



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Internal Oversight Service
Evaluation Office

IOS/EVS/181

September 2019



Review of UNESCO's work on curriculum development

Commissioning office

UNESCO IOS Evaluation Office

Authors and affiliations:

Fabrice Henard – Independent evaluation consultant

Christophe Dietrich – Evaluation manager – Evaluation Unit, ICON Institute

Viviane Bertel – Evaluator - Evaluation Unit, ICON Institute

Geoff Geurts - Principal evaluation specialist UNESCO IOS

Martina Rathner – Principal evaluation specialist UNESCO IOS

Taipei Dlamini – Evaluation Associate Programme Coordinator UNESCO IOS

Review period:

June -September 2019

Report submission:

September 2019

Abstract & Acknowledgements

ABSTRACT

In response to a request from the UNESCO Executive Board in Spring 2019, the UNESCO Internal Oversight Service (IOS) Evaluation Office has undertaken this Review to provide a mapping and analysis of UNESCO's activities in curriculum; to provide an overview of the roles typically played by other national, regional and international actors in the field of curriculum, and to assess the demand for services from UNESCO Member States and donors in the area of curriculum. The review found that curriculum is widely considered as the foundational building block of the education system, resulting from a pedagogical and political consensus with regard to what is important in learning and why, according to both the learner's needs and societal visions. In light of challenges of the 21st century and the need to strengthen the role of the humanities in a context dominated by technology and data, the redefinition of curriculum has become one of the main concerns of national education authorities around the world. It is also widely accepted that quality curricula can support the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). The review concluded that curriculum, particularly curriculum development and reform processes, should remain an area of UNESCO's education programme as it addresses a clear need from Member States. As curriculum implies both technical and political dimensions, UNESCO can act as a neutral broker, to facilitate informed and inclusive policy dialogue. It also has a long-term tradition in facilitating complex curriculum processes in often difficult and sensitive contexts. In addition, UNESCO has the capacity to serve as a platform for international exchanges and comparative research, including through networks such as UNESCO Chairs, and coordinating knowledge hubs and communities of practice. To address curriculum with added value in the future, UNESCO should focus on providing methodological technical assistance, capacity development, standard-setting and policy advice to support the curriculum processes, products and competences in Member States while ensuring a coordinated and holistic perspective. Complementary to work on curriculum from a methodological point of view, thematic Sections at Headquarters should continue elaborating content on specific crosscutting topics. Looking to the future, the review recommends (i) maintaining a specialized category 1 institute as a lead entity on curriculum development; (ii) refining the offer of technical assistance and capacity development to Member States on curriculum development and reform; (iii) developing and maintaining a knowledge base of materials and a roster of experts on curriculum; (iv) providing a platform for policy dialogue and exchange of experience among Member States; and (v) systematizing the inclusion of curriculum in standard-setting and normative work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Review was commissioned by the UNESCO Internal Oversight Service Evaluation Office. It was managed and quality assured by Mr. Geoffrey Geurts, Principal Evaluation Specialist, with the assistance of Ms. Martina Rathner, Principal Evaluation Specialist and Ms Taipei Dlamini, Associate Evaluation Programme Coordinator from the UNESCO IOS Evaluation Office. It was conducted by an independent team of senior evaluation consultants from ICON-INSTITUTE Consulting Group, Germany on behalf of and in cooperation with the IOS Evaluation Office. The IOS Evaluation Office with the assistance of the ED Sector and the International Bureau of Education ensured the quality of the process throughout the review, as well as the quality of the deliverables, including the final review report. The IOS Evaluation Office acknowledges and thanks all interviewees who agreed to participate in this Review and all those who provided valuable information and insights into the subject of curriculum both within and outside the UNESCO contexts, and UNESCO's work in the field of curriculum development. It would especially like to thank the staff and former staff of the Education Sector, and the International Bureau of Education (IBE) for their support and cooperation.

Susanne Frueh
Director IOS

Cover page: © UNESCO/ED

Table of Content

Abstract & Acknowledgements	ii
Table of Content	3
Table of Tables	3
Acronyms	1
MAIN REPORT	2
1. Objectives and methodology of the Review	2
2. Definitions of curriculum	3
3. Mapping of curriculum activities at UNESCO	5
4. Mapping of other activities in curriculum development.....	8
5. Needs analysis for UNESCO interventions in the field of curricula	12
6. Opportunities and challenges facing UNESCO's work in curriculum.....	13
7. Conclusion and Recommendations	15

APPENDICES	17
A. Terms of Reference	17
B. Definition of curriculum	21
C. List of documents reviewed.....	22
D. List of key informants	25
E. Survey to the National Commissions	27
F. Survey to the Field Offices	32
G. Biodata of the evaluators	38

Table of Tables

Table 1 Activities IBE has been involved in over the past 15 years	6
Table 2 Overview of some of the most active global and regional actors and their interventions in curriculum	9

Acronyms

CapED	UNESCO Capacity Development for Education Programme	STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
CapEFA	UNESCO Capacity Development for Education for All Programme	ToR	Terms of References
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training	TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa	UIL	UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
CSO	Civil society organisation	UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)	UN	United Nations
ETF	European Training Foundation	UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
EU	European Union	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
IBE	UNESCO International Bureau of Education	UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
IICBA	UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa	WHO	World Health Organization
IIEP	UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning		
ILO	International Labour Organization		
NGO	Non-governmental organization		
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee		
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal		

MAIN REPORT

1. Objectives and methodology of the Review

1. The main purpose of the review was to take stock and to assess the relevance of UNESCO's work in the area of curriculum and to provide some insights into the specific role for UNESCO in this field.
2. The Review focused on:
 - Providing a detailed mapping and analysis of UNESCO's activities in curriculum; (chapter 3)
 - Providing an overview of the roles typically played by other national, regional and international actors in the field of curriculum (chapter 4); and
 - Assessing the demand for services from UNESCO Member States and donors in the area of curriculum (chapter 5).
3. The Review was conducted from June to September 2019 by an external consultant team from ICON Institute Consulting Group, Germany on behalf of the UNESCO Internal Oversight Service (IOS), Evaluation Office. The IOS Evaluation Office was responsible for the management and coordination of the Review and for providing quality assurance of the review process and the deliverables.
4. The Review draws on multiple data collection strands including **desk research**, i.e. a review of materials from UNESCO, academics and other international organizations; **interviews** with 14 UNESCO education specialists and senior managers at Headquarters, in the field and at the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE); consultations with 3 representatives of other organizations working on curricula and interviews with 4 Member States that expressed interest in hosting the IBE. Furthermore, **online surveys** were sent to all UNESCO National Commissions and to UNESCO field offices. The responses received from the 58 education specialists reached in the field represent a 30 percent response rate¹. The response rate for the survey to all UNESCO National Commissions was 50 percent², which is considered high and signifies the importance attached by Member States to the issue³. The review

was conducted in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Norms and Standards.

¹ Answers originate from 17 field offices, including the regional education bureaux from Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Arab States and Latin America and the Caribbean.

² Answers were recorded from Member States covering all UNESCO regions.

³ For similar surveys to National Commissions on other evaluation topics an average response rate of between 20% and 30% is usually obtained.

2. Definitions of curriculum

5. Given the variety of contexts within which students learn, the term ‘curriculum’ can receive various connotations.

6. In a narrow sense, curriculum refers to ‘the courses offered by an educational institution’ (Cf. Merriam-Webster Dictionary). In a broader sense, largely accepted today, curriculum is understood as the ‘ensemble of learning opportunities and experiences that education institutions offer to learners in accordance with their development needs and societal goals’.

7. In a synthetic way, curriculum needs to respond to the questions of what, why, how and how well students should learn. On the one hand, curriculum is expected to ensure the transmission of people’s cultural values. On the other hand, it is expected to play a transformative role to both the development of individuals/persons and the development of societies/communities.

8. The IBE has conducted an authoritative research-based study⁴ on the conditions to be met in order to ensure the quality of the curriculum as an appropriate tool for today’s education sector. A **quality curriculum** includes a set of factors and steps that lead to a robust, effective curriculum, irrespective of its disciplinary content. These factors and steps apply for any curriculum.

9. Curriculum theory distinguishes between the written/intended/official curriculum (i.e. Curriculum Frameworks; subject curricula or syllabuses; learning materials; and guides) and the applied curriculum resulting from classroom interactions in diverse real-life contexts. The impact a curriculum is supposed to make is defined through expected learning outcomes (i.e. effective/realized curriculum).

10. The shaping and making of curriculum is called curriculum development. Usually, curriculum development includes *different phases* (*‘curriculum cycles’*) such as:

- **Developing the vision**
- **Curriculum planning** (including the management of curriculum processes)

- **Curriculum design** (i.e. defining the bigger picture, the main curriculum axes and features, and the links between the different curriculum components)
- **Drafting/writing the curriculum** through collaborative processes
- **Curriculum implementation** (through teaching and learning in the context of various learning environments)
- **Monitoring and evaluation** processes (M&E)
- **Curriculum review and revision**

11. Given the complex and rapid changes in today’s world, curriculum is increasingly expected to provide learners with the competences needed to learn, live and work in the 21st Century. The term ‘competences’ embraces the ensemble of knowledge, skills and attitudes (all underpinned by values) that learners need to mobilize independently and make proof of in order to deal with new situations and solve problems in a competent, effective and responsible/ethical way.

12. Learning experiences and opportunities can be included in the curriculum via subject areas and subjects, crosscutting issues, and extracurricular activities. While the curriculum as a whole should contribute to the development of key/transversal competences, some subjects or learning experiences could be seen as carriers for the development of specific competences.

2.1. Curriculum, a pillar for education and SDG4

13. Curriculum is widely considered as the foundational building block of the education system (i.e. hub of education systems), resulting from a pedagogical and political consensus with regard to what is important in learning and why, according to both the learner’s needs and societal visions.

14. In brief, curriculum development plays a vital role in:

⁴ IBE, Stabback, Philip. "What Makes A Quality Curriculum?" *Current And Critical Issues In Curriculum And Learning*, 2016, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000243975.locale=en>, Accessed 03 Aug. 2019.

- Making sure that all individuals have fair opportunities in fulfilling their learning potential;
- Preparing the coming generations to provide solutions to the world's most pressing problems and challenges, such as poverty, climate change, and sustainable development;⁵
- Preparing all learners to become responsible, engaged global citizens;
- Contributing to the sustainable development of a country within a holistic perspective.

15. There is consensus that curriculum development has a dominant role to play in the progress of SDG 4, i.e. to primarily “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”⁶.

16. In light of the challenges of the 21st century, the redefinition of curriculum has become one of the main concerns of national education authorities around the world. Curriculum balance among different areas, such as sciences and technology, on the one hand, and humanities and the arts, on the other hand, is key to providing learners with a wide range of learning experiences and opportunities able to address the diversity of learner needs. It is also widely accepted today that quality curricula⁷ that can support the attainment of SDG4 should lead to the development of key competences in learners of all ages, such as communication or socio-emotional skills, as well as subject-bound competences, such as mathematics or science. Being at the heart of any educational progress, today curriculum development can indirectly improve knowledge and skills of the citizens and enhance the socioeconomic development of the country in the long run⁸. It also integrates emerging issues, answers or solutions to the world's most pressing problems, such as environmental, political, socio-economical, and other issues related to poverty, climate change, and sustainable development into the learning process.

⁵ Glatthorn, Allan A., *Curriculum Renewal*, Publication Sales, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

⁶ United Nations, “4 Quality education”, Sustainable development goals overview, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2017/goal-04/>, Accessed 28 Aug. 2019.

⁷ IBE, Stabback, Phillip. "What Makes A Quality Curriculum?" *Current and Critical Issues in Curriculum and Learning*, 2016, pp. 12-16, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000243975.locale=en>, Accessed 04 Aug. 2019.

2.2. UNESCO's approach to curriculum

17. Curriculum is one of the key areas of education stressed by the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2021⁹. UNESCO, as the coordinator and lead UN agency on SDG 4, has been going through a shift from a narrower curriculum development approach to a more inclusive approach which embraces the alignment of curriculum with teaching policies and practices, and assessment as the core element of quality education for all.

18. Through SDG 4, the world is now asking: *What are children, youth and adults learning and does this learning contribute to their own and their society's prosperity? and How can their learning be assessed?* The paradigm shift has come, putting more emphasis on the instrumental role of learning for a country's wellbeing and development. Examples abound in countries where curriculum development questions the learning objectives assigned to the target population (in particular the K-12 students). Likewise, new learning outcomes (e.g. correlated to environmental awareness or citizenship responsibility) and new credentials (e.g. “badges” as a proof of a learning accomplishment to acknowledge specific skills) might imply the re-examination of the learning assessment philosophy and methods. Furthermore, the curriculum reform may advance the question of the teachers training schemes' appropriateness and their vital adaptation to the expected educators' skills that are aligned with the competences learners should develop.

⁸ OECD, *The future of Education and Skills Education 2030*, 2018.

⁹ UNESCO “will strengthen its work in areas that are critical to its improving learning such as curriculum, pedagogy and assessment of learning outcomes.”, UNESCO 37 C/4, Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2021, p. 18, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000227860.locale=en>, Accessed 30 Aug. 2019.

3. Mapping of curriculum activities at UNESCO

3.1. UNESCO Education Sector at Headquarters

19. At Headquarters, the Education Sector includes three Divisions (Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems; Inclusion, Peace and Sustainable Development; Education 2030 Support and Coordination), the Executive Office, as well as the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) team.

20. The thematic Sections of these Divisions are, among other, involved in the development of learning content that can be used for curriculum development, especially with regard to cross-cutting issues, such as Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). In the area of health education for instance, UNESCO HQ collaborates with curriculum developers in several countries for age-appropriate content on comprehensive sexual education, and in the field of information and communication technologies (ICT) for Education UNESCO helps to develop curriculum standards. In 2015, UNESCO developed learning content and objectives to inspire the promotion of Global Citizenship Education (GCED) as a key pillar of Education Agenda 2030 (SDG4.7).

