



Iraqi Curriculum Framework



2012

The background of the cover features a large, stylized olive branch. The branch is composed of numerous leaves, which are depicted as light blue, elongated ovals with darker blue outlines. Interspersed among the leaves are several white arrows, all pointing towards the bottom right corner of the page. The overall color palette is a gradient of light blue to white, giving it a clean and official appearance.

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The present Curriculum Framework is the result of the dedicated work of Iraqi curriculum specialists and decision makers from both Baghdad and Kurdistan Regions and reflects the views of relevant Iraqi education partners and stakeholders. Their collaborative work was carried out in the context of the project “Developing new Iraqi Curricula” that was initiated by UNESCO Iraq Office based on the support of Her Highness Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser, First Lady of Qatar, and with the technical support of UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE).

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Foreword

H.E. Minister of Education in Baghdad

H.E. Minister of Education in Erbil

Introduction:

- Why does Iraq need a new curriculum?
- How will the new curriculum improve our children's education?
- Development and implementation programme for the new curriculum

1. The Concept of Curriculum and the Rationale for Quality Curriculum Development.

- 1.1 The concept of curriculum
- 1.2 Curriculum Framework Scope and Rationale (Why to develop a Curriculum Framework?)
- 1.3 The Iraqi National Education Strategy and Iraqi Educational Philosophy as General Reference of the Iraqi Curriculum Framework
 - 1.3.1 Iraqi Educational Philosophy
 - 1.3.2 Iraqi National Education Strategy

2. Main education & learning aims, values and student key competencies

- 2.1 Main aims
- 2.2. Underpinning values
- 2.3 Student key competencies

3. Principles of developing and implementing the Iraqi curriculum**4. Curriculum content and structure**

- 4.1 Learning areas and subjects
- 4.2 Content and performance standards for each learning area & Integration of cross-cutting issues
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7. Guidance for developing textbooks and other learning resources (i.e. Quality Standards for textbooks)**8. Curriculum implementation issues (Challenges, Responsible Agencies, Tasks, and Timeframes; Timelines)**

- 8.1 Challenges
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- Annex 5: Glossary

Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you

The Curriculum Framework is considered an important document that the Ministry of Education has prepared in collaboration with UNESCO, with the aim to develop its educational system and achieve its goals, of which the most important is to prepare a citizen who possesses knowledge, skills and attitudes, is faithful, productive, self-confident, tolerant, committed to democracy and social justice, respectful of himself and others, and proud of his homeland, culture and heritage.

The Curriculum Framework has been developed in line with the Iraqi Constitution, National Education Strategy and Educational Philosophy, in harmony with the latest global developments in the area of curricula, balancing knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, and linking curricula with teacher's needs and their future life.

The Curriculum Framework is considered the foundation in the development of educational curricula, as it provides insight for all activities, most prominent strategic choices and the scope of work of the General Directorate of Curricula, be it its national identity, educational philosophy, educational and scientific structure, educational resources of books, guides, activities, laboratories, teaching/learning materials, educational technologies and new teaching methodologies, in order to support the attainment of learner's competencies; such as creative thinking, constructive criticism, problem-solving, sound communication and correct decision making, as per a clear educational philosophy and new curriculum standards in a manner where the curriculum content's integrate with new teaching and evaluation methods.

Based on the importance of the General Curriculum Framework as a crucial educational document, the Ministry of Education / General Directorate of Curricula presents this document to everyone for examination and comments.

I, together with the Ministry of Education, will be grateful and appreciative of your constructive suggestions which would enable us to adopt a document that is viewed as acceptable and satisfactory by all.



Dr. Mohamed Ali Tamim
Ministry of Education

Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you..

The development process of the Iraqi curricula is considered the foundation in the development of the Iraqi educational system. The development of a general framework for curricula represents the first step towards building a curriculum that is based on a clear philosophy and vision, a structure that works towards achieving the learning objectives and textbooks content that is inline with with international standard's taking into account the national Kurdish identity. Based on this, the Ministry of Education in Kurdistan Region, in cooperation with UNESCO, has completed the General Curriculum Framework document. In this context, we are pleased to invite you, especially students, teachers, supervisors, parents and everyone concerned, to provide comments and suggestions for its improvement and development to become accepted and endorsed by everyone.

The Iraqi Curriculum Framework is based on values and orientations of the Iraqi Constitution and National Education Strategy. It determines the basis and standards of developing the educational material, comprising guides, textbooks and teaching material that help in developing a successful learner who is capable of facing challenges, self-confident and proud of his homeland, heritage and culture.

The Curriculum Framework has been developed in order to reflect the latest global developments in the fields of curriculum development, balance between the acquisition of knowledge and skills and the development of attitudes. It works towards linking education to the individual's life by meeting his/her educational needs, in addition to the fact that the objective behind its development is to acquire education, develop competencies in surveys, creative and constructive thinking, problem-solving, communication and decision making.

While stressing communalities in Iraqi curriculum development, the General Framework leaves space for the Kurdish Region's specificities.

As the Ministry of Education appreciates the capacities of the children and youth of the Kurdistan Region, it will remain committed to the provision of good quality education that caters for the needs of the learner and society, as well as the labour market needs. I would also personally, together with the Ministry of Education, be glad to receive your contributions that aim for raising the educational system in a way that benefits the learner in particular.



Dr. Ismat Mohamed Khalid
Minister of Education – Kurdistan Region
Government

WHY DOES IRAQ NEED A NEW CURRICULUM?

The world is changing at a pace never experienced before, which obliges us to cope with it in the education sector, and accordingly, in curricula. The main drivers of these changes include:

- The research methodologies which are rapidly expanding the breadth and depth of our knowledge
- Technologies such as computers and mobile devices which are allowing us faster and easier access to information
- Communication technologies which are enabling inter-personal connections and exchanges of information in ways not envisaged before
- The increasing importance of environmental protection and sustainability
- The increasing need to learn to live together.

Education systems around the world are continuously evaluating their curricula in response to these challenges. Iraqi students need a modern, well- planned curriculum that builds upon our strong educational traditions and prepares them to live successfully in the 21st century. Under our new curriculum, our children will:

- Acquire up-to-date knowledge
- Learn valuable and modern skills that prepare them for life and work and promote ‘learning to live together’
- Develop values that are relevant to our country
- Be prepared for the future as responsible and competent community members and citizens.

We need to give all our children, girls and boys in all parts of Iraq, the chance to benefit from quality education and to fulfil their individual potential.

We need to ensure our curriculum meets international standards and our children have the same opportunities or better learning opportunities as children in other countries.

We need to transform our schools into stimulating and engaging places of learning where our children desire to go and that reflect our cultural values and priorities.

HOW WILL A NEW CURRICULUM IMPROVE OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION?

As a result of our new *Iraqi Curriculum*, each one of our children will have opportunities to:

- Be valued as learners and enjoy learning
- Develop important skills, values and attitudes and acquire up-to-date and relevant knowledge
- Develop a range of important key competencies such as:
 - **Thinking and learning competencies**, so that they become successful lifelong learners
 - **Personal and social competencies** so that they become confident and productive individuals
 - **Citizenship and work competencies** so that they become proud and responsible citizens.
- Extend their learning beyond the traditional subjects, and learn about a range of issues such as the potential and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and the importance of the environment and sustainable development.
- Become independent learners with the capacity to take advantage of a range of post-school opportunities for further learning and work
- Develop values based on a shared commitment towards:
 - **The Iraqi Identity**
 - **Tolerance and respect for all**
 - **Social justice (including respect for rights of other nations, gender equality, inclusiveness, and social cohesion)**
 - **Democracy**
 - **Sustainable development**

Our children are the key to our future. Our curriculum must empower them to work together to build the Iraq of the future.

In view of the importance of the General Curriculum Framework, the process of developing a new curriculum for Iraq will be a cooperative process led by curriculum specialists, including all stakeholders. We will conduct public consultations to which all stakeholders will be invited to contribute. We will seek inputs from teachers, school principals, parents, religious leaders, employers, teacher trainers, university professors and other staff, as well as other members of the local community.

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME FOR THE NEW CURRICULUM

Iraq has commenced a process of curriculum reform in the context of the project “*Developing new Iraqi Curricula*” that was initiated by UNESCO Iraq Office based on the support of Her Highness Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser, First Lady of Qatar, and with the technical support of UNESCO’s specialist curriculum institute, the International Bureau of Education (IBE).

The project has adopted the following broad programme:

OBJECTIVE 1 - CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

- ✓ Technical teams develop the Draft Curriculum Framework
- ✓ Ministers endorse the Draft Curriculum Framework for public consultation
- ✓ Stakeholders are consulted
- ✓ Ministers approve the final Curriculum Framework

OBJECTIVE 2 - ‘MODEL’ SUBJECT SYLLABUSES and TEXTBOOKS – MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

- ✓ Subject specialists set Guidelines for the development of subject curricula (syllabuses) and related textbooks in the areas of Mathematics and Sciences
- ✓ Subject committees develop draft syllabuses and textbooks (sample sections and models) for Mathematics and Science
- ✓ Ministers endorse the new curriculum materials for piloting and public consultation
- ✓ Piloting occurs in selected schools and stakeholder consultation is carried out
- ✓ Teacher training and assessment are aligned with the new curriculum
- ✓ Ministers approve plans to expand the new curriculum approach to all subjects and processes

OBJECTIVE 3 - ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IRAQI NATIONAL CURRICULUM CENTRE (INCC)

- ✓ Feasibility Study for the establishment of the INCC takes place
- ✓ Model, structure and Terms of Reference for the INCC approved by Ministers
- ✓ Legislation passed to establish the INCC
- ✓ INCC becomes fully functional

The school curriculum is being reformed to ensure that we give all learners a wider range of knowledge in life. The world around us is changing and we must prepare our children to face the new challenges in the 21st Century. They need to acquire new skills and knowledge of the latest technologies. The school curriculum must reflect these changes, and thus, prepares our children for the challenges ahead.

To flourish as a nation, we need our children to be:

- **Successful life-long learners** able to operate confidently in a knowledge-based economy and a rapidly changing environment
- **Confident and productive individuals** able to work with others and contribute to society
- **Proud and responsible citizens** of Iraq, proud of their rich heritage and able to take their place effectively in the wider world

So the key aims of the reformed curriculum are that learners should become:

**Proud citizens of
Iraq**

**Confident and
productive
individuals**

**Successful lifelong
learners**

Values and principles

The curriculum needs to be underpinned by **key values** that enshrine the aspirations of the nation: national unity, tolerance and respect for the other, social justice, democracy and sustainable development.

There are also the following key principles:

The curriculum should:

- Be developed in line with the values and orientations of the Iraq Constitution and the National Education Strategy
- Be logically coherent and promote meaningful progression towards high standards in all learning areas
- Reflect the latest global developments in all learning areas
- Provide a balance between acquiring knowledge and skills and developing attitudes
- Be relevant to students' life and their learning and development needs
- Reflect the culture and local context
- Allow national expectations to be set in a local context

Teachers should:

- Create an enabling learning environment
- Encourage active learning including the use of new technology in education.
- Follow new technologies and advanced methodologies in the educational process.
- Engage the learner in social dialogue and collaborative learning
- Enable learning to be personalised and enjoyable
- Encourage independence and self-management of learning
- Use appropriate teaching and learning strategies in harmony with the learning goals

Learning Areas

We need to ensure that all the subjects on the curriculum contain the most up-to-date information, and that they are fully in line with the best international standards. We also need to ensure that our children appreciate the importance of connections between the subjects so that they reach a deeper understanding. To deepen learning and ensure that subject connections are appreciated, the subjects will be set out in groups to emphasise the ways in which they fit together.

Young People should develop high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding of:

- Religious and Islamic Education
- Languages, Literature and Communication
- Mathematics
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Art
- Technology and ICT
- Sport and health / Fitness

They should also explore cross-cutting issues such as sustainable development, citizenship and human rights, entrepreneurship, technology inter-cultural understanding, gender equality

We shall be revising all the subject syllabi, but shall first set out clear guidelines to ensure that the syllabus revision and also textbooks and other learning materials will be of the highest quality.

- 1.1. The concept of curriculum
- 1.2 Curriculum Framework Scope and Rationale (Why to develop a Curriculum Framework?)
- 1.3 The Iraqi National Education Strategy and Iraqi Educational Philosophy as General Reference of the Iraqi Curriculum Framework
 - 1.3.1 Iraqi Educational Philosophy
 - 1.3.2 Iraqi National Education Strategy

1.1 The concept of curriculum

“Curriculum” refers to the intended and systematic learning experiences through which students acquire and/or develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes that are components of the learner’s competencies. It refers to the planned pathways of learning that respond to the learner’s needs and cater for their development, while also observing societal needs and prospects.

Curriculum encompasses different dimensions, among which are.

- The **written, intended and official curriculum** that is prepared by responsible curriculum authorities and reflects the country’s education and curriculum policy;
- The **implemented** curriculum that results from the translation by teachers of the intended/ written/official curriculum within the classroom context;
- The **effective or achieved** curriculum that consists of what students have really learned;
- The **hidden** curriculum that consists of the values and beliefs held by individuals and communities that may or may not comply with the “official” and intended curriculum.

