

# The Communication & Information Programme



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# FOREWORD

As the world rapidly changes, new challenges continue to emerge - challenges that affect the ability of our societies to grow and thrive. However, the ever growing list of challenges has been met with an increase in human resolve and a re-commitment from international organizations such as UNESCO, which aim to promote sustainable development and help people fulfil their hopes and aspirations.

This has required a focus on building strong knowledge societies where people have equal and unfettered access to information and knowledge, which can be harnessed to unleash the economic and social potentials of even the remotest village in the highest mountain. In these societies, students and researchers have access to educational material and scientific research, and people with disabilities are not shut off from the information highway; women

and girls are empowered to create the next generation of ICT applications which will be used in the fight against the social ills that befall us; knowledge is preserved for generations to come; people have freedom to express themselves online and offline; and journalists can use their pens to spread the truth without fear of recrimination.

The combination of these elements will propel innovation and development. UNESCO is working in every corner of the globe to ensure that the construction of these societies continues unabated. Since its foundation in 1945, millions have benefitted from and supported UNESCO's activism. Through their voices, which are showcased in this brochure, we are reminded that UNESCO is as relevant today as it was during the mid-twentieth century and that it continues to transform lives and communities across the world.



Getachew Engida  
Deputy Director-General,  
UNESCO

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The Organization is leading international efforts to promote press freedom.



# PRESSING FOR FREEDOM

The cold prison walls could not tame her desire for truth. Instead, the room which became her home and solitary sanctuary between 1984 and 1985 was transformed into a space for reflection. It is there, in that cell, that she recommitted her pen to the pursuit of justice and the flow of information and ideas. Upon her release from prison, with images of torture still present in her mind, Chilean journalist Ms. Mónica González Mujica returned to investigative reporting, publishing articles and books about the abuses of the military dictatorship.

UNESCO has stood side-by-side with journalists such as Ms. Mujica, who fight for freedom of expression and other democratic ideals. UNESCO's support for the efforts of these guardians of democracy is grounded in these 35 words found in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 'Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.'

Since the adoption of the Declaration in 1948, UNESCO has led an international campaign to promote freedom of expression and access to information. As the only UN agency with a mandate to promote freedom of expression, UNESCO has worked closely with governments and international institutions to strengthen democracy by lending assistance in developing laws promoting: a free press, journalism training, empowering citizens through media and information literacy, digital freedom of expression and the safety of journalists.



**The ability of ordinary Tunisians to freely express their opinions, through the media and on the streets, grew following the Arab Spring.**

## SUPPORTING EMERGING DEMOCRACIES

“ Before the revolution, there was no freedom of expression and no access to the sources of information. We only spoke about superficial subjects - talking about culture, and a little about the economy, but politics wasn't in Tunisian media programmes. Since the 14th of January 2011, we can speak about politics as well as cultural subjects or the economy in Tunisian media. For citizens today, the access to information is easier, the right to be informed is guaranteed and people aren't afraid of expressing their opinion or speaking to the microphone. ”

**Lilia Housseini (Tunisia)**  
Journalist

Beginning in 2010, thousands of citizens across the Arab region pushed for democratic reforms in what is known as the Arab Spring. UNESCO answered the call in Tunisia by assisting the government in the rewriting of its constitution which ensured the inclusion of a provision on access to information. Other support provided by UNESCO included training on election reporting for journalists and capacity building for police officers with regard to freedom of expression and the treatment of journalists.





World Press Freedom Day is one of the most important dates on the UN calendar



# PRESS FREEDOM - THE LIFEBLOOD OF DEMOCRACY

“ Imagine one day, the world without journalists. It would be a world living in silence, a party for criminals, an incentive for corrupt and abusive politicians. A day without journalists is what we are awaiting if the international community doesn't react adequately in facing the silencing of the women and men reporters who show the violations of human rights. ”

**Lydia Cacho (Mexico)**

UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World  
Press Freedom Prize Laureate, 2008

During the yearly World Press Freedom Day celebrations on 3 May, at least 100 activities are organized worldwide by UNESCO and others to promote freedom of the press. On this day, through the awarding of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize, the Organization honours a journalist or institution that has made an outstanding contribution to the fundamental principles of press freedom.

The Organization is also promoting Media and Information Literacy (MIL), which lies at the core of freedom of expression, by empowering citizens to understand the functions of traditional and twenty-first-century media, to critically evaluate their content, and to make informed decisions as users and producers of information and media content.



