Intergovernmental Council of
The Management of Social Transformations
Programme (MOST)

Fifth Session
Paris, 14-17 March 2001

Final Report

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Council of the Management
of Social Transformations Programme (MOST)

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FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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I. OPENING OF THE SESSION

The fifth session of the Intergovernmental Council of the MOST Programme was held at UNESCO, Paris, from 14 to 17 March 2001. The session was opened by Mr Kenneth Wiltshire, representative of Australia and outgoing President of the Intergovernmental Council.

II. ADDRESS BY THE ACTING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES, EXECUTIVE-SECRETARY OF THE MOST PROGRAMME

On behalf of Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Kazancigil greeted Mr Wiltshire, President of the Intergovernmental Council of MOST, and welcomed the participants. He pointed out that since its creation in 1994, the MOST Programme had set itself objectives and topics which were still as relevant as ever. Indeed, globalization, urban development and multiculturalism all remained key issues on which social science research – international, interdisciplinary and comparative – was generating knowledge that contributed to policy formulation and served to initiate activities in the social science field.

After recalling that at its fourth session, in 1999, the Intergovernmental Council (IGC) had examined and approved the external mid-term evaluation report, Mr Kazancigil informed the Council that the MOST secretariat had subsequently drawn up a strategy for refocusing the second phase of the programme (2000-2002). He further indicated that the MOST Programme had brought a critical mass of expertise to bear on the follow-up and implementation of the recommendations made by a number of major United Nations conferences (Rio 1992, Copenhagen 1995, Istanbul 1996) and had contributed to the UNESCO World Conference on Science (Budapest 1999). In addition, the regular meetings of the presidents of UNESCO's five scientific programmes (IOC, IHP, IGCP, MAB and MOST) had served to strengthen cooperation between the natural and the social sciences, with the MOST Programme also working in conjunction with the Education and Culture Sectors. Finally, following the appeal made by the United Nations Secretary-General for a reduction of poverty by 2015, UNESCO had drawn up a poverty reduction strategy, the preparation of which had been entrusted to the MOST Programme, within the Social and Human Sciences Sector.

The Executive-Secretary of MOST then pointed out that the second eight-year external evaluation of MOST (1994-2001) was to include recommendations on the continuation of the programme as from 2002. Comments, suggestions and recommendations from delegates would help the secretariat to improve the MOST methodology: for a year and a half, UNESCO had in fact been undertaking a broad reform process in which MOST played its part to the full. Accordingly, several options and approaches were available to the programme, and it was for its steering bodies to offer guidance in that respect.

III. KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MR KENNETH WILTSHIRE, PRESIDENT OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL

Mr Wiltshire noted that a new partnership was now needed between scientists and policy-makers in order to produce a dynamic synergy between those two worlds. He highlighted several main lines of emphasis: the world of science, the world of policy-making, the interface between them and the role of the MOST Programme in managing that interface. Partnership between researchers and policy-makers was a way of addressing fundamental contemporary issues, for example youth in present-day societies and the social transformations that directly affect young people. Since that partnership posed a challenge, specialists and scientific researchers had to take the initiative in relation to policy-makers (the full text of this address is reproduced in Annex II).

IV. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU

Under the chairmanship of Mr Kenneth Wiltshire, and in the presence of Mr John Donaldson of the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs of UNESCO and of the acting ADG/SHS, elections were held to renew the Bureau of the Council. The President, the six Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur were elected by consensus.

President: Mr Marek Ziolkowski (Poland)

Vice-Presidents:

Western Europe Region: Ms Lenelis Kruse-Graumann (Germany)
Central Europe Region: Ms Elena Zamfir (Romania)
Latin America and the Caribbean Region: Mr Juan Luis Martin-Chavez (Cuba)
Asia and the Pacific Region: Ms Khojasteh Arefnia (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Africa Region: Mr D. Olu Ajakaiye (Nigeria)
Arab States Region: Mr Amin Esber (Syrian Arab Republic)

Rapporteur: Mr Charly Gabriel Mbock (Cameroon)

V. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Under the chairmanship of Mr Ziolkowski, the agenda was adopted by consensus.

VI. CREATION OF A DRAFTING GROUP

A drafting group was formed as follows:

Mr Toumo Melasuo (Finland)
Mr Alberto Carrion (Peru)
Mr David Thorns (New Zealand)
Ms Ana Morais Lomba (Cape Verde)

VII. JOINT SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC STEERING COMMITTEE AND THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL AND PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC STEERING COMMITTEE BY ITS CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson of the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC), Mr Yoginder Alagh, congratulated the new President of IGC, Mr Ziolkowski, and offered his heartfelt thanks to Mr Wiltshire for the work carried out during his two terms of office.

He then highlighted the main features of the eighth session of the Committee (12-14 March 2001) in the present world context of structural adjustment and of the action plan of the United Nations Secretary-General. The work of the session had focused on:

(i) The future strategy of the MOST Programme in the general programming framework of the next UNESCO biennium (31 C/5): the Committee had noted with satisfaction that the social and human sciences were once again presented in a separate major programme in document 31 C/5 (Major Programme III).

(ii) An interdisciplinary meeting bringing together the intergovernmental scientific programmes in the natural sciences, the Culture Sector and MOST: SSC had welcomed the joint statement by the presidents of the five scientific programmes addressed to the Director-General at the 160th session of the Executive Board, urging that greater account be taken thereof in documents 31 C/4 and 31 C/5 with a view to sustainable development. SSC noted that the various presentations had highlighted some of the themes of future cooperation, including the settlement of water-related conflicts, integrated urban development in coastal areas and the three dimensions of sustainable development: environmental, sociocultural and economic. The Committee had concluded that this would involve better quality and management of institutional capacity-building, and the strengthening of networks designed to improve decision-making, while taking into account priorities such as poverty eradication and the use of the new information technologies.

(iii) A meeting to present the results expected by the various networks and the terms of reference of the next eight-year evaluation of MOST activities, which should take into account the North-South issue in the light of:

- the implementation of MOST strategies;
- the nature of the MOST organizational structure;
- the impact of institutional capacity-building initiatives.

(iv) A meeting on institutional capacity-building initiatives, the MOST international Ph.D. Award, the City Professionals Project, UNESCO Chairs and cooperation with urban NGOs.

The SSC Chairperson stressed the importance of MOST for the countries of the South and urged the need to pursue strategies for integrating city professionals into research networks, focusing on the participation of high-level professionals from the South. To that end, he requested additional support from IGC to help in fund-raising.

Discussion

During the debate which followed the report on SSC sessions, many speakers took the floor to comment on the work of the Secretariat. They called for:

- simplified documents;
- more accessible results;
- better information strategies;
- a strategy to promote interaction and reciprocity between researchers and decision-makers.

In addition, suggestions were made with a view to recasting general working methods:

- longer-term projects, better able to impact on policy-making;
- refocusing of projects in their socio-economic, political and cultural context and consideration of the lack of resources of certain research networks in relation to the conceptual framework associated with globalization and the use of the new information and communication technologies;
- definition of relevance criteria enabling researchers and decision-makers to cooperate more closely;
- establishment of a three-way dialogue between decision-makers, social scientists and researchers in the natural sciences;
- refocusing of current problems in their regional and transnational urban aspects;
- development of a language common to scientists, decision-makers and civil society in order to strengthen the interdisciplinary and participatory approach;
- use of consultants and researchers concerned with links between research and policy-making in order to disseminate knowledge of best practices worldwide, taking into account the different regional political programmes;
- adoption of a cross-cutting approach for poverty eradication projects in order to include therein the concepts of sustainable development, social justice and environmental preservation.

VIII. REPORT OF THE MOST SECRETARIAT ON ACTIVITIES SINCE THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL

Mr Kazancigil, acting ADG/SHS and Executive-Secretary of the MOST Programme, made a general presentation of the programme in the framework of the Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007 (31 C/4) and the Budget for 2002-2003 (31 C/5) in respect of the Social and Human Sciences Sector.

He placed special emphasis on the general objectives of MOST (promotion of international comparative research, transfer of the findings of such research to decision-makers, and capacity-building) and pointed out that the three key research areas (multicultural societies, urban development and globalization) should be refocused in the light of the new priorities to be established.

He stressed the strong national links of the MOST Programme resulting from the involvement of the National Liaison Committees (NLCs). In that context, he highlighted the conferences and meetings organized with the support of MOST during the period under review.

The research findings on MOST's three major topics were circulated through networking, institutional capacity-building activities, publications, newspaper articles, the MOST Internet site and the information and training materials aimed at policy-makers and the general public.

Reference was made to the interdisciplinary nature of MOST training activities and to their role in capacity-building.

The Executive-Secretary recalled that within the framework of the mid-term evaluation it had been proposed to refocus MOST in order to enhance the relevance of research and to raise the level of expertise in the social sciences in support of policy formulation and scientific and institutional capacity-building in the developing countries. He also pointed out that the priority task as defined by the United Nations system as a whole, namely, the halving of poverty by 2015, would become a major cross-cutting theme for UNESCO activities.

He further drew attention to the fact that the Executive Board had requested IGC to reflect on the content of the terms of reference for the eight-year evaluation of the MOST Programme and on prospects for the next phase. In that connection, he referred to "human security" as an approach that could mobilize both individuals and social groups in order to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life. In his view, the function of MOST should be to help enhance research in the social and human sciences on the two challenges represented by globalization and the impact of science and technology on the world population.

The Executive-Secretary concluded his statement by highlighting the intersectoral nature of MOST, whose activities, primarily national, should emanate from the grassroots rather than the institutional level, i.e. bottom-up rather than top-down.

Discussion

Several delegates expressed their support for the report, suggesting that emphasis should be placed on research into the role of NGOs in the shaping of public opinion or on promoting a policy for the creation of scientific infrastructures.

Other delegates expressed interest in various aspects of the MOST Programme. Some drew attention to points for consideration in its second phase: (1) the need for greater concentration of programme activities, (2) the search for increased resources to study the links between knowledge produced in the research world and decision-making processes in the world of social and political action, (3) the strengthening of partnerships with NLCs and the National Commissions for UNESCO. Another

suggestion was to develop a regulatory framework for researcher/decision-maker partnerships.

Lastly, some specific requests were formulated: (1) the establishment of a social science project for Africa to be entitled “Cities and Survival in West and Central Africa” (URB-AFRIQ). In this connection, the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Research and Development in West and Central Africa (COMRED/AOC), held in Cameroon in February 2001, had stressed the importance of MOST in Africa, and urged that the programme undertake the coordination of this regional project. It also requested MOST to organize a regional symposium on the social sciences and poverty eradication in Africa; (2) the organization in Montevideo (Uruguay) of a MOST regional conference on social transformations in Latin America; (3) the organization of an international meeting on social adaptation by young people to new economic conditions in the countries of Central Asia. Against this background, and with a view to setting their proposals on more secure foundations, a number of delegates drew attention to the resources likely to be available to the programme.

IX. REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE “CITIES: MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL TRANSFORMATIONS” PROJECT

Mr Vincent Defourny, representing the Central Programme Evaluation Unit of UNESCO, introduced the evaluator, Mr Denis Merklen, who outlined the objectives of the project and its methodology. The evaluation had taken into account the contribution made by the project to the training of the local actors, its involvement in a development project and the building up of a democratic culture, as well as its influence on the power game being played out at the local level.

The chosen sites, Yeumbeul and Malika (Dakar, Senegal) and Jalousie (Port-au-Prince, Haiti) were contending with situations of dire poverty. The first, in Dakar, was affected mainly by environmental degradation. The work was carried out with the support and at the initiative of the community and various neighbourhood organizations. The second, in Haiti, was located on a hillside to which access was difficult. The major problem here was the insalubrity of the site. Once again, the initiative and decisions came from the community. In both cases, citizen organization and participation were affected by the context. In such circumstances, the evaluator stressed the fact that the project had succeeded in demonstrating the importance of consultation and collaboration between the inhabitants, the local authorities and the State.

Discussion

A number of delegates as well as the representative of the Habitat II Follow-Up Commission drew attention to the visibility of this project in terms of participation. Since certain indicators had not been taken into account in the evaluation, an effort should be made to highlight the project’s multiplier effects, to propose ways of making it sustainable and to suggest an enduring structure.

In reply, the evaluator pointed out that the exercise had served to demonstrate the exemplary value of the project. It was a project designed to support the initiatives of the local inhabitants, and had succeeded in strengthening their negotiating capacities to the point where they had been able to influence policy-making. The

process to be replicated was therefore to be found in the dynamic linking civil society and the private and public sectors.

X. PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN MOST AND SCIENTIFIC NGOs

Three international scientific NGOs were invited to present reports on their cooperation with the MOST Programme: the International Social Science Council (ISSC), the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) and the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (ICPHS).

In the framework of official relations between UNESCO and ISSC, a body concerned in particular to facilitate cooperation between scientific NGOs and intergovernmental organizations, a number of activities had been undertaken in conjunction with MOST. New activities could focus more closely on the following topics: cities, international migrations and poverty, particularly in the framework of CROP (Comparative Research Programme on Poverty). For the 50th anniversary of ISSC (end of 2002), it was planned to hold an international UNESCO-ISSC conference in which MOST would be a participant.

The members of ICSU were research organizations and academies active mainly in the natural sciences. One of its principal aims was to promote interdisciplinary scientific work at international level. For that purpose, MOST and ICSU networks could collaborate on major social science subjects, such as sustainable development and the environment.

ICPHS was designed to act as an intermediary between UNESCO and academic associations with a view to extending the Organization's work in the field of the human sciences. This NGO shared the concerns of MOST on such topics as multiculturalism, multi-ethnicity in our societies, and the need for comparative analyses on cities. ICPHS would like to strengthen its cooperation with MOST in the area of interdisciplinary projects.

Following these three statements, delegates stressed both the importance of cooperative relations between MOST and the three NGOs and the need to draw up joint programmes between the natural and the social sciences in order to respond more effectively to the requirements of contemporary society.

XI. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FORTHCOMING EVALUATION OF THE MOST PROGRAMME

The basic components of a frame of reference for the forthcoming eight-year evaluation of MOST Programme activities (1994-2001) were presented under nine headings by Mr Carlos S. Milani, a member of the MOST secretariat. A document on the subject will be submitted to the Executive Board at its autumn 2002 session.