The written/intended and official curriculum is usually laid down in different documents that form a “curriculum system”:

The curriculum system of Iraq

Educational Philosophy

Educational Strategy

MoE Act

↓
Curriculum Framework

↓
Subject curricula (Syllabi)
for different learning areas and subjects

↓
Textbooks and other teaching aids

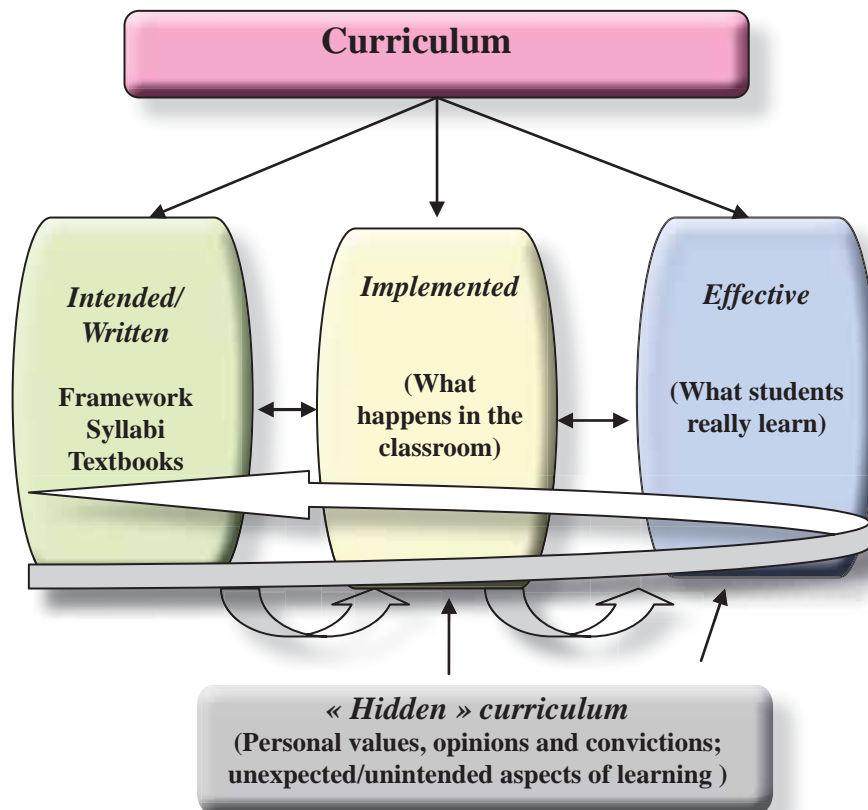


Figure 1: Curriculum Dimensions

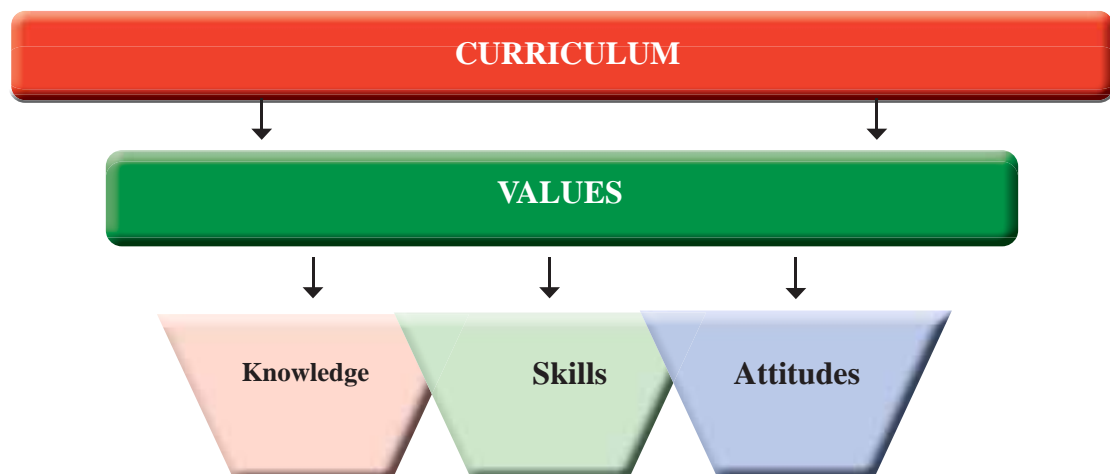


Figure 2: Curriculum: an organised ensemble of knowledge, skills and attitudes as a basis for developing learner competencies

1.2 Curriculum Framework and Rationale (Why develop a Curriculum Framework?)

Curriculum vision

The Curriculum Framework is a unifying document that lays down the education and **curriculum vision** of Iraq on why, what, how, and how well students should learn. As a key document for organizing the educational system in Iraq, it orientates education agents and stakeholders with regard to the main aspects of curriculum design and implementation mechanisms as a basis for effectively providing quality education for all¹.

The Iraqi Curriculum Framework was developed in line with the requirements of the Iraqi Educational Philosophy and the Iraqi National Education Strategy and is consistent with the policy and future orientations of the education system in Iraq. It will contribute to the standardization of quality learning requirements based on identifying challenges, as well as new trends, opportunities and priorities for further change and improvement.

As a main regulatory document of the education system in Iraq, it constitutes the basis of and reference for all the other curriculum documents and materials, including syllabi, textbooks and other learning resources. At the same time, it represents the main reference for aligning curricula, teaching and learning strategies, and assessment.

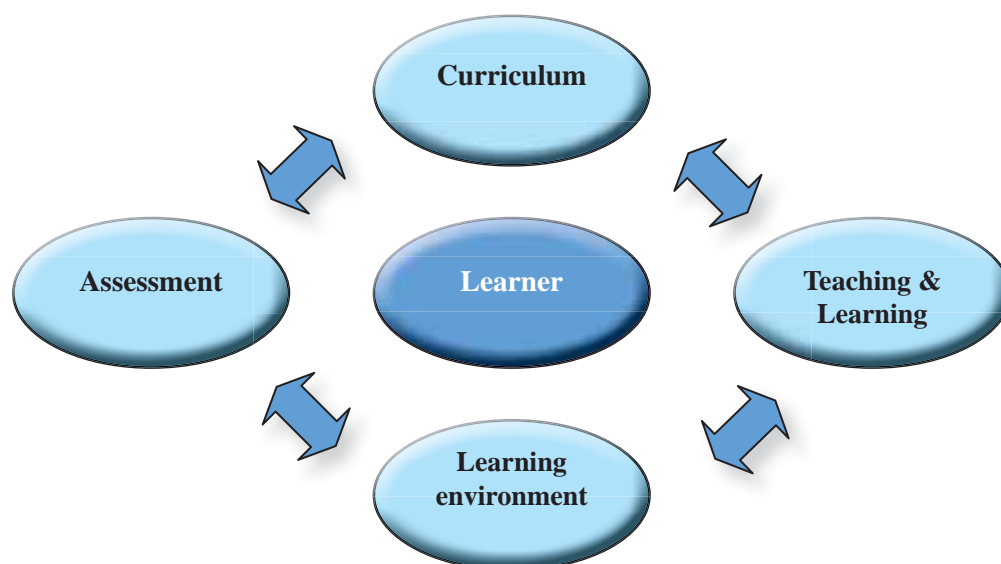


Figure 3: Aligning curriculum with teaching and learning, and assessment

¹ To date, the elements pertaining to the Iraqi education and curriculum vision are spread throughout different documents. The new Iraqi Curriculum Framework has also the role of pulling all these elements together into a comprehensive and articulated entirety.

Main orientations of the Iraqi curriculum vision

- Providing high quality education for all, as a human right
- Developing integrated, balanced, flexible and advanced curricula that deepen the learner's skills and attitudes towards respecting human rights, gender equality, intercultural understanding and sustainable development
- Addressing both the learner needs and the requirements of national development plans, including the present and future needs of the labor market
- Addressing changes/new developments at the local and international levels through up-to-date and culturally-appropriate curricula
- Forging moral persons based on high religious values and principles and by rejecting radicalism
- Forging enlightened citizenship based on the principles and practices of democracy, freedom and social justice
- Developing creative and critical thinking, problem solving skills, pro-active attitudes and learning to learn skills from a life-long learning perspective

Figure 4: Iraqi Curriculum Vision

Functions of the Iraqi Curriculum Framework

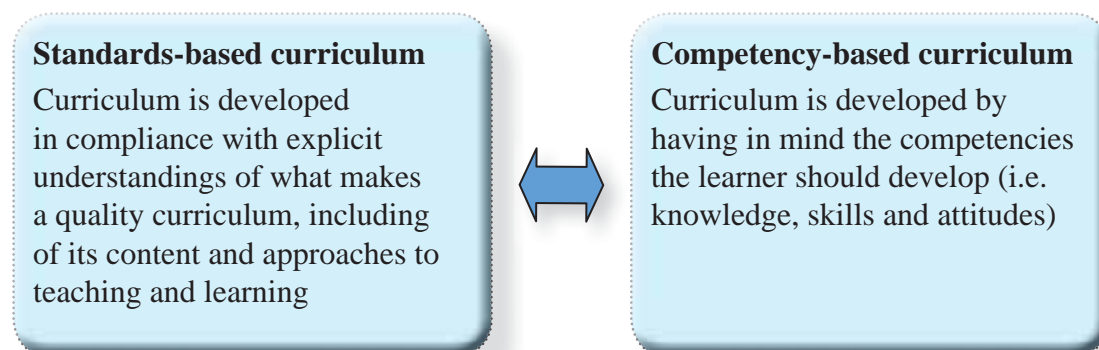
The new Iraqi Curriculum Framework is an important regulatory document of the Iraqi “curriculum system”, for it defines a common curriculum model for the country that is standards- and competency-based.

The Framework provides quality standards especially with regard to the content of the curriculum and the teaching and learning methodologies. It is a unifying document that stresses the commonalities of curriculum development and implementation in Baghdad and Kurdistan Regions, while also giving space for differentiated approaches. As a common basis for aligning curricula, teaching and learning and assessment, the Iraqi Curriculum Framework sets a common approach for the development of syllabi and textbooks, as well as other learning resources.

The following sections of the Framework apply to both the Baghdad and Kurdistan Regions:

- Aims
- Values
- Principles
- Competencies
- The broad definition of Learning Areas and the cross cutting issues
- The sections on Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Textbooks.

This leaves the two regions with the autonomy to decide on syllabus details and emphasis on subjects within the broad Learning Areas. The framework will ensure a consistency of approach and quality within the regional differences. The standards will be consistent across the regions, and the same student competencies will be developed within the syllabi that may vary in detail and extent between the two regions.



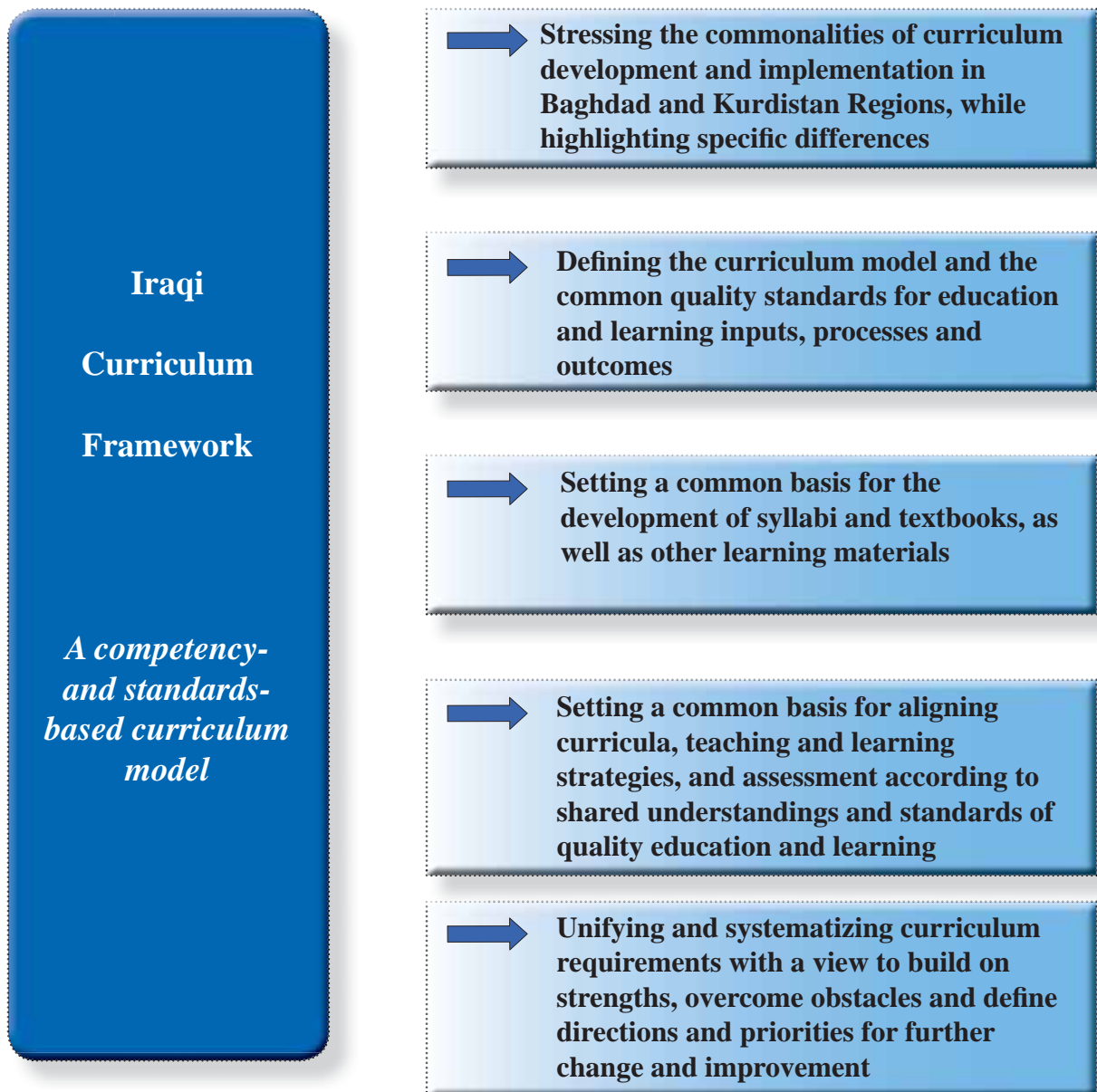


Figure 5: Rationale for developing the Iraqi Curriculum Framework

1.3 The Iraqi National Education Strategy and Iraqi Educational Philosophy as General Reference of the Iraqi Curriculum Framework

In developing the Iraqi Curriculum Framework, a number of important factors were taken into account, such as:

- The student's mental, emotional and physical needs in coping with the present and future world;
- The developments in society and the labour market;
- The need of adjusting the Iraqi curriculum to international experiences in contemporary curriculum development, such as enhancing curriculum integration and fostering integrated teaching and learning;
- The need to base curriculum development and implementation on international and national educational research, experiences and studies.

In addition, the orientations of the new *Iraqi Educational Philosophy* and of the *Iraqi National Education Strategy* are fundamental for the development of a modernized and effective curriculum in Iraq. New curriculum must respond to the new realities of the Iraqi societies while also preparing children and young people for the future.

1.1.1 The Iraqi Educational Philosophy

The political changes that took place in Iraq after 2003 and the transition to democracy required a reform of the educational system in Iraq based on a new educational philosophy. This philosophy was finalized in 2008.

The educational system in the Republic of Iraq is based on the faith in God Almighty, as well as the humanistic values concerning respecting the human dignity of all and the family as the foundation of the society. The State protects the national identity and unity and its moral and religious values that are seen as foundations of the social, educational and scientific processes. The new Iraqi Educational Philosophy is based on the Iraqi Constitution of 2005 that guarantees Iraq's unity, independence and respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Following the principles of the Iraqi Constitution, the right to free education is provided to all citizens in all education levels, and the education authorities are committed to eliminate illiteracy in the country. In compliance with the principles of democracy in education, equal opportunities are being provided for access to, and completion of, all education forms and levels.

