can be used to improve the curriculum and teaching/learning practices, and to document learning achievements or failures. (See section 2.2.2 on "Quality" for more details.)

■ Key issues

Accountability: We are accountable for the work we do and for the use of the resources that we are given. We are accountable to a variety of people, foremost to the people and communities we serve, and also to those who provide the resources. As we implement activities, we learn lessons. There is need for a system that is reflective and analytical, examining performance so that we can change direction and improve what we are doing, and also examine our effectiveness and the changes that have occurred, so that we can integrate lessons from such experience into our plans. This requires that we define in advance an effective M&E system and a set of indicators that enable reliable measurement of progress towards our goals.

Figure 7: Monitoring and evaluating relevance, efficiency and effectiveness



- **Result chain and assessment methodology:** When conducting an evaluation, we can analyse education systems or policies in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability:
 - Relevance: Does a policy or a programme respond to the identified needs (hypothetical) or have the results of the programme addressed them (real)?
 - Effectiveness: Are the desired outputs being achieved? Is the policy or project delivering the results it set out to deliver (objectives vs. outputs and outcomes)?
 - Efficiency: Are we using the available resources wisely and well in terms of the outputs that have been achieved (resources vs. outputs)?
 - Impact: Have the wider goals been achieved? What changes have occurred for individuals and/or communities?
 - Sustainability: Will the impact be sustainable? How? Will any structures and processes so established be sustained? How?

■ **Guiding questions**

In analysing government policy and implementation in regard to the monitoring and evaluation of education systems, one may ask the following questions.

Accountability

- Has an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism been established? Which institutions are responsible for which aspects of evaluation? How do they co-ordinate and co-operate for information sharing, policy design and implementation?
- Does the data and information system provide timely and relevant statistics and indicators for informed policy formulation and evaluation? What are the gaps and bottlenecks for using data in education management, especially programme M&E?
- In countries that depend on external aid, is SWAp in place for joint review and evaluation? What are the issues and challenges?

Result chain and assessment methodology

- Is there an institution responsible for assessment of learning achievement? How effective is its operation? How are the results of assessments (examinations, national or international learning surveys) used to change and improve policy? (see also section on “Quality”)
- Is there an agreed M&E framework for the education sector? If so, how was it developed? How often is such an M&E exercise carried out?
- How often are policy and plan reviews/evaluations conducted? Is there a mechanism overseeing the use and sharing of the results of evaluations for policy change and programme implementation? What improvements are needed?
- Does the country participate in international assessments and are these being used to inform the policy debate and make adjustments to current policy?

Resources

- OECD Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management.⁴⁶
- IIEP Manual for Monitoring and Evaluating Education Partnerships.⁴⁷
- UNESCO National Education Sector Development Plan: A result-based planning handbook.⁴⁸

46 OECD. 2010. Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, OECD, Paris. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf>

47 Marriott, N. and Goyder, H. 2009. Manual for Monitoring and Evaluating Education Partnerships. IIEP, Paris. http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Info_Services_Publications/pdf/2009/Mariott-Goyder_Partnership.pdf

48 Chang, G.C. 2006. National Education Sector Development Plan: A result-based planning handbook. UNESCO, Paris. pp. 48-58. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001447/144783e.pdf>

2.3 Education sub-sectors

Education policy should be analysed systemically and each sub-sector should be granted equal attention. All the sub-sectors of education have a symbiotic relationship with each other and with society. For example, universal primary education is considered essential for a better quality of life for all. However, a better quality of life cannot be sustained without social stability, which requires that citizens find suitable employment and livelihoods. This is difficult to accomplish without access to good quality secondary, tertiary and technical and vocational education. Good quality education in turn requires effective and good quality teacher education. This is often overlooked when the focus is only on achieving universal primary education. When few resources are allocated to improving the quality of education, this leads to poor quality of teaching and learning.

Traditionally, the education sector is divided into several levels. Each country has specifications for each level of education and these specifications may differ from country to country. The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) enables international comparison of the education sector. It was recently revised⁴⁹ and can be used as a reference guide.⁵⁰ The ISCED primarily covers two cross-classification variables: levels and fields of education.

Country-specific classification systems may or may not use the same terms as defined in the ISCED. For example, the starting age for primary school can be anywhere between 5 and 7 years of age and the duration of each level of education may differ from one country to another. It is therefore important to be certain that you are referring to the same level of education when comparing information internationally.

2.3.1 Early childhood care and education

Early childhood refers to the period between birth and 5 to 8 years of age, depending on the country, and takes into account the transition period from early childhood to primary education. UNESCO uses the term Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) to refer to the provision of care and education for this age group. ECCE may be provided through formal settings such as kindergartens and pre-schools, or may be provided in informal and non-formal settings such as parent education programmes, home-based settings and community-run centres, such as play-centres or play-groups.

“Care” generally includes attention to protection, health, hygiene and nutrition provided within a nurturing and safe environment. Early childhood care may include cognitive stimulation and social development. “Education” in early childhood is much broader than schooling,

49 As the 1997 ISCED continues to raise classification issues, especially as education systems expand and diversify, the UNESCO Institute of Statistics was requested to propose a revised ISCED to the UNESCO General Conference in 2011.

50 UIS. 2012. International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 2011. UIS. Montreal. <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/2011-international-standard-classification-education-isced-2012-en.pdf>

capturing socialization, learning and guidance through a wide range of developmental activities and opportunities. Early childhood education is possible only in the presence of a safe environment, good health, nutrition and hygiene and warm relationships. Thus, in practice, early childhood “care” and “education” cannot be separated. Therefore, high quality ECCE provision necessarily addresses both dimensions and fosters children’s holistic development – the ultimate purpose of ECCE.

A variety of terms are used in addition to ECCE, depending on the foci of services and the age group covered. Terms include Early Childhood Development (ECD), Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and Early Childhood Care for Survival Growth and Development (EC-SGD). At the national level, in addition to ECCD, ECCE and ECEC, the term Early Childhood Education (ECE) is used interchangeably with Pre-school Education (PSE) or Pre-primary Education (PPE) and focuses on services for children ranging between 3 to 6 years old. This type of pre-primary education typically aims to prepare children for formal primary education.

■ **Key issues**

- Access to high quality ECCE services: Enrolment in pre-primary education is low in most developing countries. There is often an absence of a well-defined ECCE policy and regulations, and of government support to ECCE centres and institutions, especially in rural areas. Enrolment ratios in pre-primary education differ greatly between countries. There are also differences within countries, with ECCE services usually concentrated in urban areas. There is an urgent need for countries to ensure all young children have equal opportunities to participate in comprehensive ECCE programmes.
- Training and professional development of ECCE practitioners: A critical issue facing ECCE in many countries is that many of the teachers and care-givers are not qualified nor adequately trained to foster young children’s optimal holistic development and learning. To increase enrolment in ECCE and improve quality, ECCE practitioners need to be well-trained and provided with opportunities for refresher training and ongoing professional development. Moreover, countries need to regulate and monitor the status, service quality, working conditions, compensation and opportunities for professional development of ECCE personnel in order to attract and retain high-quality practitioners.
- Governance and policy co-ordination: Multiple ministries/departments and non-state providers are involved in ECCE. Private providers play an important role in expanding access to ECCE in many countries, even in the wealthiest countries. Intersectoral policy co-ordination is essential to avoid fragmentation, overlaps and diffusion of efforts. This is a major challenge and there is no one-size-fits-all solution for all countries. Whatever modality is selected to bring about co-ordination in implementing ECCE policies (including public-private partnerships), it is important to ensure all stakeholders share the responsibilities, but without compartmentalizing the holistic nature of ECCE.

■ Guiding questions

Access to high quality ECCE services

- What laws, policies and regulatory frameworks exist in relation to the rights, protection, well-being and education of young children, and the obligations of the State?
- Who are the providers of ECCE services? What are their capacities for providing ECCE services? What additional ECCE capacity is needed and for which geographical regions and population groups?
- What are the causes of low participation in ECCE besides limited capacity?
- Are there ECCE curriculum guidelines or pedagogical guidelines in the country? If so, what is the coverage in terms of age groups and developmental areas?
- Are children over-burdened with heavy academic requirements and examinations at an early age to the detriment of their holistic growth?

Training and professional development of ECCE practitioners

- What types of training or preparation programmes for ECCE practitioners exist in the country? Who provides and funds them?
- What is the minimum requirement for qualified ECCE practitioners? What is the percentage of qualified ECCE practitioners for the country as a whole and by geographical areas?
- What is the status and the working conditions of ECCE practitioners compared to other sub-sectors?

Governance and policy co-ordination

- What types of ECCE programmes do young children tend to participate in? Are they funded and managed publicly or privately? What are the levels of participation in these different programmes?
- What is the division of responsibility for ECCE policy and service provision among the relevant ministries, departments and other government agencies? What mechanisms are in place to co-ordinate the sectors and ministries related to ECCE (e.g. lead ministry, inter-ministerial committee and partnerships)?

Resources

- Investing in Young Children: An Early Childhood Development Guide for Policy Dialogue and Project Preparation.⁵¹

51 Naudeau, S., Kataoka, N., Valerio, A., Neuman, M. J. and Elder, L. K. 2010. Investing in Young Children: An Early Childhood Development Guide for Policy Dialogue and Project Preparation. The World Bank, Washington, D.C. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2525>

- Early Childhood Care and Education in the Asia Pacific Region: Moving Towards Goal 1.⁵²
- Caring and Learning Together: A cross-national study of integration of early childhood care and education within education.⁵³
- EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007. Strong foundations: Early childhood care and education.⁵⁴

2.3.2 Primary education

During their primary education, children are expected to gain core knowledge, values, attitudes and skills, including skill in basic literacy, numeracy and critical thinking. Primary education typically covers the first five or six years of formal schooling, and has an official entry age of 5 to 7 years old, although there can be considerable variation from country to country. Basic education includes primary education and is generally defined as the first nine years of education (including two to four years of lower secondary). Education policies and plans increasingly aim at universal basic education.

■ Key issues

Access, participation and quality, as described in Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, are among the most important issues related to the provision of primary education. Below are additional key issues.

