

# IIEP NEWSLETTER

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## Japanese education: by wisdom peace, by peace plenty

**J**APAN – land of the rising sun, the strongest economy in Asia, the high-tech society, bullet trains, Mount Fuji, raw fish, cherry blossoms, *judo*, *kabuki*, *kimono*... These images swept through our minds as we prepared for the Study Visit which took place from 8-20 May 1999. Japan's modernization process with its rapid progress in science and technology has been regarded as a model for many developing countries, and we had been made to understand that one of the key factors behind Japan's success was education. How did they achieve such a highly literate society? What motivated the Japanese students to learn 1,000 *kanji* characters by the end of primary school? How did they attain nearly a 100 per cent enrolment rate at the non-compulsory senior high school level? Why was there no grade repetition? What were the secrets involved in their students achieving the highest scores for mathematics and science in international surveys? How could Japanese experience in education be shared with developing countries? After initial orientation sessions at the IIEP, the group of 1998/1999 ATP participants left Paris on 8 May 1999 for an eleven day journey in the

*At the invitation of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture (Monbusho), the 36 participants in the IIEP's 1998/1999 Annual Training Programme (ATP) embarked upon a Study Visit to Japan in order to take a closer look at the structure and operation of the Japanese education system. The visit commenced in Hiroshima, then moved to Kyoto, and concluded in Tokyo. The following article was prepared by the ATP trainees who participated in the visit.*

hope of finding some answers to these questions.

### Seeing is believing

Our study visit started in Hiroshima with visits to several schools. Upon arrival at each school, we were asked to take off our shoes and put on slippers – just like the students and teachers – in order to reduce background noise and to keep the school clean. We noted that class sizes were generally around 40 students. The classroom teaching presented, regardless of grade level, was 'whole class' – in that all class members moved together at the same rate throughout the teaching materials

provided by the teacher. The students often seemed to sit in 'clusters' of 5 to 10 students, called *han*, with better students helping those who had difficulties with the lessons. Students had small, thin, soft-covered textbooks, which had been compiled in



Photo: IIEP/S.Heyman

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two volumes for each school subject. As a result the students carried very little weight in their satchels. At one primary school we visited, the students of the responsible *han* for that week served lunch to their classmates, and also to us. As we left the school, we saw students sweeping the floors and scrubbing the walls – an image to be repeated in every establishment we visited. We discovered that school cleaning (including toilets) was part of the timetable and was considered to generate teamwork, a sense of responsibility, the feeling of equality, and was seen as a form of physical exercise.

We were very impressed with the fact that students seemed to spend a very large percentage of their school time 'on task', and seemed to be able to continue concentrating on their work despite disturbances caused by our visit. We often pondered whether this impressive skill was mainly due to the teaching methods, or whether it was mainly due to a prevailing social climate that valued and respected hard work.

In the five primary and junior secondary schools we visited, there were no computers in any of the classrooms. This astonished us. One school had about 30 computers in a special room which was locked and not being used. A number of international research studies have reported that Japanese secondary school teachers hardly ever use computers in mathematics classes. This came as a surprise since we expected to see more computers in this highly technological society. We learned later that a recent Monbusho policy has started to promote the use of computers and provide teacher training in order to respond to the educational needs of the information age. Within several years, it is expected that access to computers will be expanded to cover most schools.

## Years bring wisdom

We visited a small primary school on an island in the Seto Inland Sea off Hiroshima. The total enrolment for Grades 1-6 was 39. The school was staffed by a principal, vice principal, four teachers, two nurse-teachers, and two administrative staff. Seriously

surprised by this 'over-staffing', we were informed that Monbusho policy specifies that a small school cannot be closed even if school enrolment is reduced to one student. In addition, Monbusho policy requires that each school must have at least six staff members. We wondered whether there was widespread public support for these extravagant staffing arrangements, and whether the costs of this approach could be justified.

For many years, Japanese teachers have enjoyed a very high social status and respect in their communities. They have generally been paid a bonus of 10 per cent above other public servants with the same experience and qualifications. However, a decline in Japan's overall population has resulted in a drop in school enrolments and an associated oversupply of qualified teachers. According to one school principal, there were about 20 very well-qualified applicants for each vacant teaching position, and that with fewer young people entering the teaching profession there would soon be an ageing of the teaching force.

Recently, the Monbusho has been promoting the concept of 'team teaching' in order to give more individual attention to students. While this approach to staffing may offer an interesting innovation with respect to the pedagogical environment, we wondered why action had not been taken to use these extra teachers to reduce class sizes to less than 40 students.

## Keeping the balance

It was very interesting to note the mechanism by which students transferred between junior and senior high schools. A form of 'streaming' appears to take place as students are selected for certain senior high schools according to their examination results. It would seem that this transition has an impact on later choices and opportunities for higher education and therefore raised certain questions of 'equity'.

We all agreed that the Japanese education system had many good features – but that it also had several concerns – one of the biggest being

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private tuition, or *juku*. On several occasions we were told that 25 per cent of primary students and 75 per cent of junior high school students attended *juku* after school hours and that parents were paying up to US\$250 per month for this extra tuition. We thought that this had the potential for giving an unfair academic advantage to children from wealthy families. We also wondered whether it was psychologically or physically healthy for young people to be expected to spend most of their waking hours studying in order to pass examinations.

Currently the *juku* system operates outside the control of the Monbusho. However we were informed that the Monbusho intends to work much closer with the *juku* system in order to co-ordinate learning programmes to enhance children's thinking ability and creativity. This may not solve the problem of equity – and probably might exacerbate it. Perhaps another solution would be to do away with the high school entrance examinations altogether?

Another of our concerns was the linkage between high levels of student achievement and the negative attitudes of students towards school subjects. In many international surveys of educational achievement, Japanese students have scored consistently at or near the top in mathematics and science. However, it has also been shown that Japanese students have very negative attitudes towards these two subjects. It would be interesting to know if these negative attitudes have been caused by the teaching methods, the textbooks, academic pressure, or other factors.

Efforts are now underway within the Monbusho to reduce the content of the curriculum, to give schools more freedom and choice, and to encourage the *kokoro* education (with more focus on the development of the human spirit). The aim is to reduce current emphasis on competition, rote learning, and memorization of facts. The Monbusho hopes that these changes will reduce academic and

competitive pressures on students, which supposedly cause bullying and school violence

### Never too late to learn

During our stay in Hiroshima, we visited the Mazda Motor Corporation, its factory production lines, and an attached technical training college. From the discussions at Mazda, we noted that many companies preferred to organize their own apprenticeship programmes and to deal with the Ministry of Labour rather than the Monbusho. This approach contrasted markedly with approaches in most of our own countries which relied upon training programmes organized by the Ministry of Education.