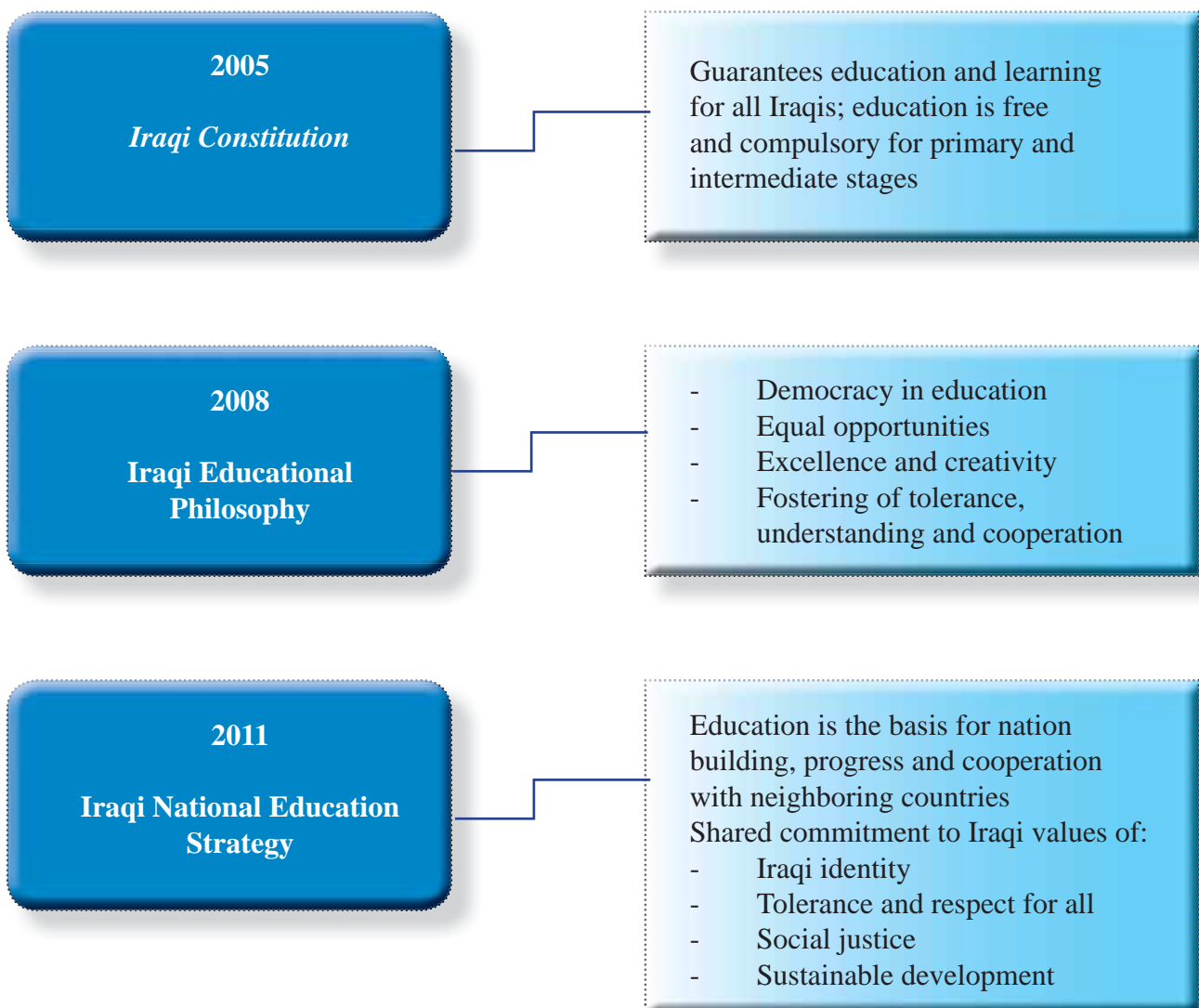
Particularly important for the Curriculum Framework are principles of the new Iraqi Educational Philosophy such as:

- Encouraging excellence and creativity in all the areas of intellectual life, scientific work and arts;
- Increasing the enrollment of learners in educational institutions;
- Paying particular attention to the population of rural and remote areas;
- Strengthening the role of education in consolidating tolerance and understanding among people based on the principles and practices of learning to live together peacefully at national, regional and international levels.

1.3.2 Iraqi National Education Strategy

In compliance with the Iraqi National Education Strategy, the overall objectives of education in Iraq are to foster new generations who:

- Love their country and work to consolidate its national unity;
- Are able to deal with scientific achievements and methods;
- Are ethical and respectful of human rights, the cultural heritage and the environment;
- Are contributing to social cohesion in a pro-active and constructive way;
- Are cultivating originality and innovation;
- Are interested in personal development and life-long learning.



Documents underpinning the Iraqi Curriculum Framework: Key issues

2.1 Main aims

2.2 Underpinning values

2.3 Student key competencies (expected learning outcomes)

Countries around the world are revising their national curricula to ensure that they prepare young people for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century. This is a time of rapid technological development and social change. Information is flowing around the world in a way and at a rate that has never happened before. It is calculated that the total of human knowledge is doubling every four years. In order to face such changes, the traditional curriculum may no longer be adequate by itself to prepare young people for the life ahead of them.

This does not mean that old subjects and concepts must be abandoned, or that young people need take no heed of the past. But it does mean that there are new demands on young people that will require them to have different knowledge, new sets of skills, and personal attitudes to meet these demands. These sets of skills, knowledge and attitudes are referred to as “Key Competencies”.

2.1 Main Aims

For a curriculum to be successful against this background, it needs to have clear aims that set out in overall terms what young people need to have learned in order to operate successfully in the 21st Century Iraq. The main education and learning aims of the Iraqi curriculum envisage:

(1) Life-long learning (Young people of Iraq should become successful life-long learners)

It is no longer possible to learn enough at school to last a lifetime because the pace of change is too rapid. So young people need to develop their love for learning that enables them to embrace change and learn new things throughout their life. They need the skills and attitudes to operate successfully based on their need to become successful life-long learners able to operate confidently in a knowledge economy and a rapidly changing world.

(2) Confidence to succeed (Young people of Iraq should become self-confident and productive individuals).

For young people to adapt to change, they need the personal confidence and resilience to face the challenges ahead of them. They also need to live a productive life that enables them to engage positively in work and society. Therefore, young people need to become confident and productive individuals

(3) Participation and citizenship in the context of Iraq and the wider world (Young people of Iraq should become proud and responsible citizens)

In a rapidly changing world, it is all the more important that young people should be deeply rooted in their own country and culture. They should learn to play an active and responsible role as citizens and should value their heritage and culture. In an increasingly globalized world, they must also be able to look beyond their own country and be aware of their position as global citizens in an increasingly inter-connected and inter-dependent world. Therefore, young people need to become proud and responsible citizens of Iraq and the wider world.

The overall aims of education and the curriculum can be summarised as:

² Student key competencies are presented here as main expected outcomes. Since they should be promoted across the curriculum, they are also called “transversal” and/or “cross-cutting” competencies.

Overall Aims
<p>Young people in Iraq should become:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful life-long learners • Confident and productive individuals • Proud and responsible citizens of Iraq and the wider world

2.2 Underpinning Values

In order to build a modern society where young people can prosper and achieve their aspirations, the curriculum needs to be built on a clear set of values that will permeate learning and become embedded in young people's approach to life. Young people need to develop these values so that they will give clear direction to their lives. They need to be clear about their Iraqi identity, and they need to be committed to justice, democracy, tolerance and respect for all. Their understanding of and commitment to, sustainable development is critical to their future, to the future of their country and of the world. To enable young people to develop these values, they need to be more than words; they need to become an essential part of the curriculum in order to impact on young people's lives.

The values underpinning education and curriculum in Iraq can be summarised as:

Values
<p>Education in Iraq should be based on a shared commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Iraqi Identity • Tolerance and respect for all • Social justice (i.e. respect for human rights and other nations; gender equality; and social cohesion) • Democracy • Sustainable development

2.3 Student Key Competencies:

Traditional subjects continue to be important, but knowledge of those subjects alone will be insufficient to equip a young person for the 21st Century. Young people need to develop a set of competencies that enable them to apply the knowledge they gain in those subjects, and which they can also apply throughout life. These competencies lie at the heart of every subject, and enhance students' understanding of those subjects. They are also the competencies that are needed for young people to continue to learn, to adapt to change, and to cope with the challenges of life in the 21st Century. To operate these sets of competencies ³, young people need the self-confidence and attitudes necessary to apply successfully. These sets of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable people to operate successfully are the Key Competencies.

³ In English, "competencies" and "skills" are sometimes used as synonyms. However, for the sake of clarity and consistency, this document uses "competencies" as the umbrella term, meaning that it embeds knowledge, skills and attitudes that are mobilised independently and effectively in the context of different tasks, including problem-solving in particular.

The Key Competencies are the sets of knowledge, skills and attitudes that young people will need if the Aims of the curriculum are to be achieved. They can therefore be grouped with those aims:

Education and curriculum aims	Learners' Key competencies
Successful life-long learners	Thinking and Learning competencies Young people need to develop thinking and learning skills so that they can think critically, creatively and independently, investigate, process information, solve problems, and make decisions. They need to be able to communicate effectively with a range of people through a variety of media, and they need to be independent enough to manage their own learning. These are the competencies that will enable them to continue to learn and adapt as they go through life.
Confident and productive individuals	Personal and Social Competencies Young people need to develop personally with the confidence to face challenges, and the ability to manage their emotions and be sensitive to the emotions of others. They need to be caring, respectful of others, proactive and ready to engage positively in society, whilst being resilient and able to cope with change. In work and in life, they need to be able to work independently and also as part of a team. They need to develop physical competence and adopt healthy lifestyles.
Proud and responsible citizens	Citizenship and Work Competencies Young people also need to develop the skills of citizenship that enable them to participate actively and responsibly in society, and to take an active responsibility for the environment. To operate effectively in the global knowledge economy, young people need not only to be deeply rooted in their own country and culture but also have an understanding and appreciation of the wider world so they can become global citizens.

The relationship between the Aims and Key Competencies is not as compartmentalised and linear as the table suggests. Aspects of all the Key Competencies will impact on each of the Aims. The Aims themselves also relate one to another and cannot be entirely separate. This can be shown in the diagram below (figure 6):



Figure 6: clarifies the relationship between main aims and key competencies

The sets of competencies that support each other and that are linked to the main aims are summarized in the following table:

Learner Key Competencies		
Successful life-long learners	Confident and productive individuals	Proud and responsible citizens
Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies
<p>Young people should develop skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical and independent thinking • Inquiry and information processing • Creative thinking and problem solving (as both individual and collective processes) • Evaluation and decision making • Communication • Management of own learning 	<p>Young people should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop self-confidence and be able to accept challenges • Manage their emotions and be sensitive to the emotions of others • Be caring, proactive and ready to engage positively in society • Be resilient and able to cope with change • Work independently and as part of a team • Develop physical competence and adopt healthy lifestyles • Develop self-respect and respect for others • Develop the capacity to use time efficiently 	<p>Young people should learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and appreciate their own country and culture • Be aware of and enjoy their rich cultural heritage • Be committed to ideals of democracy and social justice • Play a positive and pro-active role in society, knowledge production, culture and the economy • Respect the physical environment and understand the need for sustainable development

3. Principles of Developing and Implementing the Iraqi Curriculum

In order to achieve the three key Aims, and develop the Key Competencies, the curriculum needs to provide a balance between knowledge and skills on the one hand, and attitudes on the other. It must reflect the latest world developments in all learning areas, and be relevant to learners' life, learning needs and stage of development. The curriculum must be forward-looking whilst reflecting the culture and local context. It must also allow national expectations to be set in a local context. These are the principles that underpin the curriculum. To develop such a curriculum, teachers need to focus on the learners and make learning challenging of students' intellects, engaging of their interest, and exciting for their imaginations.

These are the principles that underpin curriculum and teaching and learning methodologies used in its implementation:

Principles
<p>The curriculum should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be designed in line with the values and orientations of the Iraq Constitution, the Iraqi Educational Philosophy and the National Education Strategy• Be coherent and promote meaningful progression towards high standards in all learning areas• Reflect the latest world developments in all learning areas• Provide a balance between acquiring knowledge and skills and developing attitudes• Be relevant to students' life, learning needs and their stage of development• Provide future orientation and assist in transition to the labour market.• Reflect the culture and local context• Allow opportunities for national expectations to be set in a local context
<p>Teachers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create an enabling learning environment• Encourage active learning including the use of new technologies• Use a range of teaching and learning methodologies to address different learning needs and styles• Engage the learner in social dialogue and collaborative learning• Enable learning to be personalised and enjoyable• Encourage independence and self-management of learning• Use appropriate teaching and learning strategies in harmony with the learning goals

Challenges facing curriculum reform

Main challenges as identified in different analyses:

- Since the 1980s, only textbooks were part of the written and intended curriculum, which creates obstacles for curriculum harmonization, coherence and consistency
- Lack of adequate teacher education and training in support of quality curriculum implementation
- Persistence of old-fashioned assessment and evaluation methods and tools
- Lack of critical mass of professional curriculum and textbook authors and developers
- Lack of adequate educational infrastructure and school facilities for the implementation of quality curriculum.
- Lack of appropriate quality control mechanisms.
- Lack of adequate quality control

Vocational Education and Training

The above-mentioned principles of developing and implementing a quality curriculum in both Baghdad and Kurdistan Regions equally apply to vocational education and training. As in the case of general education, learners will develop relevant competencies, especially those concerned with life and work. Attention will be given to balancing the acquisition and development of relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes that should be common to all learners, with the acquisition and development of specific knowledge and skills that are related to particular areas of education and training, such as economics, commerce, industry, agriculture, services, and teacher training.

Special needs education

The above-mentioned principles of developing and implementing a quality curriculum in both Baghdad and Kurdistan Regions encourage local communities, schools and teachers to cater for the different learners' needs, including those of learners with special needs. As much as possible, learners with special needs should be included in mainstream classes where they can benefit from adequate attention and support in order to fully develop their capabilities, skills and characters, through enjoying learning in the context of stimulating and enabling environments that are well connected to other schools and to the society at large.

- 4.1 Learning areas and subjects**
- 4.2 Content and performance standards for each learning area and integration of cross-cutting issues**
- 4.3 Time allocation**

4.1 Learning areas and subjects

Plans of Study (Future Possibilities)

The Plans of Study for Baghdad and Kurdistan Regions could be redesigned in line with some international trends in contemporary curriculum development, as per the following:

- a. In order to foster integrated learning based on an integrated curriculum, subjects tend to be grouped into broad learning areas that observe common learning objectives and approaches while contributing, at the same time, to the development of specific, subject-bound competencies, as well as key-competencies (transversal competencies). This may avoid curriculum fragmentation and student overload owing to unnecessary and non-coordinated repetitions;
- b. Plans of study encourage integrated learning, for instance through thematic approaches. Integrated teaching and learning, including assessment, are also encouraged, for instance through assessment tasks that address concepts, information and approaches of several learning areas/subjects.
- c. The integration of cross-cutting and emerging areas is encouraged, such as Education for Sustainable Development, Gender Equality, Peace education and intercultural understanding, HIV/Aids awareness, Life skills education, and Preparation for life and work.
- d. Plans of study encourage differentiated learning in compliance with the learner's needs and interests, as well as local conditions and resources. Differentiated curricula and learning are supported through school-based curricula and more flexible formulas of time allocation.
- e. Schooling time can be defined more flexibly by considering the application of interactive educational pedagogies (such as group and project work), as well as linking theory with practice in the context of practical activities. The new international trends comprise block teaching (i.e. teaching a subject or a theme during several weeks, instead of allocating a small number of hours every week throughout the school year); contact periods of over 120 minutes (especially for group and project work).