Dozens of journalists are killed every year in the line of duty.

## ENSURING THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS

“ When I chose journalism as a career 30 years ago, it was a conscious choice to follow my heart, not my head. Even at the young age of 17, I knew what risks awaited me as a journalist in war-torn Lebanon. Lebanon was at that time renowned for being the only Arab country in which freedom of speech and expression was a constitutional right granted to all of its citizens. But to be a journalist with a mission to defend Lebanon’s freedom and independence was intolerable to the forces involved in that bitter conflict. Still my passion for Lebanon was too strong to be suppressed. Nothing would have made me choose another career. Nothing would have made me less antagonistic towards the occupiers of my country. Nothing would have made me less supportive of those who were dying in the front lines to protect my right, and that of every single Lebanese, to speak, act and live in freedom. ”

**May Chidiac (Lebanon)**

UNESCO/Guillermo Cano

Laureate, 2006

UNESCO is leading international efforts to ensure the safety of journalists and coordinating initiatives to fight against impunity of the attackers, both in conflict and non-conflict situations. Through the UN Plan of Action, coordinated by UNESCO, the Organization is collaborating with other UN agencies, governments, media and NGOs to assist countries in developing legislation to protect journalists and practical guides on the safety of journalists.





Radio can reach people  
in the remotest parts  
of the world.



# ACCESSING INFORMATION

From the snow-capped mountains of Nepal to the bright green valleys in Peru, radio waves glide through the air, carrying with them streams of information. As these waves descend onto metallic towers, families huddle near the radio, digesting every serving of information in their quest to nourish their curiosity and quench their hunger for knowledge. This scene

is witnessed around the world as people search for loved ones after a hurricane, or anxiously wait for news on the latest world economic trends. The radio is a beacon for those eager to share and access information.

To promote media pluralism and choice for listeners, UNESCO is assisting in the establishment of

community radio stations, to ensure even the most remote villages are touched by the power of communication. This is done through many mechanisms, including the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). The access to radio necessitates a plurality of voices being heard, including those of women and girls.



Radio is an an integral part of life for millions around the world

## RADIO – A POWERFUL COMMUNICATION TOOL

“ I was about 10 years old when I first heard radio. A passing tourist had given my grandfather a battery-operated transistor radio while visiting my village on the Hopi Indian Reservation in north-eastern Arizona. My village is a place where there is no electricity, running water or broadband to this day. Against this stark reality, radio is the medium that is able to reach some of the most rural and isolated Native communities in the United States...

Only 53 of the 566 tribes have a radio station serving their community. These radio stations provide essential programming to Native Americans about health, education, politics, climate change, the economy and public safety. Native stations are the information backbone of Indian country and without them, Native Americans would have their voices go dark.

**Loris Ann Taylor (USA)**

Media executive

Radio is a powerful communication tool which offers a platform to facilitate debate on a range of issues of concern to the public. Radio holds a strong and special role in emergency communication and disaster relief, and is essential in furthering UNESCO's commitment to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. In recognition of the importance of radio, UNESCO declared 13 February World Radio Day, and leads celebrations worldwide each year.





Thousands across West Africa were diagnosed with Ebola.



## FIGHTING EBOLA THROUGH RADIO

“ My family and I were fearful. The entire community is fearful. Even though there were no confirmed cases in Bintumani, the community is in lockdown and movement is restricted. Through our radio station, experts share information on Ebola and people in the community are able to share their concerns and raise burning questions. The station has had a huge effect in helping to bring calm to the community and dispersing fears. We are at the forefront of the fight in educating people about how the virus is contracted and the relevant symptoms.

We are out on the streets talking to people and broadcasting live. We are engaging the people. This is important in the community, where many of the traditions, for example concerning burying the dead, help to spread the virus. People come from nearby villages and tell us how much they appreciate the work we are doing, including our broadcasting programmes on Ebola in local languages.

”

**Steven Bockarie Mansaray (Sierra Leone)**  
Radio Bintumani Station Manager

Through the support of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), a UNESCO programme which promotes media development, Radio Bintumani has become a beacon of hope in rural Sierra Leone. This support helped the radio station to expand its broadcasting hours and geographical coverage.



As a result of conflict , hundreds of thousands of Syrians sought refuge in Jordan.