The trainees were impressed by the emphasis given to lifelong learning within the Japanese education system. The total population of Japan is expected to fall after 2005, and the proportion of the total population over 65 is expected to increase. To deal with the needs of these senior citizens and also the unemployed, new community lifelong learning centres have been created. We visited one such Centre in Sumida – a working-class district in Tokyo. The Sumida Lifelong Learning Centre was a product of the so-called 'bubble economy' years, and with a budget of US\$4 million, it was a very impressive establishment, to say the least. At this centre, we visited classrooms and facilities devoted to the teaching of flamenco, astronomy, art and craft, music recording, theatre, and traditional Japanese paper-making.

### Must eagles fly alone?

We were impressed by what we saw both inside and outside the schools. The people were polite, punctual, disciplined, systematic, always smiling, hospitable and helpful. These characteristics seemed inherent to all dimensions of Japanese society. Schools benefited a great deal from this because such behaviour is essential for managing productive classrooms of children and for

encouraging effective learning. Traditional Japanese culture has tended to emphasize the importance of group membership at the expense of individualism. This approach to education was well-suited to the post-war years of industrial expansions, however we were informed by several Japanese academics that today's globalized world demanded that Japan should attempt to produce more 'free thinkers' capable of creating and expressing their own ideas and feelings.

### Different countries, different customs

We embarked upon our Japanese adventure with the expectation of discovering a 'new' world, very different to anything most of us already knew, a world full of charm and delightful surprises. We were not disappointed! This study visit enriched our understanding of a very different education system, and also of a fascinating and unique culture. We return to our own countries much richer regarding our understanding of the key features of one of the world's most effective and respected education systems.

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# Using geographical information systems to improve micro-planning

*A recent meeting of experts in geographical information systems, organized by the IIEP in Paris from 29 June to 1 July 1999, highlighted the importance of GIS as a tool for making the presentation of data more attractive for guiding decision-makers in their choices. The outcomes of the discussions are presented in the article below.*

**I**n education, as in other fields, the relationship between information producers and decision-makers is an uneasy one. The ultimate aim of information is to guide and influence the choice of decisions, but many decisions are taken without reference to the available data. While this is due to several factors, not the least important resides in the way these data are made available: they are poorly presented, out-of-date and lack analysis. Computer tools can be of use in overcoming these weaknesses and in bridging the gap between information and decisions. One such tool is a Geographic Information System (GIS) and a recent experts' meeting at the IIEP debated what could be the use of a GIS for educational planning, especially at decentralized levels.

## What is a GIS?

A Geographical Information System is a computer program which combines *two* data bases: the *first* contains the 'traditional' education management data on schools, teachers and students; the *second* files geographic data such as the location of schools, the boundaries of districts, the location of villages and cities, of roads, rivers and mountains, and other relevant geographical characteristics. The GIS links these two sets so that statistical data can be presented not only as tables and graphs but also as maps, which helps the reader to look for spatial patterns. This makes for a broader analysis, so

that quick and accurate answers can be given on questions as varied as:

- ▶ Which regions are the most disadvantaged and do factors as language, ethnicity or road infrastructure offer explanations?
- ▶ Where can in-service training best be organized to serve the schools with the least-qualified teachers?
- ▶ Which primary schools should first be upgraded to secondary to allow for increased access for the greatest possible number of primary school leavers?

One particular advantage of a GIS is that it allows for inquiries at different levels, by changing the unit of analysis from 'school' to 'district' or 'region'. The user can indeed zoom in on a map to examine one district with its different schools or zoom out to look at the whole country with its distinct regions. It is thus in principle as useful for central level as for local level planners.

## The experts' meeting

The experts' meeting, which the IIEP convened recently in Paris, focused on the latter group of users. In an environment, which is increasingly characterised by decentralization, the main interrogation concerned the actual use and potential benefit of a GIS to educational planners and managers at district level. The meeting brought together several international experts with IIEP staff. Some had worked as consultants in countries as varied as Cambodia, Ethiopia, Namibia or Palestine.

Others were employed within decentralized education departments in Argentina, France or England. After a first day, during which all experts presented briefly their experiences, the workshop examined three themes: the use of a GIS for educational planning at central and district levels; the constraints experienced in this regard; and the role the IIEP could most advantageously play in this area. The rich and diverse experience of the participants and the open and frank tone of the discussions led to a most interesting meeting, which came up with a number of challenging conclusions.

## GIS: its potential and existing limitations

A GIS can serve *three* different purposes. *Firstly*, to make the presentation of data more attractive: one expert indeed commented somewhat provocatively that his office's main reason to acquire a GIS lay in the fact that both the public and his own chief like coloured maps. The point is less superficial than it sounds: information, which is easier to read and interpret, and enjoyable to examine is more useful than a dry set of statistical tables. *Secondly*, through considering geographical factors, the analysis becomes finer, more precise and the ensuing strategies probably more pertinent. The work in *Ethiopia* for instance showed, in certain parts of the country, a clear relationship between the distance which separates villages

from schools and enrolment ratios, particularly those of girls. In *Palestine*, the development of the GIS helped in clarifying the somewhat irrational distribution of primary and secondary schools and in identifying where school construction was most needed. This brings us to the *third* possible use: assisting in prospective planning. Several examples were given: in *England*, the potential influence of a school closure on enrolment in the surrounding schools; in other countries, the potential location of secondary schools, their catchment areas and feeder schools.