For the purposes of this evaluation, the SSC's recommendations focused mainly on sustainability, productivity, quality, a forward-looking approach, interdisciplinarity, the geographical representativity of the evaluators and the need to

take on board the views of the various users of the research findings in an overall context embracing the political, economic and social dimensions.

The delegates noted the importance of this evaluation for giving new impetus to the programme. Some drew attention to the disproportionate nature of the terms of reference in relation to the MOST Programme in general, and to the inadequacy of funding in particular. Questions were raised regarding the criteria used to select projects for evaluation, and those governing the choice of priorities. Finally, the importance of an evaluation focusing on the processes which produced results rather than a purely results-based evaluation was underlined.

The secretariat thanked the two steering bodies of the programme and the delegates for their proposals, which would be used to reformulate the terms of reference for the evaluation, and drew attention to the importance of document 160 EX/12 which provided a background for the evaluation exercise. The secretariat would redefine the terms of reference in more precise and appropriate language, taking into account the dual requirement of visibility and performance, which were indissolubly linked.

XII. PANEL ON "RESEARCH–POLICY INTERACTIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE MOST PROGRAMME"

Three speakers, all members of MOST research networks, took the floor: Mr François Hainard, Mr Charly Gabriel Mbock and Mr Nikolaï Genov. Comments on their statements were made by Ms Wanda Capeller (the four texts are reproduced in full in Annex III).

Mr Hainard reported on his experience as coordinator of the "Cities, environment and social relations between men and women" project, which was supported by Swiss technical cooperation funds and the Swiss National Commission. He stressed the importance of long-term commitment in carrying out this research network and also pointed out that there was a need to continue the effort of reflection both in order to improve the calibre of collaboration between the industrialized and the developing countries and to be able to implement the recommendations relating thereto.

Mr Mbock explained his ideas on the interaction between research and policy-making from an African perspective. He began by pointing out that the worth and use of knowledge were not particularly obvious for decision-makers in Africa and proceeded to outline the historical background to social realities in the region. After drawing attention to the sharp conflict between those who had knowledge and those who held power, he stressed the importance of "scientific diplomacy" for the constructive development of legitimate relations between decision-makers and social scientists in Africa.

Mr Genov reported on his experience as coordinator of the MOST project "Personal and institutional strategies for coping with transformation risks in Central and Eastern Europe". The design and the implementation of the research project were closely coordinated with local policy-makers. The results of this work included a series of user-oriented internal reports and publications. These results were also

disseminated by teachers at several universities as well as by a number of German foundations.

Ms Capeller then presented a commentary on the three reports. She began by pointing out that they illustrated the importance of the contribution made by the MOST Programme to improving understanding of societies, notably through the production of the knowledge needed for policy-making and through the impact of its research on the implementation of public policies.

MOST's contribution focused mainly on the need to take into account the structuring of the new economic and social systems (which must draw on the knowledge produced by the social sciences), "transformational recursions" (the process of directing and redirecting decision-makers in their responses to social demands), the contextualization of research actions and the position of the actors within the social system.

Ms Capeller pointed out that sizeable difficulties remained, but that if the knowledge produced by the social sciences was used in an operational, creative and strategic way, it could contribute effectively to guiding decision-makers in their policy-making practices.

The panel's conclusions focused on the need to establish principles for cooperation between researchers; an approach based on the concept of pooling knowledge and sharing governance between decision-makers and researchers; and the recognition of those operating at municipal level as valid intermediaries between the macro and micro levels.

XIII. FORWARD-LOOKING DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF THE MOST PROGRAMME

The President of IGC introduced the debate by indicating that its purpose was to draw up a future framework for MOST activities. The main themes to emerge from the deliberations related to:

- the general principles that should govern the design of future actions;
- the focal points of research;
- action plans to make the most of available results;
- more specific proposals.

With regard to the first theme, delegates raised the following points:

- the importance of interdisciplinarity in the social sciences and the opening up of MOST to UNESCO's other fields of competence, in particular the natural sciences;
- the need to maintain a consistent focus for the MOST Programme on its three basic objectives: (1) the production of knowledge on social transformations; (2) the linking of research to decision-making; (3) capacity-building;
- raising the visibility of MOST;

- efforts to make projects more socially effective and operational for the benefit of communities, in particular women and young people;
- development of endogenous capacities;
- the importance of a three-way approach bringing together research workers, policy-makers and actors from civil society in particular.

The debate on the second theme focused more particularly on:

- MOST's original research topics (multiculturalism, urban development and globalization);
- the social dimension of sustainable development as a possible unifying research theme, as opposed to the economic and environmental dimensions;
- social, inter-ethnic and interreligious conflicts, also in relation to international migrations;
- the development of a knowledge society and the place of indigenous knowledge in this trend;
- democratic governance;
- poverty reduction and greater autonomy for the most vulnerable sections of the community, in particular women and young people.

As regards action to turn available results to optimal account, the Council agreed on:

- the need for wider dissemination of MOST projects and results;
- the incorporation of these results in curricula.

A number of more specific proposals were put forward, including:

- action geared to the problems of coexistence, dialogue and cooperation among different ethnic and religious groups in megalopolises, with special emphasis on poverty reduction, sustainable development and democratic governance;
- possible sources of financial support for specific MOST projects;
- measures to ensure that greater account is taken of SSC's work and of the results of the forthcoming evaluation of MOST;
- the follow-up to the World Social Forum (Porto Alegre, Brazil), with greater emphasis on democratic governance;
- more active partnership between researchers in the various MOST networks and those of the European Union, especially on the occasion of a third European social science conference;
- reactivation of the "Multiculturalism and post-communism" project which had been organized under the MOST Programme;
- the organization of two international conferences on: (1) adaptation by young people to new economic conditions in the countries of Central Asia; (2) tolerance and ethnic relations.

While welcoming these proposals, the President expressed the hope that this first effort of reflection would not be confined to the biennial meetings of the Intergovernmental Council, but would also be taken up by the National Liaison Committees and by the Scientific Steering Committee of MOST.

ANNEX I

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE IGC

Taking advantage of the fact that its fifth session coincides with the reform programme being implemented by the Director-General of UNESCO, the Intergovernmental Council of the MOST Programme reaffirms that:

- The MOST Programme is a scientific endeavour within UNESCO, that contributes towards improving the decision-making process within Member States by stimulating a critical analysis of the linkages between social science research and policy-making;

- Its methodological approach should be a model for encouraging intersectoral cooperation and international comparative interdisciplinary research;

- The MOST Programme encourages the extension of social science knowledge to the excluded populations, vulnerable groups, and indigenous populations;

- The intersectoral cooperation, including cooperation with the other scientific programmes of UNESCO, is to be reinforced through the definition of common problem-driven research projects to be implemented through a collaborative framework;

- Under increasing globalization and particularly its impact in developing and transition countries, the analysis and understanding of social transformation requires interdisciplinary and international and interregional comparison;

- The role and responsibilities of social science research are to be reinforced within the Organization, the MOST Programme being a major tool in this respect.

1. Recommendation on the terms of reference for the final evaluation of MOST

The Council of the MOST Programme:

Acknowledging that the preparation of the terms of reference of the forthcoming evaluation of MOST should take into account indicators such as the visibility of the programme, its funding, the quality of the research produced, the quality of the communication of its results to different stakeholders, as well as its forward-looking perspective;

Taking note of the Scientific Steering Committee's deliberations on the terms of reference, and *welcoming* their recommendations on it;

Stressing that the terms of reference consider the establishment of priorities within the selected indicators, the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as a process-oriented approach to evaluation.

Invites the Director-General to:

Ensure that the team of evaluators will be composed of members coming from developed, developing and transition countries;

Encourage the team of evaluators to take the perspective of the different users of the results of the MOST Programme, including the scientific and the policy communities;

Consult the members of the IGC, via its Bureau, on the draft final report;

Present to the Scientific Steering Committee, in its ninth session in 2002, the preliminary results of the evaluation;

Ensure that the final report of the forthcoming evaluation of MOST will be submitted to the autumn session of the Executive Board in 2002.

2. Recommendation on the linkages between social science research and policy-making

The Council of the MOST Programme:

Recalling that the programme's strengths lie in its capacity to provide impulse to new ways of thinking, doing and using research through relevant programmes and activities, such as cooperative and comparative research, sustainable networks, dissemination of knowledge and best practices – which together further the link between scientific research and social management;

Noting the concerns of the Scientific Steering Committee that further conceptualization is needed in order to better understand the research-policy linkages, and the processes of interaction between research and policy-making;

Acknowledging the complexity of the relationships between the social science and the policy communities, as well as the multidimensional character of the linkages between them.

Invites the Director-General to:

Ensure that the relationship between social research and policy-making is developed among scientific communities, decision-makers and civil society, the latter to include non-governmental organizations, public opinion, the media and citizens in general. In order to achieve this goal, the MOST secretariat will have to make the results of the research available to the general public through the relevant media and means;

Encourage research networks to illustrate the policy implications of their research, and undertake, as a key contribution to the follow-up of the major United Nations conferences, the Budapest World Conference on Science and the Dakar EFA Forum, a series of studies of research-based knowledge use by policy-makers within specific research fields;

Cooperate with the United Nations system and its specialized agencies including UNDP, UNDCP, UNICEF, and regional development banks in development initiatives by providing expertise drawn from the Secretariat and MOST networks, in response to requests for technical and research assistance;

Provide social science knowledge and expertise to Member States on designing research-based policy, thereby improving the public use of research results in policy-making, respecting the precautionary principle, *stressing* that the absence of sound research input in policy-making, or its inappropriate use, hamper effective policy development;

Foster the problem-driven conceptualization of the science-policy linkages in the analysis of social and political conditions under which the influence of social research is enhanced in policy planning and decision-making at the various political and social levels.

3. Recommendation on capacity-building activities of the MOST Programme

The Council of the MOST Programme:

Noting that there are specific capacity-building needs of researchers and social science experts in developing and transition countries in order to strengthen their autonomy and capacity in addressing social issues;

Acknowledging that raising the research skills of young scholars from developing and transition countries and strengthening the social science teaching and training within academic and policy institutions are essential strategic components of the MOST Programme.

Invites the Director-General to:

Reinforce the capacity of developing and transition countries for autonomous research on social issues and encourage cooperation in the social sciences between these countries;

Periodically monitor, evaluate and inform the Member States about the number, results and regional distribution of the capacity-building activities, with the aim of promoting, in the next phase of the programme, a better balance amongst the different geographical settings;

Associate the MOST Programme with networks, institutions and research centres in the different regions in order to implement these capacity-building activities.

4. Recommendation on the coordination of the poverty eradication strategy of the Organization

The Council of the MOST Programme:

Noting with satisfaction that the Director-General has decided to give the Social and Human Sciences Sector the role of coordination of the UNESCO's poverty eradication strategy.

Invites the Director-General to:

Set up, in the second phase of the programme, an interdisciplinary research network on the issue of education and training as a means for combating poverty and disease in developing and transition countries;

Give a priority to the issue of empowerment of the poor in the research networks of the programme, and to take advantage of the successful experiences in this field.

5. Recommendation on funding of MOST

Considering the interest raised by the MOST thematic agenda in Member States;

Recalling that the MOST regular budget can only respond partially to the overall needs of the programme;

Noting that the MOST activities require considerable amounts of extrabudgetary funding, national and international, originating from public and private sources.

Invites the Director-General to:

Enhance the fund-raising strategy of the MOST secretariat, in cooperation with members of the Intergovernmental Council, and intensify efforts to further develop fruitful relations with international and national agencies, scientific funding organizations, public and private funding entities, etc.;

Invites the Member States of UNESCO to:

Further support MOST initiatives through the Participation Programme, and be actively involved in raising extrabudgetary funding for MOST, taking initiatives vis-à-vis national, interregional and international sources in cooperation with the Secretariat.

Invites the Scientific Steering Committee to:

Examine new projects in the light of their policy relevance, scientific merit and potential capacity to attract extrabudgetary funding.

6. Recommendation on the role of MOST in promoting innovative partnerships within UNESCO and the United Nations system

The Council of the MOST Programme:

Recognizing the important role of the MOST National Liaison Committees in promoting the programme, formulating new MOST activities, and contributing to an increased cooperation with other United Nations agencies, private foundations, and other organizations;

Emphasizing the need to better utilize the academic resources available through the international and regional social science networks, which are close partners of the programme.

Invites the Member States of UNESCO to oversee:

That all Member States be encouraged to establish National Liaison Committees with the support of the MOST secretariat, so as to enhance the programme’s outreach;

That National Liaison Committees be further engaged in developing activities that assist the programme in meeting its key objectives and particularly in exploring how social science research results can be used more effectively by policy-makers in different societal contexts;

That these Committees represent as wide a range of stakeholders as possible including social scientists, policy-makers, NGOs, trade unions, business, grass-roots organizations, community leaders, natural scientists, and other relevant professionals;

That National Commissions and National Liaison Committees be more directly involved in the planning of MOST activities;

That measures be taken to strengthen the communication and dissemination of research results to decision-makers, and to further involve major scientific institutions and universities in the MOST endeavour.

Invites the Director-General to:

Continue to ensure the strategic role of UNESCO in the worldwide development of the social and human sciences;

Consider the essential multidisciplinary development of the social, human and natural sciences for the understanding and formulation of solutions to contemporary social problems;

Take into consideration that the MOST Programme is an essential and strategic instrument for this development and should hence be supported.

7. Recommendation on the future development and thematic areas of MOST

The Council of the MOST Programme:

Expresses its appreciation and favourable assessment for the achievements of MOST during the first phase of the programme and its support for the continuation of MOST;

Recommends that the Secretariat implement the Focusing Report (160 EX/12), in consultation with the SSC and the Bureau of the IGC;

Invites the Director-General to foster in the MOST Programme the systematic surveying and dissemination of successful national and regional policy experiences related to MOST issues;

Recommends that the MOST secretariat ensure a larger participation of the Intergovernmental Council in the process of definition of goals and objectives in the preparation of the thematic agenda of MOST in the aftermath of its first phase in 2002;

Invites the Director-General to determine priorities within the thematic areas of MOST, bearing in mind the wish expressed by the Member States of the MOST Intergovernmental Council in its Fifth Session, that the programme should focus on certain themes to avoid dispersion. Such themes could be chosen, among others, from the following: Poverty eradication, sustainable development, democratic governance, multicultural and multi-ethnic societies;

Recommends to the Director-General that the second phase of the MOST Programme span eight years, from 2002 to 2009, which proved to be an appropriate time frame in its first phase.

