Indicators of Education Systems

PROGRAMME OF THE FOURTH INES GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Fourth General Assembly to be held in Tokyo
on 11-13 September 2000
1. At their meetings in November 1999, the OECD Education Committee and CERI Governing Board established the objectives and organisational framework for the fourth General Assembly of the OECD Education Indicators Programme (INES), that will be held 11-13 September 2000 in Tokyo, hosted by Monbusho, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture.

2. The General Assembly will take place after five years of productive work, during which time significant progress has been made in the consolidation of the OECD education indicators. Data development has advanced in new priority areas, particularly with regard to the assessment of learning outcomes (Programme for International Student Assessment, PISA). Education Policy Analysis has emerged as an instrument placing greater emphasis on analysis. Finally, improved co-ordination mechanisms and a more flexible system of networking have allowed Member countries to take part more effectively in developing, producing and analysing the OECD education indicators.

3. This fourth General Assembly will be of central importance for the OECD as it will assess progress in INES and explore future directions for OECD’s quantitative work in the field of education and training for the period 2002 to 2006. The General Assembly seeks to bring together the various stakeholders involved in this work - senior policy makers, policy analysts, national administrations, and educational researchers - to explore how INES might progress: from measuring the quality of educational outcomes; through the estimation of the economic and social returns to knowledge and skills; towards a better understanding of the educational, economic and social factors that contribute to educational outcomes so as to inform education policy on how the returns to educational investment can be further enhanced.

4. Other international organisations have also been invited and, for the first time, delegates from non-Member countries who have been working with the OECD on education indicators through the OECD/UNESCO World Education Indicators programme.

5. The General Assembly will commence with a retrospective analysis of work undertaken within the INES project since the third General Assembly held in 1995 in Lahti. Based on this analysis, the General Assembly will then focus on substantive work in areas where Member countries consider an international comparative perspective particularly relevant; where OECD can make a unique and innovative contribution to national policy development; and where the INES framework offers an appropriate methodology and has the potential to provide a well defined strategy for development and analysis.

6. First, the General Assembly will consider how to approach the development of a strategy for defining and measuring the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are most important for tomorrow’s societies and economies. While the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) will be an important element in such a strategy, the General Assembly may seek to identify a longer perspective for a programme of developmental work which is not limited to the skill domains for which measures are currently available.
7. The General Assembly will further explore whether and how the evidence on the contribution of knowledge and skills to economic and social development could be extended. The extent to which human capital, defined to include aspects of learning beyond formal education as well as learning which is cross-curricular in nature, has an impact on the economy and society is not yet sufficiently well understood or measured in the current set of data sources and indicators. A better understanding and measurement of human capital investment may enable policy makers to obtain clearer signals for the evaluation of different strategies of investment in education.

8. While the OECD education indicators have illustrated benefits of investment in skills and competencies, there is no framework yet that would help to analyse and explain important relationships between inputs and outcomes and promote an understanding of how such relationships are mediated by factors such as the educational and social contexts or by instructional processes and technology. An important question for the General Assembly will be what contribution INES could make to relate work on the measurement of knowledge and skills to learning and schooling, not just in terms of the quality of the human and material resources invested in education, but also, and in particular, in terms of instructional technology and pedagogical processes. The role of teachers and teaching in improving educational outcomes might be an area on which greater emphasis could be placed in future work.

9. It will also be important for the General Assembly to establish cross-cutting policy perspectives that could guide the analytical work for INES during its next phase. Among these, measuring progress towards lifelong learning and addressing issues of equity in learning opportunities and outcomes have been identified as priorities by many countries.

