

Statistical Capacity Building Program: Program for Education Statistics - Improving the Quality of Internationally Comparable Education Statistics

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Responsible Sector and Bank Unit:	EDU - HDN
Recipient Agency:	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
Web Address:	http:// www.uis.unesco.org
Financial Arrangements for FY09 (Amount in US\$ Million)	
Total Budget:	19.86
DGF Funding Request:	1.80
DGF Percentage:	9%
Objectives and Expected Outcomes	
<p>The DGF grant assists the UIS and its partners by investing in the longer-term methodology and infrastructure required to improve the international statistical system for education and supporting projects that contribute to the following objectives: (1) To improve the quality of national and international education statistics and indicators, (2) to support national capacity in the production and use of data; (3) to develop appropriate methodologies and standards in the field of education statistics; and (4) to strengthen statistical analysis to build a culture of data use that informs policy-making. Funding will support the implementation of a strategy that aims to improve data quality at both national and international levels, particularly the timeliness, integrity and coverage of cross-nationally comparable indicators, in order to ensure a complete and informative picture of the state of education. Expected outcomes include marked improvements in country response rates to the UIS annual data collection, in data coverage, and other aspects of data quality such as accuracy and timeliness (critical for monitoring progress of MDGs); and greater access and use of data.</p>	
Main Components	
<p>Data development and collection: Activities focus on the links to countries, data provision, indicator validation and the country interaction with the UIS in order to improve the comparability, coverage, reliability and timeliness of the data. The component focuses on four areas of the data collection process: a) enhancing the relevance and design of UIS data collection instruments; b) raising the understanding of national statisticians in applying international standards related to education indicators, especially the International Standard Classification; c) improving the timeliness of data through the implementation of rolling data collection linked to national data production cycles; d) extending the coverage of the database to include more indicators and historical data. UIS regional advisors work directly with national statisticians.</p> <p>UIS data processing: The UIS uses information technology and quality assurance to improve the efficiency of internal data processing but is improving these in several ways. Current activities include improved quality assurance processes to ensure better accuracy and timeliness and use of performance monitoring to capture these improvements. The UIS aims to standardize the methods to estimate regional averages, for missing data and for making projections.</p> <p>Responding to needs of data users: The UIS promotes the widest possible use of the data, meta-data and documentation. The use of new technologies enables the dissemination of statistical data, metadata and analysis more rapidly, efficiently, and in formats that meet the needs of key stakeholders, like the World Bank and the international statistical community. Activities focus on two areas: improving external access to data and metadata and through promoting data use.</p> <p>Supporting national statistical capacity development: The UIS works with national teams to assess the quality of education information systems by applying a Data Quality Assessment Framework. UIS Regional Advisors provide technical assistance in building education data systems and using outputs for evidence-based policy-making.</p>	

Performance Indicators

Annex 10

This project is expected to result in marked improvements in response rates, coverage, and other aspects of data quality, & in the wider use of data at the national and international levels. Specific indicators include: **Data development and collection:** a) more relevant/ flexible data collection instruments tailored to countries; b) effective metadata collection and management; c) more complete data collection; d) higher item response rates; e) greater awareness and use of ISCED; f) more timely data collection, g) improved education finance indicators; h) greater coverage of historical data. **UIS data processing:** a) an effective statistical quality monitoring system; b) more efficient internal data extraction; c) better integrated and more effective UIS statistical processing system; d) a system for processing & quality assuring metadata; e) use of improved data exchange standards; f) estimation methods for missing data. **Responding to needs of data users:** a) more timely, complete & timely databases; b) provision of more complete metadata; c) greater web access to statistical data; d) wider range of data products for different types of users; e) improved data exchange between UIS & World Bank; f) more efficient methods to deliver data. **Supporting national statistical capacity building:** a) Methods for imputing missing country data; b) Web-based tools for diagnosing statistical capacity & summarizing national data quality assessments; and c) Design and conduct of training for education planners & policy makers on using data for results-based decision making.

Progress and Achievements

Considerable progress has been made towards achieving the major deliverables. The UIS has centralized data-processing activities within a single unit which has enabled gains in efficiency, by introducing greater standardization and automation in data collection and verification. As a result, the UIS devotes more resources towards improving data quality. The Education Indicators section has been reinforced in order to improve the relevance, comparability, timeliness and completeness of education statistics. **Data development and collection:** An on-going revision of data collection instruments has been initiated, with the first new instrument in the field. The electronic questionnaire has been further developed based on the first year's trial. Three education statistics workshops were conducted covering 60 countries and 120 national statisticians. Site visits aimed to improve data quality were conducted in six countries. ISCED follow-up at the country-level has produced improved mappings of education systems. The timeliness and coverage of data reporting has improved. Key data were provided to the World Bank on schedule and indicators were available for 15+ countries covering a more recent school-year than requested in the current Survey. **UIS data processing:** UIS data processing systems underwent further improvement, including revisions to automated systems for data verification and error reporting. A new program (DIVA) for checking aggregate data and indicators has been completed. The SDMX standard was further developed with partners to improve data sharing environments. The development of web-based diagnostic tools was undertaken and methodologies for imputing missing data were implemented. **Responding to needs of data users:** The Data Centre was launched and improved based on feedback from users. Country/regional data profiles were updated. **Supporting national statistical capacity building:** As part of efforts to improve national statistical capacity, technical assistance on imputation was provided and training materials on using education indicators were distributed.

Partners

The list of partners includes CIDA, DfID, DANIDA, SIDA, EU, USAID, Norway, Finland, UNESCO and AfDB.

Governance and Management

The work of UIS is overseen by a Governing Board, including members from developing countries. The Board reviews work in progress, approves programs and budgets, and meets once a year. A Policy and Planning Committee meets more often. The UIS also reports to UNESCO and its governing bodies. The UIS Director oversees the program, reporting directly to the Director General of UNESCO. GPP activities are selected by the Director, in consultation with the Senior Management Team, the Board, and member states. The program is managed by a Senior Program Specialist and monitored by the Director.

Exit Strategy

An independent evaluation which is underway and will be completed by October 2008. Results of the evaluation will guide the PES/UIS strategy under MAPS.