21. The interviews conducted with various UNESCO education specialists have highlighted that the Sections receive requests from Member States on curriculum development for both learning content issues and curriculum development processes more broadly and that in most of the cases, they could only address the part related to learning content. Most Sections highlighted the crucial role of curriculum development and reform in their work and the need for capacity development and stronger support in developing new standard-setting frameworks, methodologies and new ways of teaching, learning and assessing learning outcomes as learner competences.

22. The answers to the survey of UNESCO National Commissions confirm that the needs for support of Member States are highest regarding the methodology and

standards for quality curriculum development and the pedagogy and delivery of curriculum at the school/classroom level. Thematic areas where demand was reported as relatively high include STEM disciplines, ICT, gender and issues related to SDG targets 4.4 on skills and TVET¹⁰ and 4.7 on education for sustainable development and global citizenship¹¹.

23. Furthermore, the Education Sector is also involved in research work on curriculum, either directly – for instance through its collaboration with the Council of Europe and other partners, (e.g. collaboration for the production of the publication: “Curriculum Development and Review for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education”¹²) - or indirectly by producing guidelines on learning content on specific topics which can be used by curriculum developers (e.g. on inclusive and bias-free textbooks¹³ or global citizenship education¹⁴).

3.2. UNESCO regional bureaux and field offices

24. The 53 UNESCO regional bureaux and field offices are at the forefront of the support to Member States. It was confirmed through both interviews and the survey that field offices receive numerous requests from Member States on curriculum development related issues. Likewise, capacity development centred programmes such as CapED or its predecessor, CapEFA, also receive some requests to provide assistance on curriculum issues.

25. According to the survey to field offices, the requests are largely related to learning content (i.e. in literacy and numeracy, ICTs; and in emerging/cross-cutting issues). The field offices taking part in the survey tend to address these requests through recruiting external consultants or cooperation with development partners in their country as they often do not necessarily have the thematic expertise internally.¹⁵ However, it is to be considered that this is based on a response rate of only 30 percent of UNESCO field

¹² Felisa Tibbitts for UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Organization of American States, Curriculum Development and Review for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, 2017

¹³ UNESCO, *Making textbook content inclusive: A focus on religion, gender and culture*, 2017, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002473/247337e.pdf>, Accessed 29 Aug. 2019

¹⁴ UNESCO, *Global Citizenship Education: Topics and learning objectives*, 2015, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232993>, Accessed 29 Aug. 2019; and UNESCO, *Global Citizenship Education: Preparing learners for the challenges of the twenty-first century*, 2014, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000227729>, Accessed 29 Aug. 2019.

¹⁵ Results of survey and interviews. Field offices tend to treat requests at country level but stress that it is a challenge to identify relevant UNESCO expertise and material they could refer to.

office who responded to the survey and this interpretation may not reflect the situation in all settings in the world.

3.3. UNESCO Education Category 1 Institutes, in particular IBE

26. The UNESCO **International Bureau of Education** (IBE) plays a leading role in this field, as it is, since its change of mandate in 1999, the specialised UNESCO institute in curriculum, and in curriculum development processes more broadly (including the design and making, implementation, and impact evaluation of curriculum). In discharging its mandate, IBE adopts an integrated approach to curriculum that fully covers the curriculum continuum, i.e., curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment.

27. Originally founded in 1925 and part of UNESCO since 1969, the IBE saw its role in education-related issues evolve over the years: from a research and documentation centre¹⁶ mainly organising the International Conference on Education at first, it became actively engaged in educational content, methods and teaching strategies through curriculum development as a specialised category 1 institute since 1999. In 2011, the 36th session of the UNESCO General Conference declared the IBE a Global Centre of Excellence in curriculum and related matters. It currently employs three international professionals, including a Director, and two general service staff and has faced financial challenges for some years, which hamper its delivery capacity.

28. According to the statutes of IBE, its functions include:

- setting global norms and standards in its field of competence-curriculum and related matters;
- providing innovation and leadership in curriculum, learning and assessment;
- serving as a laboratory of ideas on critical and current issues in curriculum, learning and assessment, including the development of innovative curricular frameworks and prototypes;

- serving as a global reference point in curriculum, learning and assessment through its clearinghouse function in knowledge creation, management and coordination in these areas;
- maintaining and developing an international education information Centre;
- contributing, through its capacity-building function, to the systemic strengthening of the quality and development-relevance of education and effective lifelong learning for all;
- providing intellectual leadership of global dialogue in and advocacy for curriculum, learning and assessment, including the organization of the International Conference on Education;
- conserving the archives and historical collections of the IBE and making them accessible to the public.

29. The following table presents some of the IBE's activities.

Table 1 Activities IBE has been involved in over the past 15 years

<p>Technical expertise and leadership on curriculum processes and learning: IBE has led and cooperated with UNICEF, the EU and other bodies, such as university curriculum chairs/departments, in the context of several capacity development and technical assistance projects and programmes for curriculum in countries in several Member States.</p>
<p>Capacity development: reflecting customized conception of continuous professional development strategy, the accredited Certificate, Post Graduate Diploma and Master in curriculum and learning programmes for curriculum developers/specialists, educators, teachers' educators and practitioners implemented through a combination of face-to-face and on-line sessions under the technical leadership of IBE in partnership with selected universities in four UNESCO regions.</p>

¹⁶ The IBE has archives containing 75,000 different materials and 40,000 publications authored or co-authored by the IBE, with a historical textbook collection of 25,000 textbooks of more than 140 countries.

Knowledge production, brokerage, and dissemination on curriculum and learning: IBE has provided countries with informed decision-making opportunities on curriculum, exposing curriculum agencies, ministries, education specialists, researchers, and decision makers to relevant international trends and promising practices. IBE’s brokers cutting edge neuroscience research on learning to policy makers, researchers and practitioners through its Sciences of Learning Portal and through intellectual dialogue. IBE also disseminates knowledge and updates regarding international trends in curriculum from an international comparative perspective, including through its specialized Journal Prospects, its flagship magazine IBE IN FOCUS, and through its bi-weekly alerts and digests.

Management of a documentation centre: The IBE documentation centre hosts archives and historical texts from across UNESCO Member States in over 100 languages, making it one of the largest and most diverse collection on curriculum in the world. IBE started a massive digitization of its archives and historical texts dating back to 1700, to make them more accessible to the public.

30. Another important contribution of IBE to curriculum lies in the **glossary**¹⁷ it developed, and which has been widely used internally at UNESCO and adopted by other development partners such as UNICEF and World Bank. **Normative work and capacity development**, including the IBE Diploma on curriculum design and development¹⁸, have received positive feedback and demand from external technical partners, Member States as well as UNESCO education specialists. IBE also pursues an integrated approach to curriculum, i.e. “*the process of combining/articulating learning content and subjects with a view to promoting holistic and comprehensive learning*”¹⁹ focusing on the interrelatedness of curricula areas and learning methods,

¹⁷ IBE, *Glossary of Curriculum Terminology*, 2013, <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/ibe-glossary-curriculum.pdf>, Accessed Aug. 2019. It is to be noted that an updated version of the Glossary is forthcoming.

¹⁸ Its aim is to enhance the capacities of Ministry of Education, officials and specialists in curriculum design and development.

that IBE has been spearheading for years and now adopted globally with the aim to further develop an internationally referenced quality.

Certain other UNESCO category 1 institutes have played some role in curriculum, with a focus on learning content and curriculum issues related to their mandate.

The International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) was for instance involved in the UNESCO CapED programme, e.g. by supporting the inclusion of gender perspectives in STEM curricula for teachers in Niger. UIL played an important role in Afghanistan in the development of the curriculum framework for youth and adult literacy and basic education.²⁰ Furthermore, the IBE and the international Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) co-authored a resource kit, available online, on curriculum design addressing safety, resilience and social cohesion issues.²¹ The International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (TTF) also carries out curriculum work related to teachers, especially in the context of developing teacher competences frameworks and standards in close collaboration with IBE.

¹⁹ “Curriculum integration”, <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/glossary-curriculum-terminology/c/curriculum-integration>, Accessed 30 Aug. 2019.

²⁰ “New literacy and numeracy curriculum framework adopted in Afghanistan”, <http://uil.unesco.org/literacy-and-basic-skills/capacity-development/new-literacy-and-numeracy-curriculum-framework>, Accessed 30 Aug. 2019.

4. Mapping of other activities in curriculum development

4.1. At national level

31. Member States largely recognize the crucial importance of curriculum in the light of the SDG 4 – Education 2030 Agenda. The online survey sent to all National Commissions confirms this with close to 80 percent of the respondents stressing that curriculum development is a very important aspect in light of the 2030 Agenda.²² Numerous countries have taken initiatives to modernize their curriculum with a view to improving and adapting the core competences of the young population to current needs.

32. There seems though to be no unified system of curriculum development processes across Member States. A small majority mention the existence of a specific department dealing with curriculum in the Ministry in charge of education (around 40 percent). About 30 percent mention that curriculum is handled by several departments at the Ministry of Education and another 30 percent of the respondents indicate that a specific national institution responsible for curriculum reform exists outside of the Ministry. Several Member States involve schools and universities in developing curriculum. Some countries also have specialized centres on curriculum, such as Nigeria, which has the education and adaptation centre (CESAC) which devised a four stage-system to redesign curricula and improve curriculum development processes²³.

33. Most of the countries solicit international organisations, including UNESCO, and national actors (academics mostly) to help refine the teaching and learning contents, methodologies and to train national staff on curriculum development. More precisely, of the 96 Member States that responded to the survey on curriculum, 58 percent report having cooperated with UNESCO in the field of curriculum²⁴, while approximately 50 percent of respondents also mentioned cooperating with academia, 46 percent with civil society organisations (CSOs) and 35 percent with consultancies²⁵.

²² In particular targets 4.4 and 4.7.

²³ Amadioha, Dr. Samuel, "curriculum development practices in Nigeria: definition, aims and brief history of the comparative education and adaptation centre (CESAC)", *Australian Journal Of Arts And Scientific Research*, vol 21, no. 2, 2016, pp. 87-94., Accessed 24 July 2019.

34. Several universities at the national level have a department on curriculum, often located within the faculties of Education, providing services to governments on the development or revision of curriculum. According to several interviews, academia is involved in curriculum development at the national level, mostly on pedagogy, but often with a specific perspective that does not cover the global challenges and lacks the expertise in comprehensive curriculum reforms that imply broad public consultation processes, mainly in the relationship between curriculum development and planning in the education system. Some interviewees have also stressed that despite the existence of some network of academics, the actual production of reliable material from academics for Ministries to support their work and reforms remains rather minimal.

35. Some civil society research organizations also provide support to national institutions. An example is the support of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) on various topics (for instance evaluating curriculum design or using ICT in curriculum) in Indonesia through the Analytical and Capacity Development Partnership (ACDP) supported by the Government of Australia, the EU and the Asia Development Bank in Indonesia.

36. Regarding bilateral development partners, the desk review and surveys have revealed that bilateral partners such as DFID, GIZ, USAID, the Government of Netherlands and Australia, among others²⁶, were particularly active in supporting curriculum development in UNESCO Member States.

4.2. At international and regional levels

37. In addition to UNESCO, there are several international and regional organisations that engage in various ways in curriculum development processes, however sometimes dealing only with specific aspects. Some of the most active international organisations are featured in the grid below. It should be noted that UNESCO emerges to be the only organisation having both a global mandate and covering curriculum from a life-long learning perspective and with a humanistic and human rights centred approach.

²⁴ The question did not specify in which area of curriculum development. The answers will therefore cover content and methods irrespectively.

²⁵ This question allowed for multiple answers and the total exceeds 100 percent as answers were not mutually exclusive.

²⁶ It should be noted that the review is not exhaustive.

Table 2 Overview of some of the most active global and regional actors and their interventions in curriculum

Organisation	Geographical focus	Illustrative examples to highlight the main focus of curriculum related work	Main target groups
African Union	African Union Member States and agencies	<p>Curriculum and teaching and learning materials were some of the focus areas of the Second Decade for Education</p> <p>Holistic²⁷ approach to education dealing with SDG 4 issues such as citizenship</p> <p>Support to the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016-2025, with clusters (strategy, reflection) in several thematic areas²⁸ to implement the strategic objectives, including a specific cluster on curriculum²⁹ aiming to convene and integrate multiple national, regional and continental players, programmes, institutions and development partners, but also to build the capacities of curriculum developers and education implementers on curriculum</p> <p>Collaboration with UNESCO, in particular IICBA³⁰</p>	<p>lifelong learning (Early childhood, TVET, Adult literacy and continuous learning)</p> <p>Inclusive approach (special needs learners and persons with disabilities)</p>
Council of Europe	Council of Europe Member States	<p>Focus on human rights, education for democratic citizenship, languages and history teaching</p> <p>Current Curriculum research and analysis on pluri-linguist and migrants' adult education. The Council is striving to provide a framework in which courses can be designed that will aid adult migrants' language development in such a way as to support the integration process³¹</p>	Youth and adults, particularly migrants
European Union through its decentralised agencies CEDEFOP and ETF	EU Member countries (CEDEFOP) and partner countries (ETF)	<p>Focus on economic development, the changing nature of work and employer's needs, and matching education/job market, with hands-on tools for policy makers</p> <p>Support to the development of lifelong learning and the respective needs of trainers and curriculum to train and retrain adults</p> <p>Curriculum development and adaptation focusing on European vocational and technical skill, i.e. TVET policies. New transversal dimensions are also emerging like digitalization of the societies, the green economy</p>	Focus on young people and adults, especially in the areas of skills development

²⁸ STEM Education, ICT in Education, Teacher Development, Women & Girls Education, Higher Education, School Feeding, Peace and Education, Literacy and Lifelong Learning, Education Planning, TVET, Life Skills, Curriculum, Early Childhood Education, Students' Association and Parents' Association.

²⁹ The AU launched the CESA curriculum cluster in December 2018. More information on the work of the cluster are available in the following report: http://www.acuass.org/content/Cluster_Documents/CESA_Curriculum_Cluster_launch_Report.pdf.

³⁰ UNESCO-IICBA coordinates the Teacher Development Cluster.

