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APPENDIX A: Cultural Adaptation Record

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

Over the past several years the OECD, and Network C in particular, have shown increasing interest in understanding school processes in their own right. This is reflected by a cycle of school surveys that began in 1995 at the primary level and extends now to the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level (USSS). These school surveys are designed to produce institutional process indicators that reveal some of the key characteristics of both the learning environment and the organization of schools that may contribute to better student achievement.

Surveys are an important tool in Network C's mission of focusing policy makers' attention on processes. Responding to the Governing Board's request, Network C has begun a systematic series of surveys that will lead to a rich source of data to be presented as indicators in *Education at a Glance*. To further its goal of enlightening the processes by which schools educate children, Network C is now launching a second school survey focusing on the upper secondary level, which the American Institutes for Research (AIR) will lead as the International Study Coordinator. After reviewing a series of issues through thematic papers written by experts, Network C selected four topic areas for this survey:

- School characteristics aimed at facilitating the transition to the labor market and/or further education;
- Conditions of schooling that are instrumental in enhancing educational quality;
- Human resources; and
- Availability and use of information and communication technology (ICT).

These four areas have been chosen because they demonstrate school organizational processes that have a direct impact on the quality of learning.

The procedures outlined in this and other USSS manuals have been designed to ensure that high quality, internationally comparable data will be available for analyses. If you deviate from these procedures without the prior approval of the American Institutes for Research, you risk losing the ability to compare your country's results on USSS with those of the other countries. It is extremely important that the procedures outlined in this and the other USSS manuals are followed. Any anticipated deviation from these procedures should be brought to the attention of the technical staff at AIR prior to implementation.

► Do not modify any procedures without consulting AIR.

This manual contains a series of forms that you, as National Project Manager (NPM), must complete as you carry out the USSS survey operations. These forms contain vital information necessary to conduct the data collection, and will help AIR identify problems and document how procedures were implemented. You should submit the forms to AIR, as is indicated in this manual. It will also be necessary to submit all requested forms and documentation to facilitate the international data cleaning.

To facilitate the national survey operations, you will be provided with data entry software. You are strongly urged to use this software, since it greatly simplifies the data entry process while producing the required documentation as a byproduct. An electronic copy of the International Version of the questionnaire will also be provided to you.

USSS demands hard work and expertise from everyone involved, but especially from National Project Managers. One consistent finding from previous AIR studies is that the National Centers that follow study procedures produce the highest quality data with the least amount of effort. Your contribution as National Project Manager for your country is crucial to the current and future success of this survey.

Please keep a record of all problems and unforeseen situations while conducting the survey operations. After completing the data collection, please document your experiences—the good and the bad—along with suggestions for further improvements in the *Survey Activities Report* (see chapter 7). Your input will be invaluable to our efforts to improve future studies.

1.2. Important Deadlines for USSS

It is critical that all tasks related to the survey operations be carried out in accordance with the international schedule so that the data are collected and ready for analysis in a timely manner. The interval between receiving the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level materials for translation and verification, and administering the survey is very short. If you are at risk of missing any of the international deadlines, you should contact AIR immediately. Table 1.1 presents some important dates for the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level. If you cannot meet the international schedule for survey administration and data delivery, you risk having your data omitted from the analyses.

You are expected to administer the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level instruments starting **October 1, 2001** and continuing through **November 30, 2001**.

► If your country is participating in the Field Test, you are expected to administer the Field Test between **April 15, 2001** and **May 31, 2001**. Please see the timeline below for additional information.

You must submit your cleaned International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level data files and all required documentation to the American Institutes for Research no later than **December 23, 2001** to provide sufficient time for the data to be analyzed. Between the survey administration and sending your data to AIR, you must enter and verify data, and prepare the documentation required for international data cleaning.

Table 1.1: Important Dates for the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level

Month and Day, 2001	Activities
February 15	<i>Materials</i> Receive <i>USSS Sampling Manual</i> Receive <i>USSS Survey Operations Manual</i>
March 1	Receive revised questionnaire incorporating country Recommendations from pre-Field Test study
15	Identify Field Test sample and secure cooperation Sampling frame to AIR for approval
April 1	Draft sampling plan due at AIR Field Test translations due at AIR for approval
15	Receive approved sampling plan from AIR Receive approved translated questionnaire Begin Field Test
May 1	<i>Materials</i> Receive data entry database (with instructions)
31	Field Test ends
June 1	All samples approved by AIR
15	AIR receives all coded Field Test data from countries

Month and Day, 2001		Activities
August	1	<i>Materials</i> Receive final revised questionnaire
September	1	Translations sent to AIR for approval
	15	AIR releases report on Field Test results
October	1	Begin main study data collection by administering USSS
November	30	Data collection ends
December	23	Send all coded data back to AIR Send the <i>Survey Activities Report</i> to AIR no later than two weeks after submitting your coded data.
Month and Day, 2002		Activity
May	15	AIR releases final report

1.3. Field Operations Roles and Responsibilities

1.3.1. Primary Responsibilities of AIR

AIR's responsibilities center around four key areas of the survey:

- 1) Communication
 - Coordinate communication between OECD, Network C secretariats, National Project Managers, and Network members.
- 2) Field Operations
 - Develop the *USSS Sampling Manual* containing information needed to construct the sampling frame, the sampling plan, and the plan for validating the sample;
 - Work with countries in identifying target population;
 - Offer on-going consultation for sampling operations;

- Review and approve each country's sampling frame prior to drawing the sample;
 - Review and approve each country's sample based on data and documentation provided by countries;
 - Develop the *USSS Survey Operations Manual*; and
 - Provide on-going consultation for survey operations.
- 3) Instrument Development and Translation Procedures
- Finalize questionnaire;
 - Develop timelines for translation of the questionnaire and other survey materials;
 - Develop verification procedures for translation; and
 - Review and approve country translations.
- 4) Data Entry and Verification
- Develop electronic database to be used by countries to enter and check data;
 - Develop data verification procedures;
 - Develop clear procedures and worksheets for computing sample weights;
 - Receive individual country database and merge into an international database;
 - Check validity of data and weights based on documents provided by countries; and
 - Perform final data cleaning and verification procedures.