## SUPPORTING SYRIAN REFUGEES

“ The radio programme is very helpful in assisting Syrian refugees adapt to life in Jordan. Every time I go out to the camps and into the cities to speak to refugees, I understand why this programme is so vital and why we must do more to provide refugees with critical information. I once met a woman who had two children: a 7 year-old boy and a 5 year-old girl. It was very difficult for them to adapt to life in Jordan. The children would cry every day. They had lost their father, their friends and their home. The little boy became withdrawn. His mother tried but could not get him to speak. When I met the little boy, he would not talk to me; he just stared at me. His mother was also depressed because she could not get him into a school and she wanted him to live a normal life. She didn't know what to do.

We put her in touch with an organization that helped to provide classes for him in English and Arabic. The organization even assisted them in getting counselling. I called the mother recently and she was happier having access to these services. Now, the family is more comfortable in Jordan. Her son is finally talking, smiling and interacting with people. This experience reminds me that having access to information can make a big difference in the lives of refugees.

**Sarah Dabbakeh (Jordan)**  
Reporter, The Syrian Hour

UNESCO provided a platform for disseminating critical information to Syrian refugees in Jordan through a radio programme entitled 'Sa'a Suriya' (The Syrian Hour). The programme is one component of a project geared towards enhancing access to information and freedom of expression, while providing counselling and psychosocial support.





Haitian institutions including schools were affected by the earthquake.



## REBUILDING COMMUNITIES AFTER THE HAITIAN EARTHQUAKE

“ I was in the office when the earthquake struck. At first, I thought it was a large public works truck passing by on the street, but when I saw the houses leaning in all different directions, I understood that it was an earthquake. The house collapsed, but as I was on the second floor, I was able to escape unharmed. In my family, my mother-in-law was killed and her two children who lived with her were injured but able to escape. The radio was very helpful, as in the hours following the earthquake, phones were not working and Internet connection was very difficult to find. If there hadn't been radio stations on air that morning, the situation would have been much worse.

Almost the entire population was listening to the radio. Someone who was found in a location unknown to their family could go and place an ad with the radio identifying who and where they were. These types of ads helped many people reunite with their families.

**Sony Esteus (Haiti)**  
Broadcaster

After the devastating 2010 earthquake, UNESCO and partners supported the establishment of VEDEK FM, a community radio station in the southern Haitian city of Cap Rouge which empowered citizens, as they worked hand in hand to rebuild the country.



Women and girls should be allowed equal access and opportunities in order to promote economic development.

## GENDER EQUALITY IN AND THROUGH THE MEDIA

“ It was a happy day (when the station started its broadcast). We danced and laughed and called all of our friends and family members and asked them to listen. It is important for us that women feel that they can come to the radio station in order to share their thoughts and concerns. In the beginning some men belittled us, saying that women cannot successfully run a radio station. Now their attitudes are already changing – we have proved them wrong and many of them have already congratulated us for our success. ”

**Guari Khatayat (Nepal)**

Listener, Radio Women's Voice

While gender barriers have slowly been crumbling, many walls which impede women's empowerment are yet to be torn down, including those in the media. UNESCO's work in promoting gender equality is evident through its groundbreaking Gender Sensitive Indicators in Media (GSIM), used by media houses across the world to evaluate and address gender inequalities which exist in media content, staffing and management.

UNESCO and its partners are also championing the cause for gender equality through the launch of the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG). Through this Alliance, UNESCO is working with over 200 countries to develop public policies on gender equality in the media.





The Mongolia – Kunjur, a collection of over 1600 works on ten great and small sciences of traditional Buddhism is among the items listed on the Memory of the World Register.

# PRESERVING DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE

The pages are slowly turning brown as evidence of wear and age sets in. Words begin to fade, and the letters which captured the collective memory of a generation are at risk of disappearing. This is the reality that faces many archives and repositories around the world.

This documentary heritage reflects the diversity of languages, peoples and cultures. It is the mirror of the world and its memory. It helps us discover who and why we are. It is our link to the past and helps us shape the future. But this memory is fragile. Every day, irreplaceable parts of this memory disappear forever. Unless action is taken now, much of humanity's documentary heritage may vanish - discarded as no longer of relevance or left to deteriorate beyond recovery.

Archives and heritage collections are endangered both by the actions of humankind and the forces of nature. War wreaks catastrophic effects but there are other 'man-made' threats which can be more damaging. For instance, there are the problems of fragility and obsolescence associated with the physical formats to which we have entrusted our documentary heritage, such as audiotapes, glass negatives and acidic paper.