10. Finally, the General Assembly will allow to explore how the substantive directions for OECD’s work on indicators can best be translated into products, cost-effective working methods and dissemination mechanisms.
PROGRAMME FOR THE FOURTH INES GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Tokyo, 11-13 September 2000
(as of 26 July 2000)
Makuhari Messe, Nippon Convention Center
2-1, Nakase Mihama-ku, Chiba City 261-0023

Registration
(10 September, 15:00 - 18:00 and 11 September, 8:00 - 9:00)

Photo session
(11 September, 9:00 - 9:20)

Opening session
Welcome by Mr. Oshima, Japanese Minister of Education and Mr. Martin, Director for Education, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs at the OECD
(11 September, 9:20 - 9:40)

Session 1
Session 1: Retrospective analysis and future perspectives
(11 September, 9:40 - 13:00, coffee break 11:00 - 11:30)

Objectives
The first objective for the General Assembly will be to assess work undertaken by INES since the 1995 General Assembly held in Lahti, considering:

- Progress in the consolidation of the INES information base;
- Developmental work in the priority areas identified in Lahti;
- Remaining gaps in the indicators;
- the analysis and dissemination of findings;
- the resource implications for present and future work.

Such a retrospective analysis will be based on the following evaluation activities which were carried out during the period February – July 2000:

First, the Secretariat has invited Member countries to prepare a national statement on the value and priority of the different INES outcomes/activities for national policy evaluation, as well as on the effectiveness of INES in reaching policy makers and the actors in various learning settings. In their evaluation, countries considered the appropriateness of the current balance between consolidation and analysis of existing information, on the one hand, and development and the further expansion of INES into new areas, on the other.
In assessing the past and current performance of INES, countries have also produced directions on ways in which INES objectives and structures might be adjusted to meet future priorities.

- Second, the INES Steering Group has invited Ms. Jeanne Griffith, Mr. Norihiro Kuroda and Ms. Maris O’Rourke to assess the success of INES from an international perspective, focusing on: the contribution that INES has made to international comparative policy evaluation and analysis in education; aspects of international collaboration at both policy and scientific levels; the appropriateness of management structures and operations and their cost-effectiveness; the effectiveness of INES in developing, implementing and taking advantage of appropriate and innovative methods; and the appropriateness of mechanisms for scientific appraisal and quality assurance. The three evaluators have reviewed INES outcomes and publications and surveyed key participants at national and international levels. (Ms. Griffith was formerly Acting Commissioner of the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics and has played an important role in reorienting INES towards education and training outcomes in the early 1990s. Mr. Kuroda is Professor at the Japan National University in Hiroshima. Ms. O’Rourke is the Director of the Education Sector at the World Bank.)

- Third, the OECD Secretariat had asked each of the INES Networks to undertake a self-evaluation of its work since 1995 with the aim: to assess the effectiveness of the network in addressing its mandate, to identify obstacles that were encountered and ways for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of its work, and to explore how developmental work might be carried forward during the next phase.

The national reports have underlined a continued commitment of Member countries to the further development of the OECD education indicators. Building on this, the General Assembly can take a prospective view and focus on substantive development in areas where Member countries consider an international comparative perspective particularly relevant; where INES can make a unique and innovative contribution to policy development; and where INES offers an appropriate framework for development and analysis.

To this end, the introductory session will set the scene for exploring future perspectives that would allow the work to progress:

- From measuring the quality of educational outcomes;
- Through the estimation of the economic and social returns to knowledge and skills;
- Towards a better understanding of what the educational, economic and social factors are that contribute to educational outcomes so as to inform education policy on how the returns to educational investment can be further enhanced.
The introductory session will also explore important cross-cutting policy perspectives that could guide future analytical work for INES to advance with:

- measuring progress towards lifelong learning for all; and of
- addressing issues of equity in educational and learning opportunities and outcomes

**Format**

The General Assembly will be opened by the Japanese Minister of Education, Mr. Oshima and the OECD/DEELSA Director Mr. Martin. The opening will be followed by a reflection on current trends in education policy and research and the value of international benchmarks from Japan’s perspective, presented by Mr. Sato, Former Vice-Minister of Education and Director-General of the JSPS.

Mr. Thomas J. Alexander, former Director of OECD/DEELSA will then review the development of the OECD education indicators since their inception and present a vision for future work in the development and use of indicators.

Afterwards, representatives from three OECD Member countries (Mr. Kent Maguire, United States; Mr. Ingo Ruß, Germany and Mr. Thorben Rasmussen, Denmark) will reflect on the role and value of INES at the national level, including the usefulness of INES outcomes/products for policy evaluation and the effectiveness of INES in reaching key actors in various learning settings.