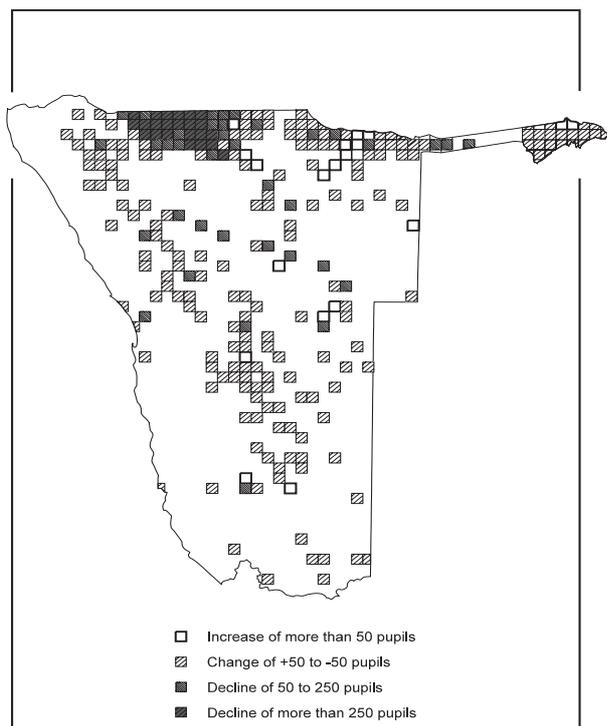
At the central level, different countries are indeed relying on a GIS to make the presentation of indicators more colourful and to analyse disparities between regions. Using a GIS for prospective purposes however is still an exception. More crucially,

the experts agreed that developing and exploiting a GIS encounters several constraints of uneven weight, but which – in particular in developing countries – are more of an impediment at district level than in the central office. These constraints can be listed under *five* factors. *Firstly*, the creation of any information system implies several technical steps (data selection, collection and input, data checking, integration, storage and updating). In the case of a GIS, because of the complexity inherent in collecting geographic data, this technical process is still more intricate. However, the experiences in *Cambodia*, *Ethiopia* or *Palestine* showed that finding computerised data on the location of rivers, villages, electricity lines and so on was actually less difficult and time-consuming than originally thought. Without doubt,

this step in the development of a GIS should remain the responsibility of a central unit. A *second* constraint concerns the cost of the hardware, the software and the staff needed for setting up the system. There again, this is hardly insurmountable when the system is limited to the central or regional levels, especially in view of the current decrease in these costs, but becomes more of a headache when a network of districts needs to be served. The *third* constraint is institutional: which units or departments should be set up to manage the geographic information. A GIS should be seen as a component of an overall EMIS, and, as such, the staff in charge of the GIS, should be integrated in the EMIS department. Where an EMIS is functioning well at central, regional and district level, the inclusion of a GIS will, from an institutional point

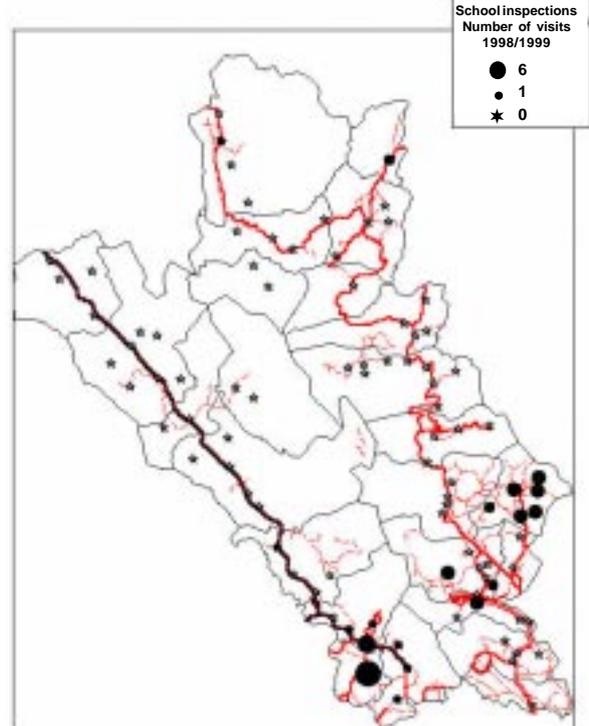
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**Map 1: Namibia**



Two maps. **Map 1, on Namibia**, shows for the whole country those areas which have undergone a significant increase or decrease in enrolment. **Map 2, a district in Viet Nam**, shows the road network, the

**Map 2: A district in Viet Nam**



primary schools and the inspection visits undertaken during the preceding school year. The map highlights not only that a majority of schools were not visited, while some received up to six visits. It also shows that there was a

clear preference to visit schools in the less mountainous Southern area of the district, where the District Office is located.

## Education and the labour market during transition in Eastern Europe

*The Republic of Moldova's National Commission for UNESCO specifically requested that IIEP animate a training seminar on 'Education and the labour market in transitional periods' organized in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova from 7 to 11 June 1999 for some 50 participants from Byelorussia, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.*

**W**HEN considering the specificities of the current situation in Moldova and other countries of the region, it is easy to understand the need for such a course. Their education systems remain conservative and resist radical change whether in orientation or management. Despite insistent recommendations of the World Bank, not a single higher or professional education institution has been closed in recent years, only a few have been reorganized or modified their profiles, and the majority continue to supply large numbers of engineers, technicians or agronomists no longer needed by the changing patterns of their transitional economies.

This mismatch between education and the labour market has caused serious employment problems. For example, while there is a constant lack of teachers, their low salaries (US\$10 per month in Moldova) force qualified personnel to seek more lucrative jobs in the booming private and informal sectors of the economy. According to statistics, 60 per cent of the GDP in Moldova is produced by the informal sector. However, although official figures for unemployment are low in these countries, due to inadequate benefits, 'hidden' and seasonal unemployment, temporary and part-time jobs seem to increase annually.

The key reason behind this is the still distorted structure of the economies of these countries which

are still dominated by a loss-making public sector, particularly in agriculture and heavy industry. Employment in agriculture is inefficient in terms of productivity and accounts for 20 to 30 per cent of the labour force, compared to 3 to 5 per cent in the countries of Western Europe. On the other hand, the potential of the services sector (banking, insurance, tourism, etc.) is not yet activated, nor are there the education and training structures to provide qualified manpower for it.

### Tackling the problems

The background issues addressed by the training seminar included:

- ▶ current problems encountered by transition countries in implementing reforms which affect labour market and employment patterns;
- ▶ the experience of developed countries in linking education and labour market through measuring human capital stock, undertaking labour market analyses, linking educational attainment to employment, defining criteria for jobs in the informal sector, etc.;
- ▶ developing creativity, problem solving and other essential skills required by contemporary patterns of the labour market.

Participants had prepared country reports, many of which were based on their respective national reports recently prepared for the European Training Foundation and for the

UNESCO Congress on Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) held in Seoul (*cf article p. 7*). Although comprehensive and descriptive, these reports gave the impression that systems of education and training, on the one hand, and government-supported strategies or labour market analysis and employment, on the other, exist separately.

This is partly explained by the fact that the ministries in charge have their own vested interests and budgets to preserve. As a result, mammoth efforts were made to sustain numerous public institutions despite high costs and often heavy arrears in salary payments. The management and funding of VTE has become an acute problem and the mismatch between supply and demand is more obvious than in higher education.