While the two Regions (Baghdad and Kurdistan) may agree on common learning areas, as presented in the table below, the specific subjects as well as the cross-cutting issues covered in each area may differ.

Learning areas/subjects	Primary education (1-6) %	Lower secondary (7-9) %	Upper secondary (10-12) %	Comments
1. Religious and Islamic education				
2. Languages, literature and communication				
Arabic				
English				
Kurdish				
3. Mathematics				
Arithmetic				
Geometry				
Algebra				
Applied Mathematics				
4. Sciences				
Integrated sciences				
Physics				
Chemistry				
Biology				
Geology				
5. Social studies				
Integrated social studies				
History				
National and Social Education/Citizenship education/Human Rights				
Sociology				
Economics				
Philosophy, psychology and other sciences				
Geography				
6. The Arts				
Art education and music				
Handicrafts/vocational education				
7. Technology and ICT				
Family studies/Handicrafts*				
Vocational education/				
Vocational education/Technology				
8. Sports and health/fitness				
Sports				
Health education				

* For girls' schools only.

Possible model of restructuring the plans of study

4.2 (Broad) content and performance standards for each learning area and integration of cross-cutting issues

4.2.1 Introductory considerations

- A. Trends with regard to curriculum content selection and organization
- B. Integration of cross-cutting and emerging issues

A. Trends with regard to curriculum content selection and organization

Over the last decades, a series of changes across the world can be documented with regard to how curriculum is constructed and the way learning is organized within learning areas/subjects. Some of these trends that could be closely relevant to curriculum change in Iraq are listed below:

1. *Broad learning areas.* As said in 4.1, there is a tendency today towards “clustering” learning into broad learning areas based on bringing together subjects and approaches (such as thematic approaches) that observe common learning objectives and contribute altogether to the development of specific competencies (i.e. subject-bound), in addition to key-competencies.
2. *Innovative content selection and organization.* Within those specific learning areas and subjects, new accents are put with regard to selecting and organizing the learning content. For instance, languages foster communication skills in addition to the traditional focus on reading and writing, vocabulary, grammar, and literature. Mathematics and sciences emphasise connections between theoretical knowledge/concepts and problem solving that is connected to one’s environment and daily life. Social studies are emphasising citizenship skills including through project work and community service that imply creativity and problem solving. Languages, history, and subjects that are also intimately linked to identity forging, and thus sensitive, tend to be more open to a Learning to Live Together perspective that cultivates the awareness and appreciation of one’s culture and tradition, as well as an openness to the world and the awareness and appreciation of others in the spirit of tolerance and mutual respect. Above all of that, history comprises, in addition to political and military aspects, issues of daily life, culture and history of ideas.
3. Cross-cutting and emerging issues are being increasingly integrated in the curriculum, such as environmental and health awareness in sciences and other areas, including technology and sports.

B. Integration of cross-cutting and emerging issues

Cross-cutting issues relate to learning objectives, approaches and outcomes that, given their importance for competency development, should be fostered by all learning areas and subjects in specific ways. However, due to their specific focus, some learning areas/subjects could function as carrier-areas/subjects for particular topics. For instance, social studies could be a carrier-area for promoting citizenship and Human Rights education. Emerging issues are new aspects that the curriculum should consider/integrate in compliance with new developments. Among emerging issues are HIV/AIDS, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), anti-terrorism education and climate change education.

The integration of such cross-cutting and emerging issues in the curriculum can be tackled through thematic approaches as well as through specific approaches, such as project work and integrated competency development supported by appropriate assessment strategies that take into account ensembles of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Among cross-cutting and emerging issues to be particularly considered in the context of Iraq are:

1. *Citizenship and Human Rights.* Learners should be equipped with appropriate knowledge of their fundamental rights as human beings and citizens of a democratic Iraq, as well as their responsibilities and obligations within their family, school and community. Competencies related to participatory citizenship should be fostered based on capacities of engaging in civil dialogue and working cooperatively with others. The interest of learners in public issues should be fostered especially through community service and project work and of public concern.
2. *Learning to Live Together: Peace and Intercultural understanding.* Given Iraq's ethnic and religious diversity, , as well as its war and conflict-affected context, learners should be equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes of Learning to Live Together, based on tolerance and respect of one's self and the others. Students should be aware of different potential roots of conflicts and be equipped with constructive conflict management skills. They should also be able to identify biases and fight them and fight all emerging forms of discrimination and violence biases. Learners will be fostered in considering diversity as a richness and opportunity of growth, instead of perceiving it as a threat and/or limitation.
3. *Sustainable development.* Since individuals and communities aspire to live better lives based on social and economical development, but are faced with limited resources and environmental treats, learners should be equipped with competencies to understand and apply the concept, values, principles and practices of sustainable development. Respecting the environment, not wasting resources, promoting healthy lifestyles, contributing to the promotion of renewable energies, being prepared to prevent and cope with disasters are important parts of competency development in relation to sustainable development. Catering for the present well being of individuals and communities while having in mind future generations and the well being of the Planet Earth are key elements of a healthy attitude promoting sustainable development.
4. *Gender Equality.* Although closely linked to issues such as Human Rights, sustainable development and intercultural understanding, Gender Equality should be treated as a special area of concern. Learners should be equipped with competencies to understand and cherish equality between men and women and be ready to fight all forms of gender-based biases, discrimination and violence. They should understand and cherish the inter-changeable nature of gender roles and the added value of gender equality for women's self-respect and self-confidence, as well as the personal and societal benefits of women's full and equal participation in family, as well as in professional and public life.
5. *Preparation for life and work in today's world.* Schools are increasingly called upon to equip learners with life skills, among which are *communication skills* (i.e. listening to the other; self-expression; civil dialogue; reading and writing; media skills); *decision-making and risk-taking skills* (i.e. making appropriate links between decisions/actions and consequences; assessing risks and anticipating effects; assessing opportunities; making informed decisions; asking for assistance/help); and *cooperation skills* (i.e. capacity to work in teams; to share tasks; leadership skills). At the same time, learners need to be prepared for the world of work based on competencies of assessing their needs, interests and capacities; capacity to follow instructions; time keeping and respect of deadlines; capacity to work with others; creativity and initiative (i.e. entrepreneurship). Part of today's preparation for life and work comprise as well is understanding the current labour market; mastering ICTs; financial literacy; and life-long learning skills to face rapidly changing economic environments and unpredictable developments.

4.2.2 Description of learning areas and subjects: broad content and performance standards

Curriculum standards are statements related to the anticipated quality of the learning content delivered (content standards), the processes of its delivery (i.e. teaching and learning), as well as of the learning outcomes, i.e. student achievements (performance standards). The Curriculum Framework refers to the broad content, processes and performance standards in each learning area/subject. More detailed and specific standards will be defined in subject curricula (“syllabi”), as well as other curriculum documents, such as teacher guides and assessment guides.

Below are descriptions of the learning areas and subjects of the Iraqi curriculum that take into account the need for each to address the three main key-competency domains, namely:

- Thinking and learning competencies
- Personal and social competencies
- Citizenship and work competencies.

At the Curriculum Framework level, the knowledge base in each area/subject is described in terms of the main knowledge axes/strands⁴.

1. Islamic & Religious Education

In Iraq, Religious education concerns

- Islamic studies
- Christianity (for the Assyrian and Armenian schools); and
- Yazidi religion (for schools of Yazidis).

In the context of Religious education, students will learn about the spiritual dimension of human existence, its relation with transcendence and Divinity, and the moral conduct that religious norms instil.

Examples of competencies to be developed

Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies (Participation in culture, society and environment)
- Developing an understanding and appreciation of one's own religion and of other religions	- Improving personal and collective behaviours - Managing emotions - Developing spiritually - Developing as moral person	- Participating in social projects to help those in need
Integration of cross-cutting issues (carrier subjects for...) ⁵		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and cooperation skills - Gender equality - Cultural awareness and intercultural understanding - Artistic education - Social justice and solidarity 		

⁴ Strands refer to modalities of clustering knowledge around main topics and/or issues

⁵ While cross-cutting issues should be tackled in all subjects transversally, certain learning areas/subjects could be nevertheless designed as carrier-subjects for specific cross-cutting issues/themes and approaches.

2. Languages, Literature and communication (Arabic Language; English Language; Kurdish Language & Other Languages)

Language is vital for communicating with others in school and in the wider world, and is fundamental to learning in all curriculum subjects. In studying languages, students develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing that they will need to participate in society and employment. Students learn to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others confidently and effectively. Literature is rich and influential. It reflects the experience of people from many countries and times and contributes to our sense of cultural identity. Students learn to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction and media texts, which enable them to gain access to the world of pleasure and knowledge that reading offers.

Looking at the patterns, structures and origins of different languages helps students understand how to use language. Through using this understanding, students can choose and adapt what they say and write in different situations as well as appreciate and interpret the choices made by other writers and speakers.

Main knowledge axes/strands

Main competency domains	Main knowledge axes/strands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Listening ▪ Reading ▪ Writing ▪ Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phonetics ▪ Vocabulary ▪ Grammar ▪ Literature ▪ Non-literary texts (i.e. Media messages; adverts; Official texts; Administrative texts) ▪ Rhetoric and Debate ▪ Writing for different purposes, including creative writing ▪ Communication, including via ICT's and the Media

Examples of competencies to be developed

Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies (Participation in culture, society and environment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading and writing - Oral communication (Listening and speaking) - Engaging in civil dialogue - Managing linguistic rules, as well as being aware of the creativity potential in using languages (such as in poetry) - Distinguishing between different oral and written communication styles and using them in accordance with specific purposes and audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-expression and assertion of one's ideas - Self-confidence - Capacity to listen and engage in a civil dialogue - Critical approach of the Media - Management of emotions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocating for a cause - Using the Media and other means (such as advertisements) to increase awareness, and solve problems in the school and community
Integration of cross-cutting issues (carrier subjects for...) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender equality - Cultural awareness and intercultural understanding - Communication and self-expression - Aesthetic education 		

3. Mathematics

Mathematics equips students with powerful ways to describe, analyse and change the world. It enables students to think independently and in abstract ways; to reason, solve problems and assess risk. Mathematical thinking is important for all members of a modern society as a habit of mind, for its use in the workplace, for participation in the knowledge economy, for understanding of science, engineering, technology, business and finance, and for both personal and public decision-making. The subject transcends cultural boundaries and its importance is universally recognized. Mathematics is a creative discipline. It can stimulate moments of pleasure and wonder for all students when they solve a problem for the first time, or discover a smoother solution, or notice hidden connections.

Main knowledge axes/strands:

- Numbers
- Mathematical symbols
- Basic operations with numbers (numeracy; arithmetic operations)
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Trigonometry
- Statistics
- Applied mathematics

Examples of competencies to be developed

Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies (Participation in culture, society and environment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with mathematical abstractions and representations, such as numbers and other mathematical symbols - Managing numeracy (numbers and mathematical calculations) in arithmetic, algebra, geometry, metrology and statistics (data processing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rigorous thinking - Analytical and synthetic thinking - Logical skills (i.e. producing correct inferences) - Capacity to assess and self-assess thinking skills (i.e. intellectual processes and products) against clear criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using mathematics to solve practical problems
Integration of cross-cutting issues (carrier subjects for...) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life skills - Work culture 		

4. Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Geology)

The study of science fires students' curiosity about phenomena in the world around them and offers opportunities to find explanations. It engages learners at many levels, linking direct practical experience with scientific ideas. Experimentation and modelling are used to develop and evaluate explanations, encourage critical and creative thinking, and to show how knowledge and understanding in science are rooted in evidence. Students discover how scientific ideas contribute to technological change – affecting industry, business and medicine and improving the quality of life. They trace the development of science worldwide and recognise its cultural significance. They learn to question and discuss issues that may affect their own lives, and the directions of societies and the future of the world.

Main knowledge axes/strands

- Scientific inquiry and research
- Matter (i.e. inorganic and organic)
- Forces
- Energy
- Man and environment
- Application of science to technology and daily life
- Ethical issues related to science
- History of science

Examples of competencies to be developed

Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies (Participation in culture, society and environment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding scientific phenomena - Using scientific approaches and methods of discovery - Applying mathematics to scientific work - Linking scientific concepts with real-life situations - Linking decisions and consequences responsibly - Problem solving - Handling information independently and critically - Capacity to integrate knowledge into complex and holistic ensembles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inquiry skills - Team work - Motivation - Analytical and synthetic thinking - Developing the capacity of making informed/evidence-based judgments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using science for practical problem solving - Communicating scientific information - Visiting labs and other scientific & technological sites - Project work
Integration of cross-cutting issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rational interaction with modern technologies - Sustainable development 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ICT Education - Ethics of science/applied ethics 		

5. Social studies (Civic and Social Education, History, Geography, Sociology, Economics, and Philosophy)

Social studies fire student's curiosity and imagination about who we are, where we come from, where we live and where we might be going next. It connects the past to the future, helps students to make sense of their place in the world, and is central to their development as responsible citizens. Students are encouraged to investigate the world around them from the local level to the global level. They learn about the impact of their actions on the planet and understand the importance of developing a sustainable future. Through exploring cultures, beliefs, values, human rights and responsibilities, students develop a deeper understanding of themselves and others and a sense of belonging. They see how societies are organised and shaped by people's actions and values, and how communities are empowered to live and work together. They learn about diversity and interdependence, fairness, justice and democracy. They begin to understand how events that happened in the past or happen now in other countries can affect our lives today, and learn how our own actions shape the future world.

Main knowledge axes/strands

- Orientation in time and space
- Self, community and identity
- History of Iraq, the region and the world
- Citizenship: participation in public life
- Human Rights and Gender Equality
- Preparation for life and work
- Entrepreneurial education
- History of ideas and philosophical perspectives
- Sustainable development

Examples of competencies to be developed

Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies (Participation in culture, society and environment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal and collective identity (ies) - Interdependencies between the local, national and international contexts - Citizenship and social values, principles and practices - Learning about Human Rights - The world of work - Orientation in time - Financial education - Problem solving - Handling information independently and critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive attitudes - Self respect and respect of the others - Tolerance - Cooperation and solidarity - Conflict management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local community service - Participation in project work
Integration of cross-cutting issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life skills - Communication and cooperation skills - Consumer culture - Education for peace and Learning to Live Together (LTLT) 		

Geography

Geography is placed herewith as part of the “Sciences” learning area. However, given its focus on the relationship between populations (human and animal) and their natural habitat/ environment, Geography also contains elements that would legitimate its presence within the “Social studies” area.

