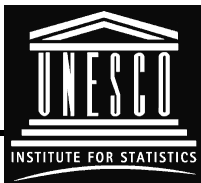




The UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Brian Buffett
Ursula Itzlinger
Alison Kennedy

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The Path towards Improving Quality in the International Education Database

UIS efforts cut across many areas:

- Improving statistical quality, relevance, and policy use within countries;
- Improving availability of internationally comparable statistics;
- Analysis of cross-nationally comparable data.



Strategy

- Decision was made to focus on strategic opportunities and the 'quick wins'.
- No formal framework has been adopted.
- Evolve into a model that suits:
 - the size of the organization;
 - the relative maturity of its processes;
 - product focused
 - applicable to the work environment and mission

Organizational Improvements

- Obtained political independence
 - Formally established Institute in November 1999
- Obtained physical separation
 - Relocated from Paris to Montreal in September 2001.
- Policy direction provided via High Level Governing Board since inception;
- Reviewed Human Resources
 - All positions opened up to competition – majority of all positions filled with new, highly qualified, inexperienced staff members.



Broad Approach

- Since 1999, focused on an evolutionary approach to continuous quality improvements.
- Reviewed all outputs, cancelled some (yearbook) and focused on a broad range of products including targeted analytical reports, regional reports, and Global Education Digest.
- Improved and extended electronic dissemination capabilities.
- Built up strong relationships with key internal and external clients;



Survey Improvements

- Via stakeholder review (1998/99)
- Via process review
 - Reduced time-to-publish;
 - Improved incoming data (response rates and quality);
 - Increased quality in internal processes;
 - Enhanced overall processing and dissemination systems;
 - Increased metadata availability;

Country Focus

- Capacity Building
 - Broad Scope via Regional Workshops
 - » Get to know data providers / build up contact lists;
 - » Train data providers on survey instruments;
 - » Train staff on survey instruments, working in international organization, working with countries.
 - Targeted activities
 - » Extended IMF DQAF for education statistics
 - » Long-term engagements with education ministries via specific funding initiatives and regionally based UIS staff



Process of Engagement

- Seeking quality improvements both within mandates as well as institute wide;
- Developing formal processes
 - Execute -> Review -> Revise -> Repeat
- Self assessment programme initiated in 2003
 - At the organizational level via offsite retreat for all staff and a second retreat restricted solely to senior staff.
- Working groups formed with representation from all areas of the organization to tackle initiatives with broad impact (eg. WG on adhoc data requests).



Reflection ...

- Creation of a centralized independent institute has proven to be an enabler;
- Location in Montreal hampers communications, efficiency, budget! Degree of autonomy from UNESCO unclear.
- Almost complete loss of corporate knowledge severely impacted early operations of Institute; At the same time, this has provided opportunity for change.
- The quality efforts have already resulted in concrete improvements to both processes and products;



The Positives

- Empowering managers and employees to speak out and act has:
 - Made significant improvements in many areas of the organization, processes, and products in relatively short time period;
 - proven to be effective for a young, small (65 FTE) organization;
 - enabled buy-in from employees;
 - Avoided burden of implementing framework in an organization with effectively no corporate memory or capacity to absorb resource overheads

The Opportunities

- Quality metrics;
- Systematic sharing of 'good practices';
- Self Assessment tools for survey products to aid structure / consistency of assessment.
- Use of client-satisfaction-surveys to provide additional and valuable input to the review processes.

Thank You

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