- **Equity:** Although access to primary education has improved significantly in most countries, there are still remaining pockets of marginalized groups who do not attend pre-primary and primary schools. School fees, hidden costs (such as transportation and uniform costs), violence in school or on the way to school, and increased incidence of child labour among lower socio-economic groups are the main barriers to participation in education. Socio-cultural biases with regard to gender continue to affect access to education for girls, while disability, prejudice against cultural and linguistic minorities, social status (e.g. caste), remoteness, and nomadism are among other factors that hamper access to education for both boys and girls, even at the primary level.
- **Meeting diverse learning needs:** The diversity of learning needs among students, particularly in culturally diverse countries, can be addressed by making education adaptable and relevant, delivered by well-trained teachers with appropriate materials. It is necessary to have a system that can evolve with the changing needs of society and is equipped to meet the individual needs of specific groups or individuals. The focus should be on competency-based curricula, which include flexible teaching-learning strategies as well as innovative and child-oriented assessments.

52 Rao, N. and Sun, J. 2010. Early Childhood Care and Education in the Asia Pacific Region: Moving Towards Goal 1. UNESCO, Bangkok. <http://www.hku.hk/cerc/Publications/M8-web.pdf>

53 Kaga, Y., Bennett, J. and Moss, P. 2010. Caring and Learning Together: A cross-national study of integration of early childhood care and education within education. UNESCO. Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001878/187818E.pdf>

54 UNESCO. 2006. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007. Strong foundations: Early childhood care and education. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2007-early-childhood/>

Bridging primary and higher levels of education: While primary education has received substantial attention from governments and development partners in the past decade, in view of the aim to achieve the EFA goals and MDGs by 2015, education levels beyond primary are often overlooked. Building a system that provides sufficient support and encouragement to students to continue their studies to secondary and higher education is crucial. Therefore primary education survival and transition to lower secondary education is a critical issue.

■ **Guiding questions**

Equity

- Are there sufficient numbers of schools and capacity, with appropriate geographical distribution, to meet actual needs? If not, which are the under-served areas and student population groups? How best can capacities be expanded to cater to their needs?
- What are the trends of student progression in primary schools? Are there any particular population groups that repeat grades and drop out more than others? If yes, at what grade? What are reasons that can explain this phenomenon? How many out-of-school children (including those who are not enrolled and dropped out) are there in the country, by geographical region? What specific measures have been put in place to address these issues?
- Are there sufficient numbers of trained teachers to teach the total primary school age population? If not, what can be done to increase these numbers, especially for the under-served areas and population groups?
- Which student population groups have less access to primary education compared to others? What are the factors preventing them from accessing primary education? What kinds of proactive policies and actions have been taken to reach groups and individuals vulnerable to exclusion and children with disabilities? If there are none, why not? If there are some, how effective are they?
- To what extent do schools charge informal fees? How do such fees affect access and participation, especially among disadvantaged children from poor households? Are there laws that attempt to eliminate barriers to education, such as banning child marriage, child labour, etc.? If not, why not? If yes, how effective are they?

Meeting diverse learning needs

- To what extent is the national primary school curriculum relevant and culturally appropriate for all? Is there room for the curriculum to be adapted and localized in terms of content?

- To what extent do teacher training (pre-service and in-service) and teaching-learning materials reflect the national curriculum framework, while allowing for local adaptations?
- Is the school and education system as a whole able to identify and adapt to the specific needs of learners from ethnic and linguistic minority groups, children with learning disabilities, etc.?
- Are children provided with basic textbooks and appropriate learning materials?
- What are the standards to ensure safe and healthy environments for children in schools? Are they being respected?
- Is there a formative assessment system to provide continuous assessment of learning and provide immediate learning support?

Bridging primary education to higher levels of education

- How have transition rates from primary to secondary education evolved in recent years? Is there a policy for regulating the transition from primary to secondary schools? Are there high numbers of drop outs during this transition due to entrance examinations and other selection systems, or due the lack of secondary schools? Are students appropriately prepared to enter lower secondary education after successfully completing primary education?
- What kinds of mechanisms exist to assist students who failed to transition from primary to secondary education? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these mechanisms?

Resources

- EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the marginalized.⁵⁵
- UNESCO Standards and Norms in Education.⁵⁶
- General comment on Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).⁵⁷
- International Standard of Classification of Education.⁵⁸

55 UNESCO. 2010. EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the marginalized, UNESCO, Paris. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2010-marginalization/>

56 UNESCO Standards and Norms in Education. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=51850&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

57 United Nations. 1999. Article 13: The right to education (General Comments). Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. <http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/ae1a0b126d068e868025683c003c8b3b?Opendocument>

58 UIS. 2012. International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 2011. UIS. Montreal. <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/2011-international-standard-classification-education-isced-2012-en.pdf>

2.3.3 Secondary education

Secondary education is the educational stage between primary education and higher education. The main function of secondary education is to broaden young people's knowledge and skills and to consolidate their values and attitudes in preparation for higher education and the world of work. Depending on the country, the number of years corresponding to secondary education can range between three and eight years, but in most countries it lasts for six or seven years. It is often divided into two levels: lower secondary and upper secondary. In an increasing number of countries, basic education includes lower secondary (or even upper secondary) and it has become compulsory in some countries. At upper secondary level, streams (e.g. science and arts) and tracks (technical and vocational vs. general academic) are often introduced. Some countries have different types of secondary schools for the various tracks and these are administered under different ministries, and are sometimes managed by private and civil society organizations, including religious bodies such as churches, mosques and temples.

■ **Key issues**

- **Equity:** Many countries today have universal or almost universal primary education. Consequently, there is increasing demand for secondary education, as more and more are children completing primary school. Ensuring equitable access to secondary education has become a major issue, in particular for marginalized groups such as girls and people in rural and remote areas. Secondary education is typically more costly than primary education and it is not always provided free of charge, which can affect access by children from poor families.
- **Curriculum coherence and relevance:** In most countries the general secondary education curriculum has been oriented towards preparing students for higher education. Realigning the curriculum towards life skills and labour market skills can result in better outcomes for students in terms of school participation and finding employment. Many challenges exist in this process of realignment, however.
- **Management of teachers and high quality teaching:** Teaching at secondary level demands a higher level of knowledge and requires pedagogical skills specific to teaching different subjects. Management of teachers at secondary level thus needs to take into account subject specializations. Teacher shortage issues can therefore be more complex than in primary education. Another issue is that some secondary school teachers do not meet the minimum requirements for the assigned level and some secondary teachers teach subjects for which they have not been trained.
- **High stake examinations:** Public examinations at the national and sub-national levels are widely used for measuring education quality and as a mechanism for selecting students to enter higher levels of education. Such high-stake public examinations

have many negative consequences, however, such as teaching for exams and excessive rote learning, which deviate from the original goals of secondary education (as described in the first paragraph of this section).

- Secondary level technical and vocational schools: Many countries have developed technical and vocational schools at the secondary level to provide options and opportunities for pupils to gain practical knowledge and skills required for the world of work. It is being argued by some specialists, however, that vocational programmes should be introduced at the secondary or post-secondary levels (see the section on “Technical and Vocational Education and Training” for more details).

■ **Guiding questions**

Equitable access

- How many students will complete primary education annually in the coming years? How many additional secondary school places will be needed to enrol them?
- Does the country aim to universalize secondary education (lower-secondary or upper-secondary or both)? What policies and strategies exist to increase enrolment for marginalized populations such as girls, people in remote areas, the poor, etc.?
- Do the entrance exams and entry requirements favour certain student groups?
- Is there a policy to encourage and regulate private provision of secondary education? What impact can increased privatization have on access and quality?

Curriculum orientation

- To what extent is the curriculum relevant to the needs of the country and able to equip pupils with sufficient knowledge, life skills and practical skills for the labour market? What are the plans to review and reform the secondary school curriculum in the coming years?
- Are present secondary schools adequately preparing young people to pursue higher education or to join the world of work?

Management of teachers and high quality teaching

- What are the minimum requirements to become a secondary teacher? How does this compare to the primary level?
- Are there sufficient numbers of subject teachers to teach at the secondary level?
- What policies are in place to train, recruit and deploy them, taking into account specialization requirements and shortages of certain subject teachers in specific geographical areas?

- Who manages teacher recruitment and performance assurance? Is it the central government, provincial/state government, district government, or school? What are the critical issues?

High stake examinations

- How competitive are the national examinations? Are they used for selecting students for higher levels and into different tracks (e.g. general vs. vocational) of education? What kind of evidence is there about the effects of these high-stake examinations on teaching-learning and school organization?
- Are national learning assessments conducted for secondary school students in the country? If so, at what intervals and how are they used to improve secondary education?

Secondary level technical and vocational schools

- What are the policies and plans regarding technical and vocational tracks in secondary education?
- What is the share of technical and vocational students at secondary level? What have been the recent enrolment trends in technical and vocational secondary education compared to general secondary education?
- How are students selected for technical and vocational tracks? Are the policies and regulations flexible enough to allow students to move between academic and vocational tracks?
- What are the main issues facing the technical and vocational track in secondary education? What can be done to address these issues?

Resources

- Asia-Pacific Secondary Education System Review Series No. 1: Examination Systems.⁵⁹
- Asia-Pacific Secondary Education System Review Series No. 2: Access to Secondary Education.⁶⁰
- Expanding Opportunities and Building Competencies for Young People: A New Agenda for Secondary Education.⁶¹

59 Hill, P. 2010. Asia-Pacific Secondary Education System Review Series No. 1: Examination Systems. Bangkok, UNESCO.

60 Caillods, F. 2010. Asia-Pacific Secondary Education System Review Series No. 2: Access to Secondary Education. Bangkok, UNESCO.

61 World Bank. 2005. Expanding Opportunities and Building Competencies for Young People: A New Agenda for Secondary Education. Washington, D.C., World Bank

2.3.4 Higher education

Higher education includes all types of studies, training or research at the post-secondary and tertiary levels, provided by universities or other recognized higher educational institutions (HEIs). Despite the diversity of higher education systems across countries, one may distinguish four broad categories of higher education: diploma programmes, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees and doctorates.

Higher education plays a key role in contributing to national development through the training of human resources with advanced knowledge and skills, the ability to produce and disseminate knowledge, and the capacity to engage in scientific and technological research. Higher education produces leaders, thinkers and scientists. As world economies increasingly become knowledge-intensive, knowledge, skills, innovative ideas and scientific thinking are becoming vital, and it is only through higher education that high-quality human capital is developed.