Main knowledge axes/strands

- Orientation in space
- The Earth: continents and water (oceans, rivers, lakes, etc.)
- The Earth, Solar System and wider Universe
- Weather and climate, including climate change
- Ecosystems
- Natural phenomena and disasters
- Human geography (i.e. Urbanisation)
- Political geography
- Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)
- Environment awareness and protection

Examples of competencies to be developed

Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies (Participation in culture, society and environment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientation in space - Awareness of traditional and alternative resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploratory skills - Curiosity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in excursions and geographical expeditions - Use of ICT to learn about the local and broader environment
Integration of cross-cutting issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ecological awareness - Maintaining secure and healthy environments - Climate change 		

6. Arts

Arts are a source of inspiration, enjoyment and fulfilment. They provide contexts in which students learn to express their thoughts and emotions, use their imaginations, experiment and develop creativity. It connects them to their rich cultural heritage. Arts make a key contribution to students' personal, social and emotional development and to their growth and self-confidence as individuals. It enables them to participate in the creative and cultural life of their communities and respond to it. They are encouraged to develop their own 'voices' and to collaborate with others in order to communicate with different audiences through a variety of media tools and contexts.

Main knowledge axes/strands

- Handicrafts
- Visual arts
- Music
- Drama
- Dancing
- Movies
- Computer-generated art

Examples of competencies to be developed

Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies (Participation in culture, society and environment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness and appreciation of one's cultural heritage - Awareness and appreciation of the other's cultural heritage - Managing artistic codes of expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-expression - Self-confidence - Cultural sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in individual and collective art work - Project work to enhance the aesthetics of one's school/ local community
Integration of cross-cutting issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life skills - Communication and cooperation skills - Consumer culture - Media education 		

7. Technology and ICT

Currently, our lives are heavily depending on technology and this is a trend that will probably continue in the future. The new information and communication technologies (ICTs) are playing important roles in our daily private, professional and public lives. Learners should develop competencies to use technology, including ICTs, in a responsible and efficient way while paying attention to the need of preserving the environment and adhering to ethical and legal norms. They should also be aware of the advantages and risks pertaining to the use of technology, including ICTs, and be able to handle technology and manage working procedures safely and responsibly.

Main knowledge axes/strands

- Working tools and procedures that are appropriate to different types of usage in the context of specific activities (i.e. kitchen/home, workshops, school; offices; enterprises; transportation; agriculture, and services)
- ICTs
- Environmental issues and sustainable development
- Preparation for life and work

Examples of competencies to be developed

Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies (Participation in culture, society and environment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analytical skills (i.e. understanding tool components) - Capacity to understand and follow instructions - Linking causes with effects - Creativity and problem-solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motor skills - Communication skills - Capacity to work in teams - Time keeping - Task sharing - Fair competition - Solidarity - Leadership skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge of the world of work - Entrepreneurial spirit - Community service and community-oriented problem solving - Environmental awareness - Preoccupation for sustainable development
Integration of cross-cutting issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life skills - Communication and cooperation skills - Consumer culture - Media education - Sustainable development 		

8. Sport and Health/Fitness (Physical Education, health and physical development)

To enjoy healthy, active and fulfilling lives, young people must learn to respond positively to challenges, be pro-active initiators and handle risks to develop their self-confidence and physical capabilities. This area lays the foundations for long-term health and wellbeing and contributes to students' emotional, social and physical development. Students learn about their changing bodies and about the importance of nutrition and rest for a healthy and balanced lifestyle. Through sport and other physical activities, they learn to increase their body control, co-ordination and dexterity. They also learn about their responsibilities as individuals and as members of groups and teams. They also learn to co-operate and to compete fairly.

4. Curriculum Content and Structure

Main knowledge axes/strands

- Human beings anatomy and body functions
- Sports
- Games
- Healthy life styles

Examples of competencies to be developed

Thinking and learning competencies	Personal and social competencies	Citizenship and work competencies (Participation in culture, society and environment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Motor skills- Awareness of healthy lifestyles- Decision making and risk taking- Preparation for family life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Psychomotor development- Psychological skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Participation in competitions- Participation in projects, such as local community service, and information and advocacy campaigns.
Integration of cross-cutting issues <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Healthy lifestyles- Sexually Transmitted Diseases (HIV/AIDS and other sexually-transmitted diseases)- Family life		

4.3 Time allocation

Possible issues to be further enhanced

Time allocation (including ratio-weights) could be revised, for instance by

- **harmonising time allocation in Baghdad and Kurdistan Regions;**
- **introducing innovative ways of using schooling time, such as through block teaching, and/or elective and optional subjects based on enhancing school autonomy;**
- **providing a better balance (ratio-weights) among learning areas and subjects; by catering for differentiated learning, such as through accelerated learning/fast tracks, remedial learning or learning for gifted students**

Teaching and learning methodologies must be in line with the aims values and principles of the Curriculum, and need to be capable of bringing about its aims. The Aims are that all young people should become:

- Successful lifelong learners
- Confident and productive individuals
- Proud and responsible citizens

To be effective, curriculum values must permeate teaching and learning strategies. So these strategies must be based on and promote: The Iraqi Identity, Tolerance and respect for all, Social justice, Democracy and Sustainable development.

There is emphasis within the curriculum on the development of students' Key Competencies to achieve the three aims.

- Thinking and learning Competencies to enable students to become successful lifelong learners
- Personal and Social Competencies to enable students to become confident and productive individuals
- Citizenship Competencies to enable students to become proud and responsible citizens

These Key Competencies are both the object and the means of learning, so strategies must embody and promote them.

The Principles suggest a shift of emphasis from teaching to learning and towards more active and personalised learning.

All of this has profound implications for teaching and learning approaches. It will not be possible to bring about new aims with only traditional approaches. The implications are concerned with the nature of textbooks as well as the learning experiments offered within classrooms.

To achieve the broader aims, teaching and learning strategies need to be:

- Learner-centred rather than teacher-centred
- interactive, and give students the opportunity to engage actively in their learning
- based on what we know about how students learn
- rooted firmly in the learners' experience and environment so that they can make sense of their learning in their own terms
- chosen to be appropriate to the particular intended learning

In order to provide a balance between the acquisition of knowledge and skills and the development of attitudes, students need to be actively engaged in their learning and be given opportunities during lessons to practise skills such as investigation/inquiry, collaboration and critical thinking, and to be given opportunities through discussion and reflection to develop the desired attitudes.

New Roles for Teachers

In order to provide these opportunities, and to actively engage students in their learning, the role of teachers needs to change. Teachers need to be more than providers of information. Teachers need to be:

- facilitators of learning, creating learning opportunities and constructing learning experiences
- advisors and tutors, supporting and shaping students' independent learning
- partners in the joint learning process

New Concept of Learning

In order to be relevant to students' life and to reflect the culture and local context, the information and concepts being learned need to be presented through real-life examples that make sense to the student within their own experience-based contexts. This has implications for textbooks, which must contain such examples. It also has implications for teachers who must be able to find local contexts and examples to enhance students' learning.

For learning to be personalised and enjoyable, and to encourage independence and self-management, it needs to be active and open-ended, offering students opportunities for their own lines of investigation and to make their own responses to their studies. To achieve this, learning will need to move beyond the textbook at times. Learning will involve traditional methods such as classroom explanations and the use of blackboards or whiteboards. However, it will also need to make use of a variety of means and resources such as:

- other text resources such as dictionaries, reference books, maps, photographs etc
- Computer-based resources such as film and the internet
- Interactive learning programs
- Learning kits
- First-hand experiences such as field-work, visits to museums or places of work

The wider aims, particularly those that involve attitudes and values, will be best achieved with the involvement of families. When families understand the aims of the curriculum, subscribe to their values, and are involved in the educational process, then learning becomes more powerful.

Enabling Learning Environment

In order to achieve the wider aims, the context and environment of learning need to be enabling. This means that the physical environment should be interesting and should stimulate students' imaginations. It should allow independent and practical learning to take place. The social environment should be encouraging and take count of different needs and concerns. Expectations should be high, and there should be personal support for all students to meet the expectations.

Inspiring Teaching and Learning Strategies

To achieve the range of aims, there needs to be a variety of approaches. Therefore, students need to be involved in types of learning that reflect what is being learned. Teachers need to draw upon a wide repertoire of strategies that are appropriate to the particular intended learning. This range would include:

Whole-class teaching	<u>Whole class teaching</u> is the traditional approach in which the teacher addresses the whole classes at once. This is a useful method for imparting information and explaining new material.
Group activities	<u>Group activities</u> give students the chance to co-operate and take some responsibility of their own learning. Students can be more active within these activities and have more opportunities for participation. This is a useful method for practical learning where students need to explore ideas or situations.

Open ended situations in which students have to co-operate with each other to solve problems	<u>Open ended situations in which students have to co-operate with each other to solve problems.</u> This is an extended form of group work in which students are given an open-ended problem-solving task and given time to find their own solutions.
Field-work and first-hand experiences	<u>Field-work and first-hand experiences</u> take students out of the classroom and on visits to museums, art galleries, historical sites, or other places that relate to their learning. This enables local resources to be used, and for learning to be rooted in the local context.
Independent study	<u>Independent study</u> enables students to work individually to find out the information for themselves from books or other means, and to put together their own findings. All students in a class might be engaged independently on the same task, or could all be studying something different.
Coaching and mentoring	<u>Coaching and mentoring</u> enables teachers to interact with individual students and give them help and advice to overcome problems and understand things they find challenging.
Community service	<u>Community service</u> enables students to participate in projects in their own locality and contribute to the aim of being responsible citizens.
Networked learning	Through <u>networked learning</u> , students can link to communities of learning and students in other schools.

Teaching and learning strategies need to be rooted in students own life and contexts. It should also provide them with experiences that challenge them intellectually, excite their imaginations, widen their horizons and raise their aspirations. Only in this way will the wider aims be achieved.

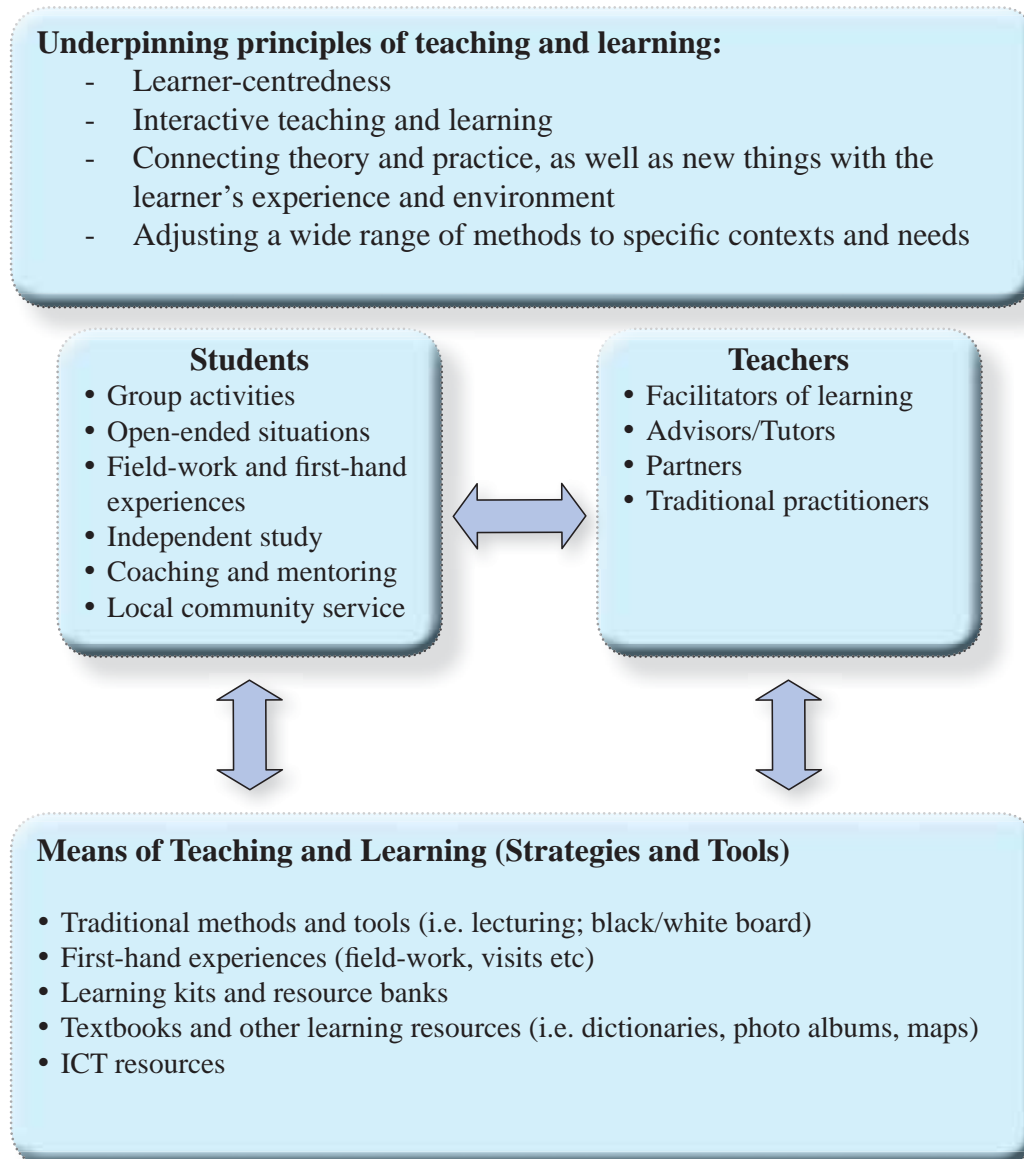
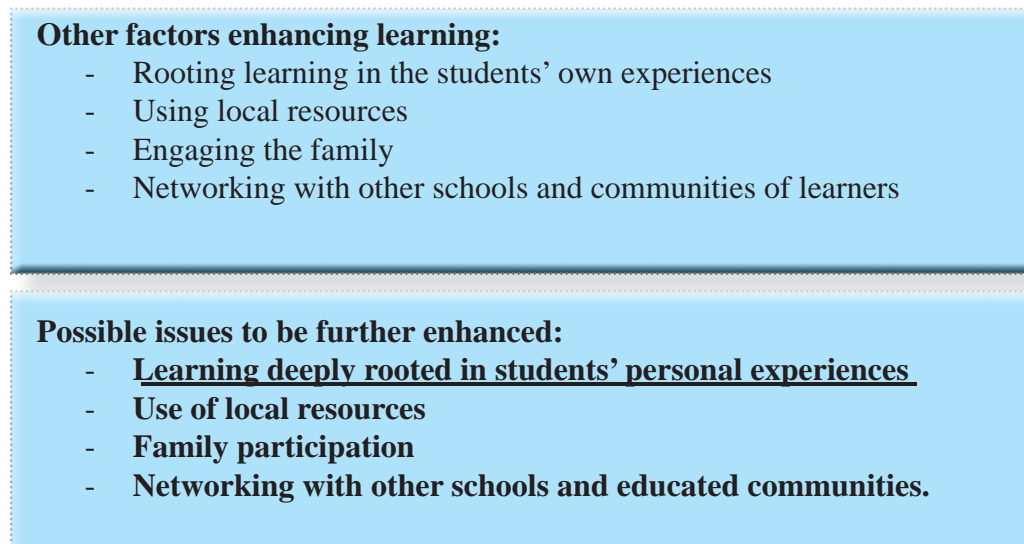