ANNEX II

SCIENTISTS AND POLICY-MAKERS TOWARDS A NEW PARTNERSHIP

Kenneth WILTSHIRE[1]

Keynote address delivered to the
Intergovernmental Council, Management
of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand before you today as a soft and inexact man. For this is how the parlance of UNESCO labels social scientists. Indeed, as an economist, public administrator, and policy adviser, I am soft and inexact three times over, and therefore something close to a marshmallow.

The odd thing is that, under this rubric, a weather forecaster would be described as hard and exact. I ask you – how can this be when every second weather forecast we hear says something like, “Chance of a thunderstorm”, or “Isolated showers”?

Nevertheless, my aim here is to sketch the outline of a new partnership which is needed throughout the world between policy-makers on the one hand, and scientists on the other whether they be soft or hard, i.e. from the social or the natural sciences. Indeed, the essence of my message is that the urgent requirement of policy-makers for sound and relevant policy advice will be the causal factor to produce a new dynamic synergy in the relationship between the social and natural sciences.

Teaching public policy in a university, especially at the postgraduate level, provides a unique vantage point to observe the educational journey followed by many scientists, particularly natural scientists. Those with ingenuity discover before too long that the economists are overriding the scientists, because the scientific innovations they have proposed are not considered economic – so their next step is to do an economics degree. Within a short space of time they learn that the economists are actually beholden to the administrators because the scientific proposal is valid, it is economic, but there is not enough in the budget for it, or it cannot be addressed in the context of a corporate or strategic plan – so they do a degree in administration or management. Before too long the reality finally hits them that it is the policy-makers/politicians who are trumping the administrators because the proposal has scientific validity, is economic, and can be administratively accommodated, but will not win votes (or may even lose votes) for the government of the day – so finally, it is out to the campus again to undertake a degree in public policy. I have never been sure about the next step in this process – I suspect it is probably a divinity degree!

This anecdote is highly pertinent to our topic today because, in these study patterns, the learning journey from the world of science to the world of policy is very instructive. There is a spectrum, a pathway. From science to policy is a continuum from the narrow and deep to the broad and shallow, from the impersonal to the

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personal, from the exact to the inexact, the predictable to the unpredictable, from the closed to the open system, from the world of facts to the world of values. Most of all, it is a journey, in search of the locus of power in a human environment, where the lessons of science are only one input into the decision-making process, no matter how overwhelming the scientific evidence may be, nor how persuasive the accompanying arguments.

In this address I would like to consider the world of science, then the world of policy-making, and then the interface between them, as well as the interface between the leading practitioners who inhabit these worlds. For it is a dichotomy and we need to understand the elements of that dichotomy before we can explore the potential for partnership. Then I want to draw on the experiences of UNESCO and particularly the MOST Programme to explore how this new partnership can be put into place and what its purpose should be.

The world of science

It is a pretty tall order to canvass the whole of the scientific arena, but we have now been provided with a very good window into the contemporary issues of the world of science through the Budapest World Conference on Science and its Declaration. Indeed as it was a joint endeavour within UNESCO we had a close involvement with the preparation and conduct of the Conference. It was my privilege on your behalf to be the joint chair of the Steering Committee for the Conference.

Undoubtedly the key theme to emanate from Budapest was the need for a new contract between science and society. Every speaker explicitly or implicitly addressed this theme. In fact, most of the so-called “hard” scientists who spoke sounded like “soft” scientists, because they were talking about the need for democratic involvement, inclusion, ethics, and participation. It was very refreshing for many of us to see leaders from the natural sciences embracing these agendas.

The Conference took place against a background of the need for more *popularisation of science*. Regrettably not all members of the scientific community accept this reality. Particularly in North America and Europe, there is often still a belief that science is god. But in our Asia-Pacific region, and in other regions as well, a lot of people are blaming science and scientists for the ills of the world, including disasters of a nuclear and ecological kind as well as dubious medical and other social experimentation, etc. Enrolments in science subjects in schools and university science faculties have been progressively falling for some time. You can tell people until you are blue in the face about the great advances that science and technology have brought to their lives, including standards of living, life expectancy, etc., but people are intrinsically still fearful of science and scientists. Current debates over genetically modified food and human genetic engineering are cases in point. Fortunately there was a wide consensus in Budapest on the need to focus far more on the popularisation of science.

The second key theme to emerge from Budapest was the need for better *science education*. There are significant deficiencies in relation to curriculum, modes of teaching, resources, approaches, funding, etc. I could present you with my own perceptions but far better I think to pass on to you some of the key outcomes of the relatively recent workshop in Beijing on “The reform in the teaching of science and technology at primary and secondary level”, reported in the newsletter of the International Bureau of Education. The authors Pilot and Osborne report that

"science education is based on a set of long-standing cultural norms that are accepted as legitimate. Upon closer examination however these norms do not always appear to be true. Moreover science is now perceived as a source of risk. Public distrust threatens science in two ways. Firstly, fewer students choose to enter scientific disciplines. Second, public distrust is in danger of placing unwarranted restrictions on future scientific research and technological development. Fear of a scientific catastrophe is leading the public to demand that restrictions be placed on research which may limit the contributions that science can make to solving the problems facing contemporary society".

The authors go on to speculate on reasons why the current practice in science education is failing to develop an appropriate understanding of science. They are talking predominantly about the natural sciences but there are important lessons in their message for the social sciences. The failure, they postulate, may be caused by a set of myths or eight "deadly sins" of science education. The first of these is the "myth of miscellaneous information" which occurs when a teacher tries to make students memorise a long series of facts, like the boiling point of water, or the density of substances, or the atomic weight of different elements, or the distance in light years to the various stars, without explaining to them the relevance or context of these facts.

There is the "fundamental myth" where it is argued that science education must be built up brick by brick, foot by foot, but the relevance and the value of all this information is not made clear to the student. There is the myth of "coverage" – some people see the science curriculum as like a sediment where all the extra knowledge keeps adding and adding, but nothing gets taken away. (They point out that no teacher of literature would try to teach every piece of literature that had ever been written, but science teachers want to teach every part of science.)

Of particular interest to the social scientists is their "myth of detached science". Science teachers, they claim, persist in presenting an idealised view of science as objective, detached and value-free, whereas in fact science is a socially situated product and the language and metaphors that it draws on are rooted in the culture and lives of the scientists who produce the new knowledge.

There is the "myth of critical thinking" where it is assumed that the study of science teaches students reflective critical thinking or logical analysis; but the truth is, say the authors, that scientists are no more or less rational than other people and this needs to be admitted and recognised.

I could go on but the drift of their argument is clear – these perceived defects in science education have done the scientific community no credit and may have inflicted long-term damage in terms of the popularisation of science. A great deal of this has to do with the calibre of our science teachers and educators but that is another story for another day. In some countries at present there is much talk of differential pay for teachers of different subject areas, a controversial measure but one which may be necessary to attract the highest calibre of talent to the science education profession. There is also a lot more that our Academies and Learned Societies could do for their colleagues in schools who, after all, are the feeder group and shopfront of the science profession. Hopefully these will be key elements in UNESCO's agenda in the follow-up to the Dakar World Conference on Education for All, and the renewal of the importance of the International Declaration on the Status of Teachers.

Another key outcome from the Budapest agenda was the importance of *ethics*. Here the essential message is that we now live in a world where innovation and experimentation in science and technology are occurring at a pace faster than the capacity of government legislators and policy-makers to address the profound implications of these changes, and introduce preventative measures and associated codes of behaviour. We only need to consider the Internet and genetic engineering to realize that the pace and complexity of technology and the investment behind it are so overwhelming as to daunt the efforts of policy-makers to legislate for ethical frameworks that will guide these innovations and address their widespread implications. It is a fairly safe generalisation to say that legislation lags behind scientific innovation by at least one and a half to two years, and international conventions or standard-setting instruments are commonly five years in the making. In this field UNESCO is attempting its task on a multilateral basis with conventions, declarations or other international policy instruments in fields such as the human genome, cyberspace and outer space, but the task is complex and the results will always appear to lag behind developments and trends.

It would not be a typical science gathering if the matter of *funding* for sciences did not arise as an issue and this was certainly true of Budapest. The focus was mostly on public funding but there is also the vital need for a greater partnership in funding between public and private sectors, not so easy in countries where there are no large-scale private foundations. In Australia we have experimented with some success with taxation incentives for research and development, cooperative research centres between universities and industry, various research grants schemes, awards, prizes, creation of large government scientific bodies, and incentives for international partnerships. We have also successfully employed the concept of a Chief Scientist who is adviser to the Prime Minister to give a holistic overview of the nation's scientific effort.

Yet despite the evidence that scientific research can provide a pronounced boost to productivity, most nations of the world invest far too little in this area. Also, for understandable reasons, there is often a skewness in favour of applied rather than pure research. This can be quite dangerous over the longer term because if there is not an appropriate balance between basic and applied science, we will lose the gene pool, the nation's fundamental scientific capacity, to foster development of all the sciences.

The question of funding is particularly acute for social scientists. Indeed, the life of social scientists can be very lonely indeed, struggling to gain financial and moral support, because their work is often politically embarrassing as it explores and exposes the value base of decision-makers, and the priorities of governments as reflected in their resource allocation. For governments, funding social scientists often seems like putting tools in the hands of burglars. Membership of a cross-national network can make a crucial difference for a social scientist in such circumstances and UNESCO, and particularly the MOST Programme, have played a crucial, positive role in this regard. Social scientists need regional and international support.

There was a lot of concern in Budapest about various *equity* issues in science, some relating to gender and the need to engage more women in science and to recognize their contribution. Many delegates wanted much greater encouragement of young scientists – not many countries go out of their way to offer positive encouragement to young people in the scientific professions. "Young scientists" should be one of the key hallmarks of all Member States, and bodies like UNESCO

must continue to provide the maximum range and number of opportunities for them to meet, network, be mentored, and be encouraged along their career path.

A different aspect of equity which frequently arose related to intellectual property rights and the difficulties for poorer countries in gaining access to knowledge which had been patented in developed countries.

Undoubtedly the most difficult issue to emerge in Budapest was the need for the international community to give greater recognition to traditional *indigenous knowledge* – a complicated area to address but a very important part of the future agenda. There appear to be two key strands to the challenge – indigenous communities want their knowledge to have equal status to that of Western knowledge, and they also want indigenous people to have improved access to Western knowledge itself. These aspects have emerged in our experience with UNESCO World Heritage Areas. Nominations for World Heritage listing have in the past been segregated between "natural" and "cultural" sites. For example, in our tropical rainforest areas, many sites are of cultural significance to indigenous peoples but it was difficult for them, living in a culture which has oral rather than written traditions, to meet the Western requirements for data gathering, verification, etc. which lay at the heart of World Heritage nomination and listing. More fundamentally of course, to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, it made no sense to divide the "natural" from the "cultural". After all, if you believe in spiritual pervasiveness through diffuse reincarnation, to divide the so-called natural and cultural elements of the environment, appears both artificial and superficial.

There were many other aspects of our current scientific world which Budapest managed to identify and magnify. I will mention just one more, perhaps the one which is the most vital in the context of our deliberations in the MOST Programme here today. I speak of the need for far more *transdisciplinarity* amongst all the sciences, hard, soft, or in between. The major problems currently facing this world require a transdisciplinary, ideally an interdisciplinary, approach. Key ecological aspects of the pursuit of human sustainable development are the quintessential example of this. There are many universities in the world pursuing this ideal; indeed a great many universities created in the second half of the twentieth century were structured along these lines rather than by the traditional faculty fault lines or silos. Yet I know of none that operates in a true interdisciplinary manner although they do have transdisciplinary approaches. We still do not have the paradigms, the conceptual frameworks, that could truly integrate the various strands of science in common paradigms. You will see in the current issue of the *International Political Science Review* devoted to the MOST Programme, the proposal that the intellectual foundation of the MOST Programme itself is already providing such a paradigm for scientific collaboration. Meanwhile we each, from our disciplinary bunker, throw up our own perspective and then we pool those perspectives in a central bunker and this is good – it is an advance. But it all needs to be taken further towards more holistic approaches for the sciences because this is necessary to address the major problems of the globe, and because it would produce more scientific research of relevance to policy-makers who are grappling with these issues.

The world of policy-making

Here we enter a very different world, one about which it is less easy to be prescriptive because, although there is in the literature a phenomenon now known as "policy science", I believe that policy-making is as much an art or skill as it is a

science. Any arena of human focused analysis occurring in the context of an open system is bound to be less predictable and rigorous – less open to definition and prescription. From my university programme we conduct a “policy skills” course for senior executives of large government organisations. We expose participants to all the literature and then invite a range of experienced policy advisers to come to share their experiences. They invariably begin by saying, “Ignore everything you have read in the textbooks because there is no formula for policy-making”. They then go on to speak of the significance to successful policy-making of luck, timing, communication skills, persuasive arguments, sound research, catering to foibles of ministers and governments, competing with policy advisers in other portfolios for space and attention, linking arguments to governments’ broader agendas and ideological positions, symbolism, craftsmanship in constructing proposals, etc.

Of course, the literature of policy-making is now immense and it has so many strands–policy context, policy as means or ends, the policy cycle, policy coordination, policy implementation and evaluation, policy systems, policy analysis, etc. Having bathed (more like soaked) in this literature and having also been blessed with a wide range of experience with policy-makers, I have come to the conclusion that the *process* of policy-making is the most worthwhile area upon which to focus to understand this world. For I believe it is possible to understand the reason for the content of a policy if one understands the evolutionary path its development has taken. I tell my students that two important tools in undertaking policy analysis are firstly to construct a chronology of key milestones in the development of that policy, and secondly a diagram demonstrating the various components of how the current policy process is supposed to work and how it does work. It is quite amazing how these two tools can instantly reveal the key forces that have been and are at work in any particular policy arena. It is also worth stating a rather obvious truth that the sounder the process of policy formulation and implementation, the sounder will be the policy itself.