Ms. Guanaraes de Castro, President of the INEP in Brazil will then speak to the relevance of the OECD indicators for non-OECD countries.

Concluding the session, Mr. McGaw, Deputy Director for Education at the OECD, will present a report on progress since Lahti and the three external evaluators (Ms. Griffith, Mr. Kuroda and Ms. O’Rourke) will present their assessment of INES work.

Session 1 will be chaired by Mr. Inoue, Deputy Director-General of the Japanese Ministry of Education.
Background documents

- Summary of Main INES activities and products since the third INES General Assembly in 1995 [doc. ref. GA(2000)3]
- Progress since 1995 and remaining gaps in the development of the OECD education indicators - Reports from OECD Member countries [doc. ref. GA(2000)4]
- Progress since 1995 and remaining gaps in the development of the OECD education indicators - Report from the external evaluators [doc. ref. GA(2000)5]
- Progress since 1995 and remaining gaps in the development of the OECD education indicators - Self-assessment of the INES Networks [doc. ref. GA(2000)6]
- The INES Compendium - Contributions from the INES Networks and working groups [doc. ref. GA(2000)12]
- Investing in Education - Analysis of the 1999 World Education Indicators, OECD, 2000
**Session 2**

**Session 2: Strategy for measuring the quality of learning outcomes**

(11 September, 14:30 - 18:00, coffee break 16:00 - 16:30)

**Objectives**

An assessment of the quality of educational outcomes, both at the level of individuals and institutions, hinges on the availability of valid and reliable measures of educational performance. Measures of institutional output and educational attainment will remain relevant but direct measures of competencies linked to reference points outside educational systems will be increasingly important for assessing the contribution of education to social and economic performance.

**…defining quality and…**

Defining the quality of education must start with an understanding of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that young adults need in order to meet the challenges of society and the economy. This goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge to include critical and creative capacities, the ability to communicate and to work with others, the motivation to continue learning and the capacity to manage that learning.

**…developing a strategy for future work.**

An important objective for Session 2 will be to establish the scope of work to be undertaken in the assessment of outcomes and to develop a strategy for the work involved. The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALLS) could be important elements in such a strategy but the General Assembly could take a broader perspective for a programme of developmental work that is not limited to the skill domains for which measures are currently available. Work undertaken in the INES ad hoc group on the definition and selection of competencies (DeSeCo) could provide a reference point for this discussion.

**The session will integrate national and international perspectives.**

The session will seek to integrate national and international perspectives in order to define the future demand for international comparative benchmarks for the quality of educational outcomes and to help shape the development of future assessment instruments that can effectively respond to this demand. The discussions would address both qualitative and quantitative aspects relating to educational outcomes.

**Format**

Session 2 will be centred around two panels providing the perspectives of both producers and users of measures of educational performance, each followed by discussion and debate.

One panel, chaired by Mr. Franz Niehl (Germany) will review where international comparative assessment stands today. The panel will include the PISA project director, Mr. Raymond Adams, the study director for ALLS, Mr. Scott Murray, the Chair of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Assessment (IEA), Mr. Alejandro Tiana, and Mr. Heinz Gilomen, who will represent the INES working group on the definition...
and selection of competencies (DeSeCo).

...and explore future priorities for development.

The other panel, chaired and introduced by Mr. Graham Reid (United Kingdom), will include three country representatives (Mr. Eugene Owen, United States; Ms. Jacqueline Levasseur, France and Mr. Ryo Watanabe, Japan) who will illustrate how education policy responds to the increasing focus on outcomes and the role international benchmarks should play in this process.

Member countries will then be invited to discuss to what existing instruments can address the needs of governments and what the priorities for future development should be.

**Background documents**

- Benchmarking the quality of learning outcomes - Session 2 of the 4\textsuperscript{th} INES General Assembly - Issues for discussion [doc. ref. GA(2000)7]

**Welcome reception**

Welcome reception hosted by the Japanese Minister of Education
(11 September, 19:30 - 21:30, Hotel New Otani, Makuhari)
Session 3

Session 3: Estimating economic and social returns to learning
(12 September, 9:00 - 11:30)

**Objectives**

**INES has demonstrated some labour market benefits of education...**

The OECD education indicators have demonstrated some important benefits of education in terms of income and employment in the labour market. However, the extent to which human capital, defined to include aspects of learning beyond formal education as well as learning which is cross-curricular in nature, has had an impact on the economy and society is less well understood.