1.3.2. Primary Responsibilities of Participating Countries

Participating countries have responsibilities in four important areas of the survey:

- 1) Appointment of the National Project Manager.
- 2) Field Operations
 - Implement sampling plan;
 - Obtain school cooperation;
 - Compute response rate based on formulas and worksheets provided by AIR;
 - Print translated questionnaires;
 - Pack and ship all survey materials;
 - Implement follow-up procedures;
 - Track and account for returned survey forms; and
 - Submit *Survey Activities Report* to AIR.
- 3) Translation of Questionnaire and Other Survey Materials
 - Identify target language;
 - Implement translation and back translation procedures of survey questionnaire;
 - Verify translations;

- Document edits and national deviations on questionnaire; and
 - Submit translation report to AIR for review and approval.
- 4) Data Entry and Verification.
- Input data into database developed by AIR;
 - Implement initial, national-level data verification procedures;
 - Develop sampling weights based on plan provided by AIR;
 - Submit verified data including weights to AIR; and
 - Identify data manager responsible for answering follow-up data questions.

► Countries will be expected to carry out these same procedures if participating in the Field Test.

1.4. The Survey Operations Manual

1.4.1. Purpose of the Manual

The International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level Survey Operations Manual has been prepared by the staff of the American Institutes for Research. It is designed to assist the National Project Manager and other National Center staff members of each country with the preparation and implementation of the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level. The NPM has overall responsibility for the within-country implementation of the survey in a manner consistent with international standards and procedures, and it is assumed that the NPM will have staff at the National Center to assist with this.

This manual describes your activities and responsibilities from the moment the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level materials arrive at your National Center to the moment you send your national data sets and accompanying documentation to the American Institutes for Research in Washington for processing. The software for data entry will be provided to help you carry out some of the tasks described in this manual. Instructions for using this software will be sent along with the software itself.

1.4.2. Audience and Use of the Manual

This manual is written for you, the National Project Manager, and for your National Center colleagues who are responsible for helping you carry out this study in your country.

It is assumed that you will be assisted by a data manager who will be responsible for establishing and maintaining all electronic systems related to: keeping track of incoming and outgoing documents, data collection, data entry, and data verification. It is important for you to have

sufficient knowledge of these matters to supervise the activities of your data manager and other National Center staff.

This *International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level Survey Operations Manual* is a very important resource for you. It is essential that you read this manual carefully and know which steps you are responsible for, even if some of these steps are contracted out to other people or organizations.

► Please do not hesitate to contact AIR for clarification if anything in this manual is unclear.

1.4.3. Reasons for these Procedures

The processes outlined in this and other American Institutes for Research manuals have been designed to ensure that high quality, internationally comparable data will be available for analyses. If you deviate from these procedures without the prior approval of AIR, you risk losing the ability to compare your country's results on the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level with those of the other countries. It is extremely important that the procedures outlined in this and other AIR manuals are followed. Any anticipated deviation from these procedures should be brought to the attention of the technical staff of AIR prior to implementation.

1.4.4. Notes on the Field Test

Although not all countries will be participating in the USSS Field Test, the procedures outlined in this manual apply to both the Field Test and the main survey.

1.4.5. Organization of the Manual

Following this introductory chapter, **chapter 2** contains an overview of the sampling methodology.

Chapter 3 provides the instructions for the translation and verification of the USSS instrument.

Chapter 4 outlines the steps for obtaining cooperation from the sampled institutions and for handling institutions that refuse to participate.

Chapter 5 outlines the procedures for packing the survey materials and sending them to the selected institutions.

Chapter 6 provides the instructions for checking in the survey materials from institutions after their administration and for organizing the survey materials for data entry.

Chapter 7 provides an overview of materials and documentation to be submitted to the American Institutes for Research, including data files, data management forms, and the Survey Activities Report.

Four appendices are also included in this manual:

- **Appendix A** contains the *Cultural Adaptation Record*
- **Appendix B** provides the *School Tracking Form*
- **Appendix C** provides a sample letter to School Heads
- **Appendix D** contains the *Data Management Form*

1.5. Further Resources and Documentation for Survey Implementation

The American Institutes for Research, along with its network of consultants and experts, will direct the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level. General questions about the project may be directed to either Dr. Joel Sherman or Dr. Stéphane Baldi. Questions about sampling should be directed to either Dr. Eugene Johnson or Dr. Stéphane Baldi. Questions about data entry should be directed to Mr. Steven Honegger, and questions about data analysis should be directed to Dr. Marianne Perie. Contact information is provided in the next section of this chapter. If you are in doubt as to which individual to contact with a specific question, please contact Dr. Joel Sherman for advice.