Studying policy processes is not for the faint hearted. It is somewhat like reading a novel and ignoring the story but recalling the characterisation, the use of language, the development of the plot, the use of imagery, etc. Or another analogy is that it is like going to see a film and recalling the photography, the costumes, the synthesizing of the music, the make-up, etc. but ignoring the tale itself. Some see it as an infuriating, frustrating and pedantic pursuit but such a concentration on the process of policy-making does allow one to discern how the wood comes from the trees. As McLuhan put it, “the medium is the message”.

A dichotomy

Rather than embark on a guided tour of the literature of policy processes I think it will be more valuable for us to construct a dichotomy where we juxtapose the world of science with the world of policy to understand better the nature of the relationship we are attempting to forge and prosper. When I speak of “policy-makers” in this dichotomy I am referring largely to policy advisers to ministers or governments, although the word is used by some to include the ministers themselves. It also encompasses the implementation of policy, because many people think the policy process is complete once the cabinet decision is made, but case studies have shown that this is only the beginning as agencies quarrel over how to “interpret” the cabinet decision. Or else geography intervenes and a policy that looks crystal clear in the national capital is distorted many times over by the time it is delivered through several layers of bureaucracy thousands of kilometres away.

The first element of the dichotomy is the *time frame*. For a policy-maker it is always very short. A week is often a luxury and a day or even a few hours to develop a policy position is not unknown. For politicians themselves, time frame often means attention span – notoriously short. They say a day is a long time in politics. Many cabinets in systems of governance devote no more than half an hour to particular policy items on the agenda of their meetings. Even 10 to 15 minutes is not uncommon. By contrast, the time frame of a scientific researcher is considerably longer, especially if it is from hypothesis to final result. The situation is often exacerbated by the election cycle, commonly three-four years, which is barely long enough for any statesmanlike policy commitment. With an election imminent, politicians are more interested in survival than scientific advice telling them what is best in the long term, or being told they will have to wait for the results of the scientific study. This has been described as the loneliness of the long-distance thinker.

Related to this is *pace*. The pace of public opinion formation is different from that of science and technology, and more fickle and hence less predictable. The role of the media whether deliberate or inadvertent in shaping, distorting, or leading public opinion, introduces a crucial imponderable into the policy equation.

Language is a vital contrasting element of the two worlds. Policy-makers often find the technical language of scientists mind numbing. To scientists, policy-makers' language is glib, superficial, rhetorical and not value-free, hence apparently untrustworthy – asserting more than the evidence suggests, promising more than a system can deliver. There is also the complexity of the language – for scientists, particularly social scientists, most things are complex. For them there is no simple answer, indeed there is often a pot pourri of factors influencing a decision. But for policy-makers, both the problem, and especially its solution, must be simple, and sound simple and look simple, and that is how they craft it. And then to the ear of the scientist it sounds simplistic rather than simple, and hence offensive.

Most scientists would argue that policy-making should best proceed on an *empirical database*. Social scientists are more familiar with the basis of values in policy-making, natural scientists look more for sheer facts, but all scientists would prefer policy-makers to distinguish, more clearly than they usually do, which elements of the policy are based on advice relating to fact and which are the product of the values of the policy-makers themselves. This is a difficult area since value judgements are a product of so many influences and indeed some policy advisers may not overtly recognise the value systems which they are themselves bringing to bear on a policy decision. Neutrality or objectivity in policy analysis is an area fraught with difficulty, especially for policy advisers who often have one foot in each of two value systems.

But of all the components in this dichotomy, the one which highlights most clearly the contrast between the worlds of policy-making and science is the notion of *rationality*. It is no accident that the literature relating to the policy-making process is preoccupied with this theme. For most scientists the desirable, "rational" design of policy would involve establishing ends, and then appropriate means to achieve these ends. But the literature from the mid-twentieth century onwards began to despair of achieving this Holy Grail. The best one could hope for, said some, was to "satisfice" not maximise. Political man could not emulate economic man. Others said "incrementalism" in policy-making was the only thing attainable and was also desirable because it recognised the essential democratic nature of partisan mutual

adjustment in a real policy-making process. The term “muddling through” grew out of this debate. “Mixed scanning” was another popular phrase, or even “bounded rationality”.

What is of particular interest to us are the reasons advanced by those social scientists (many of whom were political scientists, others systems theorists or decision-making theorists), as to why the traditional notion of rational behaviour did not fit the real world of public policy-making. Important factors they mentioned were the lack of time to be able to even conceive let alone postulate all possible ends/means, the inability to disaggregate particular ends or goals from the jumble of social behaviour, and the sheer incapacity of the human mind to comprehend all the options available or to rank them even with the aid of modern cybernetics. There is also the absence of any meta-values framework to rank order options in some kind of hierarchy and the resource constraints which simply preclude a full range of options being considered. Overshadowing all is the sheer political context whereupon constantly shifting sands of popular opinion or behaviour render any immutable fixation with predetermined decisions impossible, especially in a robust political system with articulate citizens and a proactive range of competing interest groups.

Put at its simplest, scientists failed to comprehend that the most “rational” form of behaviour for a politician was to behave “irrationally”. If the prime end or goal of a politician is survival, then the ends/means relationship begins to look very different. Successful policy advisers are very quick to recognise this key characteristic of their masters and adapt their advice accordingly as they play their part along the transmission belt from scientist’s laboratory to the minister’s press release. More recently, it has been described as “spin doctoring”, which alerts us to the dearth of studies and research into the role of public opinion and the mass media in influencing policy-making – a fertile and much too neglected area due for more urgent research.

Considerations of both ethics and rationality in policy-making lead us to the conceptualisation of the *public interest*. This is an elusive concept at the best of times but there is clearly a dichotomy in how a scientist and a policy-maker approach the conceptualisation itself. All agree that policy should be in the public interest, but how to define it, measure it, determine it? How will we recognise the public interest when we see it? In this seed bed of values the appeal often lies to philosophical, meta-physical, or religious values. The literature of political economy and welfare economics also provides the starting point for many policy analysts, what with “invisible hands”, utilitarianism, social optimums, public choice, social capital and so on, all generally trying to unify community interests from individual interests. But it is not so easy to define a “public good” these days.

Interestingly the second half of the twentieth century saw policy-makers searching for techniques, processes, and measuring devices, which would help them in pursuit of policies which would be in the public interest. From methods like inquiries and feasibility studies grew cost-benefit analysis, national plans, strategic plans, environmental impact assessments, social impact statements, task forces, think tanks and various “mega-rationalist” bodies to overview the public sector and sometimes the whole economy or society. The evolution of those techniques was from the micro to the macro, in a pursuit of objective processes that would ideally, at the pressing of a button, weigh up the evidence and options and give a simple answer. When these techniques were used as aids to policy-making they were useful; when they were substitutes for policy-making they were dangerous. Many social scientists continue to make valuable contributions through these various mechanisms

but many have also been sucked into the power play these tools present. It is an important lesson.

The tensions inherent in this dichotomy could be reduced considerably if more care were taken over the *nature of the research base* which is being constructed. The power and influence of the scientist are increased exponentially if the scientist is arguing from a sound research base. Policy advisers, in turn, know that the policy they are designing will not survive the heat of the political fracas if it is not based on sound data and argumentation. But a frequent problem is that the support which comes from the researchers is not in a form suitable for policy-makers. Quite often scientific researchers produce complex results, they do not communicate those results simply and concisely – they do not seem to be able to convey the essence of what their research is saying in language the policy-maker can understand. The abstracts are too abstract. Indeed, some have even refused to simplify their results out of high-handed attitudes dressed up as professional principles. I have watched policy advisers search databases of research institutions on the Internet for the key words associated with their current urgent policy dilemma, but to no avail, because the titles and abstracts are not configured in such a way as to assist them.

It is sadly also too often the case that for the big issues which policy-makers have to face there is nobody researching them. Take education. Big current issues facing governments relate to lifelong learning, facilitating pathways, optimum national curriculum and core curriculum, appropriate age for specialisation, factors affecting the student's choice of subjects, desirable approaches to assessment, how to balance general and vocational education, etc. Very little research in education is addressed squarely at these issues. Indeed the research scene is littered with other micro projects to inform us highly about some idiosyncratic elements of school life, or socio-economic factors, or sweeping data sets on the surface of cohorts rarely accompanied by any drilling down below the surface to identify influential factors. Moreover, education, like virtually all of the social sciences, does not have enough longitudinal studies, so that it is not possible to brief policy-makers adequately on the significant trends occurring or the causal influences beneath them. Hence no early warning system can be put in place to keep policy-makers alert to impending developments which they will have to address.

For all of these reasons there is a need for a much closer interface between policy-makers and researchers so that each understands the policy agenda. I am not suggesting that governments should manipulate the researchers, and there must always be a place for curiosity-led research. Apples will continue to fall without the tree having to be shaken. Policy-makers should, however, signal constantly and clearly the knowledge they need to have at their disposal and the gaps in that knowledge which are hindering them. We have had some success in Australia in the field of technical and vocational education and training by conducting each year a "Research Jamboree" where key researchers are gathered and addressed by policy advisers simply informing them of current and looming issues facing ministers and governments.

My essential point is that it does seem strange and dangerous that there is so often a misfit or an asymmetry between the needs of the policy-makers and the research that is being (or is not being) conducted. Clearly there is a need for policy-makers and scientific researchers to develop forums, chat rooms, common spaces for dialogue and signalling on a regular basis.

The personal interface

If we probe a little more deeply towards the actual point of the interface between these two worlds we can learn even more. If we zoom in close enough we can capture the personal interaction of the scientist and the policy-maker, especially in the realm of governance which is where I have spent most of my own working life.

There has long been a concept in the literature, evidenced in the mores of most democratic systems, that the best system of governance is where advisers give "frank and fearless" advice to ministers. This rubric is applied particularly to scientists working in the civil service. Indeed, the axiom can be stood on its head to say that when an adviser gives a minister advice which he or she believes the minister wants to hear, rather than the advice which the minister should hear, the seeds of a politicised civil service are sewn, quickly grow, and the public interest is not served.

Now throughout history this aspect has long been of considerable concern. It reached crisis proportions in relation to the so-called "scientific" advice given to governments during the Second World War in regard to development of the atomic bomb. There are now many case studies, indeed transcripts of trials, of the flow of advice from scientist to minister, some of it not very pretty reading. The ethical dimensions of that personal interface have given rise to a great deal of analysis. Much of it gave rise to that oft quoted question: "should an expert be on top or on tap?"

In a so-called Westminster system of government, civil servants used to be given permanent tenure to guarantee they would give politically neutral advice and that they could serve any government of any political persuasion with equal dedication and commitment. The American system and some like systems are different, with the top players of the civil service deliberately politicised presumably to ensure sympathy or empathy with the elected administration. But even a member of the United States cabinet is not well served if this just becomes a spoils system. A good minister will appreciate and demand frank and fearless advice whatever the context, and a good adviser will give it. However, it does need to be said that the more top advisers are placed on contract rather than tenure, the greater will be the propensity for them and their advice to become politicised: such is human nature.

Of course a great deal of this gets down to the ethics of the professional, the scientist working in government. There have been many civil servants who have fallen foul of government codes of conduct and behaviour, in fact many have been sacked or severely disciplined. A fair proportion have been scientists, quite often medicos. The reason is not hard to find. Scientists belong to professions which invariably have their own code of ethics and those codes usually speak of openness, accountability, the sharing of knowledge and collegiality, whereas the code of conduct for civil servants is usually about secrecy, confidentiality, anonymity, loyalty to the government of the day, etc. Consequently there are often cases when scientists working in government are compromising their professional ethics to abide by government codes of conduct re their behaviour.

What does it matter? Well, that depends of course, on the subject matter involved. There have been cases where scientists have had to suppress vital data and analysis relating to medical conditions, socio-economic trends, ineffectiveness of government actions, conditions in various public institutions. Or they are told to delay or even suppress the release of data of an economic, social or technical kind. Even

more poignantly, scientists have had to remain silent about the very advice they have given to ministers and governments. Serious as this situation is, it is compounded if the ministers individually, or the cabinet as a whole manages to escape accountability for the consequences of neglecting, or rejecting the advice they have been given. In the worst-case scenario a rogue minister may blame the scientist for the outcome and if the scientist's lips are sealed, a very serious dilemma arises. Is the loyalty of a scientist in the civil service always to the elected government or to some broader notion of public interest? This is a particularly pertinent question in view of the staggering increase in litigation against governments over their decisions and actions, and the establishment in many systems of governance of a plethora of quasi-judicial or para-parliamentary accountability regimes.

This situation has been compounded in many countries by reforms to the structure of the machinery of government which have invaded the space between the scientist and the policy-maker. The career path of scientists in government is a case in point. They can usually climb up three-quarters of a civil service ladder as scientists, but then their scale ends and to advance they must become managers. The best scientists are often lost to management.

In very many countries scientists work in statutory authorities which are meant to be at "arms length" from ministers, so protecting them from undue political interference. But in some systems of government the independence of these statutory bodies themselves has often been compromised. Or a minister may use other instruments to blunt the advice coming from the scientific body. A government department may be asked to comment on the advice being given by the statutory authority and it will naturally do so from a perspective of promoting its own turf, its portfolio position relative to other portfolios, or its own budget, or simply to retain its power position close to the minister. The scientific statutory body may never be shown the advice which the department gave the minister about its own advice. Then again it is now common in most governmental systems for ministers to employ political advisers who, in turn, comment on all other advice coming to the minister, quite often setting up their own consultative procedures. Once again there is no way that the scientist can check this advice for its rigour or authenticity, or any aspersions which have been cast on their own judgements or advice to the minister.

Over the past 20 years, in most Western systems of governance, there has been a great deal of contracting out of government services, including specialist advice, and this has materially affected scientists. Problems have arisen, not so much with the principle of contracting out, but with the manner in which it has been handled. Very often government departments, and hence ministers, thereby lose the corporate memory relating to that policy arena. They often are not left with enough residual expertise or critical mass to be able to comprehensively appraise the advice and recommendations they are receiving from consultants or other outsourced arrangements. They have little way of knowing if they are receiving true value for money. Moreover the outsourced advice achieves a status and mystique of its own which no remaining government scientist can hope to penetrate. Finally, there is also the real potential for the politicisation of the contracting out process itself, resulting in the work going to entities which will provide the kind of advice the government wants to hear. Outsourcing policies themselves seldom have as much rigour as they should.