The lack of professional training, coupled with the lack of resources, can pose another threat. It is often the unintentional which is most damaging - the sheer neglect of documentary heritage for want of awareness of its significance. It was to this end that the UNESCO Memory

of the World Programme was launched in 1992 to safeguard the documentary heritage of humanity against collective amnesia, neglect, the ravages of time and climatic conditions, and wilful and deliberate destruction. The vision of the Programme is simple but powerful: the world's documentary heritage belongs to all, should be fully preserved and protected for all and, with due recognition of cultural mores and practicalities, should be permanently accessible to all without hindrance.

One of the most important components of the Memory of the World Programme is the International Register, which has been an influential tool for increasing global awareness of the existence and significance of documentary heritage.





The Nebra Sky Disc features the oldest concrete depiction of cosmic phenomena worldwide and was ritually buried circa 3,600 years ago near Nebra (Germany). It was inscribed on the Memory of the World Register in 2013.



## REVIVING COMMUNITIES THROUGH HISTORY

“ The Sakubei Collection is an extremely important treasure for the community. Without a doubt, sharing and preserving this historic archive will contribute to the education of the younger generation. This type of history is not taught in the school or community. After its inscription on the Memory of the World (MOW) Register, during the peak period 1,500 tourists came over to the town which used to have only 15 tourists per day. Visitors came from all over the world, not only from Japan.

History is now the driver of the local economy. The Shutter Street Arcade, which used to be closed, is revived and rejuvenated. But most importantly, it will give the local community pride. The Tagawa registration awakened a lot of other communities. It is the first nomination from Japan. And it is the first directly from the city. Since then, all the communities started to look at their own local history, memory archives and allocated budget for conservation of the archives.

”

**Koko Kato (Japan)**

Project Manager,

Tagawa Memory of the World Nomination

UNESCO encourages archives and libraries to digitize, catalogue documents and make them available on the Internet. The promotion of this 'collective memory' can also be done through the publication and distribution of books, CDs, DVDs and other products.



Many young people across Timor-Leste are learning about the country's difficult path towards independence.

## PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF A YOUNG NATION

“ It is difficult to put into words the significance of having the Max Stahl collection of audiovisual documents on the Birth of the Nation of Timor-Leste inscribed on the Memory of the World International Register. The collection which chronicles the graphic struggles of this young and impoverished nation on its path to independence - and the cost of this independence - is incredibly inspiring for this generation and generations to come. It shows a people standing up for independence and fighting for their rights.

To have their history counted alongside all the other great documents on the Register including the Magna Carta is important for the people of Timor-Leste. The collection will surely make future generations more self-confident and prouder of their country.. ”

**Dr Ray Edmondson (Australia)**

Chairperson,  
Memory of the World Programme,  
Regional Committee for the Asia Pacific

It is important that the history of a nation is shared between generations and with the world. The Memory of the World Programme provides countries with an opportunity to showcase the richness and relevance of the past. This history has the potential to inspire and build bridges across cultures.





Access to knowledge can transform communities

# BUILDING KNOWLEDGE SOCIETIES

New technologies have created new opportunities for the access to, creation, preservation, dissemination and use of information. It is, however, human activity that enables information to be transformed into knowledge, and for knowledge to add value to human experience and development. It is knowledge that empowers people to enhance their livelihoods and to contribute to the social and economic development of their societies.

Within the last decades, we have watched in awe as the lives of

millions around the world have been influenced by technological changes and the transformative power of the Internet. From a small computer or mobile phone, students are conducting research while connected to the world's digital libraries like never before. Corporate leaders are organizing meetings without the need to gather in a single room and people can network and share information and knowledge in tremendously innovative ways.

UNESCO is working with its members and partners to ensure that

all citizens, including those living with disabilities, can leverage this knowledge. The Organization is working towards building Knowledge Societies that are inclusive, equitable, open and participatory. At the heart of UNESCO's efforts is the facilitation of the application of ICTs to enhance the quality of, and access to, education, building scientific knowledge, promoting Open Access to scientific information, and ensuring universal access to a multilingual cyberspace.





**Mobile phones have become useful tools to promote development and social cohesion**



## EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE AND TEACHERS

“ Over 70 percent of the people in my country are illiterate. And I have many close friends who struggle to read a few paragraphs. In South Sudan, many young people do not go to school and are also unable to get a good education because of the weak education system. This dire situation has been made worse by years of conflict and bad economic conditions. Without the basic skills, including the ability to read and write, the people in my community will have a problem getting employment and may end up in extreme poverty.