...but there are many gaps.

*Human Capital Investment - an International Comparison*, published in OECD in 1998, highlighted areas where important gaps in the data remain, notably in the measurement of learning beyond schooling and the estimation of social returns to learning. Other important policy issues identified related to the relationship between expenditure, at different levels of education, and outcomes; the impact of learning throughout life; the balance between public and private costs and benefits at different levels; and the mix of resources between teaching and other inputs in achieving a given outcome.

**INES cannot fill them all but could extend our understanding of the impact of social as well as cognitive factors on social and economic outcomes.**

Filling those gaps would provide a research agenda beyond the scope of INES, but INES could contribute in its next phase to broadening the understanding of the impact of learning and education on important personal, social and economic outcomes. The importance of social capital, defined as the norms and values of trust and reciprocal engagement in families, communities and schools has been recognised in the research on educational achievement over three decades but international comparative measures do not yet exist.

**The objective of Session 3 will be to determine what INES could contribute.**

Session 3 will focus on how INES could provide more comparable data on human capital as well as on the impact of human capital on key labour market and social outcomes. This needs to be provided with a clearer policy-related framework in which the complementary roles of social and human capital are acknowledged and in which various types of benefits, monetary, non-monetary and societal are described and quantified, even if imperfectly. An important issue, in the short to medium term, will be the equity of access by various groups to the learning that has an impact on outcomes.

**Format**

Following an introduction to the key issues and progress accomplished in this area by the Chair, Mr. John Martin, the session will take the form of a panel discussion.

There will be a presentation of the issues...

...a panel of experts and plenary discussion.

Mr. Alan Nordin (Chair of the INES Network B) will report from the work of Network B and Mr. Thomas Healy (OECD Secretariat) will discuss the macro-economic impact of human capital, the broad social returns to human capital and the relationship between human and social capital.
Background documents

- Estimating economic and social returns to learning - Session 3 of the 4th INES General Assembly - Issues for discussion [doc. ref. GA(2000)8]
Session 4:  Key determinants of educational success
(12 September, 12:00 - 13:00 and 14:30 - 15:30)

Objectives

Measuring the quality of educational outcomes and estimating the economic and social returns to educational investment leads to the question of which educational, social and economic factors contribute to improved education and learning and enhanced returns to investment in education. Schools are being asked to play a key role in helping OECD countries to adapt to social and economic change. They will not be able to meet such challenges without profound changes in instruction and teaching.

The process of teaching is at the heart of education and the expertise, pedagogical know-how, organisational and technical competence and flexibility of teachers will be central to educational improvement. But instruction does not only rely on teachers. Innovation in the area of information and communication technology is bound to have a significant impact on the delivery of education content as well.

While the OECD education indicators have illustrated the benefits of investment in knowledge and skills, it has not been possible, so far, to establish a policy-oriented framework that could help to analyse and explain important relationships between inputs and outcomes and promote an understanding of how such relationships are mediated by factors such as instructional and learning processes or educational and social contexts.

What steps could be undertaken towards the establishment of such a framework and towards the analysis of the relationship between educational, social and economic variables and outcomes? The answer to this question would need to cover individual, school and systemic perspectives. In establishing such a framework, relationships between the indicators and other parts of the OECD programme of work as well as relationships to work in other international organisations will need to be taken into account.

Establishing such a framework may yield clearer signals for the evaluation of different investment strategies in education, to inform education policy on how to improve the effectiveness of education and learning, and to ensure that relevant criteria for the successful evaluation of education systems are selected. Furthermore, this work might also guide the establishment of policy-relevant criteria for the selection of those indicators that are most pertinent to benchmarking education systems.
There are no clear answers in this area, but…

Session 4 could attempt to relate work on the measurement of knowledge and skills to learning and schooling, not just in terms of the quality of the human and material resources invested in the provision of education but also, and in particular, in terms of instructional technology and pedagogical processes. An important issue will also be the extent to which the increase in access to information will be accompanied by an increase in the ability to use it intelligently to improve learning. A key consideration in all of this work will be what added-value the international dimension can provide for national policy making.