The *International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level Survey Operations Manual* is part of a set of materials designed to provide you with the information you need to conduct USSS successfully. The other important materials are:

- *USSS School Sampling Manual*
- USSS Data Entry Software and Documentation

► If you are missing any of these materials, you should immediately contact AIR.
REMINDER: Data Entry Software will be provided to NPMs on **May 1, 2001**.

1.6. Important Contact Information

American Institutes for Research – Dr. Joel Sherman, Project Director

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Washington, DC 20007-3835
UNITED STATES
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American Institutes for Research – Dr. Stéphane Baldi, Deputy Project Director & Sampling and Survey Operations

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1.7. Summary

- Read all materials carefully and distribute information to your National Center colleagues as necessary;
- Familiarize yourself with your responsibilities and the important deadlines provided in Table 1.1;
- Submit your International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level coded data by **December 23, 2001** so that data can be analyzed and incorporated into the final analyses; and
- Refer to section 1.6 to contact the appropriate person with any questions you may have.

2. SELECTION OF SCHOOL SAMPLE

2.1. Overview

The OECD International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level sampling plan has been developed by the American Institutes for Research following guidelines set forth by the OECD and Network C. These guidelines are that 1) the samples drawn by countries allow the production of indicators framed in terms of the percentage of students in schools with certain characteristics, and 2) the samples reflect the major national program orientation so as to allow estimates at the program level. AIR has developed a one-stage sample of schools drawn with probability proportional to size (PPS) that meets the guidelines set forth above while greatly simplifying the operational aspects of implementing the sample design.

2.2. Target Population

The target population for the 2001 Upper Secondary School Survey (USSS) sample is the set of all schools sites containing at least one upper secondary program (as defined by Phase I of the study). In the vast majority of countries, a school site will be equivalent to a school. However, in countries where a school encompasses many educational units, the school site will be the physical entity where the upper secondary program is administered.¹

The USSS sample will generally consist of 400 schools, selected with probability proportional to the site's enrollment of students in upper secondary programs.² The number of schools was selected to meet a sampling precision requirement equivalent to that of other well-known international studies. This requirement was designed to ensure that each country draws a large enough sample so that, with 95 percent probability, the sample estimates of population values for means and correlations will be within +/- 0.1 of the standard deviation, and for proportions will be within +/- 5.0 percent.

¹ In the remainder of this manual we will use school to mean either school or school site depending on a country's situation.

² This sample size assumes an infinite number of school sites in a country. Hence, sample size will be reduced based on the actual number of school sites in a country (formulas and a sample size table are provided in the sampling manual).

2.3. Stratification

Prior to sampling, schools in the sampling frame can be assigned to a predetermined number of strata. This stratification may be explicit or implicit. There are basically three reasons for stratifying:

- To produce reliable estimates for sub-national domains;
- To improve the sampling efficiency, thereby improving the reliability of national estimates; and
- To ensure different parts of the population are appropriately represented in the sample.

As the schools are sampled, replacement sites are simultaneously identified should they be needed to replace non-participating sampled sites. The required response rate for this study is 50% of initially sampled schools and 85% after replacements.

Prior to sampling, schools can be ordered, or stratified, in the sampling frame. Stratification consists of grouping schools into strata according to some grouping, or stratification variables. Examples of commonly used stratification variables include:

- Regions (states, provinces)
- Location (rural, urban)
- Socioeconomic status
- School types (public, private)

Countries will have the option to use a combination of explicit or implicit stratification variables in drawing their sample, thus allowing them to increase precision in representing specific groups of interests (e.g., private schools). Explicit strata are distinct subsets of the sampling frame within which a specified number of schools are selected. Implicit strata are groupings of schools within explicit strata designed to ensure a proportional allocation across the implicit strata.

2.4. Selecting Substitute Schools

Each sampled school in the survey will be assigned two replacement schools in the sampling frame, inasmuch as it is possible given the constraints imposed by the sampling guidelines. These constraints state that a sampled school cannot be designated as a replacement school, and a given school cannot be assigned to substitute for more than one sampled school.

For each sampled school, the next two schools immediately following it in the sampling frame will be designated as its replacement schools. The use of implicit stratification variables and the subsequent ordering of the school sampling frame by size ensure that any sampled school site's replacements will have similar characteristics.

When a sampled school is the last one listed in an explicit stratum, then the two schools immediately above it will be designated as its replacement schools. If a sampled school is the next to last school listed in an explicit stratum, then the schools immediately above and below it will be designated as its replacement schools.

- National Project Managers should refer to the *USSS Sampling Manual* for detailed information on the sampling methodology as well as specific details and worksheets to select their country's sample.

2.5. Summary

- AIR has developed a one-stage sample of schools that meets the guidelines established by OECD and Network C;
- The target population for the 2001 USSS Survey is the set of all schools containing at least one upper secondary program;
- Prior to sampling, schools can be stratified in the sampling frame;
- Countries will have the option to use a combination of explicit or implicit stratification variables in drawing their dataset; and
- Each sampled school will be assigned two replacement schools in the sampling frame.

3. PROCEDURES FOR TRANSLATING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

3.1. Overview

This chapter has three objectives:

- To describe procedures to translate, back-translate, and adapt the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level questionnaire into your native language(s) and national cultural context;
- To describe acceptable modifications that can be made to the instrument as part of the translation/back-translation/adaptation process; and
- To document procedures for submitting your instrument for international verification of the translation, back-translation, and questionnaire assembly.