A group of us from my university is trying to solve this problem through the development of a mobile application which will allow people to teach themselves to read and write and improve their chances of having a good future. We hope to reach thousands of young people through this application. ”

**Vuciri Denis Stephen (South Sudan)**

Student

UNESCO is training up to 25,000 young people around the world on how to develop mobile applications to help solve developmental challenges confronting their communities. The Organization is also developing the skills of teachers to use ICTs effectively in the classroom, through the ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (ICT-CFT). To improve the quality of and universal access to education, UNESCO is promoting the use of open-licensed Open Educational Resources (OERs) and assisting teachers to develop open-licensed Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).



Continual research is needed to develop solutions to mitigate many developmental challenges including droughts.



## OPENLY ACCESSING SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION

“ Access to academic journals for poor students in developing countries would absolutely have a transformative effect on these economies, as researchers can assist in tackling the grand challenges confronting these developing countries. There is a notable lack of access to critical research, as students cannot afford the subscriptions. Once they have an Internet connection, they can access information previously locked away.

It is sobering to note that an international study conducted at the start of the millennium found that more than half of research-based institutions in lower-income countries had no current subscriptions to international research journals, nor had they had any for the previous five years. UNESCO has made a contribution to promoting Open Access. Its Open Access policy is well known and is a mark of best practice in encouraging open approaches to the dissemination of information.

”

**Dr Paul Ayris (UK)**

Academic

Scientific information is both a researcher's greatest output and technological innovation's most important resource. Yet, universities in developing countries face difficulty accessing this information due to the high cost of scientific journals. UNESCO is working to address this problem through Open Access, the online scholarly information library available to everyone and free of most licensing and copyright barriers. Through its Open Access Policy, States receive advice and technical assistance to promote Open Access to scientific information.





In recent years, more and more people living with disabilities have been accessing ICT tools and others mechanisms which allow them to improve their quality of life.

## REMOVING BARRIERS TO ACCESSING KNOWLEDGE

“ I have been fortunate to have access to cutting edge technology, which has allowed me to continue with my work and communicate my theories, thoughts and ideas, even after my illness robbed me of my natural speaking voice. Without this technology I would be mute, a prisoner inside my own mind. I would not even be able to ask for a cup of tea, let alone describe my no boundary theory of how the universe began...

Because I have had such phenomenal technological support, I feel a responsibility to speak for others who have not. I have not been lucky to contract ALS, but I have been lucky to have this help. I want to use my high profile to raise awareness of issues around disability and communication... Recently, my communication system broke down for three days, and I was shocked by how powerless I felt. I want to speak up on behalf of people who live their whole life in that state. My hope is that the kind of technologies I have trialled and helped develop, will become easily and cheaply available to all who need them...

”

**Professor Stephen Hawking (UK)**  
Academic

Over 15 percent of the world's population, including Professor Hawking, have a disability and millions are excluded from participating in society. However, access to and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), customized computers and software can significantly improve their education and job prospects. Therefore, UNESCO continues to work with countries to ensure that the relevant policy frameworks are implemented to remove barriers to accessing information and knowledge.





From homes and Internet cafes (including this one) people are accessing information and knowledge.



# THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET

“ The Internet landscape is constantly changing and technologies are rapidly evolving. While this creates incredible opportunities, it also gives rise to new challenges. Discussions on Internet issues are ongoing in several forums and include many different stakeholders, and UNESCO is an important part of that conversation... Since the beginning of the last decade, UNESCO has had an important role in structuring the discourse, clarifying key concepts and taking forward a human rights-based, open, accessible agenda of development rooted in a multistakeholder approach.

...We believe that UNESCO has a unique role in the UN family to promote and enable an open and inclusive Internet and facilitate the protection of the same rights to freedom of expression online as exist offline, as well as to draw linkages between Internet openness, human rights and the building of strong democracies.

”

**Freedom Online Coalition**  
(Grouping of 24 countries)

UNESCO's recent landmark Internet Study is driving global debate on the role of the Internet in fostering sustainable human development, in building inclusive Knowledge Societies and in promoting freedom of expression. It also explores options for action in areas which are of concern for everyone, including access to information and knowledge, ethics and privacy.

The Organization's leadership on these issues is also evident through its active participation in a number of international fora, including the World Summit for the Information Society (WSIS) Forum, the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) and through the implementation of projects by UNESCO's Information for All Programme (IFAP) and the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).

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