³¹ Key et al, "Curriculum / Course Programme / Course Design / Course Objectives", *Linguistic Integration Of Adult Migrants (LIAM)*, 2019, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/lang-migrants/curriculum>.

Organisation	Geographical focus	Illustrative examples to highlight the main focus of curriculum related work	Main target groups
OECD	OECD Member States and enhanced cooperation countries	<p>Curriculum for enhanced skills and the socioeconomic development of countries and focus on renewed educational models</p> <p>Future of Education and Skills 2030 project focuses since 2015 on curriculum redesign (OECD Learning Compass 2030 for a new method of Learning and Assessment in accordance with SDG4) and curriculum implementation creating a new conceptual framework for teaching (Teaching Framework for 2030 identifying competencies, e.g. knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that teachers need to acquire)³²</p> <p>The OECD is also conducting analysis and research, such as conducting an international survey on how countries implement their curricula. National reviews on curriculum development, often on their own Member States, highlighting good practices and harnessing curriculum into a wider approach of educational reform via comprehensive education policy reviews</p>	Students, teachers and schools
UNICEF	Global	<p>Curriculum development focuses on learning outcomes/skills development, and related issues such as competence-based curricula, languages of instruction, equity and enabling learning environments)</p> <p>Regular support to countries (workshops, projects, publications) from a child-protection perspective: such as Pre-school curriculum framework in Serbia, new competency-based and play-oriented curriculum in Rwanda or in Sudan, development of digital textbooks in Kenya, among many others³³</p> <p>Promotes relevant curricula and materials such as for early childhood education</p>	Children and youth
World Bank	Focus on developing/transition countries, but also middle-income countries ³⁴ and wealthier countries	<p>Projects on educational reforms and infrastructures, with components on the curriculum capacity development aspect and teacher training (but marginal relative to the sums allotted to school infrastructures and equipment³⁵), including through support to national centres for curriculum development</p> <p>Focus on systemic approach to education reforms and curriculum³⁶</p> <p>Trend is on improving teaching, learning and assessment</p> <p>Collaboration with UNESCO-UIS on student learning</p>	System-wide approach with a focus on most vulnerable populations

³² "OECD Future Of Education And Skills 2030 - Organisation for Economic Co-Operation And Development", <http://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project>, Accessed 02 Sept. 2019.

³³ UNICEF, *Goal Area 2: Every child learns*. Global Annual Result Report, 2018, <https://www.unicef.org/media/55331/file>

³⁴ Like Kazakhstan in 2019, with a project on curriculum development and approbation for pedagogical programs

³⁵ Though some projects earmarked more funds to curriculum development, like in Vietnam and Uganda in 2019.

5. Needs analysis for UNESCO interventions in the field of curricula

38. The review found that curriculum development processes and curriculum reforms are considered important or even fundamental aspects of any education system, in the context of achieving SDG4. This was clearly confirmed in interviews at UNESCO and with Member States, and also shown in the replies of 90 Member States, (corresponding to 94 percent of National Commissions surveyed).

39. Regarding the type of support requested, the major needs expressed by Member States relate to technical **expertise and capacity building on curriculum development** as well as **practical guidelines** for implementation (more than 70 percent of Member States' requests). Member States specify that these needs are related to methodology and pedagogy standards rather than to learning content.

40. Member States expressed needs on integrating learning content in the curriculum specifically related to the 2030 Agenda. More specifically, in addition to demands related to STEM disciplines, ICT, and gender the key needs relate to the **inclusion of the SDG 4.2³⁷ and 4.7³⁸ dimensions** into the curriculum and the national educational reforms. **SDG target 4.4³⁹** is also mentioned by Member States as an area where they need support. However, this is addressed by several actors, including UNESCO.

41. Yet there is a **clear awareness of Member States and National Commissions on the value of a systemic and holistic approach** to curriculum, which is at the heart of any educational reform. More than 68 percent consider curriculum as fundamental in any educational reform (National Commission survey) and more than 28 percent an important aspect. Interviews with UNESCO education specialists confirm that the countries' needs in terms of assistance focus more on the improvement of the curriculum and its best compliance to the global expectations in relation to SDG 4 rather than requiring assistance to initiate punctual curriculum revisions, which are usually conducted at the national level. Instead, most countries require support to embrace all the variables considered as key in any education reform, i.e. at system level.

³⁷ SDG target 4.2. 'By 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.'

³⁸ SDG target 4.2. 'By 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and

42. Member States do often **not clearly distinguish between a country's needs for learning content development and the needs for support** with regard to curriculum development processes as such, and sometimes also misperceive support on learning content with support for curriculum development processes moreover. The conceptual divide between developing learning content and overall processes of curriculum development is clearly understood at UNESCO Headquarters and in field offices. While Member States generally ask for more support on methodology and standards for quality curriculum, for pedagogy and for redesigning the learning content they are often less aware of their needs to organise, plan, and monitor the curriculum reforms more broadly.

43. While **UNESCO is most often cited by Member States as a partner** in the field of curriculum development, **only 32 percent** of Member States taking part in the survey declared UNESCO as **their main partner in this field**. When asked who their main partner is, the answers diverge vastly, and no particular modality emerges. Several Member States engage in bilateral cooperation with neighbouring countries or other Member States, some mention CSOs as their main partner and a few mention development partners such as the Council of Europe, the European Union, the OECD, UNICEF or the World Bank. Less than 20 percent of respondents mention regular cooperation with IBE on curriculum development. According to experts and UNESCO Sections, standard/desirable procedures are sometimes inconsequential in curriculum development, and many Member States and UNESCO field offices require **reference points** to best identify, design and enforce reforms.

44. Member States confirm that there is a strong need and desire to **network and exchange experiences** and challenges among themselves and that they would benefit from a global platform for this purpose. The review also revealed that there are increasing needs and expectations for more **hands-on tools, guidelines and practice sharing** to help national counterparts implement their educational reforms within which curriculum processes play a pivotal role.

non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.'

³⁹ SDG target 4.4 'By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.'

6. Opportunities and challenges facing UNESCO's work in curriculum

6.1. Opportunities for UNESCO's work in curriculum

45. Several opportunities can be derived from the needs identified by Member States.

- There is an apparent **need for a lead entity and a driver** in UNESCO to push curriculum issues in the Education agenda. Member States would appreciate more guidance regarding available support for curriculum. This could justify having a strong UNESCO entity, such as a specialised Category 1 institute (in the line of IIEP or UIL) to centralise expertise and coordinate the curriculum-related requests of Member States.
- In addition, reforming curriculum includes underpinning dimensions with politically or culturally sensitive aspects (e.g. global citizenship education, sexuality education), which require **a neutral player** with experience in handling complex and sensitive issues. UNESCO as a global and neutral partner may be best in a position to advise on applying promising practices while ensuring local and cultural specificities of Member States are fully embedded, and related risks and possible hindering factors likely to compromise any reform are adequately taken into account.
- There is currently **no systematic data collection and mechanism of exchange of promising practices on curriculum development** amongst Member States. Knowledge brokerage is a function at IBE-UNESCO and UNESCO HQ that is appreciated by Member States. Some interviewees confirm there is a need to further strengthen this function, as Member States strive to connect the work of UNESCO on curriculum with their needs and to draw lessons or improve practice from experiences in other countries.
- The survey results also showed that the Member States themselves are not necessarily in a position to clearly **identify their own needs when it comes to curriculum**. While they often search for content-specific expertise, at the

same time they require more support on policy orientations, implementation processes and methodology for addressing curriculum development and reform. Furthermore, Member States do not feel sufficiently informed on promising practices applied elsewhere. Respondents also pointed to a lack of opportunities for exchange and co-shared activities such as conferences, reviews, technical assistance on curriculum matters.

6.2. Challenges facing UNESCO's work in curriculum

46. Challenges regarding the work on curriculum are in particular related to the constant evolution of the education paradigms or are sometimes specific to the implication of UNESCO's work on curriculum development.

- The complexity of educational reforms and the large array of interwoven variables which must be considered by policymakers calls for a holistic and context-specific approach of curriculum development. Challenges arise from the weaknesses in normative work providing global reference points on the orchestration of any educational reform on curriculum and learning which should be highly context-specific and culturally sensitive. The revision of curriculum requires drawing on comparative and longitudinal perspectives on general issues such as globalisation, new economic models, brain drain, or uneven levels of development within regions and within countries. A thorough understanding of such dimensions is important because national-bound and short-term curriculum reform can become counterproductive. Some UNESCO thematic Sections and institutes have been setting guidelines to better integrate crosscutting dimensions (notably on human rights, global citizenship or health⁴⁰), however these are focusing on the content rather than on broader curriculum processes
- In consequence, curriculum can be approached from both, a systemic and subject perspective leading to requests being addressed to several thematic Sections in the Education Sector and to IBE whether they are thematic (STEM,

⁴⁰ For example, the section on Health Education supports a flagship programme on comprehensive sexuality education and cooperates with over 30 countries. The Section works with curriculum developers as well as Teacher Training Institutes to revise the curriculum.

Global Citizenship) or system-related (comprehensive curriculum reviews, teacher training, pedagogy, measurement). In practice, most of the requests cover several elements that cannot be always comprehensively handled by the recipient of the request. In addition, some of the field offices that responded to the survey indicated insufficient clarity in directing the curriculum related requests. Addressing curriculum as a multi-dimensional issue within an inter- and multidisciplinary perspective would therefore require improved coordination among relevant UNESCO entities and increased internal capacity.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

47. This section concludes on the findings of the review of UNESCO's work on curriculum. Furthermore, it suggests five recommendations. These are based on the analysis of the opportunities and challenges identified for UNESCO's work in curriculum and on the perspectives and expectations from Member States for the future.

7.1. Main conclusions of the review

48. The findings of the present review confirm that curriculum is a central aspect of the work on Education and is central to the achievement of SDG 4. This has been confirmed by both UNESCO education specialists and Member States.

49. Member States have expressed a strong need for support with regard to curriculum support mainly in reviewing and systematizing the learning methodology and standards for quality. Member States request support in the form of capacity building and technical assistance, knowledge management (clearing house), including research and prospective work and policy dialogue where they request a platform to exchange practices, experiences and discuss challenges. They have also expressed needs related to learning content, mainly related to the human rights aspects and SDG 4 targets.

50. UNESCO is involved in various aspects of curriculum and at various levels, however its support to Member States could be structured in a way to be able to offer assistance to Member States in a well-coordinated, multidisciplinary and holistic manner. UNESCO is the partner most often cited by Member States in the field of curriculum development but not as the primary partner for more than half (55 percent) of the Member States regardless if they are developing or developed countries. This may be seen as a signal that the Organization currently lacks sufficient internal expertise and capacities, or that it is difficult for example for field offices to clearly identify internal expertise on curriculum development. Therefore, field offices often resort to external consultants or other development partners to address requests regarding curriculum.

51. In principle, the International Bureau of Education could be acting as a lead entity providing a holistic perspective on curriculum development and closely coordinating with relevant entities at Headquarters and field offices to ensure adequate resources and guidance on how to address requests. Based on evidence gathered, including calls for increased coordination among UNESCO entities and the need for further dissemination

of knowledge on curriculum, the review identified a potential for UNESCO's work on curriculum that has not yet been fully explored.

52. Other International Organisations and bilateral development partners are engaged in the work on curriculum but with a more limited perspective than UNESCO. For instance, the OECD and the European Union are primarily focusing on socio-economic aspects and skills, respectively, while UNICEF is focusing on children and youth, the World Bank mainly on vulnerable populations and other actors are approaching it from a project perspective addressing specific issues. At country level, Member States work with universities and consultants as well with the caveat that they usually approach the subject from a narrower perspective than UNESCO.

53. In conclusion, there is a clear need for UNESCO to be actively involved and strengthen its lead role in the field of curriculum. UNESCO's mandate and approach complement the work of other development partners. UNESCO would therefore respond to a need clearly expressed by Member States and contribute to the achievement of SDG 4. A lead entity on the subject of curriculum provides a clear advantage and a category 1 institute would constitute an adequate solution for addressing the needs and requests from Member States, as curriculum is a cross-cutting topic in education and complementary to the sections in Headquarters who are approaching it from a subject matter perspective.

54. There are several opportunities for UNESCO but also challenges that need to be addressed. The recommendations in the next section of this report seek to provide some orientation for the way forward.

7.2. Recommendations on how UNESCO could address curriculum with added value in the future

Curriculum, particularly curriculum development and reform processes, should remain an area of UNESCO's education programme as it addresses a clearly identified demand from Member States. To address curriculum with added value in the future, UNESCO should focus on providing methodological technical assistance, capacity development, standard-setting and policy advice to support curriculum processes, products and competences development in Member States. Complementary to work on curriculum from a methodological point of view, thematic Sections at Headquarters shall continue elaborating learning content on specific topics, such as comprehensive health education, global citizenship education or other emerging or cross-cutting issues.

55. As curriculum implies both technical and political dimensions, UNESCO can act as a neutral broker, to facilitate informed and inclusive policy dialogue. It also has a long-term tradition in facilitating complex curriculum processes in often difficult and sensitive contexts, including in crisis-affected societies.

56. IBE already has the capacity to serve as a platform for international exchanges and comparative research, including through networks such as UNESCO Chairs, and to coordinate knowledge hubs and communities of practice.

57. Based on the findings and conclusion of the review, UNESCO should consider the following as the priorities for its support to Member States:

- Technical assistance
- Capacity-development to professionalize the area of curriculum development
- Clearing house function
- Standard-setting and normative work
- Knowledge creation, brokerage, and management

Recommendation 1: Keep a specialised institute as a lead entity on curriculum.

58. The Review confirms that there is a need for a specialised global level entity in the field of curriculum to address requests in a more holistic perspective in coordination with the relevant expertise within other entities at UNESCO. In addition, UNESCO may wish to consider covering all aspects of “what is learned”, “how it is learned”, “how learning is organised”, “how learning is measured” and, “what is the end goal of learning”. It is also recommended to focus future work on curriculum on aligning curriculum, teacher policies and practices, and assessment, with a view of reaching SDG4 targets.

