Training Tools for Curriculum Development

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Points of discussion

- Vision of the curriculum
- Curriculum frameworks
- Curricular trends
- Types of curriculum
- Challenges facing the processes of curriculum change and management

- IBE’s Training Tools for Curriculum Development
Vision of the curriculum
Why is curriculum important?

- Juan Manuel Moreno (2006): The educational reform throughout the world increasingly focuses on curriculum.

- Links between the curriculum’s objectives and structures, the democratization of educational opportunities (diversification of modes of learning to achieve good outcomes) and the achievement of social and pedagogical inclusion.

- Curriculum is linked to key definitions of the roles of education in society: as citizenship education, as sensible personal development, as a core social and economic policy, and as an irreplaceable factor for the improvement of the general well-being, in particularly of the poorest population.

- Curriculum reflects the kind of society to which we aspire/pursue and should include the demands and expectations of society. Link between society - education policy - curricular vision - teacher role and profile.
A comprehensive vision of curriculum

- The curriculum is a **political and technical issue** that is well embedded in the complex interfaces between society, politics and education. Participation of a large and diverse number of actors and institutions (multiple stakeholders from inside and outside the education system).

- Cecilia Braslavsky: curriculum can be defined “as a **dense and flexible contract** between politics/society and teachers”.

- Vision of curriculum development as both a continuous process and product.
A comprehensive vision of curriculum

- The **intended curriculum** – focus on the aims and content of what is to be taught

- The **implemented curriculum** – focus on what is actually put in place for students in schools

- The **experienced curriculum** – focus on the formal learning actually experienced by students

- The **hidden curriculum** – focus on the students’ experiences of school beyond the formal structure of the curriculum

- The **null curriculum** – focus on the areas and dimensions of human experiences not addressed through teaching
Curriculum Framework – Key features

A single document, which is supplemented by other materials to guide the implementation of specific parts of the framework. Three elements:

- an *agreed social document*, which defines and expresses national priorities for education and aspirations for the future of the nation.

- a *technical tool*, which establishes parameters for the development of other curricular documents such as subject syllabi.

- it provides *universal criteria* that allow diversity and flexibility at the school and classroom levels within universal core concepts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Introduction: Current Context</th>
<th>Reflects the findings of the contextual scan. It describes the social and economic environment in which teaching and learning occur.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Educational Policy Statements</td>
<td>Describes the Government’s goals for education, such as universal literacy and numeracy, the development of skills needed for economic prosperity and the creation of a stable and tolerant society.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Statement of Broad Learning Objectives and Outcomes / standards for each level/cycle</td>
<td>Describes what students should know and be able to do when they complete their school education. Outcomes should be expressed in a range of domains, including knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies, values and attitudes.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 4. Structure of the Education System | Describes the school system within which the curriculum framework is to be applied. It should specify:  
  • Number of years of schooling, including compulsory schooling  
  • Stages (or cycles) of schooling and their durations  
  • Number of weeks in the school years, hours or teaching periods in the school week |
| 5. Structure of curriculum content, learning areas and subjects | Describes the organization of content within the framework and the extent to which schools and students can make choices. It might describe:  
  • The pattern of subjects or learning areas to be studied in each stage or cycle (such as core, elective and optional subjects)  
  • A brief description of each subject or learning area outlining the rationale for its inclusion in the curriculum and the contribution it makes to the achievement of the learning outcomes defined in Section 3  
  • The number of hours to be assigned to each subject or learning area in each stage or cycle |
| 6. Standards of resources required for implementation | Describes standards as they apply to:  
  • Teachers – qualifications, teaching load (number of classes per week)  
  • Students – number per class in each subject  
  • Materials – textbooks, computers, other equipment; facilities – classrooms, furniture, fittings. |
| 7. Teaching methodology | Describes the range of teaching approaches that might be employed in the implementation of the framework. |
| 8. Assessing student achievement | Describes the importance of assessing the extent to which students achieve the outcomes established for each subject, and recommends or prescribes types of assessment strategies (such as written, oral, performance and practical skills demonstration). |
Curriculum Development - Trends

- Moving away from centralized models of curriculum decision-making towards **more democratic, decentralized models within universal frameworks**.

- Curriculum is increasingly being structured in ways which:
  - are appropriate to the needs and circumstances of regions,
  - address more effectively the expectations and needs of students (addressing diversity).

- Adopting **curriculum frameworks as overarching curriculum documents** to guide curriculum design and development.