3.2. Materials to be Translated

You will need to translate the following materials for the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level:

- *USSS School and Program Questionnaire.*

3.3. Summary of Procedures for the Questionnaire

For the translation of the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level questionnaire, countries should apply the following procedures:

- For each target language, there should be a minimum of two translators.
- The first translator should translate the International Version of the questionnaire into the target language, and the second translator should back-translate the questionnaire from the targeted language into English.
- If feasible, both translators should then meet to review their translations and arrive at one translated version of the questionnaire by reconciling any differences.

- Adaptations should be reported in a *Cultural Adaptation Record*. Blank copies of the *Cultural Adaptation Record* are provided in Appendix A of this manual.
- Translated text should be entered into the electronic files and the questionnaires produced.

3.4. Submitting Materials for Translation Verification

After the questionnaires have been prepared, you should send the following to AIR for translation verification:

- One copy of the translated *School and Program Questionnaire* in your language;
- One copy of the back-translated *School and Program Questionnaire* in English; and
- One copy of the final set of *Cultural Adaptation Record*.

The translated materials should be submitted to AIR **NO LATER THAN September 1, 2001**.

If your country is participating in the Field Test, the translated materials for the Field Test should be submitted to AIR **NO LATER THAN April 1, 2001**.

The materials should be sent to:

Stéphane Baldi
American Institutes for Research
Pelavin Research Center
1000 Thomas Jefferson St., NW
Washington, DC 20007-3835
UNITED STATES

The submitted materials will be thoroughly checked by an AIR editor and survey specialist who will prepare a *Translation Verification Report*. This report will be returned to you, and the recommended changes should be made before the questionnaires are printed and distributed to schools.

It is important that you submit the above materials to AIR on time to ensure that you can implement the comments in the *Translation Verification Report* prior to printing your questionnaires. Please be aware that the mail system in many countries is not always speedy and efficient. You should make proper arrangements so documents are always delivered reliably and on time. AIR recommends that you use an overnight courier service whenever possible.

3.5. Guidelines for Translation and Cultural Adaptation

The following guidelines have been developed to yield translations that are consistent with the International Version of the *International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level Questionnaire*, yet allow for cultural adaptations where necessary.

In translating the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level questionnaire, translators should pay particular attention to the following issues:

- Finding words and phrases in the target language that are equivalent to those in the International Version;
- Ensuring that the essential meaning of the text does not change;
- Ensuring that the translated questionnaire items ask the same questions as in the International Version and that national adaptations are made appropriately; and
- Being aware of possible changes in the instrument layout due to translation.

3.5.1. Language

It is difficult to provide explicit guidelines for translating the source text into the target language. For this reason, it is important to employ skilled and experienced translators who will provide quality translations of the questionnaire. The purpose of translation is to follow the conventions of the target language and the country/cultural context. Yet, the translated text needs to convey the same meaning as the source text. This also is the case when translating from English in the International Version to English appropriate in a different country/cultural context.

The following guidelines may help you assess the quality of the translation provided:

- Translated text should have the same register (language level, degree of formality) as the source text;
- Translated text should have correct grammar and usage: subject/verb agreement, prepositions, verb tenses;
- Translated text should neither clarify nor omit text from the source text, nor add additional information;
- Translated text should contain equivalent qualifiers and modifiers, in the order appropriate for the target language; and

- Spelling, punctuation, and capitalization in the target text should be appropriate for the target language and country/cultural context.

3.5.2. Translating and Adapting the Surveys

In order to make valid comparisons, it is important to ensure equivalence of the questionnaire items across languages. As much as possible, survey respondents in the different countries should be reading and answering the same questions. Very few modifications should be made to the questions beyond those necessitated by translation into the target language.

To obtain a good translation of the questionnaires, translators should be selecting the appropriate words and using appropriate grammar so that individuals across the different countries are answering the same questions in the questionnaire. When reporting the results of the questionnaires, AIR has to know that it is reporting responses to the same questions across countries.

There are, however, places where adaptations are *required*. Items or information in carets (<>), must be replaced with the country-appropriate term. For example, <country> would be replaced with the name of your country.

3.5.3. Adapting the Questionnaire for the Specific Education Programs in Your Country

Although the questionnaire was developed to allow the collection of data across three upper secondary education program categories, 3A, 3B, and 3C, not all of these program categories will be represented in each participating country. Hence, to avoid confusion from the respondents, we ask that you modify the response categories of questions designed for multiple programs to only reflect the program categories in your country. For example, if your country only has 3A programs, then the rows for 3B and 3C should be deleted from the questionnaire. Similarly, if your country only has 3A and 3C programs, then the row for 3B should be deleted. However, make sure to keep the “upper secondary programs total” row if your country has more than one program category.

In addition, NPMs are encouraged to replace generic ISCED program classifications with the appropriate name of these programs in their country.

3.5.4. Adding National Options to the Survey

Some countries might want to take the opportunity of this survey to obtain additional information about upper secondary schools, or to obtain information at a finer level of analysis (e.g., 3A general, pre-vocational, and vocational). NPMs have the possibility of adding a battery of new questions to obtain this additional information. However, under no circumstances should the

International Version of the USSS questionnaire be altered to accommodate national questions. All additional national questions/options must be placed at the very end of the USSS survey (after the last international question).

► NOTE: All additional national questions/options must be placed at the very end of the USSS survey (after the last international question).

NPMs should be advised that adding many questions is likely to have a negative impact on the response rate. Thus, we recommend that these national option questions be kept to a minimum. Countries deciding to add national options will be responsible for the verification, cleaning, and analyses of these data. Countries considering adding national options should inform the International Study Coordinator of their intention and are encouraged to consult with AIR about such options.