Several interesting examples of how economic instability in these countries and subsequent unpredictable fluctuations sent the wrong signals to education and training systems. The huge demand for managers, lawyers, and foreign language specialists in the early 1990s caused their oversupply at the end of the decade, whereas professions related to natural sciences, once considered as non prestigious, are now in high demand.

As regards unemployment strategies, all the participating countries introduced retraining and job

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# Echoes from Korea: The integration of young people into working life



Work, Education and the Future

*From 26 to 30, April, 1999, the second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) was organized in Seoul by UNESCO, in co-operation with the Government of the Republic of Korea, just 12 years after the first International Congress on the Development and Improvement of TVE held in Berlin in 1987. The meeting, which brought together some 700 participants from more than 100 countries, agencies and NGOs, formulated a number of proposals and policy directives for the development of TVE in individual Member States, and suggestions for UNESCO's role in the future ...*

**B**ESIDES plenary sessions and commissions, the Congress made provision for a number of round tables on specific issues. One of these round tables, on *The integration of youth into working life*, was organized by the IIEP.

## The rise of youth unemployment

For most countries, the increasing level of unemployment and under-employment of young people leaving the school system is a critical economic and social issue.

This youth unemployment takes place in a context where the average level of educational attainment of youth entering the labour force has increased significantly as a result of the development of education worldwide.

Although there is a relationship between the level of education and the employment situation of individuals, this link is not always clear and, in many developing economies, graduates often encounter more difficulties integrating the world of work than school drop-outs. Such a situation suggests that more education does not always lead to higher employment rates.

In many low-income countries, and even in medium-income level economies, employment in the formal

sector is stagnant and the absorption of new entrants into the labour market takes place in the informal sector. Therefore, to a large extent, integration of youth into working life means their integration into the informal sector.

## Giving young people a better chance

In this overall context, the round table organized by the IIEP looked at efforts made by governments to improve the integration of youth into the labour market. The papers presented at the round table included:

- a review of youth transition issues

and policies in selected OECD Member Countries;

- a comparative analysis of training programmes for disadvantaged youth in Argentina, Brazil and Chile;
- an analysis of the implications of the financial and economic crisis on youth employment and education and training policies in the Republic of Korea;
- a contribution on the integration of young people into the informal sector in Kenya; and lastly,
- a review of the social and economic transformation in South Africa, with special reference to labour market policies, educational policies and social partnership.

While focussing on TVE, the round



See also:  
***Reforming training governance: the Jamaican experience***, by D. Atchoarena and T. McArdle. Paris: UNESCO/IIEP. 1999. (cf *List of Recent IIEP Publications* p.16).

Photo: IIEP/HEART

table dealt with youth transition issues into a broader perspective, including labour market policies. This was particularly the case for countries encountering rapid and deep transformations such as the Republic of Korea and South Africa.

Particular attention was also paid to the institutional framework in which transition takes place. In this context, the current South African experiences in re-engineering its institutional environment provided the basis to reflect on the involvement of social partners. The establishment of a national qualification framework as well as the designing of new financing mechanisms to raise and allocate resources for training gave concrete examples of such trends.

In considering the specific problems of disadvantaged youth, the round table reviewed, on the basis of Latin American experiences, possible approaches to best target young people at risk. These examples seem to suggest that, if properly regulated by the state, the development of a market for training can be an effective tool to address the needs of disadvantaged young people.

## Policy instruments for effective transition

Developing TVE is not necessarily the best solution to fight against youth unemployment and certainly not always a cost/effective option.

The Kenyan experience in vocationalizing basic education, or even the recent expansion of TVE in the Republic of Korea, both provided evidence that other instruments and approaches must be activated.

In this context, more and more attention is being paid to educational pathways as a productive way to approach the transition issue as reflected in several OECD Member Countries, including the Republic of Korea. Building clear, open and coherent pathways seems to be a condition for successful transition. They contribute towards both increasing access to post-secondary TVE and attracting more young people to vocational streams.

Extensive, real workplace learning is also increasingly considered as an important factor. This is reflected in current policies in OECD Member Countries and emerging economies in Latin America. In some cases, providing internship seems more effective than institution-based training to integrate youngsters into the labour market. However, it seems important to always ensure the quality of the training provided. The provision of good labour market information, vocational guidance as well as job search services can also play an important role.

Beyond training and other related activities, the smooth integration of the young labour force requires youth-friendly labour markets. Such

interventions involve the provision of incentives to employers, including wage-related incentives, and the establishment of close links between TVE institutions and enterprises, as illustrated in several OECD Member Countries, including the Republic of Korea. The Kenyan experience also indicates that adjusting public TVE institutions to the needs of the informal sector constitutes a major challenge for countries where it represents the main source of employment.

Structured partnership between the key stakeholders is increasingly recognized as a prerequisite for building effective transition policies. This is also the case with informal sector representatives in a context where informal sector associations are emerging in many developing economies (e.g. the *Jua Kali* associations in Kenya).

Lastly, emphasis was put on the need to establish adequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms aimed at transition processes and outcomes.

There is no single answer to address the youth transition issue. The above-mentioned solutions can work in different ways and in various combinations. The transition of young people into working life is closely related to specific labour market and institutional conditions. Therefore, certain policies cannot be dissociated from the macroeconomic framework in which they take place.

DAVID ATCHOARENA

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placement networks, but these deal only with the few officially registered unemployed and concern a limited choice of professions.

Although educational funding continues to depend largely on the state budget, financial diversification, such as cost-sharing, is gradually being introduced. Private education is developing rapidly, mainly at post-compulsory levels, and mostly on a profitmaking basis.

## An important breakthrough

The seminar demonstrated that there is a real demand for the IIEP know-how in Eastern European and former USSR countries. Many of the indicators and methodologies presented by the IIEP were new to the participants who were being exposed for the first time to concepts of labour market analysis, educational manage-

ment and finance, and who had little or no experience of tracer studies or student loan systems.

Despite a vast practical experience in their specific domains, the participants from transition economies lacked the basic training and related fundamental knowledge which the IIEP course provided. For the Moldovan Authorities this was an important breakthrough.

IGOR KITAEV

## Cameroon: towards a strategic plan for higher education

*In its development of higher education Cameroon's position is unique. Its education system experienced one of the fastest growth rates around the world during the 1990s when the country's economy was going through a severe crisis. At the request for assistance by the Government of Cameroon, IIEP constituted an international team which undertook a thorough analysis of the situation of higher education and has completed the preparatory phase of the development of a strategic plan to remedy the resulting problems.*

**S**INCE 1985, the price of petroleum which, for some time, was Cameroon's main source of revenue, fell as did the country's reserves. A lack of effective economic and fiscal management resulted in one of the severest economic crises the country has ever known. National income decreased by over 10 per cent in 1988 and continued to decrease until a structural adjustment programme was adopted in 1992. This led to salary cuts of up to 50 per cent among civil servants, including the higher education academic staff. In January 1994, the national currency was devalued by 100 per cent, which reduced the purchasing power even further.