■ *Key issues*

With increasing need for more advanced knowledge and skills in the globalized economy, more and more people are seeking higher education. This has posed a major challenge to governments on how to expand opportunities for higher education while ensuring equity, relevance and high quality. Countries at differing stages of development are facing different challenges with regard to the development of their higher education systems. Less developed countries, middle income countries, developed countries and post-conflict countries often have different policy priorities in higher education. The following are some key issues:

- **Equity:** To meet the growing demand for higher education, significant changes are needed. Reforms could include diversifying institutions and financing, relaxing entrance requirements and using various learning channels. Changes are also needed to increase equity in access to higher education. Measures are needed to increase the participation of disadvantaged groups such as the poor, women and minorities.
- **Quality:** As higher education expands its coverage, there is growing concern about its quality. Improving the quality of higher education can be achieved by instituting quality assurance and accreditation of higher education institutions, improving governance and management of higher education institutions, revising and updating curricula, and improving teaching and learning methods and materials.
- **Financing:** Financing of the rapidly expanding higher education sector has become more diversified in recent years. Most national governments can no longer finance the higher education sector on their own. In some cases, this has increased the financial burden on families, thus affecting equity of access to higher education and excluding the poor. Many innovative financing mechanisms have been put in place such as student loans and public-private partnerships. When faced with high demand

for higher education, some HEIs, especially those that depend on students' fees, may enrol students beyond their capacity, which overloads teachers and thereby negatively affects the quality of the education provided.

- **Internationalization and cross-border higher education:** Cross-border collaboration among higher education institutions is steadily increasing. More and more students attend higher education institutions abroad. Strengthening co-operation and complementarities is needed to facilitate such movements in higher education. This collaboration can be achieved by promoting international university networks and partnerships, and by establishing national accreditation and quality assurance systems.

■ *Guiding questions*

Access and equity

- What have been the changes in the pattern of enrolment in higher education? What kinds of disparities are there in higher education by region, sex, minority groups, or among the poor?
- What kinds of policies and strategies are there to address these disparities? What financial and educational support is offered to students from poor and marginalized communities?
- What are the different types and coverage of higher education institutions catering to different types of learners?
- What are the roles of the private sector in higher education? What, if any, are the regulatory frameworks for: (a) the development of non-public higher education institutions; and (b) the contribution of the private sector to higher education financing and management?

Quality of higher education

- How is the quality of the faculty members/professors? What kinds of faculty development are provided?
- What are the regulatory and quality assurance mechanisms that promote success in higher education?
- What are the differentiated roles among the higher education institutions and networks? Are the higher education programmes relevant to societal needs and community development? Is the higher education system meeting labour market demands?
- What reforms in university governance and management have been implemented recently to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of higher education institutions?

Financing of higher education

- How is higher education financed? What is the share of public funding in higher education financing? Is the financing of higher education diversified?
- What is the role of the private sector, non-public and/or civil society organizations in the financing of higher education?
- What kinds of student fellowships, scholarships and loan schemes are there to support talented students who do not have the means to finance their education?
- Does the funding ensure sufficient financial stability in higher education to ensure quality and orderly development?
- What kinds of public-private partnerships exist between higher education institutions and businesses in terms of financing, research, internships and placement opportunities?

Internationalization and cross-border higher education

- What types of cross-border higher education are found in the country? What are the mechanisms to regulate the quality of cross-border higher education?
- What are the student inflow and outflow rates in the country? What efforts are being made by HEIs in internationalizing their education programmes?

Resources

- International Standard Classification of Education.⁶²
- The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Social Change and Development. Communiqué.⁶³
- Higher Education at a Time of Transformation: New Dynamics for Social Responsibility.⁶⁴

2.3.5 Technical and vocational education and training

The purpose of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is to prepare learners for a successful transition into the labour market through provision of practical knowledge and skills that are required in the world of work. TVET policies are generally designed to guide the effective provision of practical labour market skills through specialized education services (often delivered in formal settings) and training programmes (often provided in non-formal settings). In this regard, TVET policy can encompass almost every aspect of learning at post-basic education levels and go beyond the finite scope of the institutionalized sub-sector. In other words, TVET policy should, in principle, deal with any measures relating to the smooth transition from learning to work, including assessment of skill needs, career guidance, entrepreneurship education and employment services.

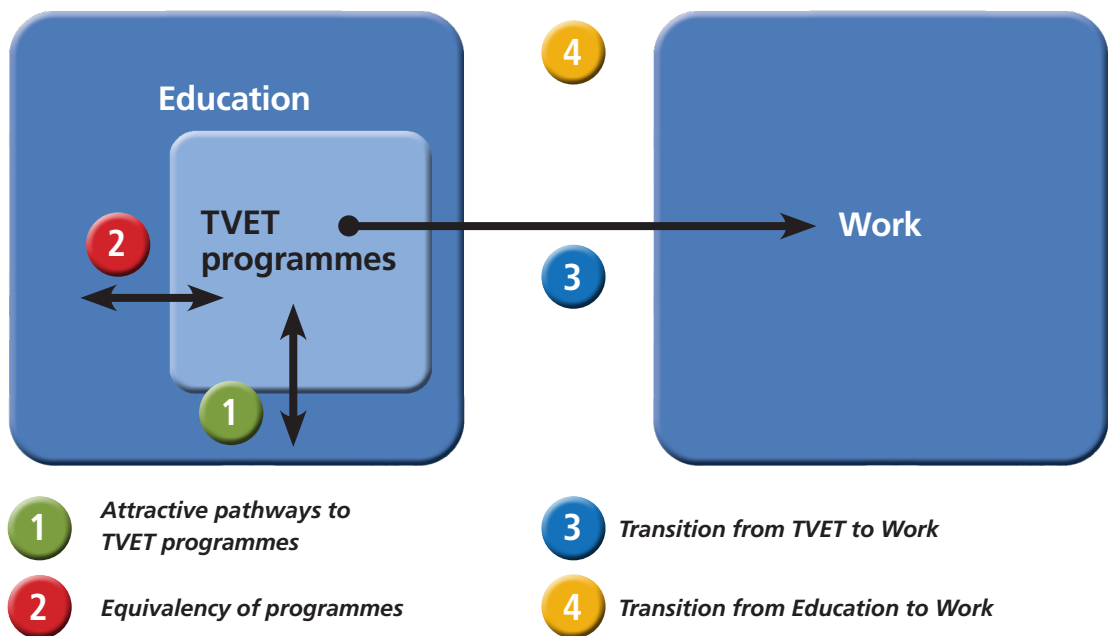
62 UIS. 2012. International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 2011. UIS. Montreal. <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/2011-international-standard-classification-education-isced-2012-en.pdf>

63 UNESCO. 2009. 2009 World Conference on Higher Education: The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research For Societal Change and Development. Communiqué. UNESCO. Paris. http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/ED/pdf/WCHE_2009/FINAL%20COMMUNIQUE%20WCHE%202009.pdf

64 Global University Network for Innovation. 2009. Higher Education at a Time of Transformation: New Dynamics for Social Responsibility. Palgrave Macmillan. <http://upcommons.upc.edu/revistes/handle/2099/9538>

Figure 8 outlines four critical dimensions that TVET policy should address: (1) making TVET attractive in relation to general education; (2) qualification and equivalency frameworks for different levels and modalities of learning; (3) insertion of TVET graduates into the labour market; and (4) relevance of education and learning to the world of work.

Figure 8: TVET in relation to other types of education and to the world of work



■ Key issues

There are many issues related to the above dimensions. Some of them are considered key to TVET in relation to school-to-work transition and to the development of specific TVET programmes.

School-to-work transition: This refers to the way learners in school are prepared for joining the world of work. Key issues in most countries include: the level of understanding about the skills needed by employers and society; existence and suitability of career guidance for youths and students; design and implementation of suitable qualification systems; support for job seeking and job placement; and employer engagement for school-to-work policies.

TVET programmes: These are education and training programmes provided in specific education forms and institutions to prepare students for the world of work. Selected key issues in this regard comprise: public perceptions of TVET and skills development and campaigns to increase the attractiveness of TVET; improvement of curricula, teacher capacity and pedagogic practices; diversification of TVET supply including providing both formal and

non-formal programmes; inter-ministerial or inter-sectoral co-ordination and collaboration; and employer engagement for TVET policy development and implementation.

■ **Guiding questions**

School-to-work transition

- Is there a system in place to identify and analyse the skills needed by employers and society? Is data on the labour market and the training needs of employers available and reliable? Is data for the labour market situation for youth school leavers systematically collected, analysed and made available to TVET agencies and institutions?
- Which institutions are dealing with employment policies and projections? Is the information about future labour demand and supply in line with the country's socio-economic development plan or strategy?
- Are there institutional arrangements facilitating access of students and youth to appropriate learning programmes? What are the existing policies and mechanisms facilitating transfers between different pathways to learning? What are the various channels and access levels of learning? Have these mechanisms been evaluated? If yes, what are the main findings?
- Are there career development information and guidance services? If yes, how reliable and how easily accessible are they? To what extent do students and youth have access to suitable employment services? What are these? How do they operate?
- Is there evidence of the value and relevance to the labour market of the qualifications offered in existing TVET programmes?

TVET programmes

- How has enrolment in TVET evolved compared with general education? What is the share of TVET expenditure within total education expenditure and total government expenditure? How does the unit cost in TVET compare with other levels and types of education?
- How is the TVET system responding to the social demands of youth? Are TVET school graduates able to find a job more easily than other types of school graduates at a similar level?
- Are there government plans pertaining to TVET? Are these plans closely related to broader strategies like the education sector policy, skills development or socio-economic development strategy?

- What are the main concerns about the validity and relevance of TVET? And about TVET teachers, curricula, facilities and equipment, hours of practice, or others?
- What are the levels of participation of employers in co-operating with government and schools in promoting and supporting TVET? What are the strategies and efforts to improve employer engagement? What are the main related issues?
- What is the current situation of general vs. vocational tracks at the post-basic education level? Are there government policies regulating this aspect? What are the gaps between policy and reality? What are the problems and challenges?
- Does the government have adequate resources for the development of TVET? How are these mobilized to meet the needs?

Resources

- UNESCO's normative instruments concerning technical and vocational education.⁶⁵
- Transition from education to work: What relevance for MEDA partners?⁶⁶
- OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training - Learning for Jobs.⁶⁷

2.3.6 Non-formal education

Non formal education (NFE) provides educational opportunities to children, youth and adults who have either never entered the formal school system or dropped out too early to acquire basic literacy skills. It is usually undertaken in the framework of life-long learning. NFE is a broad concept that includes a large array of educational activities delivered outside the formal education sector, including life skills and livelihoods training.