► NOTE: Countries considering adding national options should inform the International Study Coordinator of their intention and are encouraged to consult with AIR about such options.

3.5.5. Changes Affecting Layout

As much as possible, the questionnaire in the translated version should appear the same as the International Version. Changes to the font, margins, and other aspects of the layout of items should be avoided. However, the length of words and sentences may alter the appearance of questionnaire items, which to some extent is expected and acceptable.

If you intend to make a format change to an item you must obtain written approval from AIR. When in doubt, you should fax a copy of the original item and a copy of the proposed format change to AIR for approval.

3.6. Translation Operations

3.6.1. Identification of the Survey Language

In most cases, this will be quite straightforward. Many countries have one predominant language, which is used throughout the education system. In countries preparing a single translation, you may need to consider the dialects of the language. You may want to involve

professionals familiar with these dialects in the translation process to ensure that the translation is acceptable across all dialects.

If these questionnaires are administered in more than one language, you will need to add a language identification code when entering the data into the files. This code will enable AIR to trace the language version each student received and will assist you in distributing the correct language version to each school.

3.6.2. Identification of Translators

For each target language, you should select two separate translators. The translators should generate **two** independent translations of the questionnaire. One translator will be responsible for translating the International Version of the questionnaire into the target language, and another translator for turning the translated version back into English.

The translators you employ should have:

- An excellent knowledge of English;
- An excellent knowledge of the target language;
- Experience in your country and cultural context; and
- Familiarity with survey development.

It is important to ensure consistency of the translation within the questionnaire.

3.6.3. Preparation of Materials for Translators

A package should be prepared for each translator. It should contain:

- A cover letter;
- A paper copy of the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level materials to be translated:
School and Program Questionnaire
- A sufficient number of the *Cultural Adaptations Record*; and
- A copy of this chapter.

The cover letter should include the following:

- A list of contents of the package;
- The date the completed translations are needed;
- A telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address where you can be contacted;
- A request that the translator confirm receipt of the package;
- A request that the translator inform you if he or she will not be able to deliver on time;
- A reminder that the survey instrument is to remain secure and confidential at all times; and
- A reminder that for each instance in which an adaptation has been made, it must be recorded on a *Cultural Adaptation Record*.

3.6.4. Completion of the Cultural Adaptation Record

Changes in vocabulary or expressions or other cultural adaptations should be recorded in the *Cultural Adaptations Record*. The *Cultural Adaptations Record* should be used to document all adaptations made in the questionnaire items during translation. Each translator completes a set of forms for his/her translations and a final set is prepared after the translation review meeting. The final set of forms serves as a record of adaptations and is used during the translation verification to evaluate the quality of the translations, as well as when analyzing the data for the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level.

The *Cultural Adaptation Record* should be completed as follows:

- In Column (1), indicate the question number of the item to which the adaptation applies.
- In Column (2), describe the adaptation that was made or what term was used in place of the term in carets < > in the International Version. The description should say what change was made (e.g., vocabulary word, punctuation, etc...) and should include the English term, the translated term, and an explanation of why the term was selected. This explanation should be sufficient for the specialist reviewing the translation to understand why the survey question was not translated directly or what term was used in place of the term in carets.

3.7. Summary

- Arrange for two qualified translators for one translation into the target language and a second translation back into English;
- If feasible, have both translators meet to review the translated versions and reconcile differences;
- Translators should record adaptations in the *Cultural Adaptations Record*;
- Prepare the final set of *Cultural Adaptations Record*; and
- Send one copy of the translated questionnaire, the back-translated questionnaire, and the *Cultural Adaptations Record* to AIR for verification. It should arrive no later than **September 1, 2001** (or **April 1, 2001** for the Field Test).

4. SECURING COOPERATION FROM INSTITUTIONS

4.1. Overview

This chapter has several objectives:

- To provide guidelines to ensure the participation of the selected institutions;
- To describe the purpose of the *School Tracking Form*; and
- To describe the identification of sampled institutions.

Please note that this chapter assumes that the sample of institutions has *already* been selected. You will find the necessary instructions for selecting the institution sample, the identification of replacement institutions, and the preparation of the *School Tracking Forms* in the *USSS Sampling Manual*. (An additional example of the *School Tracking Form* is provided in Appendix B).

4.2. Obtaining Permission and Cooperation of Institutions

After the sample of institutions has been drawn, you will engage in a series of tasks to obtain the cooperation of the sampled institutions to ensure high response rates. It is critical to the credibility of this study that institution participation rates be as high as possible; countries not meeting study guidelines will be flagged or possibly eliminated from international reports.

You should send a letter to the School Head³ (or in some cases the local governing officials), requesting the school's participation.

Since it is important that the highest possible acceptance rate be obtained, the tone and content of the letter of invitation is very important. Keep in mind that schools are doing the study a favor by agreeing to participate. It is suggested that the letter be signed by you (or some other appropriately high official) and that it:

- Introduce yourself as National Project Manager;

³ "School Head" refers to the administrative head of a school or school site. This term will differ across countries so that it could be a principal, headmaster, director, etc.