- Remodeling learning experiences of many separate subjects into a **more integrated content**. Integrated learning enables students to apply knowledge and competencies more easily to their daily lives.
## International trends in curriculum change
### Paradigm shift?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FROM</th>
<th>TO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer of facts</td>
<td>Student construction of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorizations of information</td>
<td>Analysis, synthesis, evaluation, application of information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concentration on knowledge</td>
<td>Development of knowledge, competencies, values and attitudes</td>
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<td>Summative assessment on academic achievement</td>
<td>Authentic and formative assessment of competencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rote learning</td>
<td>Applied learning/learning in context</td>
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<td>Categorized knowledge (traditional subjects)</td>
<td>Integrated knowledge (broader learning areas)</td>
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<td><strong>Schooling</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lifelong learning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on inputs</td>
<td>Focus on outcomes and processes</td>
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<td>Didactic teaching</td>
<td>Participatory activity-centered approaches and “Interactive methodology”</td>
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<td>Assumption that there is one “learning style”</td>
<td>Recognition that there are “preferred learning styles”</td>
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<td>Curriculum as product</td>
<td>Curriculum as both process and product</td>
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Types of Curriculum

• **Content-based curriculum:**
  - typically focuses in *traditional subject disciplines*;
  - is often highly directive, detailed and rigid in both structure and time allocation;
  - teaching emphasizes the development of lower level cognitive skills (memorization and reproduction of factual information).

• **Outcome-based curriculum:**
  - specifies *outcomes that students are expected to achieve* in specific subjects or learning areas by the end of a specific stage of schooling;
  - focuses on the results rather than the means to achieve them;
  - supports the development of skills or understandings rather than cover required content.

• **Objective-based curriculum:**
  - specifies *behavioural objectives*, which aim to change the observable behaviour of students;
  - objectives may describe what the teacher or student is to do, what subject matter is to be covered, or the expected student learning.
Types of Curriculum

- **Competency-based curriculum:**
  - avoids a subject-based approach and emphasizes the cross-connections between learning areas;
  - aims to ensure that every learner reaches specific minimum levels of achievement or competency at particular stages of schooling;
  - emphasis on **developing and demonstrating knowledge, skills, capacities and behaviours** required for the successful completion of particular tasks (**learning situations** implying the mobilization and integration of resources). Mobilize and integrate knowledge, attitudes and values.

- **Integrated curriculum:**
  - skills and knowledge are developed in more than one area of study;
  - acknowledges that learning and knowledge have a **social dimension** and that learning is not only a “school-based” activity.

- **Standards-based curriculum:**
  - **assessments are criterion referenced** (student performance is measured against the defined standard, not against the performance of other students);
  - standards can facilitate appropriate correlations between learning outcomes and educational services from different education units to create a customized system for the benefit of the students.
Challenges facing the processes of curriculum change

• Historical, ideological and political disputes and conflicts – site of political and technical contestation.

• Disciplinary *identities* and boundaries.

• Discussions on *curricular approaches*.

• Traditional forms and contents of *knowledge organization*.
The IBE’s Training Tools for Curriculum Development

- The IBE aims to develop learning tools and training modules for curriculum change and development, both general and thematic.

- In this context, the IBE has developed a core Resource Pack, containing a set of 8 modules and a balanced number of case studies from different regions, emphasizing an interregional and global perspective of curriculum design and development.

- The Training Tools for Curriculum Development allow for customization depending on the concrete needs of countries and stakeholders; the 8 modules of the Resource Pack can be taken as a whole or individually.
The Curricular Resource Pack

- Organised in 8 modules, each:
  - on a key aspect of the curricular development process;
  - backed by a conceptual framework;
  - illustrated by case studies;
  - deepened through training activities.
The 8 Modules of the Resource Pack

1. Curriculum change
   • Offers a basic core framework centred on quality education and effective learning

2. Policy dialogue & formulation
   • Driving force of the reform
   • Contains tools for SWOT analysis and identifying key actors
   • Considers the planning and implementation of the consultation process
   • Discusses advocacy and handling of sensitive issues
Examples of “Consultation” activities

Government
Ministries of Education
Local authorities
Teacher trainers
School staff
Students
Employers
Communities
...
Fragmented, hierarchical vision?
Examples of “Consultation” activities

Parents
Editors
Medias
Religious authorities
...
More holistic and learner-centred vision?
Role of examiners?
Inspectors? International actors?