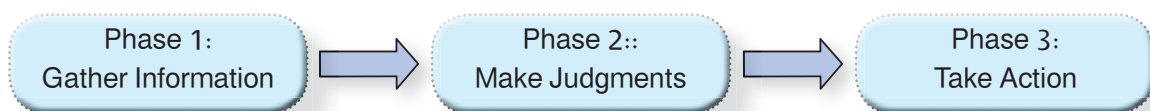
Figure 7: New Model for Teaching and Learning



- 6.1 Process of assessment**
- 6.2 Assessment Objectives**
- 6.3 The Range of Assessment Tasks**
- 6.4 Examinations**

6.1 Process of assessment

Assessing students' learning is an integral part of every teacher's responsibilities. Through assessment, teachers can understand what students have learned, and how well they have learned. Assessment is a process, not a single event. Through this process, teachers, and sometimes the education system, determine the quality of their students learning. The process typically consists of the following phases:



Phase 1: Gathering information based on learners' performance

In this phase, students undertake a task through which they demonstrate what they have learned. The tasks can vary according to the nature of the knowledge, skills or values being assessed, and are almost endless in their range. Some examples are:

- Composing a piece of text (to assess writing skill)
- Conducting a scientific experiment (to assess science-related knowledge and skills)
- Explaining a mathematical problem to a group of fellow students (to assess mathematical knowledge and understanding)
- Presenting a prepared speech on an ethical issue (to assess values)
- Performing physical skills such as catching a ball (to assess hand and eye coordination)
- Taking a test or examination.

Information is gathered by an assessor (in most cases the teacher), whereby he/she reads, listens, to or observe the students' performance.

Phase 2: Making judgements about learners' performance

Based on the information gathered, teachers can make judgements about the quality of the students' learning. This judgement can compare students' learning to

- their previous level of learning, or
- the learning of other students, or
- learning standard.

Phase 3: Translating information and judgements into measures

Having made the judgements about the quality of students' learning, teachers can then take measures. For example, they can

- report the judgements they have made about the students' level of achievement and progress to their parents
- plan enrichment and remedial learning activities to address students' weaknesses and build on their strengths
- revise teaching materials and methodologies to improve learning processes in their classrooms.

This assessment process can be formal and planned (as in the case of examinations), or can be informal and unplanned (as in the case of classroom observations).

6.2 Assessment Objectives

Assessment can be **for learning** or **for the purpose of learning**.

Assessment of learning enables teachers or the education system to make conclusive judgements about the quality and level of students' learning. This type of assessment is also referred to as 'summative' assessment, and typically takes place at the end of a topic, a course or a year. It can be used, for example, to inform parents about the student's achievement, or to determine whether a student should proceed to the next grade of schooling.

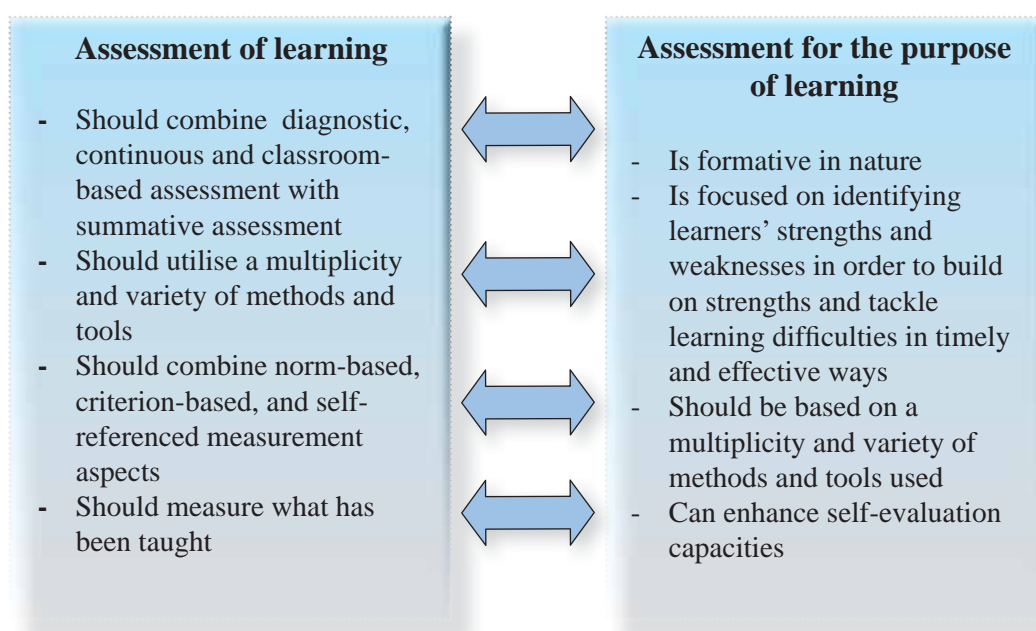
Assessment for the purpose of learning enables teachers to determine strengths and weaknesses in a student's learning, and how teaching and learning can be improved and enriched. Teachers should continually conduct assessments for the purpose of learning in both formal and informal ways.

Traditionally in Iraq, assessment has focused on the memorisation and reproduction of ready-made/pre-fabricated knowledge, and has consisted almost entirely of formal tests and examinations. Focusing on this type of assessment encourages rote learning, measures performance in a limited range of outcomes and can overburden students.

Teachers should construct assessment tasks that assess the learning outcomes detailed in this Curriculum Framework⁶ in an integrated way. Both the **assessment of learning** and the **assessment for the purpose of learning** should target clear purposes and be based on a comprehensive and complex concept of learning. Within this concept, memorisation may be important, but assessment should acknowledge that learning can also involve higher-order intellectual skills (i.e. analysis and synthesis; problem-solving; critical thinking implying evaluation and self-evaluation capacities), as well as emotional and social learning.

Assessment, in whatever form, should be based on the curriculum standards defined in this Curriculum Framework and in relevant syllabus documents.

Assessment of learning and **assessment for the purpose of learning** are summarised in the following diagram:



⁶ See Chapter 4.2 – The learning outcomes are detailed as thinking and learning skills, personal development; competencies to participate in culture, society and environment)

6.3 The Range of Assessment Tasks

Teachers should design assessment tasks that reflect the learning outcomes being assessed and the purpose of the assessment. In doing so, they should consider the following range of tasks:

Task	Task
Questions and answer Tests	Teachers and students devise questions related to the topic and ask members of the class to answer them. Teachers listen and note the responses of individual students.
Debates	Structured discussions in which students, often in groups, prepare and present arguments to support or oppose a proposition related to the subject being studied.
Student portfolios	Collections of student work related to the topic being studied. Portfolios usually have minimum requirements covering the number and types of student work.
Observation of classroom interaction	Teachers listen to and observe classroom discussions and interactions, often with a view to assessing behavioural outcomes.
Computerized examinations based on a combination of tasks	Using computers to facilitate and standardise assessment. Computerised examinations can include a range of tasks and assess a range of outcomes.
Essays	Formal written task developed by students in response to a specific question, quote or proposition. Essays normally follow a specific structure, style and tone.
(Different types of) Tests	Tests are typically formal tasks undertaken simultaneously by all members of the class. They can be written (multiple choice, or requiring a short or long response), oral (such as prepared speech) or a performance (such as a rehearsed song, dance or piece of drama).
Project and practical work	Project work normally requires students to demonstrate a range of skills they have acquired in response to an assigned topic or theme, and can include community service. They can be asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research from appropriate sources • Analyse and synthesise information from a range of sources • Summarise and comment on information • Present a range of information in different ways, including statistical tables, visual graphics and written texts. • Present their results orally to the class • Undertake practical work in which students demonstrate skills in practical settings.
Home work	Homework should complement the work done in class. Homework can provide information about knowledge and understanding, but can also be used to assess qualities such as independence and motivation.
Quizzes	Quizzes are impromptu, question and short answer tasks that, while often enjoyable (e.g. when conducted among teams), can also provide valuable assessment information.
Questionnaires	Questionnaires are written forms designed to collect information which the student has had time to reflect on and consider. They are particularly useful for assessing values and attitudes.

To enrich the information available to them, teachers should also consider student self-assessment and peer-assessment tasks.

6.4 Examinations

In setting examinations, it is important to bear in mind the aims, value and principles of this Framework. Key to this Framework is the move away from memorisation of content. This move will be undermined if examinations continue to take the form of memory tests. However, examinations will need to reflect the syllabi of the two regions concerned, Baghdad and Kurdistan, and so will be locally generated. Where possible, there should be co-operation between the two regions to devise examination questions for those elements of the syllabi that are in common, and to ensure that overall standards are equitable.



Textbooks are to date the main components of the Iraqi curriculum. However, consequently to developing the Iraqi Curriculum Framework and subject curricula (syllabi), the role of textbooks should be **revisited** in compliance with the following underpinning principles:

- Textbooks and other learning resources should incorporate and reflect the orientations of the Curriculum Framework and subject curricula (syllabi);
- Student books should be complemented by teacher guides, student exercise books, electronic software, audio-visual materials and visual aids, such as posters, graphs and other resources;
- The narrative text, illustrations, etc. should be adapted to the student age and be culturally- and context- sensitive;
- Textbooks and other teaching/learning materials/resources should be void of biases, such as those related to gender, age, religion, ethnicity, occupation, social and economic status, skin colour, etc. ;
- “Challenge” books for gifted students and “Re-teaching” books for students experiencing learning difficulties should also adhere to these principles

Quality Standards for textbooks and other learning resources: Quality textbooks

- 1 Follow the official curriculum (Curriculum Framework and subject curricula / syllabi)
- 2 As learning resources, be well-structured, with a clear table of contents, headings and subheadings
- 3 Offer students the right information, including terminology/vocabulary and guide them to find additional relevant information based on meaningful sequences of learning
- 4 Inspire and support interactive teaching and learning
- 5 Provide meaningful individual and collective student activities, including problem-solving
- 6 Provide assessment and self-assessment opportunities and prepare students for revisions and tests based on samples of oral and written answers/responses to tasks
- 7 Are void of biases of all kinds and hatred messages
- 8 Are affordable and available for learners
- 9 Are developed based on transparent procedures that involve schools, parents and local communities, , such as pilot testing

Kurdistan Region

The change of the curriculum in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in 2007 was based on the recommendations of the Parliament of Kurdistan involving international publishing houses. In collaboration with Hartcourt Global Company for Curriculum and the Lebanese Giobroujkezd Company, new approaches were introduced to Mathematics and Science Textbooks for all grades (1-12).

The new curricula/textbooks are advanced and up-to-date. The learning content is distributed through matrices that take into account the age level, education stages and development needs of students. English language is also being studied in the same way based on Mac Millan and Sun Rise books. Following these curricula/textbooks, the rest of the textbooks were modified by using local capacities. The evaluation system was also modified in the Kurdistan Region Government (KRG) so as to comply with the new teaching and learning methodologies.



8.1 Challenges

8.2 Government Agencies and Partners Responsible for Implementation

8.3 Implementation Timeframe

Implementation of the Iraqi Curriculum Framework will require the development of a chain of targeted strategies and plans which will need to

- take into account the interests of numerous stakeholders and
- develop and strengthen relationships with partners.

The aims of this section of the Curriculum Framework are to

- define the challenges that must be addressed in the implementation process,
- describe strategies and partnerships that facilitate the process and
- estimate timelines for implementation.

8.1 Challenges

All education systems face challenges in implementing curriculum, but the turmoil of Iraq's recent history makes overcoming these challenges both more difficult and more important at the same time. The most critical challenges confronting those responsible for implementation are:

- Increasing the skills and capacities of specialist curriculum staff,
- Employing a sufficient number of teachers to ensure class sizes are reduced to meet international standards,
- Providing effective training and development for teachers,
- Upgrading and repairing school facilities and equipment,
- Developing appropriate and effective institutional structures in the education sector,
- Ensuring commitment to modern teaching, learning and assessment processes at all levels of the system,
- Concluding agreements and implementing projects and global partnerships to support modernisation processes, Necessary coordination between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in the field of curricula.

Effective curriculum implementation will be achieved through addressing these challenges in planned and systematic ways in cooperation with partner agencies and institutions.

⁷ Curriculum is implemented through translating the provisions of the Curriculum Framework, syllabuses and textbooks into meaningful learning activities at school and classroom level. Important components of curriculum implementation are teaching and learning strategies; assessment procedures; and school and classroom management.

8.2 Government Agencies and Partners Responsible for Implementation

Curriculum implementation is a complex process best achieved through the concerted and coordinated efforts of responsible agencies and partners.