UNESCO defines non-formal education as:

*Any organized and sustained educational activities that do not correspond to the definition of formal education. Non-formal education may therefore take place both within and outside educational institutions and cater to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover education programmes to impart adult literacy, basic education for out-of-school children, life skills, work skills and general culture. Non-formal education programmes do not necessarily follow the ladder system and may have differing durations and may or may not confer certification of the learning achieved.*⁶⁸

65 UNESCO. 2004. Normative instruments concerning technical and vocational education. UNESCO, Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001406/140603e.pdf>

66 MEDA – Education and Training for Education. 2007. Transition from education to work: What relevance for MEDA partners? [http://ef.europa.eu/pubmgmt.nsf/getAttachment/019835E22E570165C12573370037C4EF/\\$File/NOTE763DWA.pdf](http://ef.europa.eu/pubmgmt.nsf/getAttachment/019835E22E570165C12573370037C4EF/$File/NOTE763DWA.pdf)

67 OECD. 2010. OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training - Learning for Jobs. <http://www.oecd.org/education/highereducationandadultlearning/learningforjobs.htm>

68 UNESCO, 2005. NFE-MIS Handbook: Developing a Sub-National Non-Formal Education Management Information System. UNESCO, Paris. p. viii. http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=33578&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Youth and adult literacy training are the most important educational activities provided within the NFE framework. In many countries the need for literacy training and other non-formal educational programmes is vast, given low enrolments, high drop-out rates or insufficient quality of formal education, resulting in high adult illiteracy rates. But NFE often does not have sufficient political backing or resources: human and financial. Literacy levels worldwide still lag behind EFA Goal 4 (Increase adult literacy by 50 per cent) and increased action is urgently required by governments and the international community alike to address this challenge.

■ **Key issues**

- **Literacy:** Despite progress made since 2000, achieving EFA Goal 4 of halving adult illiteracy still remains a challenge in many countries. In addition, there are growing concerns that despite having received basic literacy training, many people are not necessarily functionally literate or might be at a risk of losing their literacy skills. In evaluating education policy, it is important to assess whether adequate literacy policies and plans are in place and whether they are accompanied by appropriate, relevant and sustainable implementation plans that are translated into high quality literacy and post-literacy programmes that reflect learners' needs.
- **Equivalency programmes:** Equivalency programmes are primarily organized for children and youth who do not have access to, or have dropped out of, formal primary or basic education. Typically, equivalency programmes aim at providing education that is equivalent to formal primary or basic education and aims to ultimately mainstream the target groups into the formal system.⁶⁹ There is a risk that equivalency programmes can create a separate education system parallel to the formal education sector. For this reason, it is important to develop a clear policy for integrating or re-integrating equivalency students into the formal sector.
- **Other NFE programmes:** The NFE sector is very broad and includes other educational and training programmes aside from literacy and equivalency programmes, including training in life skills, income generation and rural development. These types of programmes can be conducted in conjunction with literacy programmes or as stand-alone programmes. It is important to obtain a clear understanding of whether there is a general policy for NFE that includes these types of programmes. To identify any gaps in provision it is necessary to have an understanding of who provides what types of programmes to which target groups.
- **Co-ordination and management:** The nature of NFE is such that it can be provided by various partners, including different government ministries and departments, international organizations, NGOs and private bodies. For example, adult literacy can

69 UNESCO, 2005. NFE-MIS Handbook. UNESCO, Paris.

be handled by the NFE department of the ministry of education, or by the National Literacy Mission and other similar autonomous bodies. This diversity of providers makes co-ordination extremely difficult. Different providers have different planning, management, monitoring and reporting methods. Data should be compiled from each provider about their methods, and the providers should be asked to use the same data collection methods, so that the data from each can be easily compared. Policies, governance structures and budgets for NFE can vary a lot between countries. Depending on their conditions and needs, some countries may focus on literacy and post literacy, whereas other countries give priorities to lifelong learning and skills development.

■ **Guiding questions**

Literacy policies and programmes

- What are the latest adult and youth literacy rates in the country?
- What literacy and NFE policies exist in the country? What implementation strategies have been developed? Are there legislation and legal frameworks to back up policies on literacy and NFE? What is the national education budget's allocation to adult literacy? What kinds of mechanisms exist to co-ordinate the planning, management, monitoring and reporting for NFE programmes?
- What are the main providers of adult literacy programmes? What kinds of literacy programmes (for adults and youths) are provided and by whom? Do the programmes specifically target any marginalized groups? Is special attention given to gender and to disadvantaged population groups?
- To what extent are literacy facilitators qualified and adequately trained? What is the quality of literacy teaching and learning materials? How relevant are these materials?
- To what extent are adult literacy curricula based on people's learning needs? Are specific programmes provided on life skills and livelihood skills?
- Is there an enabling environment for learners to use and maintain their literacy skills (e.g. reading centres, newspapers, magazines, libraries, etc.)?

Equivalency programmes

- What policies, plans, strategies, regulations and mechanisms are in place for implementing equivalency programmes?
- In what way are equivalency programmes effectively implemented at the local level? What are the problems and issues? How can these problems and issues be addressed?
- To what extent are teachers/facilitators of equivalency programmes qualified and adequately trained? What can be done to ensure the quality of equivalency programmes, teachers and the teaching and learning materials?

Other NFE programmes

- What other types of NFE programmes exist in the country? What are their objectives and contents? Which organizations/bodies organize or provide these other NFE programmes?
- Which among these NFE programmes are stand-alone programmes? And which are combined with existing adult literacy, equivalency or skills training programmes?
- What has been the feedback from learners and stakeholders about the relevance, quality and impact of these NFE programmes?

Co-ordination and management

- How are NFE programmes co-ordinated and managed at the central level? Are the roles of government bodies, NGOs and stakeholders well defined?
- Who are the other NFE partners and what are their roles? What co-ordination mechanisms are in place to ensure efficient planning and service delivery? Is there any quality assurance and monitoring system in the government structure and how is it functioning? Is there any policy provision about the NFE partnerships and PPP?
- How much budget is allocated to NFE against the total public budget for education? What data are systematically collected on NFE programmes? How are they used for planning and management? What are the most important data/information gaps on NFE?

Resources

- UNESCO Literacy and Lifelong Learning website.⁷⁰
- UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning website.⁷¹
- International Council for Adult Education website.⁷²
- Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO website.⁷³

70 UNESCO. Literacy and Lifelong Learning website. <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/literacy-and-lifelong-learning/about-literacy-and-lifelong-learning/>

71 UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning website. <http://www.uil.unesco.org/home/>

72 International Council for Adult Education website. <http://www.icae2.org/>

73 Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO website. <http://www.accu.or.jp/jp/en/index.html>

2.4 Cross-Cutting Themes

As all sub-sectors of education are closely interlinked, there are several issues that cut across all levels and types of education and directly affect the analytical dimensions of access, quality and management. In relation to UNESCO's priorities, these cross-cutting themes include: teacher policies, gender, sustainable development, HIV and AIDS, information and communication technology, education statistics and information management.

2.4.1 Teacher policies

The quality of education in any country depends largely on the quality of its teaching force, which includes teachers and practitioners in the education system and in higher education institutions, instructors in technical and vocational institutions, and facilitators in non-formal education centres and programmes. Analysis of policies regarding teachers requires looking at the issues related to their recruitment, training, deployment, compensation, working conditions and career development. Teacher education and training, both pre-service and in-service training, is an especially important component of such analysis.

■ **Key issues**

Teacher training and continuing professional development: When it comes to training teachers, there are issues relating to the organization, contents, methods and quality of pre-service and in-service training programmes for the various levels and types of education, to the different approaches to professional development of teachers and other education personnel, and to professional standards and the code of ethics.

Recruitment and management of teachers: Issues relating to recruitment include demand for teachers exceeding supply, selection to the teaching profession, and posting and transfer of teachers (deployment and redeployment). Issues relating to management of teachers include admission criteria to teacher education programmes; special provisions for teachers in remote areas and for teachers teaching special needs' learners; supervision; and assessment of teacher performance.

Status and working conditions of teachers: Such issues include teacher workloads, employment status, compensation and benefits, employment opportunities, career development, and participation in decision-making.

■ **Guiding questions**

Teacher training and continuing professional development

- What is the percentage of teachers who do not meet the minimum academic qualifications as defined by the State, for each level and type of education?
- What are the different types of pre-service teacher education programmes in terms of level of training, duration, contents and organization? What are the different forms of in-service training for practicing teachers? How effectively does each of them function? What are the admission criteria and selection procedures for the various pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes?
- What kinds of incentives or support are offered for the continuing professional development of teachers?
- Are there any professional standards for the various types of teachers at the different levels and types of education? Is there a code of ethics or conduct for teachers?

Recruitment and management of teachers

- Who manages the training, licensing and hiring of teachers? Is it done by central authorities or local authorities? To what extent are these systems and authorities clearly defined? What are some of the implementation or operational issues?
- How does the distribution of teachers vary in different geographical regions? Are teachers adequately deployed in schools in rural areas? Do schools in rural areas have difficulty attracting and retaining qualified teachers? Does the supply of teachers meet the demand for teachers in the country, especially in rural and remote areas? Are there mechanisms to recruit teachers from minority groups to teach children in those minority groups?
- What measures have been taken to overcome teacher shortages, especially in rural areas? Are there part-time or contract teachers serving in rural schools? What are their service conditions? Are they adequately paid? Are they offered incentives and financial assistance? Do they meet minimum qualification and training requirements? Are there any policy provisions for the special needs of female teachers serving in remote areas?
- What kinds of policies or incentives have been offered to attract talented young people to join the teaching profession?
- What co-ordination arrangements exist among the various education authorities (national, provincial, primary, secondary, etc) in matters of recruiting, posting and transfer of teachers?

- How do education authorities at the local level supervise the attendance and assess the performance of teachers? What is the role of head teachers or school principals in teacher management and supervision?

Status and working conditions of teachers

- What is the percentage of teachers, by employment status, in each level and type of education?
- What are the working conditions of teachers in terms of hours of work, class size, teaching aids and materials, school facilities and annual holidays and leave?
- How do teacher salaries compare with the salaries for other professions in the country? How do benefits such as pensions, housing loans, medical benefits, etc. compare with other professions?
- What are the entry requirements to the teaching profession? What is the promotion and career structure? Is there security of tenure?
- Is there any collective bargaining through teacher unions, social dialogue through teacher professional associations, or regular consultation with teachers' organizations?

Resources

- UNESCO/ILO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers (1966).⁷⁴
- UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel (1997).⁷⁵
- World Bank Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) Teachers.⁷⁶
- OECD Attracting, Developing and Retaining Teachers website.⁷⁷

2.4.2 Gender

“Gender” refers to the perceived social roles of women and men in their families, societies and cultures. The concept of gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and behaviour of both (for example, the perceptions: “Men are income earners” and “Women are child caregivers”). These perceived roles and expectations are learned and passed on from one generation to the next. They are neither biologically pre-determined, nor fixed forever – they can be changed to achieve equity and equality among women and men.