There are no proven answers to any of these questions and, in fact, there is considerable scientific controversy in this area. This session may, therefore, be limited to a review of options and scientific approaches that could provide guidance for the extent and direction of international data development.

…it is worth tackling because it might open up new directions for INES.

It is, nevertheless, worth the attempt, because progress in these areas could provide an opportunity to develop new types of data, methodologies and mechanisms of international collaboration, including perhaps a different balance between qualitative and quantitative aspects of INES work.

There will be an expert panel, a reflection on efforts, and plenary discussion.

The session will be introduced and chaired by Mr. Marshall Smith, former Deputy Secretary for Education in the United States. It will begin with a panel of experts representing three different perspectives on the selection and development of indicators. Mr. Smith will present the perspective of a senior policy maker concerned with major reform initiatives designed to enhance achievement, Mr. Gerald Burke (Australia) will present the perspective of research on the impact of financial resources, and Mr. Jaap Scheerens, Chair of the INES Network C, will present the perspective of research on school effectiveness and improvement.

Background documents

- Key determinants of educational success - Session 4 of the 4th INES General Assembly - Issues for discussion [doc. ref. GA(2000)9]
Session 5

Session 5: INES methods, structures and dissemination
(12 September, 15:30 - 18:00 and 13 September, 9:00 - 10:00)

Objectives

Finally, the question of dissemination will be addressed…

The focus of Session 5 will be on how the substantive directions for future work can be translated into products, working methods and dissemination mechanisms. This would include a discussion on the nature of future publications and the selection of “core” indicators. The session would also review the resource implications of ongoing and future work.

A review of how structures might evolve to respond to new demands will also be an important part of this session.

…and also issues of structure, process and costs in the development of the INES work.

INES has been effective in mobilising support and expertise in achieving goals that would otherwise have been difficult to reach. Today, an extensive framework and structure of working groups and networks operates in which member countries actively take part in developing, producing and analysing educational indicators on an international level. The INES Steering Group, created in 1996, provides broad policy directions for OECD’s measurement activities in education and related fields. A strengthened management and operational role of the OECD Secretariat has been introduced. Nevertheless, there is room for further development:

- There are questions about how the expertise and resources of member countries can be used more effectively and how existing organisational arrangements can be streamlined and improved whilst maintaining active participation and the innovative nature of the project.
- Not all areas of work are well institutionalised within the overall OECD programme of work, and questions of the effectiveness of the inter-organisational co-ordination of indicator activities remain.
- With the exception of PISA, mechanisms for scientific appraisal and validation of INES work and outcomes are not yet sufficiently developed and not all INES constituencies have brought in the necessary outside statistical and technical expertise.
- More thought is required on developing sound methods for conveying INES results to key stakeholders in education and the general public. These methods must allow for an effective international presentation of outcomes at the level of the OECD, paralleled by national analysis and interpretation of the results as determined by each country in ways that respond to the specific policy and educational context. Electronic mechanisms of communication need to be used more effectively not only for document transfer and exchange of messages but also for facilitating an open discussion forum on on-going work.
The format for this session is not yet finalised.

**Format**

Session 5 will begin with a brief introduction by Mr. Martin to set the framework for the working group discussions. The session will then continue with five parallel working groups, designed to bring together the different stakeholders in INES in a smaller setting, and will conclude the following morning with a report from the working groups and a synthesis by the Secretariat.

- Group 1 will review INES products and publications and explore ways how the dissemination mechanisms of INES, designed to convey results to the different stakeholders in education policy, education and the general public, can be further developed.

- Group 2 will review INES analytical work and advise on the most appropriate future balance between consolidation and analysis of existing information, on the one hand, and development and the further expansion of INES into new areas, on the other.

- Group 3 will review issues of inter-organisational co-operation and co-ordination in the development of education statistics and indicators.

- Group 4 will review organisational structures at both national and international levels and advise on ways how the expertise and resources of member countries can be used more effectively in the future. Group 4 will also examine how existing organisational arrangements can be streamlined and improved whilst maintaining active participation and the innovative nature of the project. Finally, Group 4 will deal with matters related to costs and resources, including the cost-effectiveness of INES activities.