- Describe the purpose of the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level. It would be good to include a short document describing the project and its significance, as well as a description of the types of questions that will be asked;
- Invite the cooperation of the school (emphasizing the importance of the school site's participation for achieving a representative sample);
- Outline what participation will involve for the schools (e.g. who should be filling out the questionnaire, the approximate time required for the completion of the questionnaire, a highlight of the information needed to complete it);
- Give the dates by which the questionnaire needs to be completed;
- Indicate any benefits that individual schools might receive from participating in the study (e.g. feedback from national results), and offer incentives such as certificates of appreciation, cash payments, and study reports that you determine can or should be offered;
- Guarantee the anonymity of the school and respondents in all publications of results; and
- Invite School Heads to contact you at the National Center if they need further information before making a decision.

This letter should be sent as early as possible. A sample letter for the School Head is included in Appendix C. After a reasonable period of time, those School Heads who have not replied should be contacted by telephone or through their regional offices. Remind the directors of the content of the letter inviting participation, and encourage them to respond with a decision as soon as possible. In some countries, it has been found worthwhile to telephone administrators who initially refuse and ask them to reconsider their decision. Frequently, the personal contact can bring about a change of mind.

4.3. Follow-up Letters

School Heads and personnel in schools agreeing to participate become important partners in the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level. They must not get the impression, through poor communication, that they are simply being "used" by anonymous researchers. Every opportunity should be taken to maintain good relations with School Heads in the study.

Shortly after the director agrees to participate, you should send a follow-up letter thanking him or her for participating in the survey. The letter should reiterate the importance of the project, and

confirm the name of the contact person (if not the School Head directly) to whom future correspondence will be sent. Indicate that you will contact him or her in the near future, and suggest that you, as National Project Manager, should be contacted if the school has any concerns about the USSS at any stage of the study.

You should also emphasize the importance of standardizing procedures across schools and countries, and their critical role in doing this. The letter should also ask this person to notify you if, during the course of the study, anything happens that could threaten its integrity.

4.4. Indicating Participation and Handling Non-participating Institutions

After the school selection is completed, you must confirm that each of the selected schools will indeed participate in the study. To minimize the potential for non-response bias, it is important to make every possible effort to ensure that all schools in the designed sample cooperate.

Once a school site's participation has been confirmed, you should obtain the name and telephone number of the person assigned to act as the School Coordinator (if it is different than the School Head). This person's name and phone number should be entered in column (4) of the *School Tracking Form*.

If a school does not agree to participate, enter an "N" in column (5) of the *School Tracking Form*. Schools that, despite all efforts, do not agree to take part in the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level should be replaced with their designated replacement schools.

To assign replacement schools proceed as follows:

- If a school refuses to participate, it must be replaced with the replacement school from the first replacement sample (R1) that has been assigned to this school (see the *USSS Sampling Manual*).
- If the first replacement school also refuses to participate, it should be replaced by the corresponding school from the second replacement sample (R2).

4.5. Completing the School Tracking Forms

4.5.1. Initial Information

As described in the *USSS Sampling Manual*, you need to prepare *School Tracking Forms* to keep track of the sampled schools and their replacements. A separate form should be prepared for each school in the sample. The first line of each form contains information about the school from the sample, the second line contains information about the first replacement school (R1), and the third line contains information about the second replacement school (R2).

During the school sampling process, you will have filled in the following information on this form:

- The name, full address, and telephone number of the school, and the name and telephone number of the contact person in column (3) and column (4);
- The “measure of size” (mos) of the school in column (2).

4.5.2. Assigning School IDs

After a *School Tracking Form* has been prepared for each sampled school and its replacement, a unique numerical identification code needs to be assigned to each sampled school listed on the form. This School ID should be recorded in column (1) of the *School Tracking Form*. The following numbering procedure should be:

- You should number the schools in the designed sample sequentially, beginning with 001. If stratification is used in selecting the schools, the schools should be sorted and numbered using these variables.
- For the replacement schools from the first replacement sample (R1), you should add 1000 to the School IDs of the sample schools they would replace. Similarly, for the replacement schools from the second replacement sample (R2), you should add 2000 to the School IDs of the schools in the sample. For example, the first replacement school for the school with School ID 014 would have School ID 1014 and the second replacement school would have School ID 2014.

4.6. Summary

- Secure cooperation from the sampled institutions;
- Encourage participation from School Heads, and follow procedures to ensure a maximum response rate;
- Promptly send follow-up letters to School Heads agreeing to participate; and
- Familiarize yourself with the steps necessary for completing the *School Tracking Forms*.

5. PACKAGING AND SENDING MATERIALS TO INSTITUTIONS

5.1. Overview

Preparing and packaging materials takes time, space, and people. You will need to devise a system that ensures that this is done efficiently and without errors. It will probably be necessary to hire temporary staff, and arrangements for this need to be made well in advance. Packers must ensure that all identification codes are correctly copied from the *School Tracking Forms* to the questionnaires. Having the identification codes preprinted on labels can save time.

5.2. Packaging Materials for an Institution

For each participating institution, assemble a package that contains the following:

- 1) A copy of the *School and Program Questionnaire*;
- 2) A cover letter that thanks the School Head for participating, specifies the deadline by which the questionnaire should be returned to you, and provides your contact information;
- 3) A self-addressed stamped return envelope; and
- 4) A checklist of the contents of the package.

Be sure to identify the participating institution in column (5) of the *School Tracking Form*.

5.3. Sending Materials to an Institution

Package all materials for the school safely and securely, and address the package to the School Head. Please follow these procedures:

- Enclose a pre-paid envelope addressed to the National Center to facilitate the return of all the survey materials;
- Clearly indicate the date by which the School Head must return the completed materials to the National Center; and
- Provide a list of the contents of the package, so respondents can easily check whether they have received the complete set of materials.