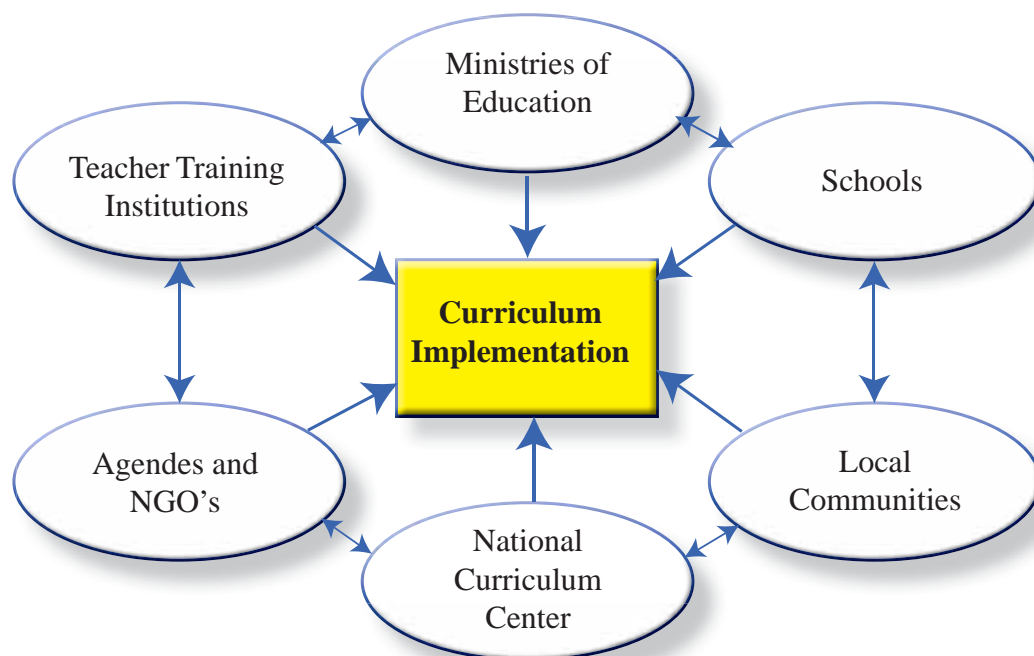


Figure (9): clarifies the governmental agencies and responsible partners for implementation

Ministries of Education

The Ministries of Education in Baghdad and Erbil have lead responsibility for the implementation of the curriculum. Through their Directorates of Curricula, the two Ministries should

- Support the curriculum development and implementation priorities of the Iraqi National Curriculum Centre (INCC)
- Facilitate and support the approval of curriculum documents by the Parliament
- Ensure that sufficient copies of curriculum documents are printed and provided to schools
- Employ a sufficient number of qualified teachers
- Support the conduct of national examinations as required by the Iraqi National Curriculum Centre

Iraqi National Curriculum Centre (INCC)

The INCC is primarily responsible for developing the Iraqi National Curriculum Framework and subject syllabuses. However, the Centre also plays an important role in implementing the curriculum, particularly by:

- Ensuring that the principles underpinning the curriculum are widely known. To achieve this, the Centre should, for example, conduct consultations with all stakeholders during the curriculum development process, and should produce pamphlets and other materials to explain the curriculum
- Advocating support for the curriculum in public forums and media,
- Developing a range of materials, including textbooks, to support teachers and schools
- Conducting systematic programs to monitor and evaluate the curriculum implementation.

School Based Staff – Principals and Teachers

The curriculum is developed at the centre, but is interpreted and put into practice in schools. The role of principals and teachers is therefore critical in curriculum implementation. This role includes:

- Ensuring that all aspects of the curriculum are understood to professional standards by all members of staff,
- Encouraging staff to continually develop their professional skills and knowledge,
- Creating a school environment that supports the educational philosophy of the curriculum and encourages the development of appropriate teaching and learning and assessment strategies,
- Ensuring that all available resources are directed at supporting teachers and maximising student learning outcomes,
- Providing information to parents about the curriculum and the school plans and strategies for its implementation, and
- Encouraging the participation of parents in the school life.

Local Communities

Local communities can support curriculum implementation in a range of ways. Some communities might be able to raise funds to provide additional equipment for the school. Others might provide premises for the conduct of specialised lessons and field visits that will enrich and support students' learning experiences.

Teacher Training Institutions

It is the responsibility of teacher training institutions to provide pre- and in-service training programs that prepare teachers well for implementing the syllabus. Pre-service programs should ensure that beginning teachers understand all aspects of the curriculum and are equipped with a wide range of teaching and assessment strategies. In particular, these institutions must ensure and understand:

- The content (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) of the curriculum and of the integrated nature of these elements
- The principles of child development that underpin the curriculum, and
- The theory and practice of assessment.

Teacher training institutions must also respond to demand for in-service training to ensure that gaps in the knowledge and skills of teachers are addressed, and that teachers are encouraged to continually upgrade their professional competence.

International Agencies and NGOs

It is likely that Iraq will be provided with the support of the international community and NGOs for some time. It is the role of these agencies and organisations to focus their efforts on supporting the implementation of the curriculum in consistency with their mandates. This could include programs of professional development, school building and refurbishment and the provision of equipment and resources. All these activities should be consistent with the principles and philosophy of the curriculum.

8.3 Implementation Timeframe

Successful curriculum implementation requires careful planning based on a realistic timeframe, as well as effective task distribution and resource allocation . The Ministers of Education in Baghdad and Kurdistan Region, in cooperation with the Iraqi National Curriculum Centre (INCC) and other relevant stakeholders, will issue a detailed implementation plan for the short-, medium-, and long term. Implementation of the new curriculum will be carried out steadily by building on achievements and identifying challenges, as well as solutions to overcome them based on stakeholder and community support.



Annexes

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Annex 1 :Curent Plans of Study

1.1. Education structure

The Plans of study of Baghdad and Kurdistan Regions observe the present education structure of the two respective regions, namely:

Education System structure

Center

Kindergarten Phase (children of 4-5 years old)

Elementary stage – classes (Primary education – ISCED 1)						Intermediate – classes (Lower secondary – ISCED 2)			Secondary (Upper secondary – ISCED 3)		
									Scientific (S)	Literary (L)	Vocational (V)
1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

Kurdistan Region

Kindergarten Phase: (4-5 years old children)

Primary/Basic Education (Primary education – ISCED 1) & (Lower secondary – ISCED 2)									Secondary (Upper secondary – ISCED 3)		
									Scientific (S)	Literary (L)	Vocational (V)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

1.2 School Year Length & Weekly Contact Periods

School year length

Cewnter	Kurdistan Region
32 weeks x 5days = 160 days	32 weeks x 6 days) = 192 days

Weekly contact periods

Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
27 - 28	32	29 - 35

1.3 Current Plans of Study

A. Cnter

Plan of study (General education): Center - Primary education (grades 1-6)

Learning areas & Subjects	Grades											
	1	%	2	%	3	%	4	%	5	%	6	%
1. Religious and Islamic education												
	4	15%	4	15%	3	11%	3	11%	3	11%	3	11%
2. Languages, literature and communication												
Arabic (mother tongue)	9 (Reading)	33%	9 (Reading)	33%	8	29,5%	8	29,5%	5	18%	5	18%
English	0	0%	0	0%	3	11%	3	11%	4	14%	4	14%
3. Mathematics												
	6	22%	6	22%	6	22%	6	21%	5	18%	5	18%
4. Sciences												
Sciences (integrated)	3	11%	3	11%	3	11%	3	11%	3	11%	3	11%
5. Social sciences												
Social sciences (integrated)/ Civic and Social education	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3,5%	1	3,5%	1	3,5%
History	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	7%	2	7%
Geography	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	7%	2	7%
6. Arts												
Visual arts	2	7,5%	2	7,5%	1	4%	1	3,5%	1	3,5%	1	3,5%
Songs & Music	1	4%	1	4%	1	4%	1	3,5%				
7. Technology and ICT												
	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
8. Sports, physical education and health												
Physical education	2	7,5%	2	7,5%	2	7,5%	2	7%	2	7%	2	7%
Total weekly hours	27		27		27		28		28		28	

Plan of study (General education): Center - Secondary education (Intermediate and secondary stages, Classes 1-6)

Learning areas & Subjects	Grades								
	1	2	3	4		5		6	
				S*	L**	S	L	S	L
1. Islamic and religious education									
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
2. Languages, literature and communication									
Arabic (mother tongue)	5	5	5	5	5	4	7	5	8
Kurdish	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
English	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6
Other languages									
3. Mathematics									
	5	5	5	4	3	6	3	6	3
4. Sciences									
Physics	2	2	2	3	0	3	0	4	0
Chemistry	2	2	2	3	0	3	0	4	0
Biology	2	2	2	3	0	3	0	4	0
5. Social sciences									
National and social education	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
History	2	2	2	0	3	0	3	0	3
Geography	2	2	2	0	3	0	3	0	3
Sociology	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Economy	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
6. Arts									
	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
7. Technology and ICT									
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Sport, physical education and health									
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total weekly hours	32	32	32	31	29	30	31	35	32

* S –Science track; **L- Literary track

B. Kurdistan Region

Plan of study (General education): Kurdistan Region- Basic education (Grades 1-9).

Learning areas and subjects	Grades															
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
		%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
1. Religious and Islamic education																
	2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2	
2. Languages, literature and communication																
Kurdish (mother tongue)	10		10		9		5		5		5		4		4	
Arabic	0		0		0		4		4		4		4		4	
English	3		3		3		4		5		5		5		5	
Other languages (i.e. French, German for gifted students)	0		0		0		0		0		0		1		0	
Minority languages (i.e. Turkmen, Assyrian, Armenian)	2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2	
	2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2	
	2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2	
3. Mathematics																
	6		6		6		6		6		6		6		6	
4. Sciences																
Sciences (integrated)	5		5		5		5		5		5		6		6	
5. Social sciences																
Social sciences (integrated)	0		0		0		2		3		3		3		4	
Family studies (for girls schools)	0		0		0		0		0		0		1		0	
Civic education	0		0		0		0		1		0		0		0	
Human Rights	0		0		0		0		1		0		0		0	
6. Arts																
Music and drawing	2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2	
7. Technology and ICT																
Computer science													2		2	
Vocational education (for schools that have workshops)	0		0		0		0		0		0		1		1	
8. Sports, physical education and health																
Sports and fitness	2		2		2		2		2		2		2		2	
Total weekly hours																

Plan of study (General education): Kurdistan Region - Upper secondary/Preparatory education (Grades 10-12)

Learning areas and Subjects	Grade 10		Grade 11		Grade 12	
	S(science) Branch	L(iterary) Branch	S	L	S	L
1. Religious and Islamic education						
	2	2	2	2	2	2
2. Language, literature and communication						
Kurdish	4	4	4	4	4	4
Arabic	4	4	4	4	4	4
English	5	5	5	5	5	5
3. Mathematics						
	6	3	6	3	6	3
4. Sciences						
Physics	4	0	4	0	4	0
Chemistry	4	0	4	0	4	0
Life Sciences	4	0	4	0	4	0
5. Social sciences						
History	0	3	0	3	0	3
Geography	0	3	0	3	0	3
Economics	0	2	0	3	0	3
Sociology	0	2	0	0	0	0
Philosophy	0	0	0	1	0	0
Civic education	0	0	0	1	0	0
6. Arts						
	1	1	1	1	1	1
7. Technology and ICT						
Technology	1	1	1	1	1	
Computer Science	2	2	2	2		
8. Sports, physical education and health						
Sports and Fitness	1	2	1	2	1	2
Total weekly hours						

Annex 2: Examinations

Center

Assessment practices in the Ministry of Education - Baghdad are very conventional and examination-based. They focus on assessing the quantity of knowledge acquired and memorisation skills, and ignore the assessment of other higher level skills. Current practices may neglect many of the curriculum objectives. This narrow range of assessment methods is generally not consistent with the educational philosophy and principles of this framework, and often results in assessment being seen as an end in itself rather than as a means to measure students' progress and improve the quality of learning. This implies improving the evaluation process.

Priorities for improving evaluation processes include:

- 1 Ensuring that they are comprehensive and measure students' achievements in all areas
- 2 Measuring skills development
- 3 Encouraging the use of a range of assessment methodologies and reducing the current reliance on examinations.

Kurdistan Region

In Kurdistan, the examination regulations below were adopted in 2005 and remain current:

1 Grades 1-3:

- There are no examinations for the 1st elementary grade.
- Students progress through Grades 1-2 based on their success in passing all the subjects of the examination. However, if a student did not pass both the Kurdish language and mathematics exams (or Arabic language and Mathematics exams in schools where teaching is in Arabic), he/she would be considered to have failed and would repeat the year. If teachers determine that the student is not ready to progress to the next grade, a decision to repeat a grade is taken in consultation with parents.

2 Grades 4-9:

- The courses system is applied. Assessment occurs twice in each subject in each of Courses 1 and 2 (semester 1 and 2). The assessment consists of three components:
- Subject assessment based on class work (15 marks)
- Subject assessment based on written test (20 marks)
- Extra-curricular activities (demonstrating such qualities as community involvement and leadership) (15 marks)

The marks from the four assessments are averaged to calculate a percentage mark at the end of the year. In addition, at the end of grade 9, students are required to take a national baccalaureate examination to assess readiness to progress to secondary school (grades 10 to 12). The final mark in grade 9 is determined by averaging the school assessment in Courses 1 and 2 (described above) and the baccalaureate examination in equal proportions. From grade 10 to 12, the courses system applies and the total grade for success is calculated for every course.

If the student passed the six courses, he would obtain the secondary certificate and would benefit from this certificate for entry into the labour market and for other purposes except for admission to university.

If the student wants to join the university, he/she will have to pass the ministerial examination (baccalaureate), and 30% is calculated from the total grades he/she has obtained in the secondary level, plus the 70% of the ministerial examination.

Note: The transition system in every subject matter from one phase to another shall apply and the student shall not be considered to have passed if he/she did not succeed in all phases.

Students must achieve a mark of at least 50% in the school assessment to be eligible to sit for the grade 12 baccalaureate examinations. The results achieved in the grade 12 baccalaureate determine eligibility for admission to universities and institutes.

Annex 3: List of Abbreviations

CF	Curriculum Framework
EFA	Education for All
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GE	Gender Equality
HHO	Her Highness Office
HR	Human Rights
HRE	Human Rights Education
IBE	UNESCO International Bureau of Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PE	Physical Education
T&L	Teaching and Learning
TT	Teacher Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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ANNEX 5 - GLOSSARY

Advocacy (in education)	Process of persuading stakeholders and the broader public of the importance of introducing and promoting & supporting changes in education
Assessment	The process of gathering information and making judgements about a student's achievement or performance
Assessment for learning	Assessment that aims to support learners achieve the key competencies by showing them where they are with reference to some set learning outcomes. It is based on making students aware of, and participating in the setting of learning outcomes, quality criteria and personal performance indicators. Students learn what is needed to do in order to achieve those defined learning outcomes and how to get there.
Assessment of learning	Gathering valid, reliable and comparable evidence with regard to assessing learners' progress in learning (i.e. their achievements in different learning areas/subjects and mastering of key competencies).
Assessment methodology	The strategies and activities employed, normally by teachers (internal assessment) or by specialised agencies (external assessment), to gauge a student's achievement or performance
Attitudes	Internal preparation or disposition to face and address challenges and tasks in a certain way – attitudes are influenced by knowledge and values and are usually triggering behaviors (though the links between attitudes and behaviors is not that linear)
Basic Education	The years of schooling considered necessary to reach a minimum standard of learning. The composition of 'basic education' varies across countries and regions but would generally include primary education and lower secondary education, normally therefore consisting of a minimum of eight or nine years. (Sometimes equivalent to compulsory education)
Bloc teaching	Flexible way of allocating time for teaching and learning by defining more compact periods of time for subjects/learning units (for instance, teaching a subject during one semester or only six weeks instead of the weekly periods spread throughout the year). It can be applied especially in the case of subjects where no extremely rigorous sequencing is required.
Capacity development	Process of developing the people's knowledge, skills and attitudes in compliance with their working needs, based on building on their strengths and identifying and addressing weaknesses/lacks that need to be overcome
Carrier subject	A subject that is, based on its scope and construction, more prone to contribute to the achievement of certain education goals, and develop certain competencies in students (i.e. Work Education or Technology; Personal Development; Life skills; Social studies)
Child-friendly environment	Learning settings that are friendly, rights-based, inclusive, healthy and protective to all children. They also involve strong school-community/family relations. (See UNICEF's concept of rights-based, child-friendly education systems and schools)
Classroom- and teacher-based assessment	Assessment that is carried out on a regular basis by classroom teachers as part of their teaching and learning strategies. It provides immediate and constant feedback with regard to the learners' achievements and problems in learning.
Competence (or competency)	A broad capacity to apply knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in independent, practical and meaningful ways
Competencies	Outcomes of learning as articulation of knowledge, skills and attitudes that learners can mobilize independently and efficiently to solve problems
Contact period	The time allocated for the periodical, regular & systematic interaction between teachers and students in the context of subjects, learning units and/or lessons.