Despite the economic crisis, enrolments in higher education increased from 22,488 in 1987/88 to 44,551 in 1992/93, at an average annual rate of 15 per cent. After a period of relatively slow growth, enrolments in public universities again began to increase at a rate of 13 per cent from 1997/98 to 1998/99. To-day the total enrolment in higher education is more than 70,000. In 1961, year of independence for Cameroon, the country had 213 enrolments in higher education. This quantitative expansion could not be matched with provision of physical facilities, books, equipment and other

essential instructional needs. Academic staff, due to the above-mentioned decrease in purchasing power, could not meet their basic needs without a second, or even third, job.

This expansion resulted in the serious deterioration of relevance, quality and management of higher education. Although the economy has been recovering slowly since 1994, and despite the African Development Bank having classified Cameroon as a 'medium-size high growth economy' in 1998, the country's higher education is still at a crossroads. In an attempt to provide the right directives, the Minister of Higher Education of Cameroon, during his participation in the World Conference of Higher Education organized by UNESCO in Paris in October 1998, approached the IIEP requesting assistance in the design of a strategic plan for higher education.

As a result, a mission was undertaken, in December 1998, by the IIEP's Special Adviser to prepare the terms of reference for the strategic plan. Following the usual procedure of designing a strategic plan, an analysis of the environment, both internal and external to the higher education system, was proposed as the first step. This was to be followed by the creation of an enabling



environment for the preparation of the plan. In February 1999, the Minister, having approved the terms of reference, set up a national Steering Committee presided by the Inspector General (Academic) with 14 members including the Special Adviser, and requested the IIEP to form a team of international experts to work on a series of studies on: relevance, quality, management, financing, relationship between the state and higher education institutions, and co-operation. A team of experts was constituted at the IIEP and approved by the Minister. Each member of the team was assigned a particular topic, and IIEP's Special Adviser was responsible for the overall co-ordination of the work of the international team.

A two-week field mission took place in April 1999 to collect data and hold in-depth discussions while visiting institutions of higher education (both private and public), different ministries (including the Ministry of National Education and the different offices of the Ministry of Higher Education), bi- and multi-lateral aid agencies, and NGOs dealing with higher education issues. During the visits to higher education institutions, special attention was paid to discussions with the represen-

tatives of the students and staff, in addition to the senior academic faculty and non-academic staff. A few distinguished national educationists were consulted for their assessment of the situation and a meeting was organized with the Council of University Rectors to give their view on the higher education system.

On 31 May 1999, the Director of IIEP, Mr Jacques Hallak, submitted

to the Minister of Higher Education of Cameroon the recommendations and plan of action prepared by the team on each of the six above-mentioned issues, as well as on the creation of a favourable environment for development of the strategic plan. In a letter addressed to Mr Hallak on 1 July 1999, the Minister gave his approbation on the substance of the whole report. Subsequently, the

follow-up actions are currently being planned by the National Steering Committee and the involvement of the IIEP has been solicited by the Minister in the execution of some of these actions.

BIKAS C. SANYAL  
IIEP SPECIAL ADVISOR

## The Virtual Institute: an update of activities



**A**s part of a developing programme of continuing education activities for former IIEP course participants, the Institute held an Internet based discussion forum on the topic reducing repetition. Based upon the IIEP title, *Reducing repetition: issues and strategies*, the discussion centred on three main topics:

- ▶ the magnitude of repetition and its relation to drop out;
- ▶ the causes and consequences of repetition;
- ▶ the possible strategies for reducing repetition.

The forum resulted in a lively debate and a final summary prepared by the moderator, André Magnen. Copies of the summary are available

for distribution by e-mail.

This forum was offered to English-speaking participants, and will be offered to French-speaking participants in the Autumn, if sufficient interest is shown.

For a copy of the summary, or information on future activities, please contact Susan D'Antoni at: [s.dantoni@iep.unesco.org](mailto:s.dantoni@iep.unesco.org)

## NEW IIEP STAFF MEMBER

**Mr N.V. Varghese** (India) joined IIEP staff as a Programme Specialist on 1 June 1999 to work specifically on the research and study programme on higher education. No stranger to IIEP, Mr Varghese participated as a trainee in our Annual Training Programme from 1984/85 and returned in 1988/89 as a Resident Fellow.

Prior to his appointment at the Institute, he was a Senior Fellow and Head of the Educational Planning Unit at the National

Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) in New Delhi. While at the NIEPA he was also the focal point of the Asian Network of Training and Research Institutions in Educational Planning (ANTRIEP) and editor of the ANTRIEP Newsletter.

Mr Varghese has been closely associated with educational planning at the federal and decentralized levels, and with design and development of externally funded educational projects in India. His areas of research interest and publications include: educational



planning, educational finance, higher education and basic education.

# Spotlight on indicators in Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa

The main aim of the intensive course on 'The use of indicators for planning basic education', organized in Maputo in July 1998 for Portuguese-speaking African countries, was to help these countries develop a system of indicators on basic education. The national teams returned home, enriched by the exchange of experiences and the pilot work done on a first draft document of key indicators.<sup>1</sup> This work is regrouped in **Indicadores para a planificação da educação nos países africanos de língua oficial portuguesa**, recently published by the IIEP. What has happened since then?

ON their return, the participants from Angola, Cape Verde, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe, without exception, were authorized by their different hierarchies to go ahead and create teams responsible for the elaboration of an indicators report. IIEP gave support from a distance to the different teams in order to assist them in this work, and organized a follow-up workshop on the use of indicators from 26 to 30 April 1999 at Praia, Cape Verde, in co-operation with UNICEF and the DANIDA agency, Denmark.

## Why a follow-up workshop?

The teams had to face a number of methodological problems when back in their countries. The course in Maputo was in fact but the first stage in a long analytical process. It took into account only a small amount of indicators (16) which increased considerably (to 32 in some cases) as the in-country phase of the work advanced. The follow-up workshop helped to go more deeply into this task of systematic analysis. It was also an opportune moment to study issues related to the updating of an indicators report, the objective being to publish an annual report.