At the appropriate time before the date of the survey administration, send the materials to each institution. At the same time, a letter or fax should be sent to the School Head asking him or her to confirm that the materials have been received and are complete.

To keep track of this, record the dates when materials are sent to each institution and the date they are returned in columns (6) and (7) of the *School Tracking Form*.

5.4. Summary

- Devise an error-free packing and checking system;
- Prepare the *School and Program Questionnaire*, cover letter, checklist, and the self-addressed return envelope; and
- Safely pack and ship the materials to the school and record the date of shipment on the *School Tracking Form*.

6. RECEIVING MATERIALS FROM INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZING MATERIALS FOR DATA ENTRY

You are responsible for ensuring that each participating institution listed in the *School Tracking Form* has returned the questionnaire, and for taking steps to retrieve questionnaires that have not been returned. As the questionnaires are returned from the schools to the National Center, you should carefully check each questionnaire for completeness and accuracy of documentation.

6.1. Materials to be Received

Each school is responsible for returning a completed *School and Program Questionnaire*.

6.2. Receipt Control

This activity essentially involves two basic tasks: ensuring that questionnaires have been received and checking that the questionnaire is complete and accurate. The information on the instrument and the tracking forms must be in agreement.

6.3. Organizing the Surveys

Once the questionnaires have been sorted and assembled with their corresponding tracking forms, the tracking forms and questionnaires can be forwarded to the data entry staff. After data entry, you should ensure that all questionnaires are still sorted by institution so that the specific questionnaires can be easily identified for future data verification. Copies of all tracking forms should be sent to AIR together with the data files.

6.4. Follow-up Procedures

The response rate requirements for the study are 50 percent before replacement schools and 85 percent after replacement schools. Countries unable to meet these requirements will be identified as such in publications based on the data. Hence, it is crucial that countries follow up on schools that have agreed to participate but have not returned their filled-out questionnaire by the indicated deadline.

Follow-up procedures should include the following:

- Immediately after the return deadline is missed, a reminder postcard should be sent to the school urging reply with a new deadline of one week.
- If the questionnaire is still not returned after one more week, a phone call should be made to the School Head to remind him/her of the agreement to participate and the need to fill out the survey.
- After the phone call, another reminder letter with a new questionnaire should be sent, again emphasizing the importance of their participation to the study.
- If after another week the last questionnaire is not returned, a final contact letter should be sent via express/urgent mail. This final contact letter should again stress the importance of the study and make clear that this is a final attempt to obtain an answer. It should also include another copy of the questionnaire.

Only after all the above follow-up procedures have been implemented should a school be considered a non-response.

6.5. Callbacks for Problematic Instruments

In a few instances it is possible that during receipt control (see 6.2) you will discover that the information on a given questionnaire is of poor quality (e.g., contains a lot of missing responses, or obviously inaccurate ones). If this is the case, you must recontact the respondent at the school where the problem exists to ask for clarification of problematic items/responses. The number of callbacks and reasons should be indicated in the *Survey Activities Report* submitted by countries to AIR.

6.6. Description of AIR's Data Entry System

AIR has developed data entry software that will allow data entry staff to check the quality of the data as they enter it. The software will be composed of interactive menus where survey responses are entered one by one. Because the software will be pre-coded to only allow valid values to be entered for a given variable, data entry staff will be immediately notified when they enter invalid values and asked to check their entry.

▶ AIR's data entry software will be sent to countries on **May 1, 2001**.

The data entry software and its accompanying documentation will be sent to individual National Project Managers on May 1, 2001. The documentation will contain all necessary information to install the software on a wide variety of platforms as well as a codebook laying out the structure of the data entry file and appropriate values for each variable.

6.7. Procedures for Data Entry

Data entry staff will be expected to use AIR's data entry software to enter the data for the USSS. In case this is not feasible, they will be expected to adhere to the codebook structure (e.g., variable layout) developed by AIR. Values to be entered for each variable will be provided in a codebook. Countries will be expected to document any deviation from the coding scheme provided, along with justifications.

6.8. Data Cleaning and Quality Control of Collected Data

Although the data entry software developed by AIR will provide a high level of data entry accuracy because of its built-in checks, data processing staff in each country will be expected to conduct an additional round of data cleaning and quality control procedures. This is necessary to ensure the highest level of confidence in the data that will be received by the International Study Coordinator. These procedures consist of the following tasks:

- Once the data are entered and the dataset completed, data entry staff will be expected to use a statistical software package (e.g., SAS, SPSS) to examine means, standard deviations, minima, maxima, and, for discrete variables, frequencies. This must be done in order to identify out-of-range values or suspicious or anomalous descriptive statistics in the variables. All anomalous variables and problematic cases within these variables should be checked against the original source variables and corrected accordingly. This checking procedure will be repeated until no single value of the variables included in the final dataset presents anomalies.
- Data entry staff will then be expected to run a series of additional checks by requesting cross-tabulation of all variables by key subgroups (e.g., program categories). These analyses will be used to identify possible coding mistakes not readily apparent in descriptive statistics (e.g., sum of program enrollment larger than school enrollment).
- Cross-tabulations should be checked for validity and consistency, providing an additional level of quality assurance. Again, if any anomalies are discovered they must be checked against the original source of data (i.e., the actual questionnaire) and

corrected accordingly. This process must be repeated until data entry staff are confident that the dataset contains no errors.