Constructivist approaches	Philosophy and practices inspired by different constructivist theories of learning and development stating that learning is constructed through culture, individual and social experiences, as well as interactions and contexts. According to constructivist theories, learning needs to make sense (to be meaningful) to learners in order to be effective.
Core curriculum	Common requirements for all students, in terms of key competencies, common subject timetables and general orientations
Cross-cutting issues	Important curriculum content that does not belong to one subject or learning area exclusively, but which is best taught and learned in a number of subjects. Common examples include peace education, communication skills and HIV/AIDS education. (Also Cross-cutting themes)
Curriculum	The aggregate of subjects, learning areas and courses of study available in an education system. The term normally applies to the 'formal' or 'intended' curriculum, but can also include the 'unintended' or 'hidden' curriculum. (Curricula or Curriculum, pl.) Systematic and intentional articulation of knowledge, skills and attitudes in the context of learning experiences and opportunities for students in both formal and non-formal education
Curriculum Framework	A set of policies, regulations, directions and guidelines that govern the development of syllabi and other curriculum documents
Curriculum integration	Process of combining/articulating learning content and subjects with a view to promote holistic and comprehensive learning. It leads to the reduction of the number of discrete subjects and is usually applied in primary and lower secondary education.
Curriculum policy	Formal decisions made by government or education authorities that have a direct or significant bearing on the development of curriculum. These decisions are normally recorded in official government documents.
Curriculum structure	The way in which the curriculum of any system is organised, including the subjects or learning areas, when they must be studied and the 'pattern' in which they must be studied. The curriculum may be composed, for example, of core and optional subjects studied with some variation between grades.
Curriculum system	The totality of curriculum provisions and documents through which orientation is given to teachers and other stakeholders with regard to why, what, how and how well students should learn. The curriculum system usually comprises education acts, curriculum framework(s), syllabi, assessment standards, textbooks and other learning resources.
Diagnostic assessment	Assessment that is usually carried out at the beginning of a learning process and focuses primarily on identifying strengths and weaknesses in learners that should be taken into account in supporting students to cope with different learning problems.
Education policy	Coherent set of visions and decisions with regard to the directions education should follow in compliance with certain goals and in order to attain certain results
Effective curriculum	What students really learned in terms of knowledge, attitudes and skills. (Also realized or achieved curriculum)
Extra-curricular activities	Structured learning activities that take place outside the context of formal subjects or learning areas. In some systems, these might include work experience organized sport.
E-learning	Learning that is based on using new information and communication technologies with a view to enhance access to information, as well as its effective and responsible usage in the context of (commonly) networked and distance activities.
Elective curriculum	Learning areas/subjects among which students can choose in compliance with their interests, talents and needs
Entrepreneurship education	In a narrow sense: preparing children and young people to take over entrepreneurial roles in the economy, i.e. create their own businesses/enterprises. In a broader sense: equipping children and young people with entrepreneurial skills, such as proactivity, decision making, risk taking, leadership, organization and management skills.

External assessment	Assessment that is carried out by out-of-school agencies or is based on procedures and tools provided by such out-of-school agencies (i.e. external examinations; tests provided by specialised evaluation agencies). It should be based on (national) evaluation standards so that subjectivity in assessment is reduced to the maximum.
Formal curriculum	The learning experiences and opportunities that are provided to learners in the context of formal education. The formal curriculum serves as a basis for socially recognised certification and diploma awarding.
Formal education	The hierarchically structured, chronologically-graded educational system running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialized programs and institutions for full-time technical and professional training
Formative assessment	Assessment that is basically classroom- and teacher-based, aiming at supporting students to make progress in learning throughout a certain period of time. It envisages learning as a process, not just a result (see also Assessment for learning, to which it is connected).
Gender	Cultural differences between males and females
Gender biases	Prejudices or distorted images/characterizations generated by gender difference – they can be positive (generalizing features considered valuable) or negative (generalizing features considered bad or appalling)
Gender equality	Aspiration and practice of considering that, despite differences, men and women are equal and should be treated equally (i.e. equal chances; equal rights; equal responsibilities; equal entitlements) – gender differences should not legitimate gender discrimination
Gender lens or perspective	Looking at different issues by taking into account the gender dimension including participation, needs and realities of girls and women, as well as of boys and men
Gender mainstreaming	The process and outcome of integrating gender issues throughout the formal and non-formal curriculum, as well as through other education components, such as school and classroom organization and practices, assessment; and school-community links
Gender parity	Equal participation or representation of women and men in education, professions, decision-making bodies, etc.(rather from a numeric point of view). Opposite: <i>gender disparity</i> , meaning that one gender is under-participating or underrepresented.
Hidden curriculum	The values, knowledge, skills and attitudes that students and teachers share in private – they can be different from the ones promoted by the official curriculum, also unintended/unexpected aspects of the curriculum
Holistic and comprehensive learning	Learning that integrates both academic aspects and student development by attempting to tackle phenomena as a whole while emphasising the interconnectivity of natural, social and personal processes and dimensions.
Holistic development	The harmonious growth/progress of all personal dimensions, i.e. intellectual, emotional, motor aspects. (“Whole-person” approach)
Implemented curriculum	The curriculum that results from classroom interactions between teachers and students (applied curriculum)
Inclusive education	Inclusive education seeks to address the learning needs of all children with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. It implies all learners - with or without disabilities - being able to learn together through access to common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting with an appropriate network of support services.
Indicators	Qualitative or quantitative expressions of the findings on characteristics of the situations, populations, processes or phenomena analysed
Informal education	Acquisition and development of knowledge, skills and attitudes outside formal or non-formal settings during everyday experiences and in the absence of intended and systematic processes of learning.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	New tools and processes of accessing and processing information, as well as communicating it based on electronic means, such as computers, TV, Internet, other digital means.
Integrated teaching and learning	Teaching and learning that reflects and points to the links/connections and inter-links/ inter-connections In individual and social life (human activities), nature and knowledge.
Integrated classroom	Learning environment at classroom level that is based on constant exchanges among teachers and students in the context of inquiry-based, problem-solving and hands-on activities.
Intended curriculum	The curriculum that is envisaged by education authorities and is usually official and written – it can be laid down in the form of curriculum frameworks; syllabi; textbooks; teacher guides
Interactive pedagogy	Teaching and learning that is based on students' active participation in the context of classroom interactions (i.e. peer and group work; project work)
Interchangeable roles	Refers to the fact that men and women can take on similar/identical roles meaning they are not confined to segregated, static and rigid functions and expectations in work, studies, communities and families
Key competencies	Competencies considered by the education and training system to be important in the learning of every student and significant contributors to the lives of every member of society. The Key Competencies most relevant to Basic Education might be referred to as 'basic competencies'. (Also Generic, Transversal or Overarching competencies)
Knowledge	Component of learning that includes information about concepts, facts and opinions as well as procedural aspects pertaining to reasoning
Learner-centeredness	Philosophy and practice of organising teaching, learning and assessment from the perspective of learners' needs, interests and abilities.
Learning	The process and outcome of acquiring and integrating new knowledge, skills and attitudes into existing structures that trigger changes at cognitive, emotional and/or motor level
Learning area	A broad category of learning, often grouping traditionally discrete but related subjects. Examples include General Science (containing elements of Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geology and perhaps other sciences) and Social Studies (containing elements of History, Geography and other related subjects).
Learning Area Statement	A document describing the learning objectives, learning outcomes and content related to a broad learning area. These statements might also provide guidance about its implementation including relevant teaching and assessment methodologies. (also Syllabus)
Learning content	The topics, themes, beliefs, behaviours, concepts and facts, often grouped within each subject or learning area under knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, that are expected to be learned and form the basis of teaching and learning.
Learning inputs	Items that are indispensable for a learning process to happen (i.e. teachers, curricula, textbooks, education facilities)
Learning objectives	Statements describing the intentions of syllabi or learning area statements (Also Objectives)
Learning experience	Situation(s) and process(es) through which learners acquire/develop knowledge, attitudes and skills
Learning opportunity	Situations(s) and process(es) that have a potential to foster learning in students.
Learning outcomes	Statements describing what students should know, believe, value and be able to do when they complete their school education. Outcomes should be expressed in a range of domains, including knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies, values and attitudes. (also Outcomes)
Learning outputs	Results of learning processes, such as student competencies or the impact of learning on individual and societal progress

Learning resource	Reference to, and support for student learning including textbooks, education software, experimental kits, atlases, dictionaries, workbooks, etc.
Lifelong learning	Equipping learners with competencies they need to be successful learners throughout their lives.
Life skills	Skills which provide the learners with the capacity to undertake tasks or processes related to their day to day lives.
Lower secondary education	The first cycle of secondary education, normally of three or four years duration
Meaningful learning	As opposed to rote learning, it leads to the development of conceptual networks (i.e. concept mapping) that can be applied in different situations, allowing for creativity and problem solving. In association with constructivist views, it also refers to learning that makes sense to students (i.e. is connected to their personal experience, is practically-oriented and hands-on).
Multi-layered concept of identity	An understanding of identity as a complex result of both pre-determined factors and an evolving construction due to the exposure to, and participation of individuals and groups in different cultures in the context of current globalization phenomena.
Multiple intelligences	<p>Influential contemporary theory of intelligence and personality (H. Gardner) stating that specific intelligences can be detected in the brain instead of just a general or generic intelligence, usually defined as capacity to solve problems effectively. It had important consequences to curriculum development and implementation especially through the concept of child- or learner-centred approaches and the “whole person” model of learning and development.</p> <p>Today, eight such multiple intelligences have been identified: linguistic; logical mathematical; spatial; bodily-kinaesthetic; musical; interpersonal; intrapersonal; naturalist. To those eight intelligences some would add the existential/spiritual/moral intelligence.</p>
Non-formal education	Education which takes place outside the formal school environment and outside the formal school curriculum, and does not usually provide a socially-recognised certificate or diploma (though at present non-formal acquisitions are acknowledged in some countries even in the form of formal diplomas).
Peer assessment	Student assessment of other students’ work (can be both formative and summative).
Peer education	Processes of learning based on exchange of information, knowledge and experiences between peers in which they act as resource persons, facilitators of learning and/or mentors.
Post-primary education	All the periods / cycles / years of education occurring after the primary phase of schooling
Predictive assessment	Assessment that aims to forecast potential successes and failures in students’ development with a view to suggest effective pathways for their progress as well as appropriate remedial action in the case of (anticipated) shortcomings in learning.
Primary education	The first period or cycle of education, normally of four, or six or seven (sometimes eight) years duration and often including a reception or kindergarten year.
Remedial activities	Learning experiences and opportunities that are provided with a view to help students cope with learning difficulties effectively.
School autonomy	The autonomy granted to schools in terms of financial resource management (public and private funding), human resource management (school heads, teaching and non-teaching staff) and decision-making within schools as well as the evaluation systems (accountability) of schools implemented in connection with this autonomy.
School based curriculum	The courses and curricular activities which are decided at the school level.
Secondary education	The second period or cycle of schooling, often divided into lower and upper phases.

Selective assessment	Assessment whose purpose is primarily to provide the clustering and/or selection of students in compliance with certain performance criteria (i.e. selection of gifted students for science or arts classes; selection of students to be admitted into different upper secondary schools).
Self assessment	Auto-evaluation by learners of their achievements and problems in learning. As in the case of peer assessment, it is based on higher order intellectual skills that learners put on work in order to assess their learning in terms of both processes and results.
Service-based learning	Learning that occurs as a result of students' engagement in the structured provision of some service, normally to the local or broader community (Also community service)
Skill	The capacity to apply knowledge to perform a particular task to a consistent standard Operational side of knowledge; knowledge in action about how to do things (know-how)
Spiral curriculum	A model of curriculum construction that involves periodically repeating the learning of knowledge, skills and attitudes related to specific learning areas/subjects in the context of new, broader and more complex learning experiences. It serves to both consolidating pre-existent learning as well as broadening up and exploring more in-depth the different learning content.
Standard	1.A decision, requirement or regulation that is expected to be implemented or applied. 2.The level of achievement or performance that is expected from students if they are to be awarded particular results.
Stereotypes	Rushed and unfair attribution of group characteristic to a person, situation, item
Subject	A discrete learning discipline (such as Mathematics , History).
Summative assessment	Assessment that summarises the progress and achievement of learning outcomes by learners at a particular time
Sustainable learning progression	Learning that is based on effectively integrating previous acquisitions into new systems of knowledge, skills and attitudes.
Sustainable development	Development model that pays attention to the preservation of the environment, disaster risk reduction, climate change, the meaningful usage of resources and utilization of renewable energies, as well as securing the well being of present and future generations.
Syllabus	A document describing the learning objectives, learning outcomes and content related to a specific subject. Modern syllabi also provide guidance on its implementation including relevant teaching and assessment methodologies. (Also Subject Curriculum; Learning Area Statement)
Teaching	Activity carried out with a view to foster learning in students by using a wide range of methods that are adjusted to the learners' learning styles.
Textbook	Resource for students that pulls together the content of learning for a specific learning area/subject/grade in a systematic way. Textbooks are usually developed based on a syllabus and should observe quality criteria such as relevance, adjustment to students' needs and capacity to inspire interactive teaching and learning
Textbook analysis	Process of exploring specific aspects in textbooks based on analytical concepts and criteria developed in compliance with the research purpose and scope
Textbook revision	Process of changing and improving textbooks in line with specific quality criteria, including education/learning goals, expected outcomes (students competencies) and teaching and learning, including assessment practices
Time allocation	The amount of time in the school year or week assigned to teaching and learning in a specific subject or learning area.
Vocational education and training	Education and training to enable learners to gain employable skills and professional qualifications for specific occupations, in addition to achievement of the key competencies as defined by the Curriculum Framework



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