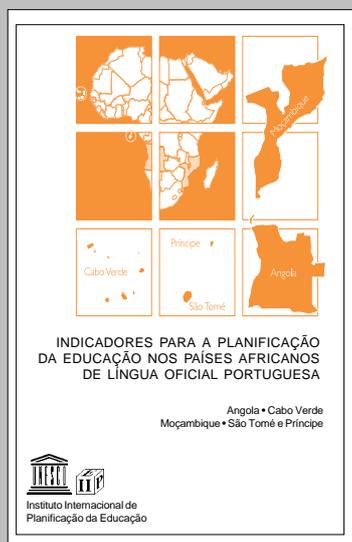
## What was the impact?

The teams were able to finalize a first version of the document, despite sometimes difficult conditions. In addition, this experience helped participants to place their efforts within a certain continuity in order to better meet the information needs of the decision-makers. Mozambique, for example, is currently in the process of updating its national report of indicators. Produced in more than 1,000 copies, this document is disseminated not only to all bodies under the Ministry of Education, but also to all external partners and donor

agencies, and it is now available to the general public. In the face of a strong demand, the Ministry has decided to publish its next indicator report in a greater number of copies. It has also decided to initiate similar work at the provincial level. According to the Statistics Department, the indicators report has helped the Ministry to realize the importance of information and the need to collect and analyze data to provide support to the decision-making process.

PATRICIA DIAS DA GRAÇA

<sup>1</sup> *IIEP Newsletter*, Vol. XVI, n° 3, July-September 1998.



*Indicadores para a planificação da educação nos países africanos de língua oficial portuguesa – Angola, Cabo Verde, Moçambique, São Tomé e Príncipe.*  
Paris: UNESCO/IIEP, 1999.

## 1998/1999 Annual Training Programme: an assessment

*As is custom, the IIEP Annual Training Programme (ATP) ended with an assessment by trainees of the aims, teaching methods and approaches used during the programme. This final assessment followed on a previous evaluation in January 1999, held half-way through the programme in order to adapt certain parts as necessary, according to the trainees' reactions ...*

The final evaluation of IIEP's 1998/1999 Annual Training Programme was oriented towards a global assessment, bearing in mind the linking of the various parts of the programme, specific and global objectives, working methods, etc. A number of lessons can be learned from this second evaluation.

A large majority of trainees (95%) felt that the programme met their needs as planners and managers of education systems. Generally speaking, between 80 and 98 per cent of trainees felt that the aims set for each module had been achieved, even if the lack of time was often evoked as a limitation. Insufficient time comes up regularly from one year to the next and can be interpreted in reality by a profound curiosity on the part of trainees which is difficult to satisfy

in view of the amplitude of the programme. However, the sequence followed by the programme should help to overcome, at least partly, this constraint by seeking to supply a solid knowledge base for each of the topics studied and by helping trainees to strengthen their ability to examine in depth, and tackle autonomously, the issues at stakes within their professional responsibilities.

The practical orientation of the programme, both as regards the topics treated and the pedagogical approach (small-group discussions, presentations of national experiences and plenary sessions) seems to have been generally satisfactory. The refresher classes, aimed at updating trainees' knowledge of general education concepts and basic statistical notions, were much appreciated.

One of the main reasons for satisfaction which came out in this evaluation, was the level of self-confidence attained during the training. This is probably explained by the diversity of topics covered by the programme which help trainees to have a general overview of the more sensitive issues in education. The acknowledgement of current trends and of major education problems seemed to be appreciated, and this is why three innovations were made in this year's programme.

The first innovation consisted in introducing a seminar on 'audit' (or organizational analysis) in which the analytical framework of a educational diagnostic is presented and then discussed with the aim of highlighting the possibilities of educational management systems for action. In a continually changing economic and social context, which naturally affects education, an audit would appear as a prerequisite for any far-reaching educational reform. This exercise proved promising and will probably be developed further in future programmes as part of the already smoothly-running unit on education sector diagnosis.

The second innovation was destined to strengthen trainees' computer abilities. Despite its early morning start, the 'Early Bird' classes were a big success, more so than expected, and although the main aim of these classes was to master computer techniques and the



Photo: IIEP/V. Frogier

manipulation of certain software, the topics and exercises were related to the rest of the programme.

The third innovation concerned the use of new information and communication technologies in the management and administration of education systems. This was done by organizing a course through the Internet, using a didactic framework to improve individual autonomy, particularly as regards looking for information on the Web, and by using e-mail for group work and interaction with supervisors.

Socially the stay in Paris was judged as very enriching on several levels. The relationships which formed among trainees helped to exchange information on education systems, develop friendships as well as share and understand each others cultures. These relationships and the conviviality they created contributed much towards the quality of the training. Unanimously the trainees felt that the study visits to both

France and Japan were professionally very enriching, offering them the opportunity not only to get a close view of two very different administrative and management frameworks, but also a real hands-on experience of how things really worked at the school level.

As is always the case, the drafting of the terminal paper proved to be a period of intensive activity. Working on the topic of their choice, trainees could, during this period, reflect systematically and rigourously on the concepts and issues affecting the education systems in their respective countries. It was also an opportunity not only to practice drafting professional reports, but also to apply certain methodological approaches related to social sciences. The trainees suggested that the preparation of the terminal paper should in fact start earlier on in the programme, in order to have more time to draft their documents and consult with their respective advisors.

During the evaluation seminar trainees also brought up the question of individual evaluation of skills and knowledge acquired during the course – an issue which the IIEP is currently reflecting on.

The possibility to follow a maximum number of modules was raised on several occasions. This proposal raises the question of the already mentioned time constraints and the difficulty of having to regroup some modules in order to fit in with some pedagogical requirements. This concern was noted and should result in adjustments in the programme which will hopefully meet with trainees' expectations.

To conclude, we noted how, without exception, all of the trainees expressed how eager they were to reinvest the knowledge and experience they had gained at the IIEP into their work on the return to their home countries.

LARS O. MÄHLCK AND KHADIM SYLLA

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>> continuation of article p.5

of view, not be a major worry. *Fourthly*, ensuring that a GIS be used by district staff implies that such personnel should be trained. The meeting in this regard drew a distinction between training in the development of a GIS (which is complicated and could be limited to a few experts at central level), training in the use of the system (which is more straightforward and could be offered to district staff with sufficient computer experience) and training in the use and interpretation of the system's products, i.e. the maps (useful to a much wider group of people). This is linked to a *fifth* constraint, which one expert called the need to develop 'spatial literacy' among education staff, who show a lack of interest or awareness in the geographic dimensions of planning and management. Some experts therefore argued that promoting a demand for the products of a GIS is as much a priority as pursuing its

technical development.