- All data entry anomalies that cannot be reconciled must be documented in the *Survey Activities Report* submitted by countries to AIR.

6.9. Creating the Final Country Data File, Including Weights and Variance Computation Information

When assembling the final national data file, you will be asked to include the sampling weights and stratification information (if you decided to stratify). This information will have been computed while drawing the USSS sample (with the help of forms provided in the *USSS Sampling Manual*). The data entry software will allow you to input a value for sampling weights and multiple stratification variables for each record in the data set.

6.10. Summary

- Ensure that all schools have completed and returned questionnaires;
- Utilize follow-up procedures to maximize the response rate, which must be 85 percent after replacement schools;
- Use the data entry software provided by AIR;
- Follow data cleaning and quality control procedures; and
- Create the final national data file with sampling weights, and send it to AIR along with copies of all tracking forms.

7. SENDING COMPLETED, CLEANED DATA FILES TO AIR

This chapter provides an overview of the materials to be submitted to AIR, including data files and data management forms. It also describes the *Survey Activities Report*.

7.1. Materials to be Submitted

You will need to submit the following materials to the American Institutes for Research in Washington:

- A clean data file. This data file should be in the format of the data entry software provided by AIR;
- The codebook structure file (including all changes made to the structure) for each data file, with an explanatory letter;
- A copy of the national USSS *School and Program Questionnaire*;
- A copy of each *School Tracking Form*;
- The completed *Data Management Form*; and
- A *Survey Activities Report*.

Please send your data file to Dr. Marianne Perie (see contact information in chapter 1).

7.2. Data Files

Date files that have been successfully verified by AIR's data entry software are in a format in accordance with the AIR international codebook. For each data file, you should make a backup copy before sending it to AIR.

7.3. Data Management Form

You are requested to complete the *Data Management Form* in Appendix D.

The *Data Management Form* requires the following information:

- Names of data file(s) and number of diskettes;
- Number of records in each data file;
- An indication of any country-specific changes to possible answers to the questions or the codebook structure;
- Changes to the default valid ranges; and
- A description of any modifications to the international coding schemes.

A *Data Management Form* should be included with the data.

7.4. Survey Activities Report

You are also requested to prepare a *Survey Activities Report*. The following are the main points the report should cover:

7.4.1. Translation Verification

- A description of the procedures used and problems encountered in the translation, layout, and printing of the test instrument.

7.4.2. Survey Instruments

- A copy of the national version of the USSS questionnaire.
- A list of items that are considered inappropriate in the context of the respective educational system and a brief explanation for each.

7.4.3. Survey Operations

- A description of any problems encountered in the use of the *Survey Tracking Forms*, and in the survey administration and accounting procedures.

7.4.4. Quality Control

- A description of the procedures that were used for quality control.

7.4.5. Data Entry

- A description of any data entry and data verification problems encountered, including an indication of error rate found during the verification process.

7.4.6. Other

- Anything that might help in interpreting the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level data or explaining possible anomalies.

Please send the *Survey Activities Report* to AIR no later than two weeks after submitting your data. Besides providing the information described above, please take some time to describe your experiences with the survey, both good and bad, and share any suggestions for future improvements. This will be invaluable to our efforts to improve future studies.

7.5. Notifying AIR

Please notify the American Institutes for Research by fax or e-mail when these materials have been sent. The mailing information is included in chapter 1 of this manual.

APPENDIX A:
Cultural Adaptation Record

APPENDIX B:
School Tracking Form

OECD
International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level
School Tracking Form

Use one form for each sampled school. See Section 4.5 of the USSS Survey Operations Manual.

Country: _____

National Project Manager: _____

Explicit Stratum: _____

	(1) School ID	(2) School MOS	(3) Name, Address, and Telephone # of School	(4) Name and Telephone # of School Coordinator	(5) Status*	(6) Date Materials Sent	(7) Date Materials Received
Sampled School							
First Replacement School							
Second Replacement School							

* Enter "N" for non-participating schools.
 A check mark (✓) indicates the participating school.

Form ___ of ___

APPENDIX C:

Sample Letter to School Head

Sample Letter to the School Head

The International Survey of Schools At the Upper Secondary Level

Dear <School Head>,

My name is <NPM name>, and I am the National Project Manager for the International Survey of Schools at the Upper Secondary Level (USSS), which is sponsored by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

[country name] is participating in the USSS, which is an important educational research study on indicators of school processes in eighteen educational systems around the world. It is designed to produce institutional process indicators that reveal some of the key characteristics in both the learning environment and the organization of schools that may contribute to better student achievement.

The sample for the study has now been completed and your school is included in the survey. I would like to request your support in conducting the USSS.

The survey must be completed by [date], and it will take about [NPM to specify] minutes to complete. The questions on the survey are designed to gather information on school characteristics aimed at facilitating the transition to the labor market and/or further education, conditions of schooling that are instrumental in enhancing education quality, human resources, and the availability and use of information and communication technology. Your responses to this questionnaire will be utilized to elucidate the characteristics of schools that contribute to student achievement.

All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. All publications will refer to aggregated data.

I am including for your information some materials that will give you an overview of the project. Additional information, related forms, and the survey itself will be forwarded to you the week of [date] from the National Center.

We greatly value your support and appreciate your cooperation in this important survey. We will be contacting you by telephone in the next few days to confirm your participation.

If you have any questions concerning this survey, please do not hesitate to call me at [phone number].

APPENDIX D:
Data Management Form