In other words, we have witnessed, in the last two decades of the twentieth century, fundamental changes in patterns of governance which have impacted heavily on the role of the scientist, particularly those who work within government.

They are now in a jungle, a melange of policy apparatus so complex that the need for them to clarify their role, adhere to their ethics and professional standards, has become paramount. I am constantly surprised how little attention the world's professional scientific bodies pay to those problems and how slow they are to come to the defence of their members; more importantly, how seldom they put forward constructive proposals to governments to address these issues.

Now there is nothing inherently wrong in many of these developments and they ought not to be viewed solely from an ideological or self-interest perspective. Democratically elected governments are perfectly entitled to rearrange their sources of policy advice and the blending of that advice as they see fit. Indeed, it is inherently healthy in a democratic system for ministers to receive a range of advice from differing perspectives. All I am advocating is a vigilant watch to ensure that the advice given by the scientist to the policy-maker can remain frank and fearless and in the public interest. When frameworks change, relationships and behaviour also often change and the plight of the scientist, like that of all expert advisers, needs to be closely monitored.

Enter UNESCO and the experience of MOST

The social science programme of UNESCO has always been important. It is in the mind that the defences of peace must be constructed and therefore the social sciences have a central position in UNESCO's mandate. Since the establishment of the Organisation, UNESCO has addressed many important international issues of the human condition and has certainly established widespread networks and linkages with the social science profession and its peak bodies. Some seminal work was performed, for example in development, ethics, peace, and human rights. However, the social science programme has always been significantly underfunded, and in my early involvement with UNESCO I was surprised to find that the Social Science Sector saw this as much as a battle with the Natural Science Sector as with the rest of the Organisation for a share of that funding. For this and probably other reasons, UNESCO made some brave attempts but never seemed to achieve its true global observatory/early warning function in the social sciences. Indeed, quite the opposite seemed to be the case, and, as occurs in many countries, the social sciences were looked to after catastrophes had occurred or after other experts had devised technical solutions without taking human perspectives into account. Despite the obvious truth that it is better to have a fence at the top of the cliff than an ambulance at the bottom, the true preventative role which the social sciences can so effectively perform was not occurring. This was despite the professional commitment of so many members of the Secretariat in the Social Science Sector. Moreover, the social science research for which UNESCO served as a catalyst was not well linked to the policy-makers who could act upon that research.

It was in this milieu that MOST was born, in 1994, as the first intergovernmental social science programme of UNESCO. I recall presiding over the Social Science Commission of the UNESCO General Conference at the time, and chairing meetings to formulate the Statutes for the MOST Programme and steer them through the Bureau.

The programme captured well the spirit of the times characterised as they were throughout the world by social transformations on a scale seldom seen before. Countries with recently discarded totalitarian regimes were now pursuing democratic political systems and market economies. They came to UNESCO seeking assistance.

Ecological disasters and threats demanded new holistic approaches to sustainable development. Severe political and social tensions had arisen from patterns of mega-migration particularly affecting refugees and itinerants confronting not just a lack of facilities but also a lack of identity, status and citizenship. Urbanisation had reached a scale unprecedented in world history with severe attendant problems for human populations and associated enormous pressure on the heavily populated coastal zones of the world and fragile ecosystems.

As a new generation UNESCO programme, MOST was readily embraced by the governments of Member States and the reasons are not hard to find. It has three quite specific objectives. It has a sunset clause with a formal life of eight years with a mid-term and final evaluation. Its themes are transversal; its approach transdisciplinary. It operates by way of mobilising international social science networks. But the key ingredient in its appeal is that it seeks to link social science research with policy-making and social scientists themselves with policy-makers.

Through the important initiative of the Joint Chairs of UNESCO's intergovernmental scientific programmes, it has forged new links and synergies with the Natural Science Sector, particularly in the area of sustainable development, and has played a prominent role in follow-up to key United Nations Summits, e.g. Rio, Cairo, Copenhagen and Istanbul. It was a key partner in the Budapest World Conference on Science where UNESCO's first world social science report was released. And recently UNESCO has entrusted to the MOST Programme the leading role in coordinating a new UNESCO strategy for poverty eradication.

It really is quite a remarkable story – during the first phase of only four years, with 109 countries participating in 23 projects involving transnational researchers from several disciplines, 55 countries with MOST liaison committees. MOST came successfully through its mid-term evaluation by a team of Dutch evaluators. (The Dutch must be the most rigorous evaluators in the world – is it something in their genes or is it because they are powered by windmills?)

The programme has generated a great deal of research of key relevance to policy-makers. It has also actually brought many researchers into contact with policy-makers. It has achieved transdisciplinary approaches to problems that transcend national boundaries. It has kicked new life into UNESCO's social science programme. But much remains to be done in the remainder of its formal normal life span. As the evaluation recognised, the key objective in this period must be to link the myriad results of the research effort of the first half of the programme directly to policy-making and this is the key challenge facing you all at this meeting of the Intergovernmental Council here today. An ancillary but related goal is to transfer the policy research results obtained through the programme to other users of social science knowledge: policy- and decision-makers, civil society organisations, NGOs, grass-roots communities, educators and opinion leaders. As some of you will know, I would like to see the discipline of economics more involved in the projects, as well as a greater emphasis on issues of governance, citizenship and youth.

The role of MOST

But what of your role in the new partnership of researchers and policy-makers? What contribution can be played by the MOST Programme?

Please allow me to be bold enough to suggest a few steps.

1. Back to the Origins

The first step of course is to do as the mid-term evaluation has done and revisit the original goals for the MOST Programme as outlined in the original feasibility study:

> "Purpose 1: Fostering the production of knowledge on social transformations;
>
> Purpose 2: Enhancing the relevance of social science research and expertise for policy-making and development;
>
> Purpose 3: Strengthening the scientific, professional and institutional capacities, particularly in developing countries".

Then take up the key recommendation from the Mid -Term Evaluation, viz.:

> "emphasise MOST's central objective of contributing to a more effective use of results from social science research in policy- and decision-making."

And, for good measure, recall the passage of the Review and the UNESCO Executive Board response, the key element of which was:

> "the reconfirmation of the social research and policy interface as the major *raison d'être* for MOST".

2. Tidy up the house

We need a review of all of the past and current MOST projects to rejig their findings into the format of a "policy-relevant template" useful for policy-makers, paying particular attention to useful synopses/abstracts. These would be in policy-friendly language that would focus on potential outcomes from the research, not just concepts, so that policy-makers would be able to identify their potential. For this review the Scientific Steering Committee could have a major input. So too should UNESCO's Institute for Statistics. Indeed, we must make much greater use of the Institute in its professional capacity because statisticians are essential partners for the social science programmes and there would be a very effective partnership dynamic for MOST and the Institute working together towards these objectives. Statisticians themselves are key social scientists. In this exercise it is important for researchers to envisage the whole policy process from advice to formulation, decision, implementation and evaluation.

Once this has been completed for these programmes and the results conveyed to appropriate policy-makers it should be possible to distribute the template to all current and future MOST researchers, so that it can be applied to all phases of their research from design to implementation.

3. Link the "soft" and the "hard"

It is crucial to develop further the links which have emerged with the natural science sector of UNESCO over recent years. New partnerships throughout a range of new projects should be established. For an effective contribution from the sciences to policy-making, these synergies are indispensable; ideally, they should include transdisciplinary approaches. If some basic conceptual research work could also begin on paradigms for interdisciplinarity, this would be a great step forward and an invaluable tool for researchers. For my own part I believe the paradigms within the

policy discipline itself are a useful starting point, particularly systems theory which has an endemic synergy with scientific analysis. The mechanism of the Joint Chairs of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Scientific Programmes is one excellent modality and the follow-up to the various United Nations conferences is an important enabling agenda.

4. Family reunion

Then it is time to step out of the 7th and 16th arrondissements to renew the relationships with the whole international social science family. That is a relatively easy task because the MOST Programme has been maintaining strong links with the peak international and regional social science bodies, as well as many national academies. But the new drive for a social science research policy-making dynamic, which will emanate from UNESCO, needs to be conveyed, and the support of the social science global family enlisted, including isolated social scientists throughout the world.

5. Catch the waves

This is perhaps the most urgent imperative, for there are a number of exciting waves of change and reform occurring in the sea that surrounds and permeates the MOST Programme.

- The first is the *Matsuura wave*. The new Director-General of UNESCO has embarked on a very positive and constructive reform programme for the Organisation, many elements of which will provide potent forces for a MOST research-policy partnership. He has retained the Social Science Sector and its programmes, an extremely wise decision, and has acknowledged the vital importance of the MOST Programme. He has signalled the ethics of science as a key priority for UNESCO. He has made bold moves to introduce cross-sectoral and transdisciplinary frameworks into the next Medium-Term Strategy (31 C/4)and Programme and Budget (31 C/5), including one of two major cross-cutting themes on poverty eradication, with a leading role for the Social Science Sector and the MOST Programme. Mr Matsuura is strongly encouraging partnerships especially with the private sector, entrepreneurial bodies, financial institutions, other multilateral agencies and the whole of the United Nations network. He has set in place a strategy to lift the visibility of UNESCO's endeavours. And all of this will be mobilized by a new senior management team working in a collegiate manner. Each of these elements is good news and taken together they provide a framework and motivating force which can provide the catalyst for the orientation of the MOST Programme towards its potential policy-making partners.

- The second is the *Budapest wave*. Even a cursory reading of the "Science Agenda – Framework for Action" emanating from the World Conference on Science, sends the signals of opportunity. Indeed there are complete slabs of recommendations precisely on this theme, e.g. "Science in society and science for society", "Science and policy", "Ethical issues", etc.

Consider these sentiments:

"28. In view of the increasing complexity of decision-making in the contemporary world, scientists should be more proactive in their contribution to

national policy-making. The role of science in society and governance has never been more important".

And then these more specific prescriptions:

"61. Governments should make an effort to use scientific expertise more systematically in policy-making, addressing the process of economic and technological transformation. The contribution of scientists should be an integral part of programmes supporting either innovations or measures aimed at industrial development or restructuring.

Scientific advice is an increasingly necessary factor for informed policy-making in a complex world. Therefore scientists, and scientific bodies, should consider it an important responsibility to provide independent advice to the best of their knowledge."

- Then there is the *wave of global reconceptualization* being undertaken in many crucial international arenas. Among international financial circles the so-called "Washington Consensus" is being debated. The World Bank and other key international and regional financial bodies have recognised the importance of investment in human-centred developments. The new approach to triple bottom-line accounting takes human and environmental factors into account in measuring company performance; so too does human capital accounting. The remarkable success of microfinance has demonstrated the potential at the grass-roots level for partnerships with financial institutions to arrest poverty and unlock human potential including entrepreneurial capacity. New links with education and particularly Technical and Vocational Education and Training are being opened up and education policy linked more closely to economic policy. Many public and private bodies have realised the importance of investment aimed at ensuring democratic governance, stability and the preservation of market economies in regions which are in transition from command systems. Human Sustainable Development has achieved recognition as a mobilising theme well beyond the previous confines of the environmental bodies. Philanthropy is on the rise among many mega-companies and conglomerates and the potential for business to contribute to welfare is being explored.

These and many other developments are signs of a shift in values which are highly pertinent for a programme whose focus is social transformation. They offer tremendous potential for linkages aimed at policy-making from sound social science research bases.

6. Create the forums

Then the MOST Programme will be truly prepared to meet with the policy-makers. The meetings cannot be just virtual. Posting, faxing or even emailing the results of social science research to policy-makers will not be sufficient no matter how relevant or attractively packaged the results of that research might be. The MOST Programme, throughout the second phase of its existence, needs to establish actual forums, meeting places, real live chat rooms, where researchers sit down with policy-makers to consider the research and the means of its implementation and subsequent evaluation. Although this can be steered from Headquarters, UNESCO's cluster offices and the MOST liaison committees must play a vital role in this regard. In preparation for these forums, it would help if the Secretariat of the MOST

Programme, working closely with the Scientific Steering Committee, could produce a framework whereby the research outcomes are oriented towards policy outcomes, and where the design of the forums will ensure that they are effective. The framework can then be propagated throughout the MOST networks.

By the time of the next final evaluation of MOST there ought ideally to have been forums between researchers and policy-makers in every programme in all the regions.

Geared up in this way, the expertise of the MOST Programme and its networks can also be offered to policy-makers to act as global observatories, consultants, clearing houses, and particularly as brokers for the supply of relevant knowledge and skill to the policy-making market. The MOST networks can easily fulfil these ancillary and entrepreneurial roles if they are given the guidance and frameworks for these partnerships with policy-makers.

The purpose of the new partnership

All of this is very well but a scientist/policy-maker partnership is not an end in itself – it is a means to an end. And once the partnership has been effectively achieved it has powerful potential, which can immediately be unleashed on some of the key issues confronting the world of this twenty-first century.

Those issues should certainly include the ongoing agenda of MOST – multicultural and multi-ethnic societies, cities and urban social and environmental issues, strategies for coping at the local level with global environmental, technological and economic pressures. They must also encompass the transversal dimensions such as poverty and exclusion, sustainability and sustainable development, international migrations, and governance. The science policy partnerships will obviously have to address these in very practical and not just conceptual ways – after all, to eradicate poverty you cannot eat a paradigm.

There are many other highly significant social transformations occurring in this world that could benefit immensely from the attention of a science/policy partnership including the growing digital divide between not just the haves and the have-nots, but the know and know-nots; the impact of profound labour market changes in developed as well as developing countries, especially the casualization of the labour force; the agony of those crucial moments of transition for a learner on the journey of lifelong learning; the turbulence created in the value systems of cultures subject to the impact of the small and large screen.

In all of these areas, UNESCO's ethical mission, its standard setting, its mobilising catalytic function, its early warning global observatory function, and crucially its capacity-building role are vital. In my own region of Asia and the Pacific and especially in the subregion of the Pacific, the number one modality required from UNESCO by Member States is always signalled as "capacity-building" and here a scientist/policy partnership could make a major contribution. All it needs is to remind national governments that social scientists are often their unclaimed treasure.