In view of these different constraints, a model seems to have been elaborated in several developing countries, whereby a GIS is set up only at central level as part of the EMIS and whereby the products of the GIS are made available to the districts. These products can take the form of paper maps (in Cambodia and Ethiopia) or, more ambitiously, can be the database itself, transmitted either through the internet (in the province of Buenos Aires) or via a CD-ROM (as was tried, with mitigated success, in South Africa). While such a model is attractive, taking into account as it does several of the above-mentioned constraints, it raises a more complex issue. Educational micro-planning has to be participatory and the decision of locating a school needs to be taken at the local level, in close consultation with the communities concerned. When a GIS is set up and managed centrally, the

risk exists that decisions concerning the district level will also become more centralized, with an ensuing loss in ownership and relevance of those decisions. The persisting challenge therefore is to integrate the valuable contribution of a sophisticated tool into a decision-making process which emphasizes negotiation and ownership.

ANTON DE GRAUWE

#### SUGGESTED READING

J. Mendelsohn. *Educational planning and management and the use of geographical information systems*. UNESCO/IIEP. 1996.

#### FORTHCOMING TITLES:

I. Attfield. *Micro-planning and school mapping in Ethiopia: setting up and using a geographical information system for educational planning*. UNESCO/IIEP.

B. Parolin. *School mapping in Palestine: setting up and using a geographical information system*. UNESCO/IIEP.



*"An institution in touch with its environment"*

- **Sub-regional workshop on 'Strategic and financial management of higher education'**  
(IIEP, Paris  
6-8 July 1999)

At the invitation of the University of Monterrey in Mexico, the IIEP conducted this three-day workshop for a group of 30 heads of higher education institutions in Latin America, and their immediate collaborators. During the workshop, the participants from six Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Paraguay and Spain) discussed their experiences in strategic management and the management of finance, including the management of income-generating activities.

- **Sub-regional workshop on 'The management of higher education institutions'**  
(Libreville, Gabon  
19-23 July 1999)

This one-week training programme aims at capacity-building in the institutional management of higher education institutions of establishments located in selected French-speaking African countries. The workshop will particularly address problems in the financial management of higher education institutions and try to identify a number of options to improve both the utilization of resources and the generation of income. The participants include administrators of higher education institutions, such as secretary generals, and heads of finance of the selected institutions.

- **National Forum on 'Strategies for opening up higher education institutions to their environment'**  
(Hammamet, Tunisia  
6 and 7 September 1999)

In many countries higher education institutions still function in isolation to their socio-economic and cultural environments, at the local, national and international levels. During this

Forum a number of innovative strategies for the opening up of the higher education system to different strata of the environment will be presented and discussed among the Tunisian deans of faculties and directors of institutes. Conclusions on desirable options will be made at the end of the Forum.

- **Sub-regional intensive course on 'The identification and preparation of educational development projects'**  
(Kinshasa, Congo Dem. Rep.  
22-29 September 1999)

The general objective of this course is to strengthen participants' capacity to analyze educational policy, determine the priorities, and to prepare development projects aimed at expanding basic education and improving its quality. The participants will include educational planners, trainers and those in charge of implementing educational development projects in French-speaking Central African countries (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Gabon and the Republic of the Congo).

- **Technical workshop on 'Improving school supervision and support services for basic education'**  
(IIEP-Buenos Aires, Argentina  
28 September - 1 October 1999)

The objectives of the workshop are to review the results of the first part of diagnostic studies carried out by the national research teams from Brazil (Ceara), Chile, Colombia and Mexico and to jointly work out plans for further action. It will bring together the national team members, specialists from the IIEP and a few experts in supervision from the region.

- **National course on 'The management of resources of higher education institutions in Colombia'**  
(Bogota, Colombia  
11-15 October 1999)

This one-week training programme organized at the national level aims at capacity building in Colombian higher education institutions. The course concentrates on general aspects of institutional management and gives special emphasis to innovative methods of financial management and management of income generating activities. Participants will be rectors and high level administrators of Colombian higher education institutions.

- **Sub-regional intensive course on 'Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)'**  
(Kingston, Jamaica  
15-26 November 1999)

This course aims to develop and strengthen the capacity of ministries of education to design and use information systems to make informed policy decisions. In particular, the course seeks to reinforce the conceptual and technical skills of educational planners in identifying educational policy concerns, operationalizing these concerns into planning issues and indicators, identifying the methodological and technical steps required to build and use EMIS, and how to use statistical procedures to analyze, interpret and communicate information that can be used for planning purposes.

- **International Seminar on 'Changes in secondary education: analysis of current approaches in Europe and Latin America'**  
(IIEP-Buenos Aires, Argentina  
16-17 November 1999)

This seminar aims to compare trends and strategies of change in secondary education in Europe and South America, paying particular attention to a series of national experiments analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals and the process of change initiated by public policy. This comparison should enrich the debate between the various educational actors involved, facilitating the emergence of a consensus, ironing out any dissensions and opening up new opportunities to advance regional and international dialogue on the subject.

- **International Seminar on 'Changes in secondary education in Latin America'**  
(IIEP-Buenos Aires, Argentina  
18-19 November 1999)

The aim of this seminar is to discuss between a group of specialists, the main aspects of change in secondary education in Latin America. The seminar will also try to produce ideas and reflexions on how IIEP can contribute towards promoting change in secondary education in Latin America, and how such actions should be linked to others promoting reforms in educational management for the region as a whole.

□ **Regional Seminar on  
'Education and training strategies  
for disadvantaged groups'**

(San José, Costa Rica  
22-24 November 1999)

Organized within the framework of the IIEP research project on the same subject, this seminar will discuss the

results of the various studies undertaken on education and training programmes for disadvantaged groups. The discussion will focus on the following topics: strategies of positive discrimination; the State-NGO partnerships in the organization of education and training programmes for

disadvantaged youth, diversifying the actors involved in training, inter-sectoral strategies and strengthening institutional capacity. The seminar is organized jointly by the IIEP, the Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje (INA) and the University of Costa Rica.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Enfoques y tendencias de los programas de educación y formación dirigidos a niños y jóvenes desfavorecidos en América Latina

by Claudia Jacinto

*IIEP Research and Studies Programme Series: Strategies of education and training for disadvantaged groups, UNESCO/IIEP, 1999, 191p.*

**T**HE booklet *Enfoques y tendencias de los programas de educación y formación dirigidos a niños y jóvenes desfavorecidos en América Latina* (Approaches and trends of education and training programmes for disadvantaged children and youth in Latin America), recently published in the IIEP Research and Studies Programme Series on Strategies for disadvantaged groups, tries to systemize the scope, highlights and strategies deployed by education and training programmes for underprivileged youth in the region during the 1990s. It highlights not only the predominant approaches and strategies but also some innovations within formal and non-formal education destined to improve the retention or reinsertion in schools of youngsters who dropped out of basic education. In the case of vocational training of youth with a low level of qualifications and encountering serious difficulties integrating a restricted and competitive labour market, the author elaborates on how the approaches used evolve, the potentialities and limitations of the more recent initiatives, and new trends regarding management strategies, institutional actors and approaches which have been added to those already existing. Starting

with an analysis of the current socio-economic and educational situation of the region, the author then goes on to examine data on institutional actors, actions strategies and the public reached, highlighting a few of the many relevant programmes which exist throughout the continent.