74 UNESCO/ILO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers (1966). <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001604/160495e.pdf>

75 UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel (1997). <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001604/160495e.pdf>

76 World Bank. Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER). <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTEDUCATION/0,,contentMDK:22770531~menuPK:282391~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:282386~isCURL:Y,00.html>

77 OECD Attracting, Developing and Retaining Teachers website. http://www.oecd.org/document/9/0,3746,en_2649_39263231_11969545_1_1_1_1,00.html

The MDGs and EFA goals highlight the importance of gender equality in education. Gender equality in education exists when girls and boys have equal opportunities to access and participate in education.

Gender-sensitive curricula, learning materials, and teaching-learning processes, enable both girls and boys to become equally equipped with the life skills and attitudes that they will need to achieve their full potential. In addition, gender-sensitive education enables both girls and boys to realize their human rights within and outside of the education system, regardless of their sex.

Gender equality is a cross-cutting issue that must be considered for all levels and aspects of education. This requires assessing the implications for both women and men of any planned policy or action (gender mainstreaming). It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of both females and males an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all spheres, including education, so that women/girls and men/boys will benefit equally.

■ **Key issues**

- **Legal framework and enabling policies for gender equality:** An enabling environment for promoting gender equality is nested within a fair legal framework and non-discriminatory policies. Many countries have yet to design a legal framework or policies that promote gender equality, and have yet to translate such policies into concrete actions.
- **Gender biased curriculum and teaching-learning materials:** Curriculum materials often portray ideas and images that contribute to gender stereotypes and the internalization and acceptance of corresponding behaviours (for example, when books at school portray only men as doctors, it instils the belief that only men can become doctors). Curricula and teaching-learning materials must be reviewed for gender bias, which could include auditing the curriculum from a gender perspective and, where necessary, redesigning the curriculum and teaching-learning materials to remove any bias.
- **Gender gap between higher and lower levels of education:** A gender gap may be observed between higher and lower levels of education in many countries. The widening variance in the economic and social returns to different levels of schooling for boys and girls may be the main reason for this gap, with the implications that gender-related policies must take this into account.

■ **Guiding questions**

Policy and legal frameworks

- How strongly is the government committed to gender equality? Is there adequate legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex?
- Is there any policy explicitly targeting equality in access to education for both girls and boys? What is its nature and scope? What are the underlying assumptions being made about gender difference and inequality?
- Is there any policy explicitly targeting education for men/boys? What is its nature and scope? What are the underlying assumptions about gender difference and inequality? Are these policies likely to increase or decrease gender inequality? Are there any strategies targeting men/boys that explicitly attempt to redress a gender imbalance? How are these policies implemented, monitored and managed? By whom? Is gender mainstreamed into these processes?
- To what extent have the equal rights of girls and boys to receive education been enforced?
- How far and in what ways are the needs of the poorest and most disadvantaged women taken into account?
- Are there concrete incentives for the implementation of empowerment strategies? Are local elected bodies, stakeholders and communities sensitized to gender equality? Are there gender budgeting and budget tracking mechanisms in place?

Gender responsive curricula and teaching-learning materials

- Do the contents of the curricula and teaching-learning materials equally address the needs and interests of both boys and girls? Have the curricula and textbook materials been revised to ensure gender responsiveness? When? By whom?
- Are the language and pictures in teaching-learning materials free of gender bias and stereotypes?
- Is awareness of gender issues integrated into pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes? Are there gender considerations in teacher recruitment and career development policies?
- Is the school construction policy gender-responsive?

Gender gap between higher and lower levels of education

- Are the data on enrolment, retention, completion and learning achievements of children disaggregated by sex? What other education data are disaggregated by sex (e.g. numbers of male and female teachers)?
- What are the gender parity indices for intake rates, enrolment ratios, repetition, drop-out and transition rates at different levels of education and in different geographical regions of the country? How do they compare? What measures has the government taken to address the gender gaps in education?
- Are education planners, administrators, teachers and other types of education personnel oriented to gender issues in education? Is gender well-integrated in education planning, programming, budgeting and monitoring? Are teachers responsive to the needs of both girls and boys?

Resources

Statistics

- World Bank gender database.⁷⁸
- The World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2010.
- The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics.
- UIS Global Education Digest 2010.

Policy and gender mainstreaming

- GENIA Toolkit: Promoting Gender Equality in Education.⁷⁹
- Gender in Primary and Secondary Education: a Handbook for Policymakers and other Stakeholders.⁸⁰
- Gender Issues in Higher Education: Advocacy Brief.⁸¹
- Gender Manual: A Practical Guide for Development Policy-makers and Practitioners.⁸²

78 World Bank gender database. www.genderstats.worldbank.org

79 UNESCO. 2009. GENIA Toolkit for Promoting Gender Equality in Education, UNESCO, Bangkok. <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/gender/resources/genia-toolkit/>

80 Subrahmanian, R. 2007. Gender in Primary and Secondary Education: a Handbook for Policymakers and other Stakeholders. London, Commonwealth Secretariat.

81 Ramachandran, V. 2010. Gender Issues in Higher Education – Advocacy Brief. UNESCO, Bangkok. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001898/189825e.pdf>

82 Derbyshire, H. 2002. Gender Manual: A Practical Guide for Development Policy-makers and Practitioners. DFID, London. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/gendermanual.pdf>

2.4.3 Sustainable development

The world is facing serious environmental degradation and climate change. It has been estimated that our collective consumption of the earth's natural resources is 1.4 times faster than the planet's regenerative capacity. With a global population currently at around 7 billion and projected to reach 9 billion by 2050, humanity's strain on the environment is a major global challenge.

Because environmental issues are created by human activities, they can only be mitigated by sensitizing and educating people to change those activities. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is education that empowers individuals with the attitudes, behaviour, knowledge and skills to create a just society for present and future generations. ESD equips students with the ability to question conventional aspirations and challenge the way people view the world. It also encourages students to imagine a more just and sustainable world and reflect on how our values, beliefs and behaviour can bring about such a world. ESD is about learning for change and learning to change.

ESD is a holistic concept embracing societal, cultural, environmental and economic issues, thereby potentially touching on every aspect of life, and involves comprehensive learning strategies.⁸³ ESD involves incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and learning characteristics associated with ESD into curricula for all types and levels of education.⁸⁴

ESD interventions can cover teacher education, curriculum development, education policy and planning, and activities in classrooms and in the NFE sector. Education and awareness-raising activities by the media and other stakeholders from the informal sector are also part of ESD.⁸⁵

■ Key issues

ESD provides a platform for education about how to sustain the environments on which human society and human lives depend. The main contents of ESD are defined on the basis of the national context and national sustainable development priorities. Such contents may be related to diverse fields such as fresh water conservation, health, peace and conflict resolution, disaster mitigation, pollution reduction and hunger alleviation. In the Asia-Pacific region, UNESCO has identified two interlinked thematic issues that ESD should address as priorities: climate change education and disaster risk reduction.

83 UNESCO. 2005. A Situational Analysis of Education for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific Region, UNESCO, Bangkok. http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/ESD_situation_analysis/situational_analysis_2ed.pdf

84 UNESCO. 2011. Astrolabe. A Guide to Education for Sustainable Development Coordination in Asia and the Pacific. UNESCO. Bangkok. Annex 3. pp. 94-102. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001930/193013e.pdf>

85 UNESCO. 2002. Education for Sustainability. From Rio to Johannesburg: Lessons learned from a decade of commitment. UNESCO, Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127100e.pdf>

- **Integrating the principles of sustainable development:** MDG 7 (Ensure environmental sustainability) seeks to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, decrease biodiversity loss, improve access to clean drinking water, etc. Environmental degradation caused by human activities can impact the economic opportunities of communities. In many cases, scarcity of resources such as water and food can lead to loss of life, hunger, migration and increased conflict. Within the framework of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), many countries have established national ESD committees and developed policies and action plans. In analysing a country's education policies, it would be useful to review such ESD policies and action plans and their implementation, so as to identify any issues, gaps, lessons learned and needs.
- **Disaster risk reduction:** Natural hazards and disasters are a major risk to people's well-being and development. Education can play a key role in mitigating risk, safeguarding development gains and saving lives. Good planning and delivery of disaster risk reduction (DRR) education programmes, innovative pedagogical approaches, curriculum development and teacher training can lead directly to better preparedness. Some of the key issues include whether DRR education has been incorporated into national education policies and plans, and how such programmes can best be organized and delivered.
- **Community linkages:** Solutions to unsustainable practices are generally found in local communities. ESD provides an active link to learning about the economic, environmental and social issues in the community. For example, communities facing the issue of water shortages can learn about the role that forests play in providing water and therefore become motivated to protect their remaining forests. Linking ESD to solving community problems helps to transform education from being a process of information transfer into being an application of knowledge that is locally relevant. Evidence is emerging that school performance and community well-being increase when education incorporates the principles of sustainable development and is linked to community issues. Thus, there are strategic gains in reorienting education towards ESD. Reorienting education to incorporate the principles of sustainable development also includes adopting learner-centred pedagogies, experiential and project-based learning, a more integrated curriculum, and support for critical thinking skills.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ UNESCO. 2011. Astrolabe. A Guide to Education for Sustainable Development Coordination in Asia and the Pacific. UNESCO. Bangkok. Annex 3. pp. 94-102. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001930/193013e.pdf>

■ **Guiding questions**

Integrating the principles of sustainable development

- Is there a national policy or action plan on ESD? What are its priorities? How has the policy/action plan been implemented so far? What are the lessons learned, issues, gaps and identified needs?
- Is commitment to ESD at the policy level reflected in national budgets and education planning? If not, why not?
- Is there a management and accountability system in place to ensure the ESD policy/action plan is carried out? Is this system functioning?
- Is ESD integrated into school curricula and pre-service and in-service teacher education and training?
- How are the principles of sustainable development and the tools to address sustainability issues (e.g. critical thinking and problem-solving skills) integrated into learning content and assessment? Is education leading to positive changes in values and behaviour?
- Do the ESD-integrated curricula facilitate dialogue in the classroom (or in other learning environments)? Do teachers encourage experimenting as part of learning, critical thinking and project-based learning?

Disaster risk reduction

- To what extent are DRR and Climate Change Adaptation integrated into education policies and plans, including contingency plans for when disasters occur and plans for building safe and sustainable school facilities?
- What have been done to introduce DRR and Climate Change Adaptation into the various levels and types of education in different regions of the country? What are the lessons learned?