The greatest social transformation

I make a special pleading for this new partnership to engage **young people** in its mission and to focus on their needs. For currently, in their minds and value

systems, is occurring probably the greatest social transformation this world has ever witnessed, and we cannot take it for granted that they will choose the path of altruism, universal harmony, selflessness, justice and tolerance. Facing high rates of youth unemployment, as products of education systems with often irrelevant curriculums, watching corrupt and selfish behaviour in community leaders, faced with images on the large and small screen of violence and inhumanity, influenced by media portrayals of new role models, and confronted by value systems in conflict with those of their traditional societies, it is too easy for them to become introverted, cynical and alienated. This is especially true of the 15-24 year olds who are not just the largest single age group in the world but who also represent our hopes for the perpetuation of the values of peace and human development which symbolize UNESCO's mission. Thankfully UNESCO's own research and experience show that within the heart of each young person lies a desire to contribute, to make a difference, to be part of a vision. They do not want to be seen as the problem but rather part of the solution. UNESCO has a wealth of experience in youth programmes and is well placed to play a role. The new Director-General has retained youth as a key emphasis and the Organisation, especially through its social science programmes, can play a pivotal role in creating peace in the minds of youth.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The need for a new partnership between scientists and policy-makers is easily demonstrated. The purposes of such a partnership are clear. The modalities are already in place. The time is ripe and the beckoning waves are rolling in the seachange enveloping UNESCO and its partners.

This is the dawn of a new millennium where, more than ever before, knowledge is power. Many nations have already realised that their comparative advantage, their competitive advantage, lies in their scientific and technological capacity. To engage that capacity they need a new partnership between policy-makers and scientists. The same is true for the global village, and the MOST Programme is strategically placed to play a pivotal role in this international partnership with its proud record, vibrant networks, and extremely relevant mandate.

But speaking as one who strands the two worlds of social science and policy, my experience leads me to believe that it is the social scientists who need to take the initiative to engage with the policy-makers. And after all, ours is a natural empathy with them since we share two key common characteristics – we are both soft and inexact.

To address the key issues confronting communities across the globe, policy-makers need the benefit of social science research that is relevant, timely, transdisciplinary, methodologically capable of capturing global and local trends, swift to respond to fundamental issues, and offering findings which are clearly articulated, effectively disseminated and oriented to outcomes.

It is a big task, but from my observations I believe that the MOST Programme is more than equal to the challenge.

ANNEX III

PANEL ON "RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE MOST PROGRAMME

I. Research project on "Cities, environment and social relations between men and women" of the Swiss MOST Committee and policy formulation in the social sciences

François Hainard[2]

All research work is capable of contributing to the dynamics of the science upon which it draws. The work carried out by Switzerland under the MOST Programme is no exception to the rule.

Allow me to begin by recalling the general idea and principal objectives of the MOST research project supported by Swiss technical cooperation and the Swiss National Commission for UNESCO. The project was based on the hypothesis that a crosswise look at the topics of the environment, cities and gender relations would bring a fresh perspective to each of them. It starts from the observation that women and men are not involved in the same way in the urban environment, and that innovative approaches often emanate from women's movements interested in changing the environmental situation in cities as well as women's place and role in decision-making processes.

The work is coordinated by researchers in Switzerland, and involves seven research teams from Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Bulgaria and Romania. The field locations are all difficult both from the environmental point of view and in terms of living conditions (economic integration, poverty, health, education and participation in decision-making). The methodological approach involves action-research, and therefore implies not only the study of specific urban realities but also the identification of problems and support for projects conducted with the communities concerned.

There are many different objectives; they can, however, be divided into two main groups:

- the collection of information conducive to thinking about development in the countries of the South along new lines, in particular that of the empowerment of women;

- the establishment of a North-South network of social science researchers specialising in the urban environment combined with a gender approach.

The project has already been the subject of various publications, including a book and a scientific review article[3].

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2 François Hainard has a doctorate in sociology, and studied at the University of Neuchâtel (Switzerland) and Cornell University (USA). After several years at the Ecole polytechnique fédérale in Lausanne, he now holds a chair in sociology at the University of Neuchâtel (Switzerland) and is particularly concerned with issues of economic sociology (migrations, know-how, consumer trends, etc.). He is also the chairperson of the MOST Committee of the Swiss National Commission for UNESCO.

3 F. Hainard, C. Verschuur et al. Relations de genre et environnements urbains précaires [Gender relations and vulnerable urban environments], Karthala, Paris (to be published shortly).

It is doubtful whether there are any real innovations in terms of policy-making proposals to include in the MOST Programme or in the social science research field in general. On the other hand, we feel certain that there are a few clarifications and reminders that are both necessary and urgent. We shall summarise them under six headings.

1. Efforts to establish principles for scientific partnership with researchers in the developing countries

In the belief that scientific research designed to solve social, environmental and development problems requires a better geographical distribution of scientific capacities and systematic cooperation between researchers, policy-makers, economists and civil society (KFPE, 1999, p. 2),[4] we need to set up cooperation mechanisms in the form of international networks which respect certain rules of scientific partnership.

These rules, or rather principles, are interdependent and concern the objectives, implementation and monitoring of scientific partnership activities between industrialised and developing countries (KFPE, 1999, pp. 8-9). Without going into details here, and without attempting to be exhaustive (we refer interested readers to the publication already mentioned), we note that these principles include the need to share administrative and scientific responsibilities, to ensure the transparency of funding devoted to the project, to monitor the progress of cooperation, and to publicise and make effective use of the results. Furthermore, while the aim of "strengthening research capacities" is essential, it goes hand in hand with the need to look beyond research in the strict sense by involving scientists in the application of the results of their work to civil society.

2. Action not only to establish research networks but to make them permanent

This is an important objective both of the MOST Programme and of our own research; but it also undoubtedly represents a survival strategy for the social sciences in general. The social sciences are constantly being blamed for their failure to network. Everybody works in isolation, in parallel with other teams and other projects, but without ever genuinely exchanging and comparing hypotheses and results.

While some disciplines do not necessarily require large-scale structures or substantial technical resources, the observation and management of social transformations, if they are to be relevant and credible, must be linked together in a set-up that involves constant comparison. This calls for close attention to both the financial and the technical and participatory aspects of networking and its management. All this, it should be realised, requires money, time and a great deal of energy, since networking tends to function in a highly centripetal manner. Sound organisation and the effective functioning of a genuine research network lay the groundwork for successful research. These considerations, however, have not yet been taken to heart by social science researchers. As regards the Swiss MOST

F. Hainard and C. Verschuur, 2001, "Filling the urban policy breach: Women's empowerment, grass-roots organizations and urban governance" in *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp. 33-53.

[4] KFPE, Swiss Commission for Partnership with Developing Countries, 1999, Guide du partenariat scientifique avec les pays en voie de développement [Guide to scientific partnership with the developing countries], Berne.

research project, the network of seven partner teams is only just beginning to function as it should, following an initial four-year phase of operations. The situation is ideal for strengthening this network in the next four years, since we have the good fortune to be able to continue the project – although we may well feel uneasy about the length of time it took us to reach this point.

The second aspect of the problem is precisely that of finding the wherewithal to undertake such a long-term project. This ties in with the following points concerning the resources available to the social sciences, and the need to take up topics over the medium and long term.

3. The need to make effective use of results and to strengthen research capacities

It is a fact that research projects involving industrialised and developing countries are often geared to concrete problems and accordingly raise high hopes among the populations concerned. In such cases, it is not enough to publish the results; we start from the principle that these have to be applied in practice. Of course, this does not depend on the researchers alone, but also to a considerable extent on the funding sources. It should be realised that expectations have been aroused not only among the communities concerned, but also among the research teams, and, of course, the project leaders.

In addition to the anticipated results, the purpose of the partnership should be to strengthen research. Every research effort enhances the skills of all concerned, above all perhaps in the developing countries. However, the problem, as in the case of the industrialised countries but to an even more marked extent in the South, is how to keep the teams in place and to develop the skills required for the subjects under study. We find ourselves in situations in which the continuity of research is a recurrent problem – one that blights the social sciences, whether in Europe or elsewhere, because the possibility of long-term work on the same subject is severely restricted. The fact is that researchers are constantly having to take up new subjects in order to make ends meet.

4. The need to secure proper working conditions

The resources available to the social sciences are rarely sufficient to carry out serious research over a long period (for instance, a dozen or so years). For this reason there is a major need to inform the media and the public, to sensitise those in charge of research policies, and even to lobby the institutions that provide funding and fellowships and take decisions on major research programmes. MOST is a genuine exception, not only in regard to UNESCO but also in the context of the whole field of the social sciences. We have to be aware of the endemic poverty of the social sciences, and to denounce it. In financial terms, the social sciences are marginal, despite the fact that their task is to study the central problems facing our societies: economic and social inequalities, multiculturalism, migratory flows, violence, urban management, relations with the environment, development, and so on.

We therefore need the minimum resources that will allow us not only to draw up projects, operate research networks, monitor their progress, and arrange for the various partner or rival teams to meet one another in the flesh, but also to make optimal use of the results after each project’s official closure, facilitate the acquisition

of new knowledge, keep communities informed, strengthen the scientific capacities of the partner countries and thus contribute to sustainable development.

5. Joint determination of the research subject and the content of the issues involved

While it is clearly inadvisable to present a fully fledged project to the potential partners, the procedures for obtaining funding and sponsorship (UNESCO/MOST) require a more or less finalised version. For this reason, scientific research projects are almost always submitted in final form to the partners. This is contrary to professional ethics and doubtless scientifically counter-productive as well.

Of course the joint effort needed to finalise a project can pose very difficult problems, depending on the topics considered. The study of the social relations between men and women, for example, was barely touched upon or even totally unknown among certain research teams in the partner countries; the same applies to the approach involving action-research. Some subjects call for introductory work and training in order to create a theoretical common denominator.

Conversely, participation and negotiation on how the issues are to be interpreted and applied in each of the field locations are more straightforward because they are clearly more necessary. Every partner team should be allowed plenty of room for manoeuvre.

6. Learning to manage cultural differences

In any research project, difficulties and successes are always very closely interlinked. Even so, a number of factors seriously complicate the implementation of research work that is interdisciplinary and involves several regions of the world: even if everything is foreseen from the outset in terms of timetable, budget and of course the issues under study, nothing is ever absolutely certain, and everything may be jeopardised by the dead-weight and inertia resulting from the specific background and professional career of the teams. In addition to the problem of scant resources, the initial agreements on basic principles generally come up against cultural differences reflected in representations of time, money and on occasion the very notion of scientific rigour.

Lastly, it is undoubtedly the positing of the problem that requires the most effort if the many adjustments are to be made. Often enough, issues that were taken to be understood and shared turn out not to be, or only partially so, or in different ways. The whole project has to be thrashed out over and over again.

We have to continue our reflections on the matter if we are to improve the quality of collaboration in research carried out by networking between industrialized and developing countries. For this purpose, the recommendations should take account of the need to learn how to manage cultural ambivalence and the non-linear nature of research dynamics, including instances of inertia and failures.

II. Research-Policy Interaction: The African Perspective

Charly Gabriel Mbock

> "Le changement ne peut se comprendre que comme processus de création collective à travers lequel les membres d'une collectivité donnée *apprennent* ensemble, c'est-à-dire *inventent* et fixent de nouvelles façons de jouer le jeu social de la coopération et du conflit, bref, une nouvelle praxis sociale"
>
> *Crozier and Friedberg, 1977, 30.*

Introduction

Anyone who thinks that using knowledge is but normal in any human society might not get my point. The worth and the use of knowledge are precisely *not* obvious for decision-makers in Africa.

Some social facts may enlighten that assertion:

- *Knowledge* has been confused with *schooling* or *instruction*;
- Those who colonized Africa showed their might through instruction; any African who went to school meant to climb the ladder of the White Power, most of the time to exert his power upon his own people;
- African indigenous knowledge and local technologies have been undermined, in spite of their efficiency in the management of social critical situations;
- That knowledge was shared through specific rituals as a common heritage. Nowadays, competition and the *marketization* of the world have transformed knowledge into goods for sale;

As a matter of ***hypothesis***, any investigation on research-policy interaction in Africa is wondering *whether the present standard of research-policy relations can provide the continent with a sustainable and comprehensive pattern for social and productive governance.*

African social scientists may have to address the need for a new social paradigm.

1. Research-Policy interaction: A Twofold challenge

For research in social sciences to be relevant, and for its results to be *workable*, the social context must be specified, and clearly localized. That constraint is plain and well known. Yet it is not merely methodological; sometimes it has a theoretical influence: definitions of concepts in social sciences usually express social fights; some of their meanings are closely related to social stakes (Sayad, 1987, 9-26)[5]. The

[5] Sayad, A. « *Les changements sémantiques, en apparence de nature purement symbolique, correspondent en réalité à des changements d'un autre ordre, à des changements dans la structure des rapports de force entre, d'un côté, les groupes sociaux au sein d'une même société et, de l'autre côté, les sociétés en relation d'interaction, c'est-à-dire à des changements dans les positions qu'occupent les différents partenaires intéressés à des définitions différentes* … ».

stake here is not only *scientific*, but *political*: the need for a new social paradigm seems as comprehensive and global as urgent.

As far as research is concerned, interaction is a twofold challenge: it must first take place *among* scientists before it becomes a reality *between* scientists and decision-makers. The first step to research-policy interaction is interdisciplinarity. That step is scientific. As its field is within the scientific community, one could use the daring term of “intraction” to name it. Intraction is the first achievement scientists must secure before they strive for interaction. Only researchers who succeed in bridging the gap between the different and specific disciplines happen to be in a mental mood to link research to policy.

It is that second step which is *political*, in the original Greek conception of the *Polis*.

Pierre Thuillier (1988, 60) did show the necessity to link science to social realities: the consequences of scientific results are not simply theoretical and scientific; they happen to be practical and economical. To Benjamin Farrington ([1939]1965, 31) it is obvious that the future development of science is a matter of politics. T. Shinn (1980) enlightened that link when he demonstrated that even “objective” methods have a social meaning and a political purpose: the *deductive epistemology,* he says, stems from a conservative policy, whereas the *inductive epistemology* stems from a progressive policy.

What François Dubet (1994) hails as “Sociology of experience” is a shift from the *systemic* approach of social issues to their *relational* approach. The title of Crozier and Friedberg, *l’Acteur et le Système* (1977), made some people think that the actor was distinct from the system, and that any actor should stay apart from the stage for a better impact of her/his action. Such a conception and distance creates social isolation and individualism; it finally gives room to what Lipovetsky (1983) describes as “the era of void”. That emptiness is said to be the main characteristic of modernity and post-modern human societies.