Users of the Resource Pack
The 8 Modules of the Resource Pack

3. **Curriculum design**
   - Contains tools for organising the curriculum framework
   - Considers cross-cutting themes for curricular integration and diversification

4. **System management and governance**
   - Contains models for managing the development and implementation of the curriculum
   - Emphasises balance between curricular centralisation, decentralisation, and localisation
   - Looks at curricular management at the school level
   - Underlines greater engagement / involvement of stakeholders
The 8 Modules of the Resource Pack

5. Development of textbooks and other teaching/learning materials
   - Supports the design of policies that integrate the new models and approaches to ensure quality
   - Offers evaluation criteria and approval of materials
   - Discusses the development of additional materials, e.g. e-learning, etc.
   - Focuses on curriculum development by teachers

6. Capacity building for curriculum implementation
   - Discusses new capacity building approaches and practices
   - Helps target and support the capacities of key actors in the priority areas
The 8 Modules of the Resource Pack

7. Processes of Curriculum Implementation
   • Piloting (design: justification, objectives, models, variables, planning, monitoring and evaluation, etc.)
   • Large scale implementation

8. Curriculum evaluation and student assessment
   • Offers criteria and analytical scheme for evaluating curricula
   • Assessment of students: integral part of the curriculum (experiences of the Nordic countries)
   • How to evaluate the learning outcomes of cross-cutting themes
Thematic Modules

• individual thematic modules addressing the issue of how to incorporate specific topics into the curriculum.

• follow the structure of the Resource Pack

• can be used individually or as add-ons as learning and training tools to respond to the concrete needs of stakeholders at the national level.
Thematic Modules
Environmental Education

• This module aims to provide teachers, educators and curriculum development specialists with the understanding, tools and methods for successfully integrating environmental issues and concepts into core curriculum for any subject or discipline in order to increase the overall environmental literacy of students.

• This module is organized around four activities:

1. What is “environment”?
2. Why do we need to protect the environment? This activity builds on the premise that “all education is environmental education”.
3. Environmental literacy and ESD
4. Integrating environmental issues into curriculum
Thematic Modules
Natural Disaster Preparedness and Response

• The Module aims to:
  • Promote the inclusion of natural disaster preparedness and response in relevant sections of school curricula at all levels in order to provide accurate information;
  • Utilize various strategies to involve the young people and teachers in natural disaster preparedness and response;
  • Develop an action plan/action research on school – community participation related to disaster preparedness and response;
  • Promote the implementation of programmes in schools and teacher education institutions on natural disaster preparedness and response.

• The module has 5 thematic lessons:
  1 - Learning about Earthquakes
  2 - Learning about Floods
  3 - Learning about Typhoons/Storms, Hurricanes, and Cyclones
  4 - Learning about Tsunamis
  5 - Learning about Volcanoes
Why develop capacities?
Some issues to bear in mind

• when addressing the new curricular approaches, it is important to take the following into account:
  – Global, national and local realities and perspectives
  – Multiplies quantity of information – strengthen the role as life-long learners
  – Challenges: sustainable development, climate change, food security, glaring gaps in social and educational opportunities
  – Transition towards a knowledge society and impacts on social inclusion – democratization of the access to knowledge?
  – Partnerships and instability on a global scale and its implications at different levels
  – Changes in cultures, customs, life-styles and working styles – understanding of the cultural dimension to support change
  – Accessible and widespread technologies, social and educational impacts
## Competencies of curriculum developers / specialists

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• multicultural, multidisciplinary opening</td>
<td>• Multilingualism</td>
<td>• Cognitive Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Precision</td>
<td>• Research</td>
<td>• Curricular theories and trends</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Versatility, flexibility</td>
<td>• New ICT</td>
<td>• Pedagogy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Communication, negotiation</td>
<td>• Evaluate, anticipate</td>
<td>• Assessment models</td>
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<td>• Teamwork</td>
<td>• Present, advocate, convince</td>
<td>• Disciplinary expertise</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Boldness and persistence</td>
<td>• Train</td>
<td>• Societies, cultures and politics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lead, organise</td>
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</table>
Thank you for your interest in
the IBE’s Training Tools for Curriculum Development

Resource Pack - English, Spanish and French

Thematic modules:
• ‘Environmental Education’ for Asia and the Pacific (English)
• ‘Natural Disasters Preparedness and Response’ for Asia and the Pacific (English)
• ‘Climate Change’ for Asia and the Pacific (English)
• ‘Gender Sensitization’ for Asia and the Pacific (English)
• ‘Basic Education in Africa Programme (BEAP)’ for Sub-Saharan Africa (English and French)
• ‘Competency-based Approaches’ for Mexico (joint project, in Spanish)
• ‘Pedagogy of Integration’ for Mexico (as above)
• ‘Inclusive Education’ (English)
• ‘School-based Curriculum’ for Latin America (Spanish)

The IBE offers tailored workshops and courses in response to the concrete needs of countries and stakeholders. The customized courses would take into account the organization, content, methodology, documentation, tutorial guidance and deliverance (on-line and face-to-face, or both). These tailored workshops also cater for professionals involved in curriculum development and implementation in bilateral and multilateral agencies, as well as education and curriculum specialists from ministries, institutions and universities.