Community linkages

- Is ESD being linked to solutions for community problems? Does ESD have a positive impact on the ability of communities to solve issues, implement early warning systems and increase resilience to climate change and local natural disasters?
- What indigenous practices in the local community to address environmental problems could be included in curricula and in teaching and learning?
- Do ESD policies/strategies take into consideration and capitalize on indigenous knowledge, practices and competencies for sustainable development in local communities?

- How is information about DRR and Climate Change Adaption being incorporated into the formal curricula, and into co-curricular activities, non-formal education, and informal learning in the communities?

Resources

- Astrolabe. A Guide to Education for Sustainable Development Coordination in Asia and the Pacific.⁸⁷
- Education for Sustainable Development Lens: A Policy and Practice Review Tool.⁸⁸
- Decade of Education for Sustainable Development: International Implementation Scheme.⁸⁹
- Minimum Standards for Education. Preparedness, Recovery, Response.⁹⁰

2.4.4 HIV and AIDS

The education sector has a significant role to play in response to the HIV epidemic. The sector can help to prevent the spread of HIV through education and, in countries that are highly affected by HIV, by taking steps to protect students and teachers from the effects of HIV and AIDS. HIV and AIDS education, especially in schools, can shape the attitudes, opinions and behaviours of individuals, so can help prevent the disease in the most-at-risk populations. Additionally, it can contribute to the reduction of stigma and discrimination both in the education system and in the community, by teaching both the social and the biological aspects of HIV and AIDS. It can also make a significant contribution by supporting health improvement generally, and by helping to improve the health status of young people through school and outreach efforts.

The AIDS response in education at the country level can be framed in a combination of policy instruments, including a cross-sectoral HIV and AIDS policy, a specific HIV and AIDS education policy or a related policy integrated into the sector-wide education plan. An education sector HIV and AIDS policy is intended to guide a comprehensive and explicit sectoral response as part of a multi-sectoral drive. It informs every function of the education system and sector management, including the development of regulations and guidelines giving legal effect to such a sectoral HIV and AIDS policy.

87 UNESCO. 2011. Astrolabe. A Guide to Education for Sustainable Development Coordination in Asia and the Pacific. UNESCO. Bangkok. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001930/193013e.pdf>

88 UNESCO. 2010. Education for Sustainable Development Lens: A Policy and Practice Review Tool; Education for Sustainable Development in Action; Learning and Training Tools no. 2 – 2010 UNESCO, Paris. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001908/190898e.pdf>

89 United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development International Implementation Scheme. www.unescobkk.org/education/education-for-sustainable-development/un-decade-of-esd/international-implementation-scheme

90 Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. 2010. Minimum Standards for Education. Preparedness, Recovery, Response. http://www.ineesite.org/index.php/post/inee_handbook/

■ *Key issues*

Education sector HIV and AIDS policy themes: To be effective, an education sector HIV and AIDS policy must be comprehensive, addressing the following four themes:

- **Prevention:** This requires changes in the curriculum geared toward teaching life skills (including HIV and sexuality education), teacher training and preparation, and instructional materials. Appropriate resources will need to be earmarked and allocated to this end.
- **Treatment, care and support:** This is at the fringe of the education sector, requiring close co-operation and co-ordination with the health sector in order to provide for treatment and support, protection from discrimination and access to psychosocial care for learners and teachers.
- **Workplace issues and discrimination:** A set of policies and regulations needs to be in place to address teacher attrition due to the disease and the issue of discrimination against teachers and students living with HIV.
- **Sector-wide engagement and management:** HIV and AIDS in education cannot be effectively addressed by specialists alone. It must engage the whole sector throughout all stages of education management and involve all stakeholders in policy development and management. Integration of an AIDS response into sector-wide education plans and budgets is critical to ensure the successful functioning, monitoring and enforcement of the policy. Related plans are most effective when they are realistic, costed and time-bound, based on wide consultation and used strategically to mobilise resources.

■ *Guiding questions*

Overall policy framework

- Is there a national policy on HIV and AIDS? Does it cover sectoral responses (including education)? Is the education response costed and integrated into the education sector policy or plan?
- Is there a mechanism in place to support strategic planning of HIV and AIDS education? Are strategic actions, roles and responsibilities, monitoring indicators and costs of implementing the policy clearly defined? Are mechanisms in place to ensure that all levels of the education system are adequately informed about national policies on HIV and AIDS?
- Has a monitoring/review process been established to determine the degree to which plans have been implemented and their effectiveness? Are HIV-sensitive indicators included in education management information systems?

Prevention

- Have curriculum reform, introduction of life skills training, HIV and sexuality education and peer education programmes been instituted in national policies? What is missing?
- Has teacher training been strengthened on HIV and AIDS? Are there appropriate teaching and learning materials produced and used?
- What kinds of precautions are in place to eliminate the risk of transmission of all blood-borne pathogens, including HIV in educational institutions?

Treatment, care and support

- How readily available and acceptable is treatment, care and support to education sector personnel and learners (including protection from discrimination)? What types of systems have been developed, implemented and monitored for identification and support of orphans and other vulnerable children? How do education and health institutions co-operate? What are the gaps?

Workplace issues and discrimination

- What human resource policies are in place to minimize HIV vulnerability and ensure non-discriminatory practices in recruitment, advancement, continued employment and benefits for personnel affected by HIV?
- What measures ensure that no HIV affected learner is denied admission or denied continued attendance?
- Is there a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment and abuse among students and between school staff, teachers and students?

Sector engagement and management of the response

- Have co-ordination units been established to review laws, regulations, policies, procedures, codes of conduct and collective agreements to ensure that HIV and AIDS are appropriately addressed? Is staff time allocated for ensuring the actual operation of the units?
- Has an inclusive process been established with broad stakeholder engagement (e.g. ministry of education and other education sector interest groups) throughout the policy development and review processes?
- What are the steps to be taken to ensure the policy is enforceable?

Resources

- Educational Planning and Management in a World with AIDS.⁹¹
 - Module 2.1: Developing and Implementing HIV/AIDS Policy in Education
 - Module 4.3: An Education Policy Framework for Orphans and Vulnerable Children
- EDUCAIDS Framework for Action.⁹²
- Toolkit for Mainstreaming HIV in the Education Sector.⁹³
- UNESCO HIV and AIDS Education Clearinghouse.⁹⁴

2.4.5 Information and communication technology

Information and communication technology (ICT) have the potential to increase access to information; make learning available anytime, anywhere; and make learning more enjoyable for learners, thereby improving participation rates and learning outcomes. Use of ICT can also improve the quality of teaching, enable the creation of more relevant and stimulating learning materials, improve education management, enhance the provision of educational services and make such services more cost-effective.

The term information and communication technology refers to all forms of technology that are used to transmit, process, store, create, display, share or exchange information by electronic means. Examples of forms of ICT that can be used in education include such things as educational radio programmes, DVDs, mobile phone (m-learning) applications and interactive computer programs.

ICT in education is a cross-cutting theme across all education types and levels. Policies relating to the use of ICT in education can be found embedded in a wide range of educational areas that include education policy, teacher education, teaching and learning, non-formal education, monitoring and measuring change, research and knowledge sharing, and cross-sectoral ICT programmes.

91 UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning and the Mobile Task Team on the Impact of HIV/AIDS on Education. 2007. Educational Planning and Management in a World with AIDS. Paris, IIEP <http://www.iiep.unesco.org/capacity-development/training/training-materials/hiv aids.html>

92 UNESCO. 2008. EDUCAIDS Framework for Action. Paris, UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001473/147360E.pdf>

93 UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on Education. Toolkit for Mainstreaming HIV in the Education Sector. Paris, UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001566/156673e.pdf>

94 UNESCO HIV and AIDS Education Clearinghouse. <http://hiv aidsclearinghouse.unesco.org>

■ **Key issues**

- ICT in education policy: This relates to developing appropriate policies and plans that facilitate the integration of relevant forms of ICT into the education system.
- ICT in teacher education: This is made up of two sub-issues: 1) building the capacity of teachers to utilise ICT effectively to facilitate student-centred teaching and learning, and building their capacity to collaborate in ICT-enhanced teaching communities; and 2) using ICT to train teachers.
- Developing and delivering content using ICT: There are various issues relating to designing and developing useful and appropriate ICT-based teaching and learning materials and other resources. These issues are often related to the capacity of teachers to create or access appropriate materials and utilise them effectively in the classroom.
- Use of ICT for non-formal education and informal learning: ICT can be used in non-formal education programmes and via informal learning opportunities to assist out-of-school youths and adults in gaining and maintaining literacy skills and expanding their livelihood opportunities. There are issues, however, in terms of such things as the types of ICT that are appropriate, the level of skills of teachers in using such ICT and the cost of the ICT tools.

■ **Guiding questions**

ICT in education policy

- Does the country have a national policy or plan that aims to integrate the use of ICT into national education? Is it time-bound, costed and reflected in the government budget? Has it been discussed with and endorsed by the other ministries concerned?
- What is the level of awareness and understanding among policy-makers and education managers about the various options for ICT use in different education settings?

ICT in teacher education

- What kinds of training and professional development activities are available to teachers who wish to use ICT effectively in improving their teaching and learning? Are these activities ad hoc or part of the government strategy? Is there evidence of the impact of these activities?
- Have teacher education institutions revised their teacher education programmes to include ICT-related curricula? How are they implemented?
- Do teachers in remote areas benefit from special ICT-related programmes or activities?

- What are these? What achievements and/or difficulties can be mentioned?
- Do teacher training courses utilize innovative and effective forms of ICT to train teachers?

Developing and delivering content using ICT

- How is the use of ICT being strengthened in school administration, school curricula, and the teaching-learning processes in the classroom? What are the difficulties? Are the schools connected as a network to support effective use of ICT?
- What is the level of capacity of teachers in using ICT to develop teaching and learning materials and integrate ICT into their pedagogies? Are there disparities between schools in different geographical regions and at different locations? What kinds of software, courseware and digital resources are available to teachers?

ICT in non-formal education and informal learning

- What is the level of use of ICT in non-formal education and informal learning? What are the various forms of ICT that are being used in NFE? What are the issues and challenges in terms of ICT infrastructure in NFE institutions such as community learning centres, community telecentres, etc.?
- How do NFE practitioners and facilitators use ICT in their work?
- What are the different kinds of ICT-based NFE programmes that are carried out in the country? Are they ad hoc activities supported by specific projects or part of a sustained government strategy?