Recommendation 2: Refine the offer of technical assistance and capacity building to Member States on curriculum reform and development.

IBE, in its current structure and capacity, is unlikely to be able to directly assist Member States in their curriculum reform, due to the scarcity of in-house resources. The most deprived countries lack capacities and resources for launching and supervising educational reforms. UNESCO field offices do not always have the specialised expertise on curriculum and limited means to operate. UNESCO should investigate the

opportunities to complement the current work of IBE through a specialised unit or section focusing on delivering technical assistance and capacity building to Member States and seek adequate staff and funding to address the needs expressed by Member States.

Recommendation 3: Develop and maintain a knowledge base of material on curriculum and a roster of expertise.

59. UNESCO has developed ample reference work on curriculum that may not always be known to Member States and field offices and could be used to accompany curriculum development and reform. In light of Recommendation 1, a specialised Category I institute could also engage in: 1) spearheading research on curriculum documenting fieldwork, 2) maintaining and disseminating existing reference work on the subject, 3) maintaining a roster of in-house and external expertise from which UNESCO identifies relevant resources to support its work and the work of Member States.

Recommendation 4: Provide a platform for policy dialogue and exchange of experience among Member States.

60. UNESCO should take advantage of its mandate and position in education to provide Member States with a platform where they could exchange and discuss challenges and upcoming topics in the field of curriculum, especially in relation to the 2030 Agenda and SDG4 targets, in particular target 4.7 (education for sustainable development and global citizenship). This could take the form of thematic conferences, a network of academics, practitioners and policy makers or technical working groups. At the same time UNESCO should ensure exchange of information and cooperation via intersectoral and interdisciplinary work, while also drawing on its vast networks, such as UNESCO Chairs. UNESCO should also reinforce cooperation within the UN family and beyond.

Recommendation 5: Systematise the inclusion of curriculum in the standard-setting and normative work.

Member States need guidance, global reference points, understanding of conditions and basic prerequisites to be met for any successful education reform. Normative work should focus on providing reference points and quality standards with regard to engaging and implementing education and curriculum reforms successfully. However, UNESCO could set the highest quality standards and in parallel guide Member States onto pathways of meeting them progressively.

APPENDICES

A. Terms of Reference

Review of UNESCO's work in curriculum

Introduction

1. The International Bureau of Education (IBE) in Geneva, Switzerland is the oldest UNESCO category 1 institute. It was established in 1925 and fully integrated into the Organization in 1969. Since then, IBE has transformed from a research and documentation centre into a specialized arm of UNESCO on curriculum. As one of the seven education-related category 1 institutes, IBE is an integral part of the Education Sector, enjoying functional autonomy, and contributes to the implementation of the Sector's programme, which is based on Sustainable Development Goal 4 – Education 2030. Over the past two decades, IBE has supported around 85 Member States to strengthen their curriculum capacities, processes and content.

2. IBE receives an allocation of roughly \$4 million from UNESCO Headquarters every biennium, and in the last biennium (2016-2017), it raised \$3.3 million from other funding sources. Extrabudgetary support from government donors has been on a steady decline since 2014, which has placed the institute in a precarious and unsustainable financial situation. The decision of the host country of the institute, Switzerland, to discontinue its annual funding as of 2018 further exacerbated the situation. As a result, UNESCO began exploring possible options for IBE's future and financial sustainability, namely (i) IBE's continued location in Switzerland; (ii) integrating IBE's specialized contribution (curriculum) into the Education Sector at Headquarters, and (iii) finding a new host country.

3. These options were presented to the Executive Board at its 205th session (autumn 2018), which expressed concern over the situation and invited the Director-General to further elaborate on a number of options for the future of IBE, its collections and its archives, and to report on these at the 206th session. The Board also invited the Director-General to take into account (i) the establishment of clear criteria to maximize the efficiency of IBE's mandate, impact and sustainability; as well as (ii) the improvement of synergies between the activities of IBE and the Education Sector, to ensure their financial stability, as well as contribute to keeping curricula as one of the pillars of UNESCO's work in education.

Options for IBE's Future - Debate during the 206th session of the Executive Board

4. In her report to the recent 206th session of the Executive Board (see 206 EX/17 in the Annex to these Terms of Reference), the Director-General proposed a number of criteria to maximize the efficiency of IBE's mandate, impact and sustainability, in addition to three options for IBE's future (the details of which are also contained in the Annex):

- Option 1 – IBE's continued location in Switzerland with a new mandate
- Option 2 – Integrating curriculum into the work of the Education Sector at Headquarters
- Option 3 – Finding a new host country keeping the original mandate on curriculum

5. Following debate on the item, the Executive Board requested⁴¹ the Director-General to undertake an review of UNESCO's work in curricula in order to inform its decision-making on the future of the IBE.

Rationale for the review

international actors in this field worldwide, and to prepare a proposition on the way for UNESCO to address curriculum with added-value in the future. "

⁴¹ The decision reads: "Invites the Director-General to produce a mapping and an analysis of impact of all UNESCO's current activities in curricula with an evaluation on the demands for services from Member States and donors, the roles of other national, regional and

6. In order to meet the decision-making requirements of the Executive Board, an evaluative exercise is to be completed by the end of July 2019, with a first draft ready by mid-July 2019. The Evaluation Office of UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service, in close coordination with the Executive Office of the Education Sector, will manage the review. As part of the background, IOS has audited (2017) and evaluated (2013) the IBE in recent years. These reports will be made available.

Purpose

7. The main purpose of the review is to take stock and to assess the relevance of UNESCO's work in the area of curricula and to provide some insights into the specific role for UNESCO in the field of curricula, related to both methodologies and content within the context of SDG4. The review will:

- provide a detailed mapping and analysis of UNESCO's activities in curricula, i.e the activities of IBE, UNESCO Education Sector at Headquarters, UNESCO Field Offices, other UNESCO Category I Education Institutes;
- provide an overview of the roles typically played by other national, regional and international actors in the field of curricula; and
- assess the demand for services from UNESCO Member States and donors in the area of curricula.

8. The review is not expected to include a formal assessment of programme impact; rather it will provide an analysis of the reported effects of UNESCO's work in curricula.

9. The primary users of the review are UNESCO Member States and senior management of the Education Sector, as they are both expected to use the reviews' findings to inform their decision-making on the future of the International Bureau of Education and more broadly, UNESCO's work in the area of curricula.

Scope and methods

10. The review will examine UNESCO's work from 2014 to the present corresponding to the last three UNESCO Programme and Budget documents (i.e.

37C/5, 38C/5 and 39C/5). The activities to be covered are national, regional and international in scope. While the evaluation will be limited to the thematic area of *curricula*, the evaluator(s) will discuss with the Education Sector and IOS in order to agree upon a working definition of this area of work.

11. The review will aim to answer the questions below. The final set of questions to be answered by the review will be agreed upon during the inception phase.

- What is the nature and scope of the activities delivered by the IBE as well as other UNESCO entities in the area of curricula?
- What roles are played by other national, regional and international actors in the area of curricula?
- How is the work undertaken by IBE complementary to these other actors, including other UNESCO entities, and to what extent is there any overlap?
- What is the (added) value for UNESCO of having an independent specialized Institute in the field of curriculum?
- To what extent is the work undertaken by the IBE relevant to the needs and priorities of UNESCO Member States?
- How important is curricula for the implementation of SDG4? To what extent do Ministries of Education consider it important that UNESCO works in this area?
- To what extent has the work of the IBE met the expectations of UNESCO Member States and other key actors in this field?
- In light of Agenda 2030, what role should UNESCO play in the area of curricula?

12. In terms of methods, the suggested elements will include the following: desk-based review, key informant interviews and a survey. The survey will be an essential to obtaining and analyzing the "*demand for services of Members States and donors*", as called for in the decision of the Executive Board.

Management arrangements

13. The review will be managed by UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service (IOS) Evaluation Office with support from the Executive Office of the Education sector. IOS is responsible for the overall management of the review and quality assurance of its deliverables.

14. The review will be conducted by an independent external evaluator who fulfills the qualifications below. The evaluator is expected to develop a detailed methodology including the necessary data collection tools (survey and interview protocol), to conduct data collection and analysis and to prepare the draft and final report in English.

15. The evaluator will comply with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) updated 2016 Norms and Standards for Evaluation, UNEG Guidelines for Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations and UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.

16. A Reference Group has been established to accompany the review process and provide feedback on the Terms of Reference, the Inception Report, the methodology and the draft review report. The Reference Group comprises a representative from the IOS Evaluation Office, the Executive Office (EO) of the Education Sector and the International Bureau of Education (IBE). The Reference Group will liaise electronically and/or meet periodically during the review, as necessary.

Qualifications of the evaluator

17. The assignment is expected to require one senior level evaluator who possesses the following mandatory qualifications and experience:

- University degree at Masters level or equivalent in education, social sciences, political sciences, economics, or any related field;
- At least 10 years of working experience acquired at the international level or in an international setting;
- Senior experience of at least 10 years in project and/or programme evaluation;
- Knowledge of and experience in applying qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, in particular survey design;
- Senior professional experience relevant to the field of curriculum and/or curriculum development;
- Understanding and knowledge of the UN mandates and its programming in relation to education in the framework of the Sustainable Development Agenda;
- Excellent report writing / drafting skills in English and a working

knowledge of spoken French;

- No previous involvement in the implementation of the activities under review.

Deliverables and schedule

18. The review is estimated to require approximately 40 professional working days for one senior level consultant between the dates of 1 June and 31 July 2019. This will include one visit to UNESCO Headquarters in Paris for interviews and data collection.

19. There are three required deliverables:

- *Inception report*: the inception report shall include a description of the review methods and approach indicating the key review questions to be answered, a review plan with a detailed timeline, and the survey tool.
- *Draft report*: the draft report should be written in English and be no more than 25 pages. The format of the report will be discussed and agreed upon during the inception phase.
- *Final report*: the final report should incorporate comments provided by the IOS Evaluation Office. It should include an Executive Summary and Annexes, including the survey results. The report must comply with the UNEG Norms and Standards.

20. The proposed schedule is as follows:

Activity / Deliverable	Date
Contract an independent evaluator	By end May 2019
Inception phase – inception report	Early June 2019
Data collection: Interviews & administer survey to key stakeholders	June 2019
Draft report	Mid-July 2019
Final report	End July 2019

How to apply:

61. Interested candidates should provide the following information by Friday, 28 June 2019 (18h00 Paris time) to m.rathner@unesco.org cc g.geurts@unesco.org

- Full CVs of the proposed evaluation consultant / team
- 1-2 pages (maximum) outlining how your past experience /credentials are specifically relevant for this assignment.
- A previous evaluation report that demonstrates familiarity with the topic for this review
- Fee proposal, with a tentative indication of the level of effort per deliverable per team member (as applicable).

Annex 1: Reference documents

- Report of the Secretary General 2019 (advance unedited version, available on request)
- UNESCO's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy
- 199 EX/5 Part II page 81 ff: Structured Financing Dialogue
- Executive Board Decision 202 EX/5 Part III (C): Structured Financing Dialogue)

B. Definition of curriculum

In a narrow sense, curriculum refers to ‘the courses offered by an educational institution’ (Cf. Merriam-Webster Dictionary). In a broader sense, largely accepted today, curriculum is understood as the ensemble of learning opportunities and experiences that education institutions offer to learners in accordance with their development needs and societal goals.

Curriculum theory distinguishes between the written/intended/official curriculum (i.e. Curriculum Frameworks; subject curricula or syllabuses; learning materials; and guides) and the applied curriculum resulting from classroom interactions in diverse real-life contexts. The impact a curriculum is supposed to make is defined through expected learning outcomes (i.e. effective/realized curriculum).

The shaping and making of curriculum is called **curriculum development**. Usually, curriculum development includes different phases (‘curriculum cycles’) such as:

- Developing the vision
- Curriculum planning (including the management of curriculum processes)
- Curriculum design (i.e. defining the bigger picture, the main curriculum axes and features, and the links between the different curriculum components)
- Drafting/writing the curriculum through collaborative processes
- Curriculum implementation (through teaching and learning in the context of various learning environments)
- Monitoring and evaluation processes (M+E)
- Curriculum review and revision

Given the complex and rapid changes in today’s world, curriculum is increasingly expected to provide learners with the competences needed to learn, live and work in the 21st Century. The term ‘competences’ embraces the ensemble of knowledge, skills and attitudes (all underpinned by values) that learners need to mobilize independently and make proof of in order to deal with new situations and solve problems in a competent, effective and responsible/ethical way.

Learning experiences and opportunities can be included in the curriculum via subject areas and subjects; crosscutting issues; and extracurricular activities. While the curriculum as a whole should contribute to the development of key/transversal

competences, some subjects or learning experiences could be seen as carriers for the development of specific competences.

C. List of documents reviewed

Acedo, Clementina for UNESCO-IBE, "Curriculum reforms: In search of innovative models for dynamic education systems", *Prospects*, No. 43, 2013, pp. 393-395.

African Union, "Launch of the CESA Curriculum Cluster", CESA Report.

http://www.acuass.org/content/Cluster_Documents/CESA_Curriculum_Cluster_launch_Report.pdf, Accessed Aug. 2019.

Amadioha, Dr. Samuel, "curriculum development practices in Nigeria: definition, aims and brief history of the comparative education and adaptation centre (CESAC)", *Australian Journal Of Arts And Scientific Research*, vol 21, no. 2, 2016, pp. 87-94.

Amimo, Catherine, Prof. Joseph Bosire and Prof. Elizabeth Role, "Theoretical Underpinnings of Curriculum Change in Developing Economies: Is Complexity Theory the New Wine in Lewins' Old Wineskin?", *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, vol. 3, No. 3, 2014, pp. 38-49.

Asebiomo, PhD. Ayodele M.; "Moving With Global Trends in Curriculum Innovation: Mitigating the Challenges of Curriculum Implementation for Effective Teaching and Learning in Nigeria", *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, vol. 3, issue 1, 2015, pp. 26-33.

CEDEFOP, *Curriculum Reform in Europe. The impact of learning outcomes*, Research Paper No.29, 2012

Glatthorn, Allan A. for Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, *Curriculum Renewal*, 1987.