Over and above the variety of approaches and programmes, all of them represent alternative pathways along which hopefully new opportunities will be given to adolescents and young people who are confronted with the risk of social exclusion. The analysis makes evident new trends in the management and financing of such programmes, as well as new roles for the state and private partners at different levels and in different domains. Within the framework of educational decentralization, compensatory programmes tend to transfer responsibilities to regional governments, municipalities, or even directly to schools in some cases. However, central government should continue to play the main role as regards policies aimed at improving educational equity and reducing inequalities, mainly because of its experience and therefore crucial participation in the design and articulation of national policies, for economic efficiency reasons, and, in some cases, to compensate the technical weakness of provincial or

local teams. In recent vocational training programmes for disadvantaged youth, the author observes an active role of the state in the global design, financing, supervision and evaluation of such programmes, although at times a clear tendency to subcontract the implementation of courses to different public and private, institutional and organizational actors is noted. This trend reflects the intention to adapt the training to the demands of the labour market, showing at this stage its possibilities and limitations.

Among the many issues and tensions related to the design and implementation in the delivery of education and training programmes for disadvantaged youth, there are some which, although widely approved, are particularly difficult to resolve. These concern articulation between educational and training services and local and community actors, between educational and social actions, between vocational training, basic skills and useful work experience periods in firms, and finally between formal and non-formal education within the framework of a wider concept of basic and permanent education.

A series of transversal topics concerning planning education and training systems cut through the issues discussed in the book. >>

**NEW BOOKS**

***Needs-based resource allocation in education via formula funding of schools*** by Kenneth N. Ross and Rosalind Levacic. 1999, 257p. ISBN 92-803-1171-9 (limp-bound edition); ISBN 92-803-1183-2 (hard-back edition).

**FUNDAMENTALS OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING**

***Training teachers to work in schools considered difficult*** by Jean-Louis Auduc. IIEP Fundamentals of Educational Planning N° 59. 1998, 137p. ISBN 92-803-1169-7. (Also available in French).

**RESEARCH AND STUDIES PROGRAMME**

□ FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS

***Educational financing and budgeting in Kyrgyzstan*** by Symbat Dj. Rysaliev and Gulmira A. Ibraeva. 1999, 67p. (Also available in Russian).

□ TRENDS IN SCHOOL SUPERVISION

***From supervision to quality assurance: the case of the State of Victoria (Australia)*** by David Gurr. 1999, 137p.

***Quality education through school-based supervision and support: the case of GSS primary schools in Bangladesh*** by R. Govinda and Shahjahan Tapan. 1999, 67p.

□ NEW TRENDS IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

***Getting the stakeholders involved: partnership at work in three countries from Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe*** by Judit Lannert, Suresh Munbodh and Mahes C. Verma, edited by David Atchoarena. 1999, 142p. ISBN 92-803-1181-6

***Reforming training governance: the Jamaican experience*** by David Atchoarena and Tom McArdle. 1999.

□ STRATEGIES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

***Enfoques y tendencias de los programas de educación dirigidos a niños y jóvenes desfavorecidos en América Latina*** by Claudia Jacinto. 1999, 191p. (See article p.15).

□ SCHOOL MAPPING AND LOCAL-LEVEL PLANNING

***Reaching the unreached through participatory planning: school mapping in Lok Jumbish, India*** by R. Govinda. 1999, 184p. ISBN 92-803-1180-8

**IIEP OBSERVATION PROGRAMME**

***L'éducation dans les villes*** by Jacques Hallak and Murel Poisson. Educational Forum Series No. 10, 1999, 169p. ISBN 92-803-2182-X

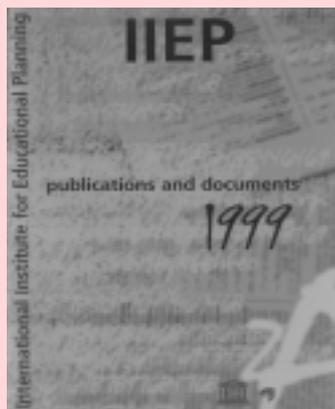
**IIEP CONTRIBUTIONS**

***The role of the university in initial teacher training: trends, current problems and strategies for improvement*** by Michaela Martin. IIEP Contributions No. 32. 1999, 82p.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

***Indicadores para la planificación de la educación: una guía práctica*** by Claude Sauvageot. 1999, 63p. (Already available in English and French).

***Indicadores para a planificação da educação nos países africanos de língua oficial portuguesa***. Results of the work carried out by the national teams at an intensive sub-regional training course on: *Using indicators in planning basic education: methodological aspects and technical tools*, Maputo, 6-16 July 1998. 1999, 57p.



IIEP's new ***Catalogue of Publications*** will be out soon. Produced from a database of IIEP Publications, the catalogue contains approximately 260 titles. It will be available in English and French in the Autumn 1999. The new design lends itself to easier reading and ordering. The next step will be to subsequently link the database to the IIEP Web Site for on-line consultation. Copies of the new catalogue can be obtained upon request from *IIEP Publications and Dissemination* (see box for details).

To order your copy of the new IIEP Publications Catalogue, or any of the above-mentioned publications, please contact:

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Developments over recent years, and the discussions these topics have prompted, highlight the need to examine them in more depth through case studies analyzing recent actions and monographs presenting different strategies and viewpoints. These topics include: how

broad or focussed a programme should be; selection criteria and mechanisms of schools and/or of the populations to be included in the programme; links and partnerships between the state and other social actors at the different levels; the integration of actions with other sectoral

interventions to reduce inequalities, both at the local and central state policy levels; the difficulties of extending an experimental project on a large scale; and the challenges and tools needed to create a new institutional role for vocational training centres. □