Resources

- UNESCO ICT in Education Policy website.⁹⁵
- UNESCO ICT in Education Clearinghouse.⁹⁶
- UNESCO. 2010. ICT Transforming Education: A Regional Guide.⁹⁷
- UNESCO. 2007. ICT in Education in the Asia Pacific Region: Progress and Plans.⁹⁸

2.4.6 Statistics and information management

Data and statistics are essential as a basis for formulating evidence-based policies and implementing and monitoring result-oriented programmes. However, data can only be useful if they are relevant, reliable, consistent and available in a timely manner.

95 UNESCO ICT in Education Policy website <http://www.unescobkk.org/archive/education/ict/themes/policy/>

96 UNESCO ICT in Education Clearinghouse <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/>

97 UNESCO. 2010. ICT Transforming Education: A Regional Guide <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001892/189216e.pdf>

98 UNESCO. 2007. ICT in Education in the Asia Pacific Region: Progress and Plans. http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/brochures/ict_in_education.pdf

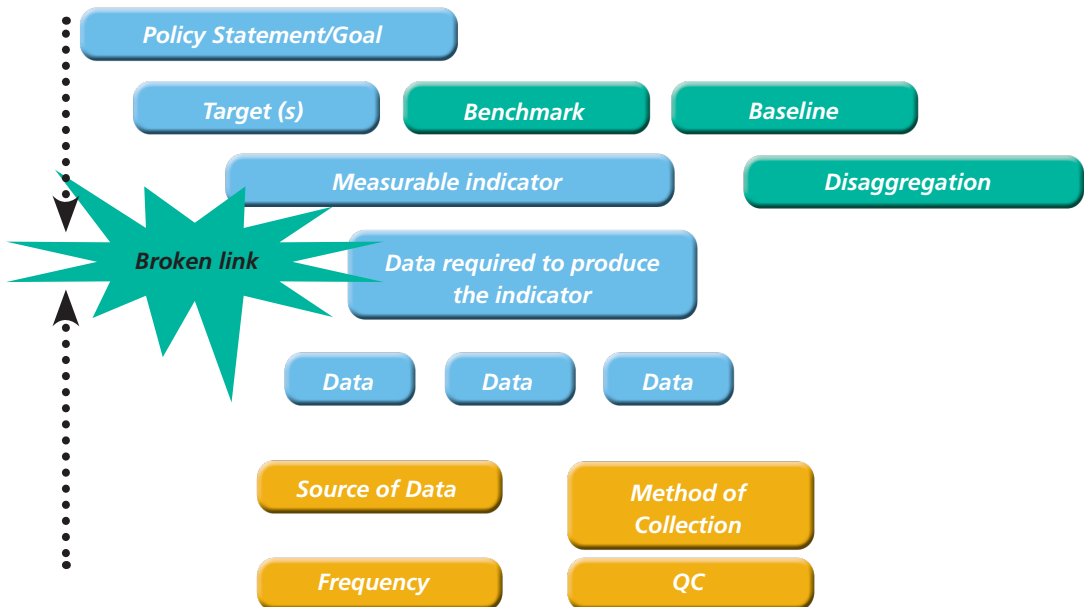
Throughout the region, countries are setting up EMIS to collect data and produce reliable and up-to-date statistics for policy use, but many of these systems have not yet achieved their goals. There has been an inconsistent understanding of terminologies, definitions, methodologies and sources of data in producing education indicators. This affects the accuracy and quality of the data collected. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the quality of data depends on several dimensions including:

- Relevance to policy
- Validity and reliability
- Potential for disaggregation
- Timeliness and punctuality
- Clarity and transparency
- Comparability through standards
- Accessibility and affordability
- Consistency over time and space

■ **Key issues**

- **Quality of data:** Accurate, reliable and consistent information can enable a decision-maker to make appropriate and timely decisions or policy choices. Weaknesses on the part of data providers – from inadequate technical skills to lack of motivation and genuine commitment – often result in much of the collected data not being used, which is a waste of the resources invested into compiling that data.
- **Linkages between planners and statisticians:** Statistics play a major role in every step of the policy cycle. Lack of effective co-ordination between policy-makers, planners and statisticians can lead to difficulties in formulating sound policies that are based on relevant and accurate information and data. Planners often prepare plans that include various targets and monitoring indicators without much involvement from statisticians and without their professional validation as to whether the indicators they have identified are feasible, meaningful and realistic to measure. At the same time, statisticians are often busy collecting data without much consultation with the education planners, assuming that all the data will be useful for the planners. This broken link is illustrated in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Linkages between planners and statistics



- **Transforming data into relevant information and useful policy:** A huge amount of data is collected in each country, but not enough attention is paid to how to transform this data into useful information and use this information as a basis for in decision-making. In relation to this, it is worthwhile to note the following:

We have more information now than we can use, and less knowledge and understanding than we need. Indeed, we seem to collect information because we have the ability to do so, but we are so busy collecting it that we haven't devised a means of using it. The true measure of any society is not what it knows but what it does with what it knows.

– Warren Bennis (Leadership Institution, University of Southern California)

- **Establishing a systematic and sustainable monitoring system:** Many countries have set up education management information systems, hoping to generate good quality data for the users, particularly policy makers. Most of these information systems are short-lived, however, and never manage to reach a systematic and sustainable level. This is often due to lack of clear planning and lack of understanding regarding what is feasible given the country context. Poor planning and subsequent EMIS failure causes disappointment and frustration among decision-makers and donors. Above all, it leads to guess-based decision-making and therefore leads to bad governance.

■ **Guiding questions**

Quality of data

- What is the general quality of the statistical data currently available in the country? Are there discrepancies between official national statistics and statistics from other sources (e.g. international statistics, donor reports, academic studies, etc.)? If yes, why?
- What kind of data quality control and validation system is in place?
- If the quality of data is a problem, what are the key bottlenecks?

Linkages between planners and statistics

- To what extent are the data and their analysis integrated in policy development and implementation?
- What would be your advice regarding how to streamline and co-ordinate the work of education planners and statisticians to create synergies and harmonized actions?
- Poor data are often blamed on insufficient resources allotted by decision-makers for data collection and maintenance of information systems. If this is true, why does this happen and how can decision-makers be convinced to allocate sufficient resources?

Transforming data into useful and relevant information

- Often many agencies collect data (in some cases the same data from the same sources) but produce different statistics and reports, leading to confusion among data users. How can such duplications be reconciled and resolved?
- How are the data stored and analysed? Who has access to such data?

Establishing a systematic and sustainable monitoring system

- Does an education management information system exist in the country? What data and information does it collect and how? How are the collected data and information used?
- How is the existing monitoring system funded? Was it established and funded by specific donor-funded projects and programmes?
- What is the level of capacity at the central, provincial and local levels to use the existing monitoring system?
- What policies should be put in place to ensure the sustainability of the information system, particularly if the system was set up under a specific project or with a finite funding source?

Resources

- Information tools for the preparation and monitoring of education plans.⁹⁹
- Data Quality Assessment Framework for Education Statistics.¹⁰⁰
- Indicators for Educational Planning: Practical Guide.¹⁰¹
- Association for the Development of Education in Africa: Working Group on Education Statistics.¹⁰²
- PARIS21: Statistics of development/ Renewing the partnership.¹⁰³
- Capacity development in education planning and management: learning from successes and failures.¹⁰⁴
- Methodology for Evaluating Data Quality – Education policy and data centre.¹⁰⁵

99 Information Tools for the Preparation and Monitoring of Education Plans. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001323/132306e.pdf>

100 Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF) for Education Statistics. http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=5738_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

101 Indicators for Educational Planning: Practical Guide. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001034/103407e.pdf>

102 Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA): Working Group on Education Statistics (WGES). http://www.adeanet.org/adeaPortal/adea/workgroups/en_wges.html

103 PARIS21: Statistics of development/Renewing the partnership. <http://www.paris21.org/>

104 Capacity Development in Education Planning and Management: Learning from Successes and Failures (IIEP). <http://www.iiep.unesco.org/capacity-development/capacity-development-strategies/range-of-studies/capdev-in-educational-planning-management.html>

105 Methodology for Evaluating Data Quality – Education Policy and Cata Centre (AED). <http://www.epdc.org/policyanalysis/static/DataQuality.pdf>

Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| Adult literacy rate* | The percentage of population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. |
| Age-specific enrolment ratio | The percentage of the population of a specific age enrolled, irrespective of the level of education. It is calculated by dividing the number of students of a specific age enrolled in educational institutions at all levels of education by the population of the same age. |
| Apparent intake rate | The total number of new entrants in the first grade of primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population at the official primary school-entrance age. It can be calculated by dividing the number of new entrants in grade 1, irrespective of age, by the population of official school-entrance age. |
| Assessment of learning achievement | This describes the level of achievement either of the education system or of individual schools and students in relation to standards set by national education systems. |
| Class size (Pupil-section ratio) | The number of students a teacher has in his/her class at a given time. |
| Cohort completion rate* | Percentage of a cohort of pupils enrolled in the first grade of primary education in a given school year who are expected to complete this level of education. The CCR is the product of the probability to reach the last grade and the probability to graduate from the last grade. It is calculated by dividing the number of students completing the final year of primary or secondary education by the population of the official graduation age. |
| Competency-based learning | Learning that develops the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to achieve competency standards. |
| Drop-out rate, by grade* | Proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade at a given school year who are no longer enrolled in the following school year. |
| Gross completion rate | The total number of students completing the final year of primary or secondary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population of the official primary or secondary graduation age. |
| Gross enrolment ratio* | The number of pupils or students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education. For the tertiary level, the population used is the 5-year age group starting from the official secondary school graduation age. It is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled in a given level of education regardless of age by the population of the age-group which officially corresponds to the given level of education. |

*Source: UIS Glossary: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/Glossary.aspx> (Accessed on 11 February 2013).

| | |
|--|---|
| Gross (apparent) intake rate | See “apparent intake rate.” |
| Gross national product | Gross national product (GNP) is the value of the goods and services produced in an economy, plus the value of the goods and services imported, minus the goods and services exported. GNP is very closely related to the concept of gross domestic product (GDP), and in practice the numbers tend to be very similar. |
| Net enrolment rate* | Total number of pupils or students in the theoretical age group for a given level of education enrolled in that level, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group. |
| Net intake rate* | New entrants in the first grade of primary education who are of the official primary school-entrance age, expressed as a percentage of the population of the same age. |
| Out-of-school children* | Children in the official primary school age range who are not enrolled in either primary or secondary schools |
| Promotion rate by grade* | Proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade at a given school year who study in the next grade in the following school year. |
| Public expenditure on education as percentage of gross domestic product | Total public expenditure on education (current and capital) expressed as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product in a given financial year. It is calculated by dividing total public expenditure on education in a given financial year by the GDP of the country for the corresponding year. |
| Public expenditure on education as percentage of total public expenditure | Total public expenditure on education (current and capital) expressed as a percentage of total public expenditure in a given financial year. It is calculated by dividing total expenditure on education incurred by all government agencies/departments in a given financial year by the total government expenditure for the same financial year. |
| Rate of incidence of poverty | The proportion of families or individuals with per capita income less than the per capita poverty threshold. |
| Repetition rate by grade* | Number of repeaters in a given grade in a given school year, expressed as a percentage of enrolment in that grade the previous school year. |
| Retention rate | A measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational programme at an institution, expressed as a percentage. |
| Rote learning | A mode of learning whereby students must simply repeat back information given to them, with no understanding or ability to apply this information. |

*Source: UIS Glossary: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/Glossary.aspx> (Accessed on 11 February 2013).