Due to the twofold challenge, to study research-policy interaction is actually making a plea for ***social interactivity*** between any given actors *within* any given system. Were that actor a social scientist, then she/he should consider herself/himself as full part of the social game. In that perspective, the actor ***is*** the system. Therefore, personal qualifications may direct ***scientific*** action, but for that scientific action to be ***social***, it should lean on ***relations*** with other actors whose qualifications will hopefully help understand the identity of one another, in order to design a common social goal.

E. Goffman ([1974] 1991) tried to base a theory of social interaction on a day-to-day social observation and experience. This empirical and even pragmatic approach is likely to impulse a significant move from the Weberian schema (1965), in which scientists and politicians clash and contradict one another, to a new social paradigm, for interaction to replace disruption.

That is but a dream which requires a “scientific” governance. Power, then, may no longer be a personal property, but a social relation, based on interaction as a permanent negotiation and adjustment between or among actors … .

Is there any chance for Africa to perform that research-policy partnership? How deep is the Knowledge-Power ***deal*** in Africa?

2. The knowledge-power landscape in Cameroon

If one refers to the number of scientific and academic institutions in Cameroon, education, research and professional training seem a matter of pride. The country has three education-related ministries: the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Scientific and Technical Research. Six State universities have been created, not to mention private universities and technical-training high schools.

A Council for Higher Education and Scientific Research was created in the 1970s to assist the government in policy-making. Its most recent session was held 19 years ago, in 1982. That session nevertheless took a resolution for the promotion of “a more efficient training”; human resources were also recognized as “the most precious capital in our strategy for development”. It was strongly stated by the then Minister of Scientific and Technical Research (Bol Alima, 1984), that national competences would be mobilized and judiciously used to foster the development of the nation.

However, that political declaration quickly faced a contradiction: the availability of a highly qualified human capital was not followed by its effective involvement, use or valorization.

This paradox needs a short comment.

During the colonial tough era, colonial rulers used to undermine the knowledge of the natives. Paradoxically, they kept training some of the natives, only for them to remain a working tool in the hands of colonial administrators.

Surprisingly, African decision-makers who took over kept undermining national scholars. They could tolerate some *organic intellectuals*, whose involvement was not based on scientific criteria: organic scholars were used as cover for assent and approval. Though the government had sponsored their expensive training at home and abroad to achieve high-level qualifications, only assent and even complacency seemed to be expected from them.

This is part of the social paradox to which African scientists and scholars are generally submitted. To understand that awkward situation, we must keep in mind that in Africa, knowledge is perceived as a social power. Not many decision-makers, be they of the intellectual class, are ready to share their social power with intellectuals. That attitude deepens the gap.

The roots of that research-policy gap are, on the one hand, the reluctance of some intellectuals to comply with political decisions they deem “illiterate and illegitimate”. On the other hand, decision-makers have the strong feeling that intellectuals question their social influence to erode their political power. Decision-makers fire back and strongly deny any value to dissent. Usually, repression follows. What I would call “syndrome of Socrates” then becomes a day-to-day ordeal for many scientists in Africa.

Europe witnessed similar situations throughout history. In the seventeenth century, the publication of the *Dialogue concerning the two chief world systems* exposed its author to Inquisition. It is only three centuries later that Pope John Paul II (1992) acknowledged and regretted the "tragic mutual misunderstanding" between Galileo and the Roman Catholic Church. To the Pope, both sides would have to be aware of the limit of "their own competences". Turning to clergymen, he regretted that "in their anxiety to defend the faith they thought they had to reject historical conclusions seriously worked out". Galileo did publish a dialogue on the two world systems. But Galileo ironically suffered from the absence of dialogue between the two world systems of research and policy.

Powers are not especially trained either to regret, or to apologize. The *syndrome of Socrates* however gives a hint of the "misunderstanding" which usually bursts out between Knowledge as scientific power and Power as political might. Whatever the case, the standard to which dissent is tolerated reflects the intellectual ***and*** political health of a society. That standard of tolerance ensures that a given society hatches some potential for its rebirth.

In Cameroon, the landscape is not far from a social embarrassment.

3. Knowledge and decision-making in Cameroon

During the early years of her independence, Cameroon used to organize Five-Year Plans for development. The process applied a bottom-up approach. Suggestions were gathered from the grass-roots people and conveyed to decision-makers. Those data were not scientifically collected; however, they reflected first-hand grievances, as well as the basic needs and the local expectations of the grass-roots people. That pseudo-scientific process provided a certain type of knowledge for governance. Unfortunately, that approach was blamed and abandoned as communist-oriented … .

In the meantime, decision-makers had decided to govern without knowledge, even to govern knowledge, in a pure Stalinist style … .

That drastic change produced negative effects on Cameroon scholars. The Federal University, created in 1962, fell under political and police control. Professors were frequently hushed down and pulled out of their classroom to comply with a police inquiry, or answer a political query. Any speaker needed a political green light from the Chancellor for any conference. A scientific and cultural publication, *Abbia*, went under censorship. Its editor, Professor Bernard Fonlon, who was then Minister of Health, was accused of subverting the nation by Enoch Kwayep, the then Minister of Territorial Administration. Surprisingly enough, within the same government, an *intellectual* Minister was accused of subversion and activism by an *administrative* Minister … .

No teachers' association was tolerated. In 1992, the Rector of the Yaoundé University told the SYNES, the only active trade union for higher education, that the funds were provided to the university by the ruling political party for professors who were its militants. According to him, SYNES members were but "political activists"; they could not expect a single penny from him.

In October 1991, the Institute of Human Sciences was dissolved by the Minister in charge of Scientific and Technical Research, a well-known intellectual in

Cameroon, who accused the Institute of being “a nest for opposition activists”. Researchers were scattered at the very moment the country was facing a serious social turmoil. Actually, decision-makers did not want researchers to literally poke their nose into their business. That situation was yelled out in a pamphlet by some outspoken scholars (FUC, 1997).

The present overview pictures the research-policy relations in Cameroon, and the context of the case study on research-policy interaction. The clash is obvious. The gap may deepen, as research-policy relations are in a sorry plight. Nothing, therefore, should be taken for granted, especially as leaders of the ruling party state that “truth comes from the top; only rumours come from the bottom”.

The question then is: where are we heading to? Where do we go from here?

Since *social dissent* has no value with decision-makers, social scientists should negotiate *scientific assent,* for their scientific results to win a socio-political recognition.

4. From social dissent to scientific assent

One can attempt to ***rule*** a country without scientific knowledge. Can one ***govern*** people against scientific knowledge? Given the present study on research-policy interaction, social interactivity seems a basic step for good governance. The need for a new social paradigm is but a need for a new culture: *a culture of social interactivity* as a fundamental principle of good governance.

The Cameroon research team has just started its survey. However, since my specific assignment is to revamp research in Social Sciences against all odds, some necessary steps have been taken during the last two years to pave the way to a better research-policy interaction in the country.

> *In January 1999*, a national workshop was sponsored by the Ministry of Scientific and Technical Research, nearly 10 years after the dissolution of the Institute of Human Sciences.

The purpose was to bring social scientists together, to think out the future of their disciplines if not their own future. We contacted different “social ministries” before the workshop, for them to list out their social concerns. About 10 ministries collaborated. The scientific responsibility of social scientists was to reshape these concerns into research projects.

That approach sounded quite new in Cameroon: we had moved to problem-oriented research instead of sticking to pure academic research for theses and scientific papers. Up to six ministers attended the opening ceremony of that national workshop. The political message was clear: decision-makers were willing to acknowledge the worth of Social Sciences, provided that social scientists tackle social scourges for concrete solutions. The challenge now is to move from scientific-paper research to problem-oriented research.

> *By June 1999*, a regional research project (“Towns and Survival in West and Central Africa” [URB-AFRIQ]) was drafted in that respect. It has been progressively amended and adopted by more then 10 “social ministries”. The Prime Minister of Cameroon officially confirmed the interest of the project for his

government, and instructed different ministries to participate in its execution. I did mention that step at the international workshop on “Social science and governance” held in Zeist (the Netherlands), in March 2000.

In February 2001, during its second session in Yaoundé, the Conference of Ministers in charge of Scientific and Technical Research in West and Central Africa (COMRED-WCA) resolved to adopt that project, “Towns and Survival in West and Central Africa [URB-AFRIQ]”, as an “Interafrican Research Programme in Social Sciences”.

The COMRED-WCA went further and resolved to back a regional colloquium on “Social Sciences and Poverty in Africa” planned for 19-22 June 2001 in Yaoundé.

These steps are indicators of the challenge social scientists have to meet, for social sciences to develop Africa, and to develop in Africa: social scientists need *scientific diplomacy* to convince decision-makers on the worth of the job they are supposed to do in society. Scientific diplomacy may happen to be a prerequisite in Social Sciences, for research-policy interaction to become a socially beneficial innovation.

Social scientists have been trained to meet the challenge, *I presume*.

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III. The interaction between social science research and policy under the conditions of societal transformation

Nikolai Genov[6]

I gained the experience I am going to share as project coordinator of the UNESCO-MOST Research Project "Personal and Institutional Strategies for Coping with Transformation Risks in Central and Eastern Europe" (1997-2000). From the very beginning, the project was intended to be truly interdisciplinary, internationally comparative and policy oriented. In fact, in the course of the project implementation, cognitive resources from economics, sociology, political sciences and sciences of culture were systematically used. At various stages and with a variety of tasks, social scientists from Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Russia and Slovenia participated in it. The policy relevance of the project was a strategic issue. It was intentionally included in the conceptual framework of the project. The design and the implementation of the research tasks were closely coordinated with local policy-makers. A series of internal reports and book publications made the practically oriented results of the project public (see Genov, 1998; Genov, 1999a; Genov, 1999b). The research results were used in communal decision-making. The experience of the project coordinator was utilised in the preparation of national decisions and in international activities – for instance, in the preparation of the official position of the Council of Europe for the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen+5, Geneva, 2000). The experience from the research project was disseminated by the channels of teaching at several universities, the EU Socrates Project "Transformations in a Comparative European Perspective" as well as at the first UNESCO-MOST Summer School "International Comparative Research Programmes in the Social Sciences (Sofia, 2000).

1. Policy-oriented conceptual schemes

The most practical thing is the good theory. Seen from this point of view, the vision of *transition* which was popular at the end of the eighties-beginning of the nineties, was not a theory at all. Its practical value was close to zero since it assumed a movement from a clearly defined starting point of State socialism to another clearly defined destination dominated by market economy and democratic politics. This universalized assumption was far away from the variety of starting points of the changes in the countries in Central and Eastern Europe as well as from the large variety of market economies and national systems of democratic politics in the advanced countries. Thus, in the mid-nineties there was an urgent practical need to redefine the aims, means and the course of the ongoing processes. The debate was very much stimulated in Bulgaria by needs of policy-making but also by the needs of the United Nations Development Programme (in 1994-1995 the author was preparing the first UNDP *Human Development Report* for Bulgaria). Therefore, the concept of societal transformation had to be introduced and elaborated in great details. That is why the project started with a serious theoretical debate focused on the systemic parameters of the transformation of the societies in the region. The outcome was the vision of four major systemic dimensions of the transformation of Central and Eastern European societies:

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[6] Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Table 1: Systemic dimensions of the transformation in Eastern Europe

Issue	Task	Potential effect
- Technological restructuring	Informatization	Adjustment to the global information technologies
- Economic restructuring	Marketization	Adjustment to the global market
- Political restructuring	Democratization	Adjustment to the global rationalization of politics
- Cultural restructuring	Universalization	Adjustment to the global innovations in culture

In the course of the further elaboration on the concept of societal transformation it became clear that because of theoretical and practical reasons special attention had to be paid to the action dimensions of the transformation:

Table 2: Action dimensions of the transformation

Dimension	Task	Effects
- Actors	Initiative and responsibility	Competitiveness
- Relations	Balancing hierarchy and poliarchy	Meritocracy
- Processes	Effective allocation of resources	Innovation

The next step in the theoretical elaboration was very much influenced by the theoretical and practical discussions on risk society and on risk management in the advanced countries. Ideas and practices of the Asian Development Bank and of insurance companies also stimulated the elaboration of a simplified but rather operational concept of a generalised situation of definition of risk and risk management:

Table 3: Analytical dimensions of a risk situation

Registration	Action form	Prediction	Norm
What is the effect?	EVALUATION OF REACTION	What will be the effect?	What criteria for evaluation are acceptable?
Who reacts in which way?	↑ REACTION (MANAGEMENT)	Who will react in which way?	What forms of reaction are acceptable?
Who (what) causes risk?	↑ SEARCH FOR CAUSES (REASONS)	Who (what) will cause it?	What causes of risk are acceptable?
What is the intensity of risk?	↑ RISK ASSESSMENT	What will be the intensity of risk?	What intensity of risk is acceptable?
What poses a risk?	↑ IDENTIFICATION OF RISK	What will pose a risk?	Is this risk acceptable?

2. The focus on long-term unemployment as a major risk

Initially, the UNESCO-MOST project was intended to focus on the interaction of various risks in the course of the transformation of Central and Eastern European societies. Theoretical debates, communication with decision-makers and several pilot studies urged the team to keep to the above focus but to introduce another one in addition. This was the focus on unemployment and especially on long-term unemployment. The reasons for this development were manifold and mostly connected with practical concerns in the above societies. In fact, with few exceptions (Poland and Yugoslavia), unemployment was not known in Eastern Europe before 1989. In the course of the nineties it became a first rate burning issue with dramatic dimensions, especially in Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Yugoslavia and Macedonia. The official unemployment is just one of the issues, however. The sharp decline of the officially registered employed all over the region shows clearly that another issue in the given context is the move of large segments of the labour force into the shadow economy. Thus, the real practical problem concerning unemployment in the region is how to deal with the tremendous restructuring of the labour force in terms of patterns of employment and mass unemployment.