Hirst Paul H., *Knowledge and the Curriculum: A Collection of Philosophical Papers*, Routledge, 1975

Key et al. for Council of Europe, "Curriculum/Course Programme/Course Design/Course Objectives", *Linguistic Integration Of Adult Migrants (LIAM)*, 2019 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/lang-migrants>, Accessed July 2019.

Kridel Craig, *Encyclopedia of Curriculum Studies*, University of South Carolina, SAGE, 2010

Kyunghee, So and Jiyoun San, "Curriculum Reform in Korea: Issues and Challenges for Twenty-first Century Learning", Vol. 23, No. 4, *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 2014, pp. 795-803.

Le Fanu, Guy, "The inclusion of inclusive education in international development: Lessons from Papua New Guinea", *International Journal of Education Development*, Vol.33, No. 2, 2013, pp. 139-148.

Milner IV, H. Richard and F. Blake Tenor for the OECD, "Curriculum Planning and Development: Implications for a new generation of teacher educators", *Educating Teachers for Diversity: Meeting the Challenge*, 2010, pp.163-183.

OECD, "Competencies for 2030: Curriculum, assessment and teaching", *Education Policy in Japan: Building Bridges towards 2030*, 2018, pp. 79-107.

OECD, "Designing and implementing curriculum and standards", *Starting Strong III: A Quality Toolbox for Early Childhood Education and Care*, 2011, pp. 81-141.

OECD, *Making the Curriculum work*, 1998.

OECD, *The future of Education and Skills. Education 2030*, 2018.

OECD website, "OECD Future Of Education And Skills 2030 - Organisation For Economic Co-Operation And Development"

<http://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project>, Accessed Sept. 2019.

Operti, Renato for UNESCO-IBE, "Curriculum in the Education 2030 Agenda, Case of Latin America and Caribbean", *Current and Critical Issues in Curriculum, Learning and Assessment*, 2017.

Partnership, Great, *The Glossary Of Education Reform*, 2019,

<https://www.edglossary.org/curriculum/>, Accessed July 2019.

Rawezh, Ibrahim, "Curriculum development models and documents", PPT presentation, 2014.

Stabback, Philip for UNESCO-IBE, "What Makes A Quality Curriculum?", *Current and Critical Issues in Curriculum and Learning*, 2016.

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000243975.locale=en>, Accessed Aug. 2019.

Tibbitts, Felisa for UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Organization of American States, *Curriculum Development and Review for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*, 2017

UNESCO 205 EX/11, *Future of the International Bureau of Education (IBE)*, 2018.

UNESCO 206 EX/16, *Future of the International Bureau of Education (IBE)*, 2019.

UNESCO 206 EX/17, *Future of the International Bureau of Education (IBE)*, 2019.

UNESCO 206 EX/17.INF., *Proposal by Switzerland concerning the International Bureau of Education*, 2019

UNESCO 206 EX/17.INF.2, *Proposal of Spain to host the International Bureau of Education*, 2019

UNESCO 37 C/4, *Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2021*.

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000227860.locale=en>, Accessed Aug. 2019.

UNESCO, *Global Citizenship Education: Preparing learners for the challenges of the twenty-first century*, 2014.

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000227729>, Accessed Aug. 2019.

UNESCO, *Global Citizenship Education: Topics and learning objectives*, 2015

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232993>, Accessed Aug. 2019.

UNESCO, *Making textbook content inclusive: A focus on religion, gender and culture*, 2017

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002473/247337e.pdf>, Accessed Aug. 2019.

UNESCO-IBE, *Glossary of Curriculum Terminology*, 2013.

<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/sites/default/files/resources/ibe-glossary-curriculum.pdf>, Accessed Aug. 2019.

UNESCO-IBE, *Report of the Director of the International Bureau of Education to the 68th Session of the Council. Implementation of Activities for 2018*, 2018.

UNESCO-IBE, *Report of the Director of the International Bureau of Education to the 68th Session of the Council. Proposed programme of activities and budget 2019*, 2018

UNESCO-IBE, "II-Statutes of the International Bureau of Education", *Collection of Basic Texts*, 2016.

UNESCO-IIEP website, "Curriculum"

<http://education4resilience.iiep.unesco.org/en/curriculum>, Accessed Aug 2019.

UNESCO website, "Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development"

<https://en.unesco.org/gap/priority-action-areas>, Accessed Aug. 2019.

UNESCO website, "New literacy and numeracy curriculum framework adopted in Afghanistan"

<http://uil.unesco.org/literacy-and-basic-skills/capacity-development/new-literacy-and-numeracy-curriculum-framework>, Accessed Aug. 2019.

UNICEF, “Goal Area 2: Every child learns.”, *Global Annual Result Report*, 2018, <https://www.unicef.org/media/55331/file>, Accessed Aug. 2019.

United Nations website, “4 Quality education”, Sustainable development goals overview, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2017/goal-04/>, Accessed Aug. 2019

Wallace Susan, *A Dictionary of Education*, Oxford University Press, 2009

World Bank, *World Development Report 2018: Learning to Realize Education's Promise*, 2018.

DRAFT FOR REVISION

D. List of key informants

Name	Surname	Organisation	Position
Chang	Gwan Choi	UNESCO – Education Sector	Director of Education Policies Chief of Education Policies
Choi	Soo Yang	UNESCO – Education Sector	Director of Inclusion, Peace and Sustainable Development
Cornu	Christophe	UNESCO – Education Sector	Senior Project Officer on Health Education
Deffous	Elodie	UNESCO – Education Sector	Programme Specialists in the CapED Programme
Fadel	Charles	Center for Curriculum Design	Founder and Head
Giannini	Stefania	UNESCO – Education Sector	Assistant Director General
Gillet	Astrid,	UNESCO – Education Sector	Chief Executive Officer
Gutovic	Vanja	UNESCO – Education Sector	Associate Executive Officer

Holst	Kerstin	UNESCO – Education Sector	Chief of Education in Emergencies
Leicht	Alexander	UNESCO – Education Sector	Chief of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship
Machivila		Permanent Delegation of Spain to UNESCO	Education Counselor
Marope	Mmantsetsa	International Bureau of Education	Director
Miao	Fengchun	UNESCO – Education Sector	Chief of ICTs in Education
Michelet	Martin	Permanent Delegation of Switzerland to UNESCO	Ambassador
Naidoo	Jordan	UNESCO – Education Sector	Director of Education 2030 Support and Coordination
Novoa	Antonio	Permanent Delegation of Portugal to UNESCO	Ambassador

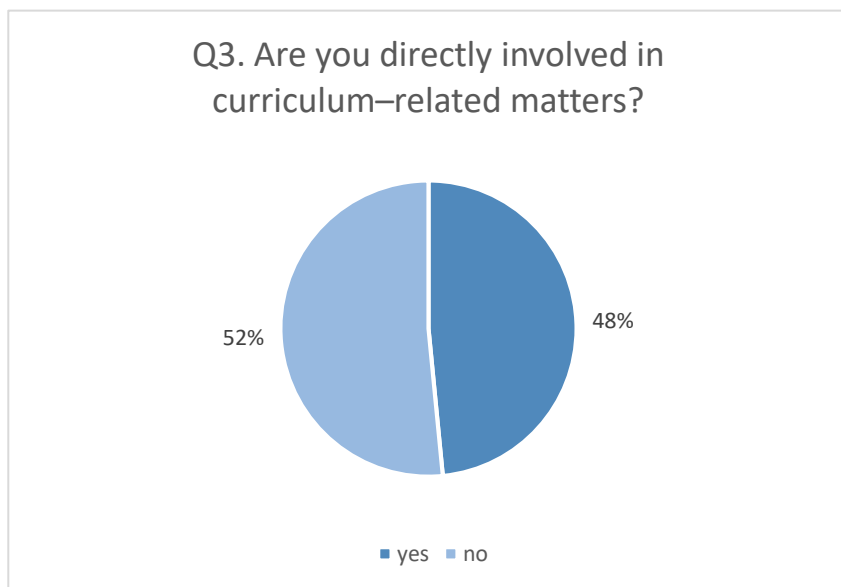
Opperti	Renato	International Bureau of Education	Former Programme Specialist at IBE
Pinilla Martín	Enrique	UNESCO Education Sector	– Programme Specialists in the CapED Programme
Sass	Justine	UNESCO Education Sector	– Chief of Education for Inclusion and Gender Equality
Ssereo	Florence	UNESCO Education Sector	– Programme Specialist in the Section Teacher Development
Tawil	Sobhi	UNESCO Education Sector	– Chief of Research and Foresight
van den Akker	Jan	University of Twente	Education expert
Yu	Xiaoping	Permanent Delegation of China to UNESCO	Counselor

E. Survey to the National Commissions

Q1. Please indicate your country:

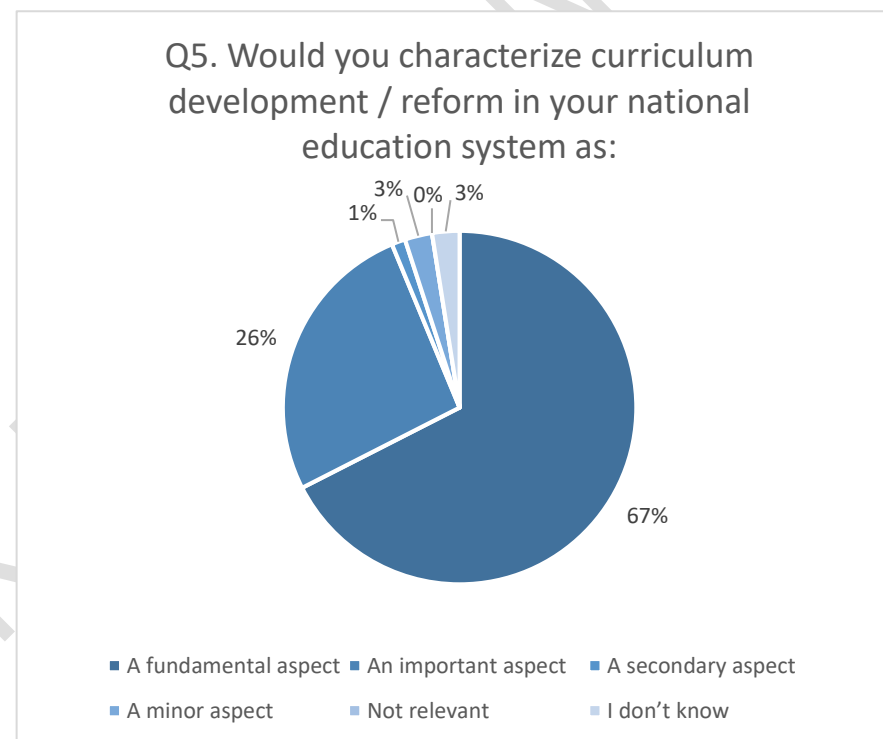
Q2. Please indicate your position:

Q3. Are you directly involved in curriculum-related matters?



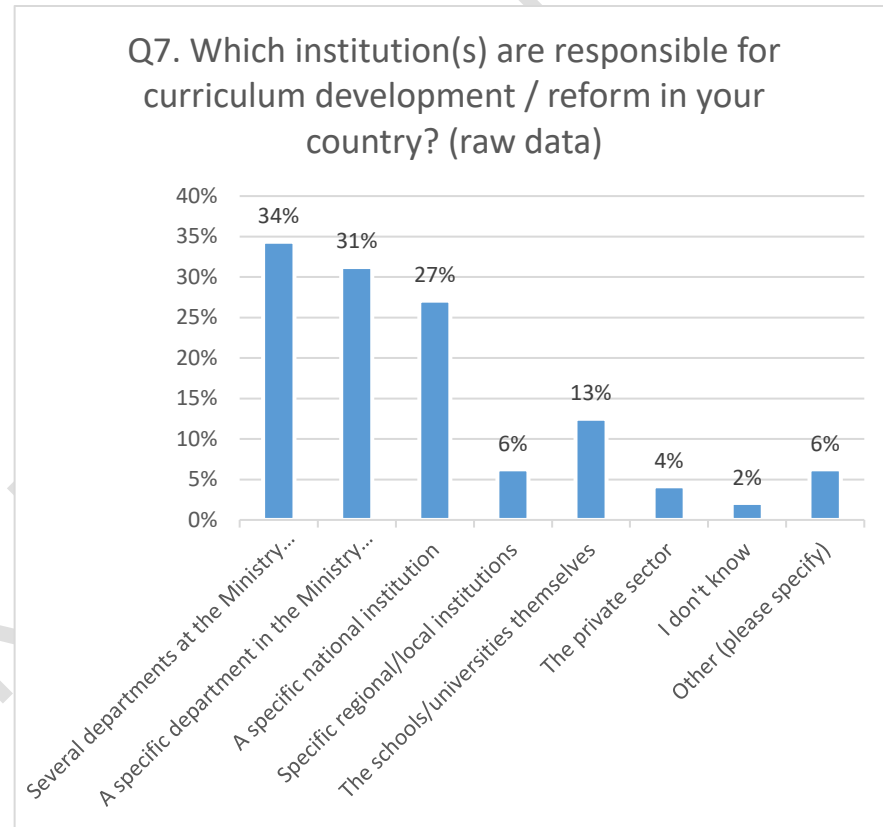
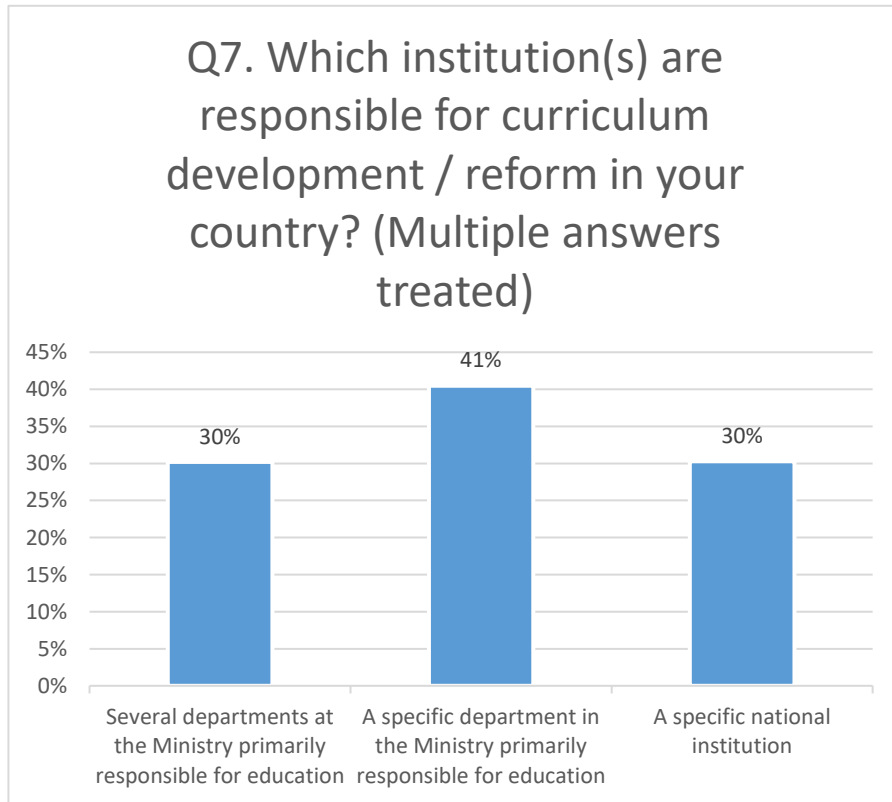
Q4. If so, in what capacity:

Q5. Would you characterize curriculum development / reform in your national education system as:



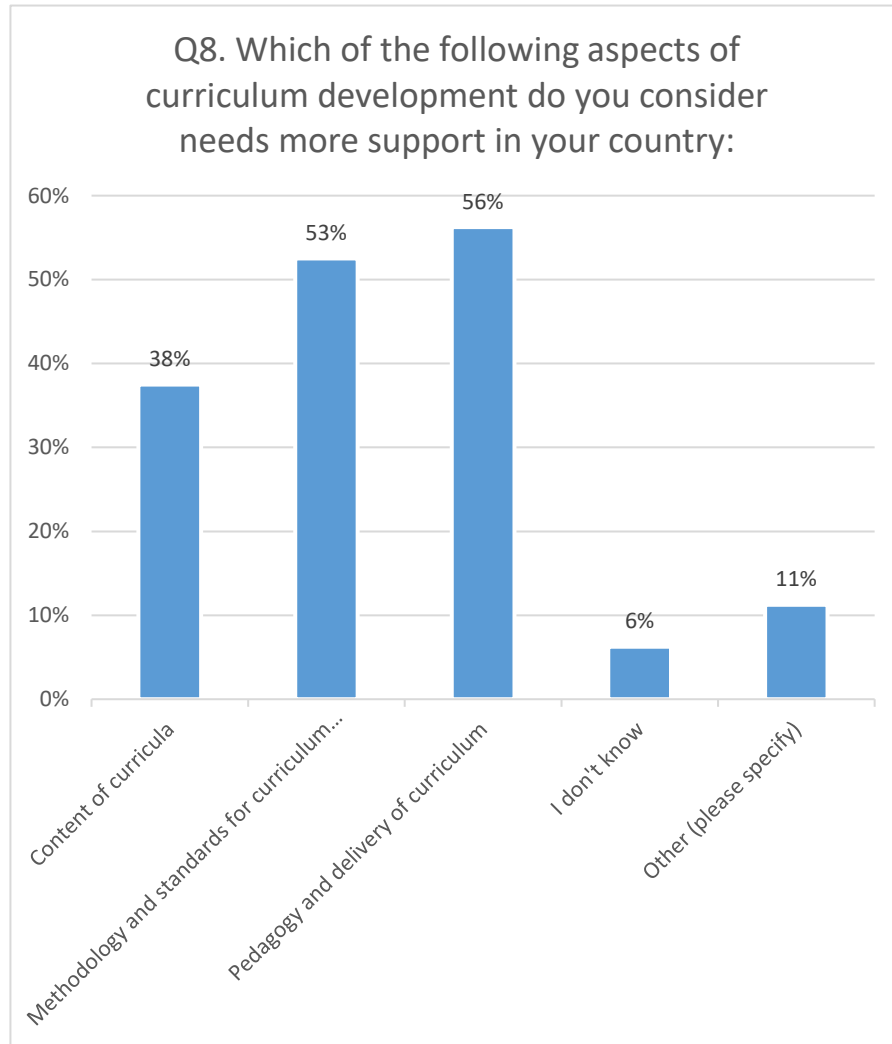
Q6. Please briefly describe why.

Q7. Which institution(s) are responsible for curriculum development / reform in your country

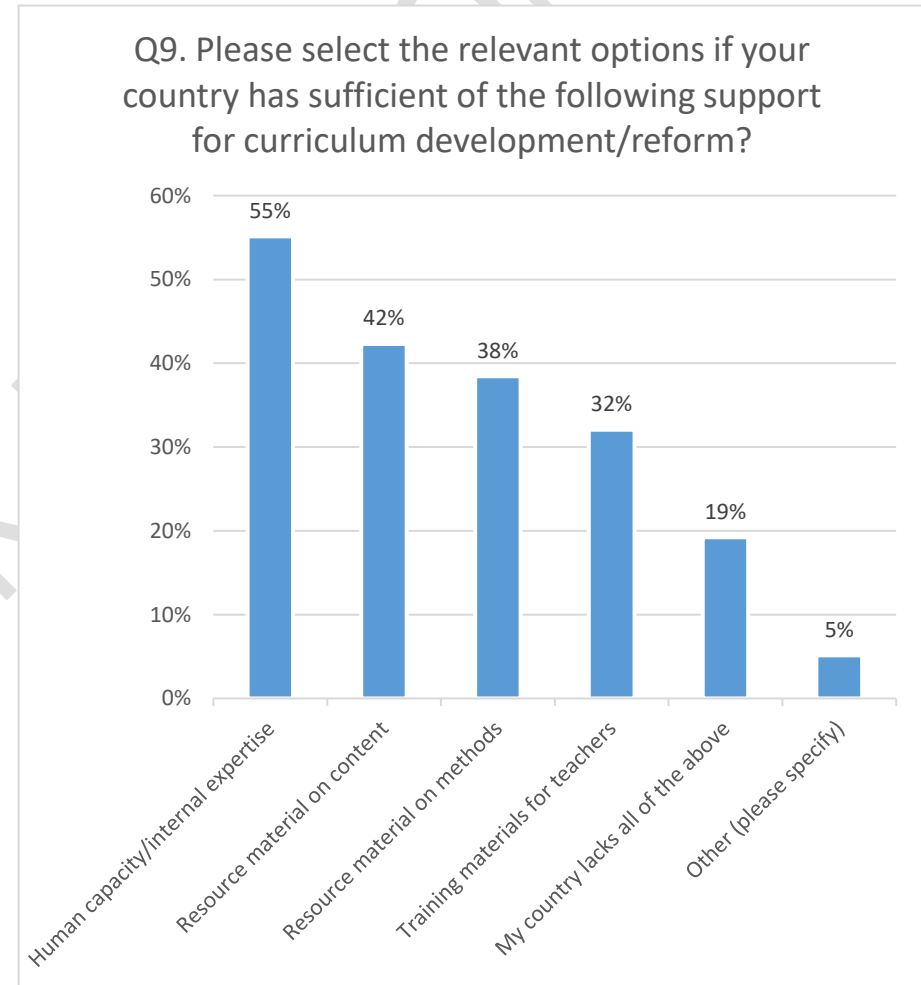


DRAFT

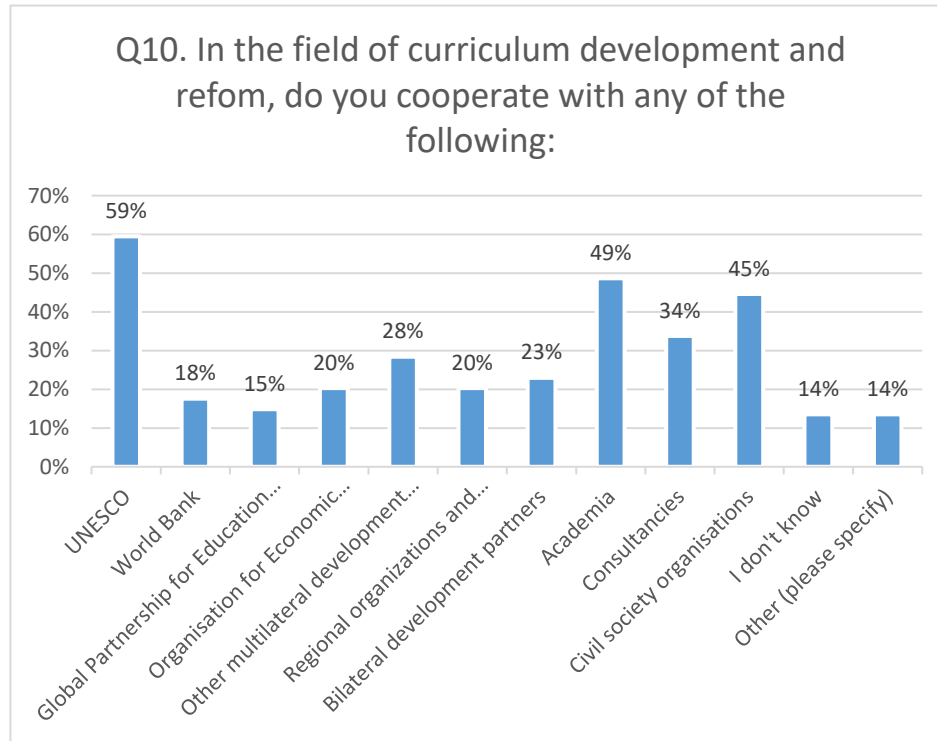
Q8. Which of the following aspects of curriculum development do you consider needs more support in your country:



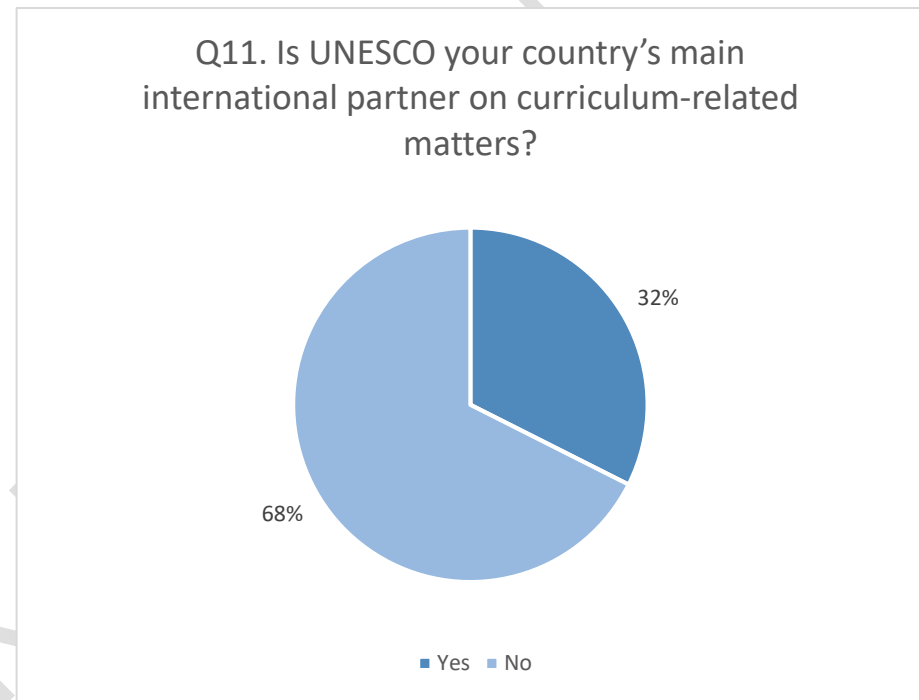
Q9. Please select the relevant options if your country has sufficient of the following support for curriculum development/reform?



Q10. In the field of curriculum development and reform, do you cooperate with any of the following:



Q11. Is UNESCO your country's main international partner on curriculum-related matters?

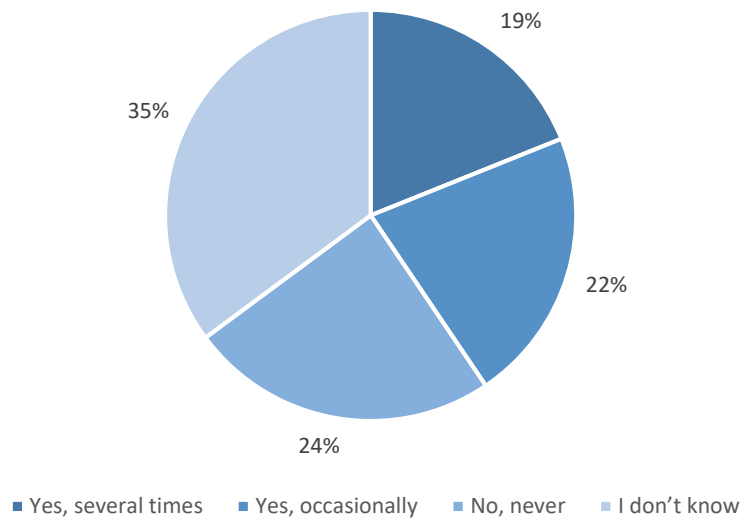


Q12. If not, please specify who is your country's main partner on curriculum development and reform

Q13. Have you or the institutions involved in curriculum development/reform in your country worked with the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) in the past 10 years?