Glossary continued

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Sector-wide approach | <p>An approach to development that brings together stakeholders (government agencies, development agencies, etc), under the leadership of the country government, to develop and implement a single, comprehensive policy and programme for each sector (e.g. the education sector). Under this approach there are no self-contained projects, as there were in the past. All projects are coordinated under the single sector-wide programme.</p> |
| Survival rate by grade* | <p>The percentage of a cohort of students enrolled in the first grade of a given level of education in a given school-year who are expected to reach successive grades. The rate is calculated by dividing the total number of students belonging to a school-cohort who reached each successive grade of the specified level of education by the number of students in the school-cohort, i.e. those originally enrolled in the first grade of primary education.</p> |
| Teacher retention rate | <p>The number of teachers who stayed in teaching in a year (including those who moved from school to another) expressed as percentage of the total number of teachers in the same year. The total number of teachers is calculated as: the total number of teachers in a year minus the total number of teachers who left the teaching force that year plus newly recruited teachers the same year.</p> |
| Transition rate* | <p>The number of pupils (or students) admitted to the first grade of a higher level of education in a given year, expressed as a percentage of the number of pupils (or students) enrolled in the final grade of the lower level of education in the previous year.</p> |

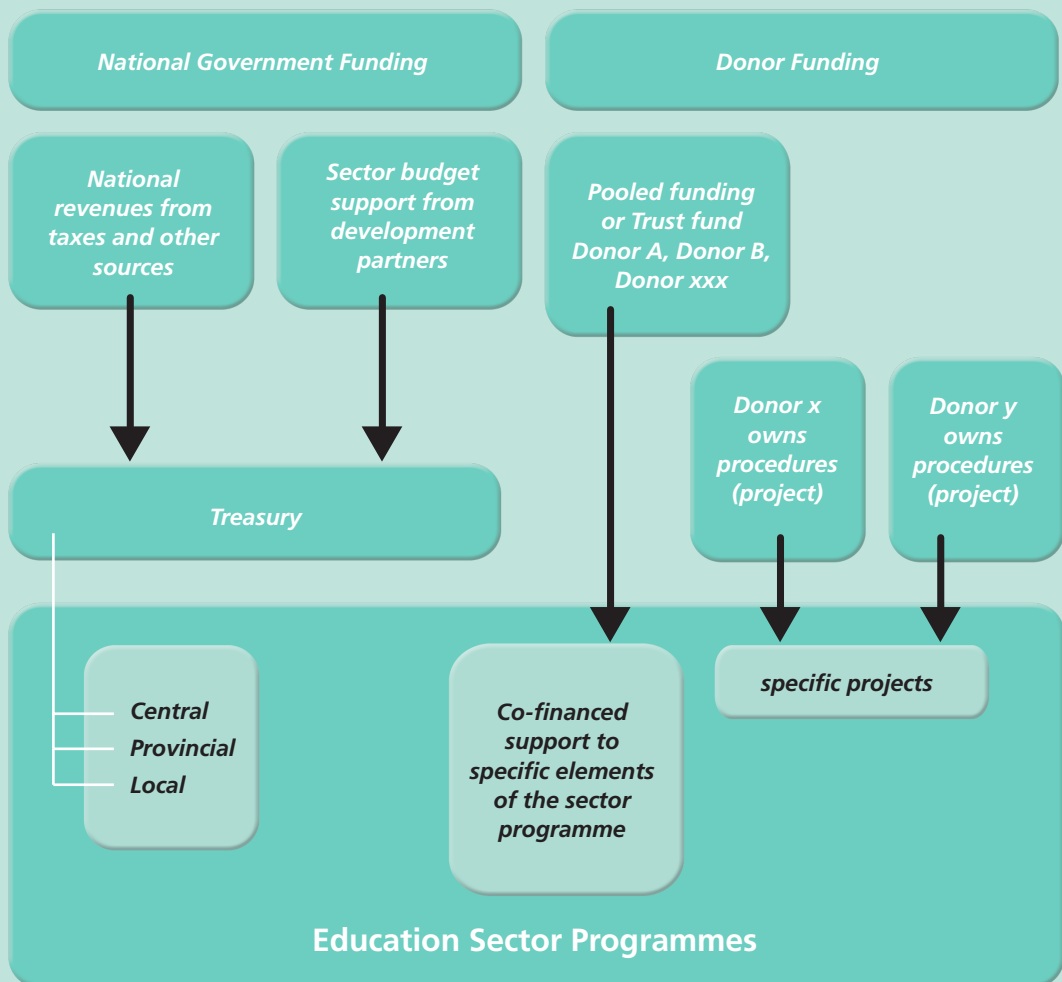
*Source: UIS Glossary: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/Glossary.aspx> (Accessed on 11 February 2013).

Annex

1. Financing modalities for partners

Several modalities are used by partners (countries) and each has advantages and disadvantages. The choice of financing modality may be a result of analysis of the partner government's public financial management systems or of the legal or policy requirements of a particular development partner (Figure 10). It is important that there is a common forum to discuss this and that all resources (for interventions in the education sector) are recorded with the ministry of finance and the ministry of education so that they can be captured in the overall funding resources.

Figure 10: IDP financing modalities



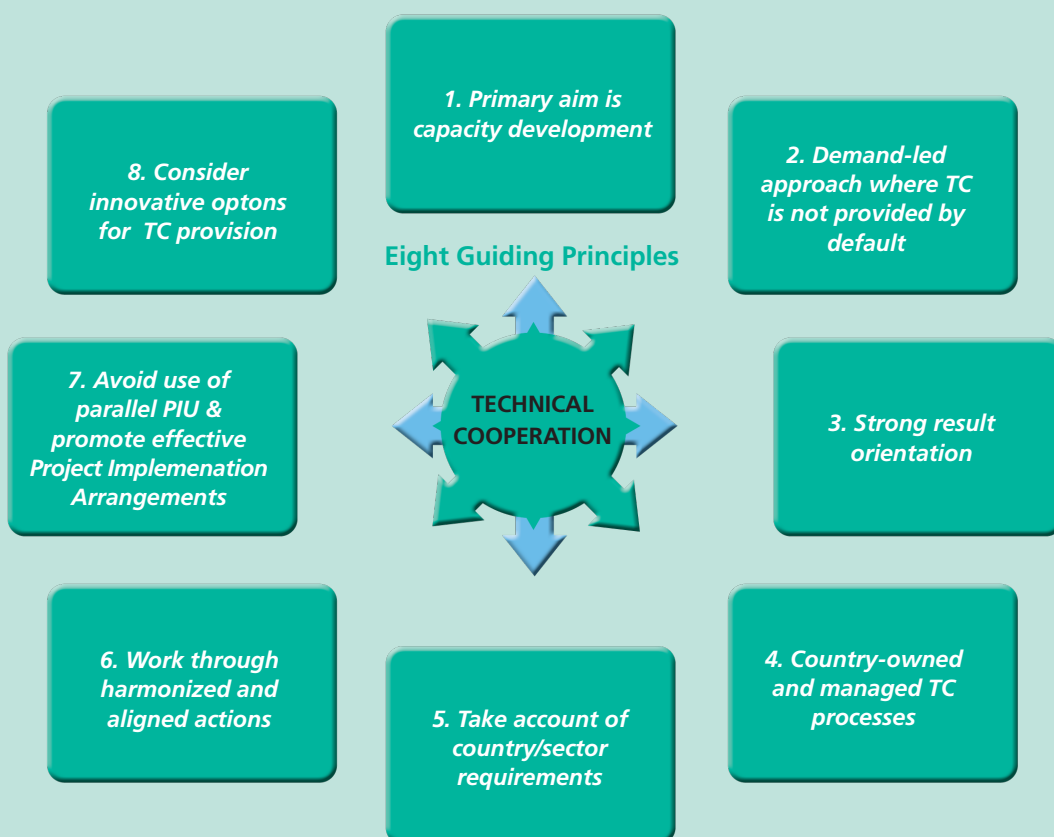
*Source: http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/library/EFA-FTL_FINAL_Modality_Guide_November_2008.pdf

The mandates of NGOs and CSOs often mean that budget support is not an option. Project-managed funds or donor-managed pooled funding may be a useful option for piloting specific innovations or for managing and employing technical assistance. Nevertheless, the assistance they provide should be in support of the overall sector plan and the financing reported to the treasury to be captured as a part of the overall sector resource envelope.

2. Technical assistance and developing capacity

Technical assistance (TA), or technical co-operation, can be a problematical area of policy support. TA can have three purposes: advisory, operational and training. Many agencies have prepared models for managing TA. Figure 11 shows the principles developed by the European Commission. This is an approach that UNESCO staff may find helpful. Further information is available from the European Commission capacity4dev website www.capacity4dev.eu. These principles can be turned into questions to analyse a country's TA process.

Figure 11: Principles of technical cooperation



Managing and deploying TA can be a time-consuming and expensive operation. On the other hand, there is a recurrent issue of overlap in designing and providing TA and capacity development support because each agency crafts and delivers its activities only within the scope of its own interventions. An option is to have a TA Trust Fund that is managed by the government and by the donors. UNESCO, as a neutral and technical agency, may support the government in developing a comprehensive TA and capacity development plan and mobilize partners to align their related interventions around this government plan.

*Source: UIS Glossary (<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Pages/Glossary.aspx>). (Accessed on 11 February 2013).

What are key education policy and management concepts?
How can an education system be analyzed?
How can critical policy areas be identified?

The education sector can seem vast and complex to analyse. Volume I of this handbook proposes a systematic and structured method that facilitates analysis of education policy and programmes across the areas of access, quality and management of education and across the major cross-cutting issues, for all levels and types of education within the national context.

What is a sector-wide approach to education?
What are key modalities for cooperation?



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