- Group 5 will review methods for the scientific appraisal of INES outcomes and advise on the further development of methods for quality assurance.

**Social event**

*An introduction to Japanese Culture*

(12 September, 19:30 - 22:00)
Session 6: Cross-cutting policy perspectives that could guide the analytical work for INES in its next phase
(13 September, 10:30 - 12:30)

Objectives

It will be important for INES to establish cross-cutting analytical perspectives for its work.

While progress in substantive areas such as those mentioned above is needed, it is also important for the General Assembly to establish cross-cutting policy perspectives that might guide the analytical work in INES during its next phase. Among these, measuring progress towards lifelong learning and addressing issues of equity in learning opportunities and outcomes are widely considered to be important.

INES has made some progress in developing indicators of lifelong learning...

The growing recognition of the importance of lifelong learning, and of situating education indicators in this framework, has been an important aspect of INES work since the third INES General Assembly in Lahti. Some progress has been achieved. New indicators on labour market outcomes of education as well as indicators on participation in various types of continuing education and training have linked indicators of the education system to learning throughout life. Methodologically, the revision of ISCED has placed greater emphasis on different learning pathways in a variety of settings.

...but lifelong learning could provide a broader analytic perspective for all INES work.

However, there is a need to consider moving more actively from an institutional based model of learning located mainly in formal education to one that seeks to measure the extent and benefits of learning throughout life in a wide range of circumstances. This could be an important analytic perspective for all developmental work, whether in the area of knowledge, skills and competencies, the transition from initial education to working life, the access to and participation in education and learning or in the area of financial investment in education and training. The session could also reflect on data sources, including the use of labour force surveys and other national and international surveys.

Equity issues are vital for policy-makers.

Similarly, the links between educational and equity are vital areas of concern for policy-makers. There is already some quantitative evidence that educational reform and rising levels of educational attainment have not reduced inequality in educational opportunities and outcomes. Differences in resources for, access to, and outcomes from education and training remain across different social, regional, ethnic and gender groups.

INES is producing significant information with which to address equity issues...

The indicators currently reported in the 2000 edition of Education at a Glance have provided a stronger perspective of in-country variation, allowing for better reflection on issues of equity in provision and outcomes of education. Work has also begun in the ad-hoc group set up by the INES Steering Group to elaborate a conceptual framework for indicator development in this area.

...and more is to come.

Current developmental work is establishing a rich information base with which issues of equity can be addressed. PISA will provide information on
differences in achievement trends within countries and on the relationships between student, school and country-level variables and student and school performance. PISA will also facilitate analysis of the proportion of variation in student performance between schools, rather than within, as well as the extent to which schools in different countries are successful in moderating the relationship between students performance and the economic, social and cultural capital of their families. Such comparisons will reflect education policies in force and help to identify options for policy development. Finally, the Network C school survey will be a further instrument to highlight disparities among schools in available resources, school and classroom characteristics and practices.

Format

There will be an introduction to each of the two themes and a reflection of how these themes could be addressed in future INES work.

Mr. Thomas J. Alexander will introduce and chair the session.

Afterwards, Mr. Ulf Lundgren (Sweden) will speak to how the theme of lifelong learning could guide analytical work in INES. Following this, Mr. Walo Hutmacher (Switzerland) will present the theme of equity as another cross-cutting policy perspective for INES.

Finally, Mr. Schleicher (OECD Secretariat) will reflect on how different cross-cutting analytical perspectives could progressively be integrated into the future INES programme of work.

Background documents

- The INES Compendium - Contributions from the INES Networks [doc. ref. GA(2000)12]

Session 7

Session 7: Conclusions

(13 September, 13:30 - 15:00)

The General Assembly will conclude with:

- A synthesis of the outcomes, presented by Mr. Martin; and
- An opportunity for country delegates to react.

Session 7 will be chaired by Mr. Honma, Director-General of the Japanese Ministry of Education and Japanese INES National Co-ordinator.

Social event

Visit to the Sumo Wrestlers (September Tournament)

(13 September, 15:30 - 22:00)