DRAFT

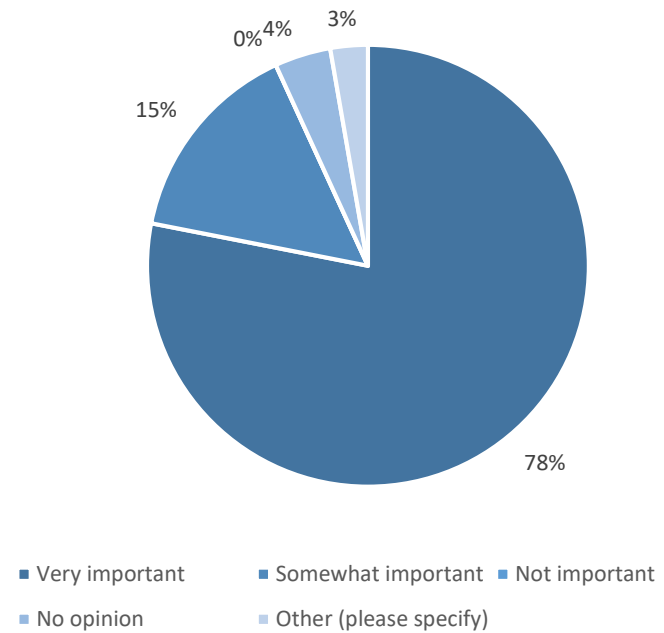
Q13. Have you or the institutions involved in curriculum development/reform in your country worked with the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) in the past 10 years?



Q14. If, yes please briefly describe the nature and quality of your collaboration:

Q15. To what extent do you consider curriculum development/reform to be an important pillar of education, especially in view of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

Q15. To what extent do you consider curriculum development/reform to be an important pillar of education, especially in view of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

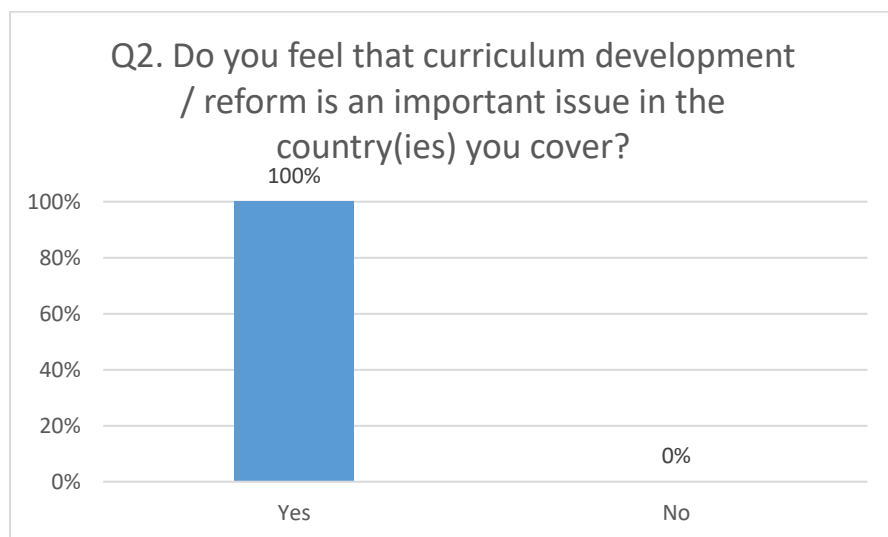


Q16. Any other comments:

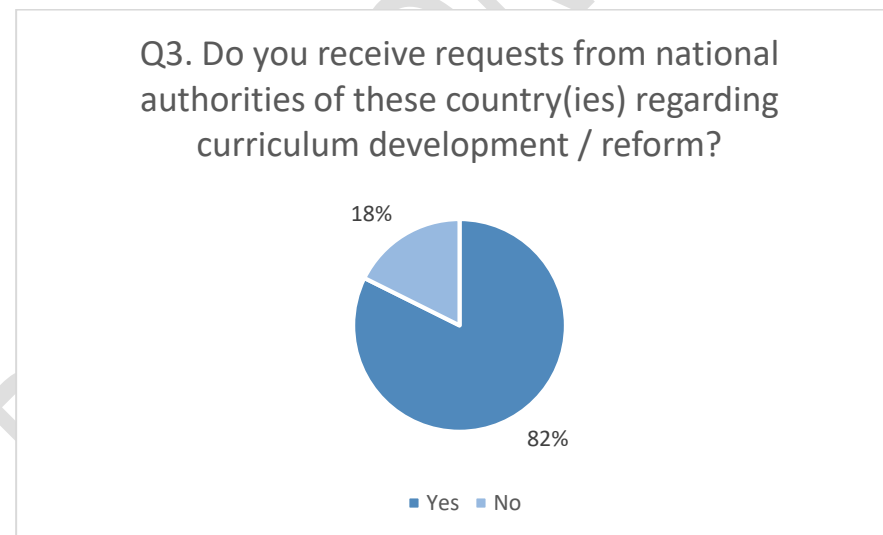
F. Survey to the Field Offices

Q1. Please indicate in which regional education bureau/field office you are based in:

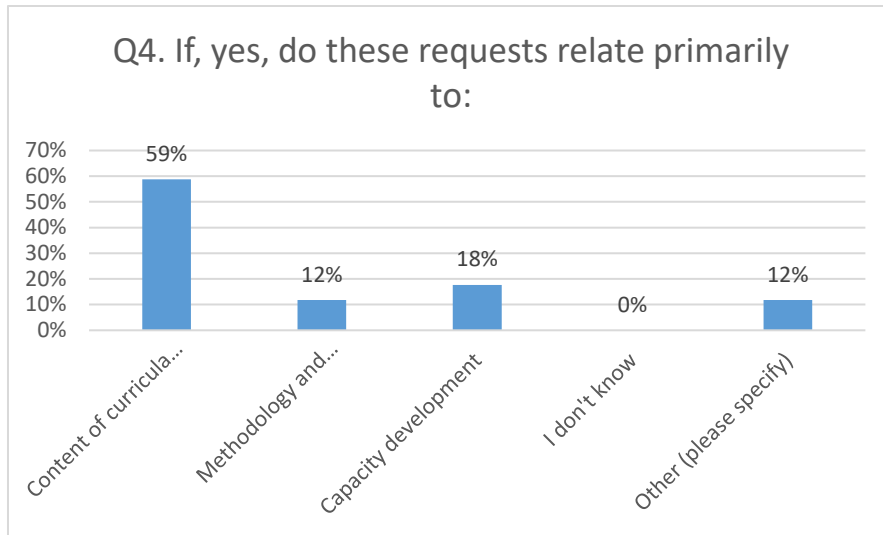
Q2. Do you feel that curriculum development / reform is an important issue in the country(ies) you cover?



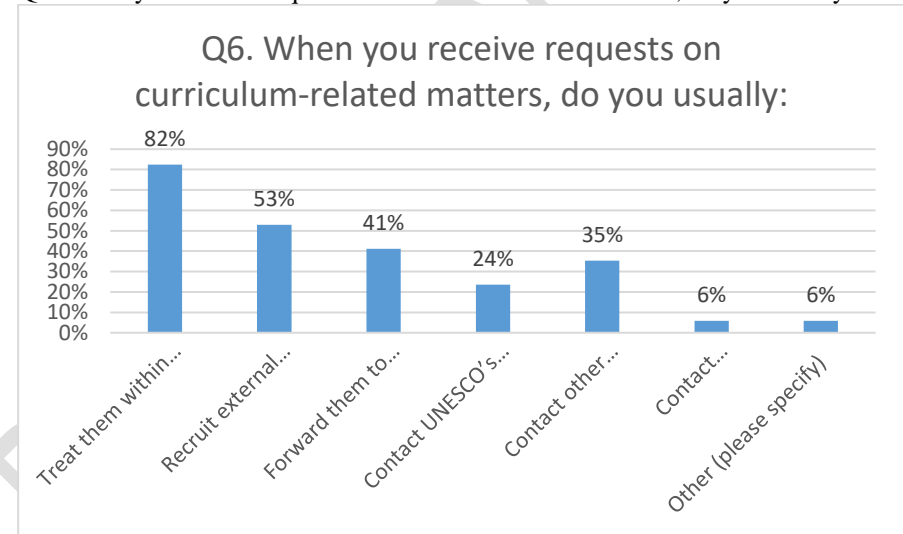
Q3. Do you receive requests from national authorities of these country(ies) regarding curriculum development / reform?



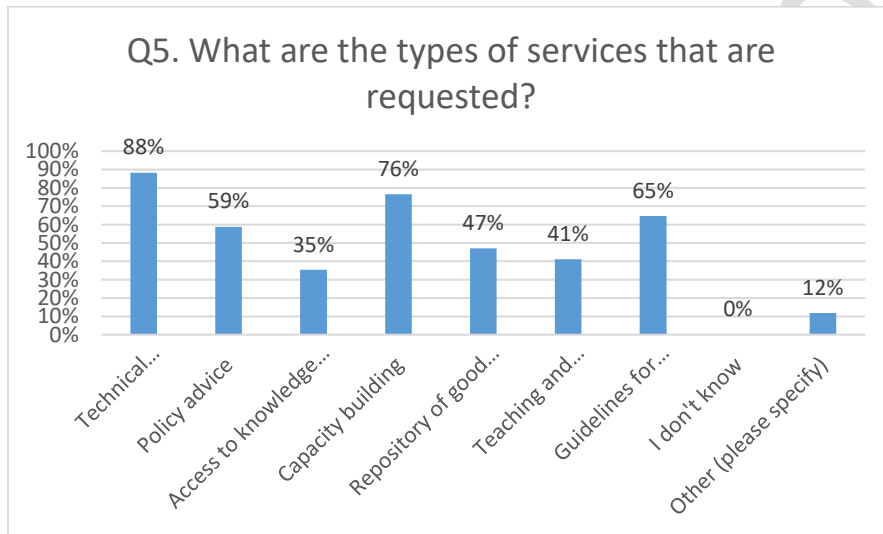
Q4. If, yes, do these requests relate primarily to:



Q6. When you receive requests on curriculum-related matters, do you usually:

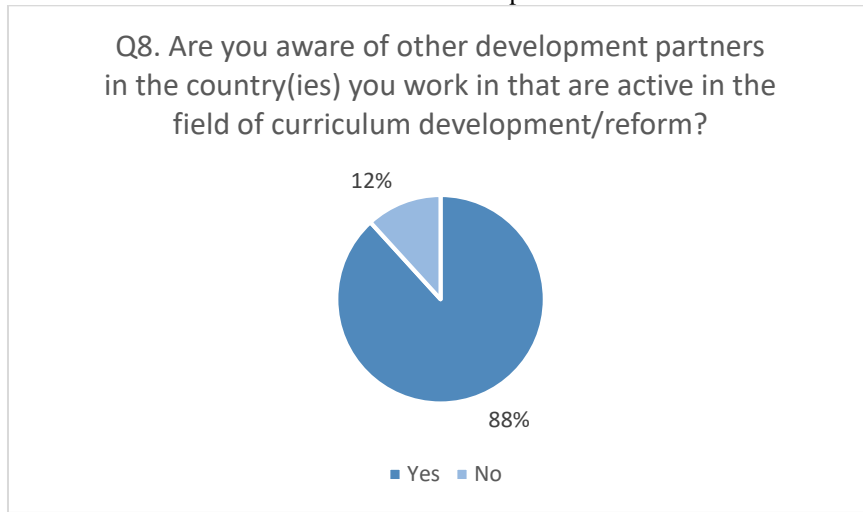


Q5. What are the types of services that are requested?

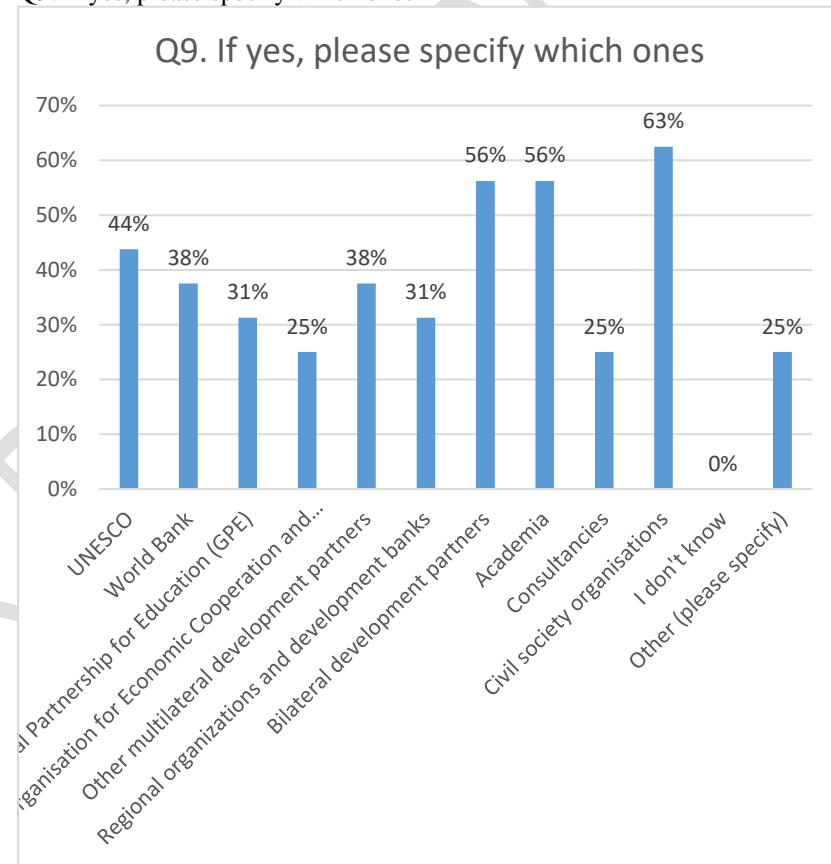


Q7. What are the obstacles, if any, for effective coordination among different UNESCO entities in the field of curriculum development/reform

Q8. Are you aware of other development partners in the country(ies) you work in that are active in the field of curriculum development/reform?

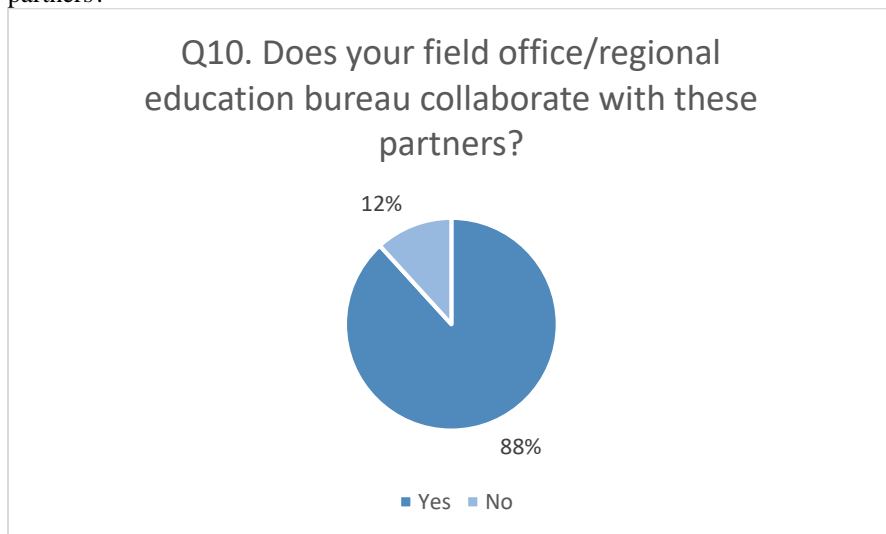


Q9. If yes, please specify which ones

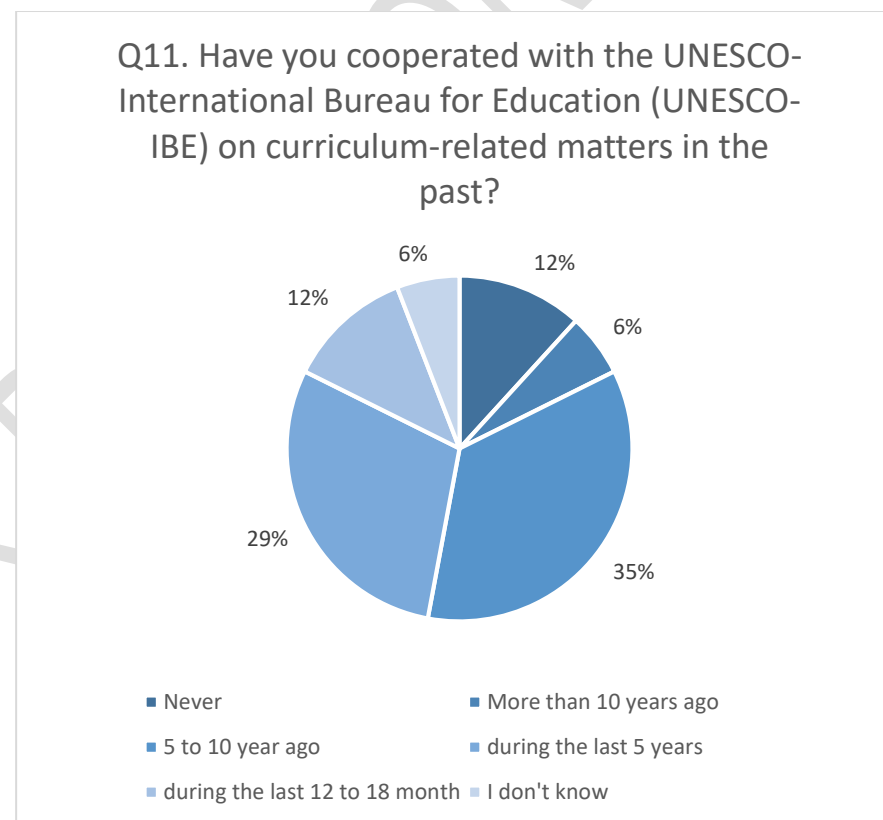


DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Q10. Does your field office/regional education bureau collaborate with these partners?



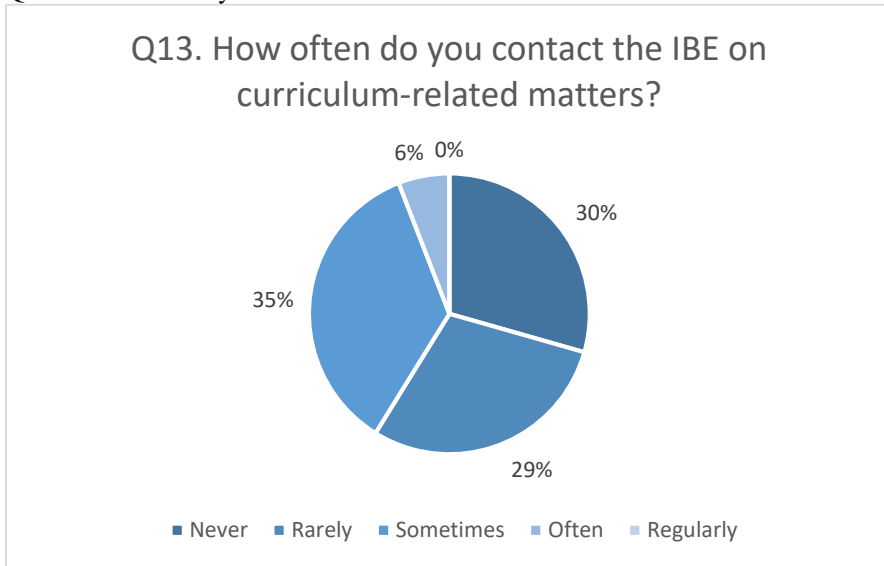
Q11. Have you cooperated with the UNESCO-International Bureau for Education (UNESCO-IBE) on curriculum-related matters in the past?



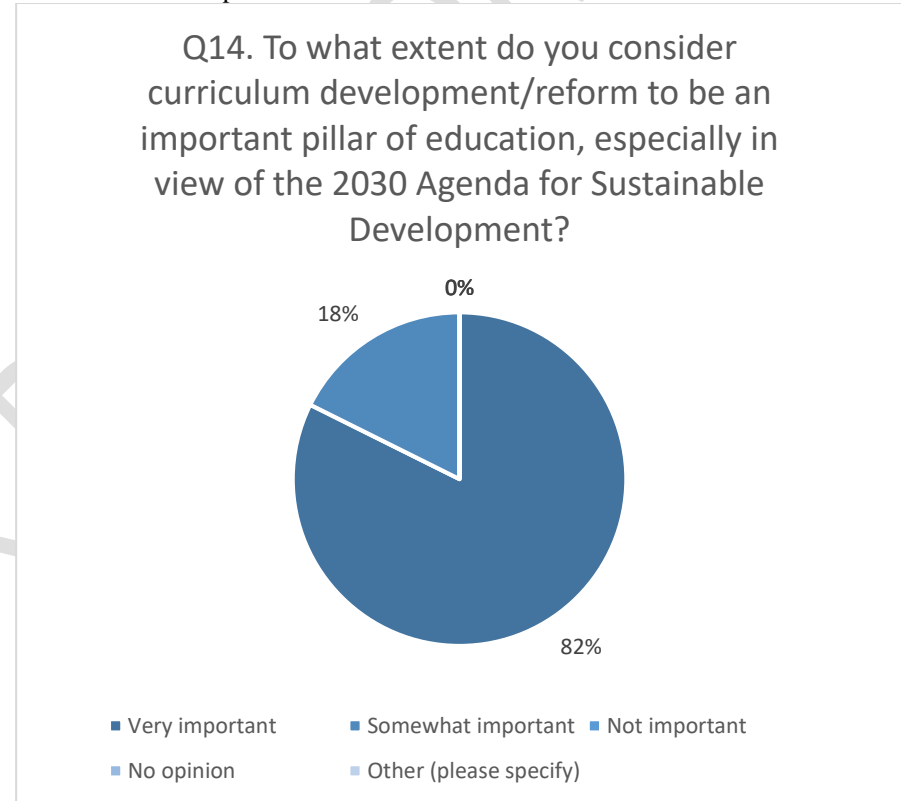
Q12. Please describe the nature and quality of cooperation you have with IBE?

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

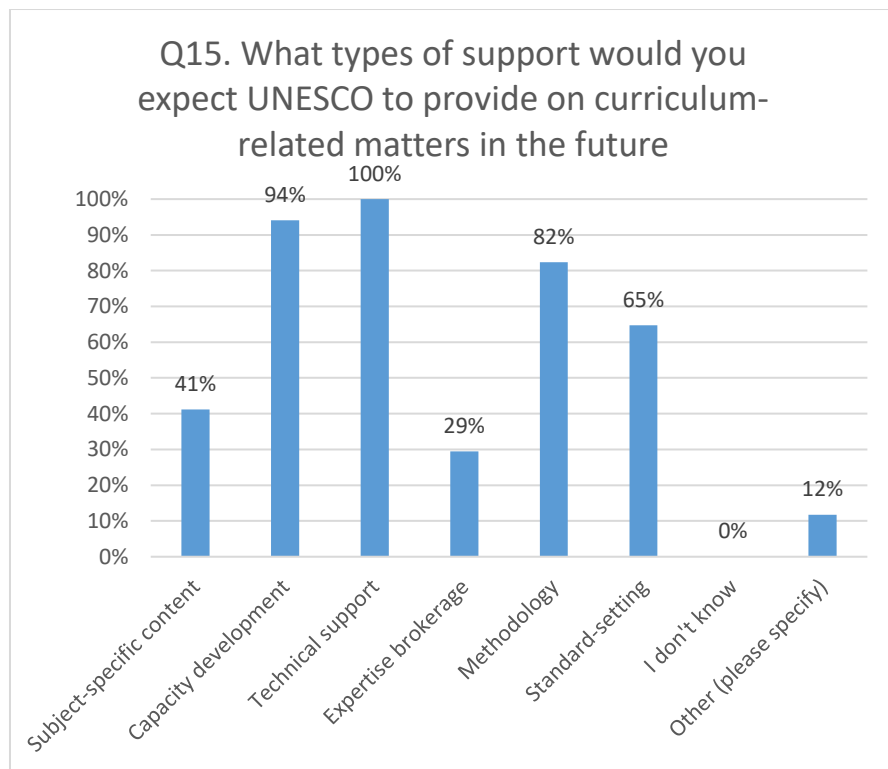
Q13. How often do you contact the IBE on curriculum-related matters?



Q14. To what extent do you consider curriculum development/reform to be an important pillar of education, especially in view of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?



Q15. What types of support would you expect UNESCO to provide on curriculum-related matters in the future



G. Biodata of the evaluators

Mr Fabrice Hénard is an international consultant specialized in the evaluation of education (particularly in higher education), skills and R&D policies for the European Union, OECD, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank, national and multilateral organizations (GIZ, AFD, British Council among others) as well as NGOs. He is furthermore an international expert in quality assurance for higher education and he assists Asian and African governments in building up their accreditation and evaluation systems of universities and programmes.

Fabrice is a graduate from Sciences Po-University Paris and holds a Master in Urban Policy. Fabrice's evaluation experience dates back to 1999, where he was a senior evaluator for the Centre for European Expertise and Evaluation, designing evaluation methodology and guidelines for EuropeAid. From 2003, he was an evaluator for the French agency for evaluation of higher education and research, specifically in charge of European and international evaluations of programmes and universities, with a focus on transnational education. In 2007, he was an Analyst at the OECD Directorate for Education, specialized in quality teaching, governance, assessment of learning outcomes and internationalization of higher education. He started cooperating with other international organizations such as the World Bank in MENA countries and contributed to widening the OECD higher education programme to other areas.

Since 2013, Fabrice is running his own consultancy Learning Avenue that conducts policy evaluations and advises governments on education and skill policies, ranging from early childhood to higher education, including lifelong learning and VET. Fabrice's main geographical areas cover Africa (French-speaking Africa, Eastern Africa and Austral Africa), South-East Asia, Maghreb and all OECD countries. His specializations include impact evaluation and multi-country evaluations, Theory of change, quantitative analysis, case studies, outcome mapping, international benchmarking and comparative analysis (recently in the Sahel region). Fabrice is much familiar with the evaluation standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

Fabrice is affiliated to several networks in quality assurance and evaluation (AMAQEN, Morocco; the US Council for higher education accreditation, the French Society for Evaluation), he has published several articles and handbooks on quality teaching, integrity and quality assurance. In addition, Fabrice is serving on the Albanian Accreditation Board since 2017 and has been the Secretary General of the Luxembourg

Accreditation Committee since 2013. Since 2016, Fabrice has been the educational expert for France, for the European Commission's DG Education and Culture.

Mr Christophe Dietrich holds a Master in Economics and works as a senior project manager, Team Leader and expert with the evaluation unit and statistics unit of ICON-INSTITUTE Consulting Group.

Focal areas of his work are the conception and implementation of evaluation schemes in the field of social development and education policy. Most recently, Christophe has been implementing the Evaluation of the CapED SDG4 – Pilot Programme, the Evaluation of the UNESCO's Net-Med Youth Project as well as the Evaluation of the IPE-Pôle de Dakar. He was involved as a Survey expert and Evaluation Manager in the Thematic Evaluation of the UNFPA support to the 2010 round of census and participated to the data collection of UNESCO's Capacity Development for Education for All (CapEFA) Programme evaluation in Afghanistan.

In addition, Christophe is also involved in the Statistics Unit where he was Deputy Team Leader and Expert of Process engineering for the Technical Assistance to the Production of the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey for the Afghanistan Central Statistics Organisation, Senior Research and Team Leader for a Study on the use and formation of Human Capital in Afghanistan for the Ministry of Labour, and Lead researcher for the study on the prevalence of discrimination in Albania for the Council of Europe. Before joining ICON, Christophe has worked as a research assistant and manager as well as project manager at the Council of Europe in the Social Cohesion Directorate General.

Ms Viviane Bertel holds a double Master's degree in Political Sciences with a specialisation in Development Cooperation from Sciences Po Lille, and in European and International Governance from the University of Münster. She has joined ICON in 2016 and has since then acquired solid experience in project management through participation in several cooperation projects.

Viviane is involved in the management of evaluations since 2018 and has gained experience in survey management through a survey in 23 countries for the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI). She has also a good knowledge of Agenda 2030 and SDG-related issues and is currently contributing to the capacity development for SDG implementation for the government of Aruba