Obviously, in order to grasp this highly controversial situation of intensive risks, one had to continue doing research on unemployment at the national level. Moreover, this type of research was very much facilitated by the introduction of national surveys using the ILO criteria for registration of unemployment, thus making international comparisons meaningful. How important the national studies on unemployment were at that time comes clearly from the fact that the first modern Law on Unemployment was passed in Bulgaria as late as in December 1998. However, in order to reach the social problems connected with unemployment to the roots, one had to carry out case studies at communal level as well. Moreover, these studies could be more important the stronger the cross-national comparative element.

At this point I have to express my deep gratitude to the Mayor of the town of Pernik (110,000 inhabitants, 30 km. to the west from Sofia) Ing. Andrey Andreyev. He is an extremely knowledgeable and open-minded person supported by a dedicated team. Unfortunately, the technological, economic and social problems of Pernik are tremendous. The town was one of the leading centres of the fast industrialization of Bulgaria after the Second World War. Based on local resources (coal) and imported raw materials, steel production and machine building flourished there. The town attracted labour force from all over the country, the capital city of Sofia included. Salaries were higher in Pernik than the average in the country.

The changes after 1989 turned Pernik into a typical depressive area. Machine building and glass production practically disappeared, coal mining is to be gradually reduced and closed, steel production has declined substantially. Thus, the manifest and hidden unemployment are rather high although the nearby labour market of the capital city serves as a vent. In an intensive interaction with the Mayor my team prepared a comprehensive picture of the local unemployment and of the efficiency of the measures to cope with it so far. The diagnosis of the situation was strengthened by a cross-national comparative study on unemployment in Pernik, Lodz (near Warsaw) and Tver (near Moscow). The study was carried out by face-to-face interviews with about 300 long-term unemployed in each of the three towns in December 1998-January 1999. The comparative analysis clearly showed that the Polish long-term unemployed are much better supported by the State and the local

governments and are more active in attending training courses as compared to the Bulgarian and the Russian ones. There are clear differences in other major indicators of personal activities for coping with the risk of unemployment, namely the efforts to become self-employed or to search for a job abroad:

Table 4 Activities of the long-term unemployed during the last 12 months ("yes" answers, in %)

	Pernik	**Lodz**	**Tver**
Attended training courses	4.2	34.1	5.7
Established a private firm	0.7	5.2	8.0
Searched for a job abroad	5.6	2.6	8.0

The major reason for the above striking differences is mostly the current stabilisation of the Polish economy. So, the conclusions my team made for a general improvement of the labour market in Pernik were mostly focused on the necessary technological restructuring but were also very much oriented towards the influence of potential international support on the part of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and the pre-accession funds of the European Union. Our practical suggestions were very well received in Pernik and by national institutions dealing with unemployment.

I should also express my deep gratitude to the Friedrich Ebert Foundation which generously supported the project throughout its implementation. I am glad to notice that the Foundation continues to support the studies on local employment policies. The experience from the MOST project is being thus further used in policy-oriented research projects. Other German institutions were also attracted by the cognitive and practical relevance of the research implemented in the framework of the MOST project (Genov, 2000). This is clear evidence that the MOST Programme has already fulfilled its aim to facilitate scientifically sound and policy-oriented research projects.

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IMPROVEMENT OF POLICY-MAKING IN RELATION TO SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS

Prospects for the MOST/UNESCO Programme

Wanda Capeller

I should like to say how happy I am to be at this meeting and to thank the officials of the MOST project who kindly invited me to address you, even though the task is not an easy one. We have just heard some brilliant statements, for which, before anything else, the authors deserve our thanks.

My task, I repeat, is a difficult one since the reason for my presence here is to provide a sort of added value, if that is possible, to these three interesting lectures. And the only way I can carry out this duty is by taking a critical look, which alone will enable me to make an effective contribution to the debate and to your collective thinking.

It was a pleasure, I freely confess, to read and reflect on the communications presented here; they testify in particular to the importance of the MOST project in the development of research programmes designed to have an impact on the implementation of public policies. In this respect, the report by Mr Genov was highly significant. I was also struck by the two other communications: that of Mr Hainard, who drew our attention to the difficulties arising in the complex area of the interaction between the social sciences and the implementation of policies, and that of Mr Mbock, who highlighted the intensity of the conflict between “those who hold power” and “those who have knowledge”.

The three speakers were clearly in search of the “good theory”, to borrow Mr Genov’s term, i.e. a theory capable not only of apprehending social complexity but also of guiding projects that can transform society. Mr Genov even introduced a systemic approach to illuminate specific aspects of the process of transformation at work in the countries of Eastern Europe; he also used the notion of risk to tackle the problems associated with unemployment in that region. In turn, Mr Mbock drew attention to certain sociological trends (Crozier and Friedberg’s sociology of organizations, Erving Goffman’s interactionist sociology and François Dubet’s sociology of experience), which are capable, in his view, of transcending the situation in his own country.

As a contribution to this debate I will contend that:

- the structuring of the new economic and social systems must make effective use of the knowledge produced by the social sciences;

- this knowledge should not be confined to the launching of various policy initiatives and decisions or to justifying them after the event;

- such knowledge should make a practical contribution, in particular through analysis of the transformations taking place during recursions, to directing or redirecting decision-makers in their responses to social demand.

It follows that we also have to analyse power relationships, the strategies of the actors involved, the features of mutual rejection and mutual recognition, and even

those aspects associated with the unintended consequences of an action. In other words, we must not overlook the ***recursions*** between the various levels of decision.

I shall seek to justify these positions in three stages. First, I shall demonstrate the need to contextualize intellectual and political action both at the macro and at the micro sociological levels in relation to the social systems in question (it is obvious that everyday reality in the countries of the Third and Fourth Worlds is not the same as in Switzerland or in the countries of Eastern Europe, for example) (Section I).

Indeed – and this will be my second point – the position of the actors in a restructuring process is closely bound up with power relationships, and their opportunities for action also depend on the effect of positioning in the system (Section II).

And since we are to speak of systems, I shall lastly address the question of the importance of taking transformational recursions into account (Section III).

1. Contextualization of the action

In order to contextualize the action it is essential to consider both the macro and the micro sociological levels, without overlooking the fact that these two approaches are not antagonistic and that, according to Giddens, the micro/macro distinction has the unfortunate consequence of engendering a sort of division of intellectual labour between those who undertake projects at the micro level and those who devote themselves to macro studies (1984:195).

Mr Hainard, for example, shows how difficult it is to work concomitantly at these two levels, namely the analysis of structural constraints and individual action in such contexts. The MOST project developed by Switzerland, which comprises a network of seven teams in Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Bulgaria and Romania, is apparently coming up against certain obstacles. These obstacles, according to Mr Hainard, are due to “cultural differences relating to representations of time, money and on occasion the very notion of scientific rigour”. I have no doubt that he is right.

It seems to me, however, that we can go further in the search for what is causing the obstruction. I should like to ask Mr Hainard the following question: is it not a fact that this kind of network can only work satisfactorily if the development of the project enables the researchers to establish links that go beyond purely strategic ones (strategies for the creation of the network, strategies for fund-raising, survival strategies for the social sciences or strategies for the joint identification of the research subject, etc.)? From strategy to planning, from design to implementation, the answer may perhaps be found in this kind of speculation, for which, in this report at least, Mr Hainard is not acting as the spokesman.

How are we to manage the divergences between these two levels of action – the macro and the micro – or between two different cultures? There is no easy solution. Faced with this difficulty, Jean-Pierre Boutinet provides a few pointers, notably when he demonstrates that the management of “divergences” consists in implementing the project by going through all the “planned stages”. This is perhaps another route we could explore: the “planned stages” probably deserve to be spelled out.

In addition, Boutinet asserts that the problem does not consist in constantly reducing the “divergences”, for in that case the discourse in which the project is framed would come to dominate its implementation in practice. Instead, the problem would rather consist in defining “tolerable divergences”. And Boutinet goes on to state that if the “divergences” become too wide, the question then arises as to whether practice should be modified to bring it into line with the rules set for the project, or whether the project should be changed by making it more realistic and better adapted to the needs of the situation, i.e. more relevant (1990:235).

Whatever the case, sociologists have been alerted by Giddens to the fact that “macro processes” do not result directly from the interaction of “micro situations”, and that the macro level is not just an aggregation of micro experiences (Giddens, 1984:197). The implementation of such a project calls for a preliminary effort of clarification of this interaction, and of the ways in which the data produced by this experiment could be reintegrated into transformative local policies.

The interactions I refer to are those that occur between the researchers themselves, the way in which information circulates within the network, and the perception that the researchers have of one another. When Mr Hainard speaks of greater difficulty in developing skills and in maintaining networks in countries of the South, his assertion should surely be tested on the basis of certain concepts that could be used to verify this phenomenon, such as those proposed by Giddens. In short, an analysis of this kind seems to me to be essential if we are to overcome the difficulties and contribute to the excellence of programmes that are so important for development.

2. Power relationships

I shall here refer to Mr Mbock’s statement, which is highly illuminating on this issue. He asserts that, in Cameroon, the place of intellectuals in the structure of a new system is somewhat marginal. Intellectual actors are not in a position of strength in relation to the political actors. To join the ranks of the decision-makers, one has, he claims, to be an “organic intellectual”. However, since Foucault we know that power is intimately bound up with knowledge, and vice versa. Power is not an attribute or a possession; it is relational. Mr Mbock acknowledges as much, incidentally, in his text.

He nevertheless insists on power as an attribute, notably when he describes the situation in Cameroon. According to his evidence, intellectuals in this country perceive power as the property of a ruling class; vis-à-vis the “powers that be” they have an attitude of submission.

It goes without saying that the knowledge produced by the social sciences should not be used to underpin the views of those who hold political power. Sociology in particular is, by nature, a subversive science; it constantly challenges authority. We may therefore speculate on the conflictual relationship that exists between intellectuals and decision-makers in Cameroon. What is the attitude of intellectuals towards this political and social system? Are they locked into the role of either denunciation or organic cooperation, or can they establish a collective “strategic rationale” for the transformation of their society?

It seems that they have some room for manoeuvre, since, despite a restricted range of action and through a strategy of “scientific diplomacy” – to use Mr Mbock’s

own words – intellectuals in Cameroon have managed to break the deadlock and to propose a number of important initiatives that appear to have been taking shape for some time now. Mr Mbock may have been a little too restrained about the “effect of position” of these intellectuals in the political and social system of Cameroon, and also in his analysis of their strategies and the way in which they circulate the knowledge and information they possess, and the national and international networks to which they belong.

However, we may also wonder whether this conflictual relationship between political and intellectual actors in Cameroon – as described by the author – does not in fact reveal a state of rivalry within the enlightened elites over the distribution of power itself. Does political repression reflect a genuine threat arising out of a conflict of interests within these elites?

At this point I should like to raise again, for consideration, an interesting question posed by Anthony Giddens on this subject: in power relationships, he asks, how do the less powerful organise and use their resources in such a way as to keep check on the more powerful?

The reply to this question might perhaps enable us to develop a reflexive approach to our own intentions, our own actions, and our ability to carry out genuinely transformative projects.

3. Analysis of transformational recursions

Last but not least, I turn to Mr Genov’s paper. I very much appreciated his formula: “The most practical thing is the good theory” and I agree with the need to be pragmatic and operational if we are to carry through projects encompassing such complex realities.

I shall begin with an analysis of the four tables presented in Mr Genov’s communication:

1. The systemic dimensions of the transformation in Eastern Europe;

2. Action dimensions of the transformation;

3. Analytical dimensions of a risk situation;

4. Activities of the long-term unemployed during the last 12 months.

These tables clearly demonstrate a concern to establish an interaction between the macro and micro aspects of socio-economic realities. They also show that the basic criteria of the complex systemic theory have been taken into account, in particular those concerning:

- the teleological perspective: we know that decisions exist only in relation to the project that they serve to finalise;

- systemic unity: i.e. the structural distinction between levels of which each has a specific function.

These two aspects are particularly noticeable in Tables 1 and 2.

The criterion of systemic openness also emerges clearly in Table 3 on the analytic dimensions of risk.

However, the criterion of recursiveness – as well as the basically transformational character of such recursions – probably deserved greater prominence.

To start with, Table 3, for example, on the analytic dimensions of risk, is not directly applied to the proposed object of empirical research, namely long-term unemployment in the countries of Eastern Europe. Nor is it reviewed and adapted on the basis of information gathered during research work in the field – a most interesting study, incidentally, involving evidence from 300 individuals who were unemployed at the time. The data yielded by this study, contained in Table 4 concerning the strategies used by the unemployed to enter the labour market, could have served as a transformative element in Table 1.

There should be a fundamental, recursive correspondence between the information produced by social science research and proposals for the structuring of new systems. And, when the teleological dimension is introduced (for what purpose?), the decision then takes shape. The decision-making process is simultaneously formed and informed by the informational process, which is in its turn transformed by the decision-making process.

It is only when the problem has been constructed at grass-roots level that intentional action plans can be drawn up, and possible strategies can be identified – all of which may provide solutions to the problem as previously formulated.

If the systemic dimension is introduced, it has to be recognised that it achieves its full expression in transformational recursions, in the interlinking of relations and feedback between one institutional level and another, from the micro level to the macro level, and vice versa. The complexity of the process emerges fully when we realise that recursiveness is not confined to a single operation, but can be renewed until the decision-makers are in a position to describe one of the action plans presented to them as being “satisfactory”.

Complexity also arises from the interactions that may take place, at several levels, between the actors directly involved in the transformational restructuring processes. This is why Anthony Giddens directs us towards a primary-level analysis of the behaviour of the actors engaged in a restructuring process, in particular their mutual rejections, mutual disregard, mutual acknowledgements and resistances. He even invites us to observe the way in which established practices are sometimes firmly anchored in obsolete institutional practices. This analysis of resistances is fundamental, as I discovered in my own research on the implementation of the Schengen system.

By way of conclusion:

These reports clearly show, if evidence were needed, the importance of the three projects to which they refer – as these were carried out under the MOST/UNESCO Programme launched in March 1994. They provide a particularly flattering portrait of this Programme.

On the one hand, the projects appear to make an effective contribution to improving our understanding of societies by producing knowledge that is relevant to policy formulation, in particular on the problems associated with multi-ethnic and multicultural societies, matters relating to urbanisation and local and national strategies designed to cope with the processes of globalisation.

Moreover, they undoubtedly promote communication between social scientists and political decision-makers, while also mobilising networks.

This does not mean that the difficulties should be played down. Indeed, they are still very substantial.

Nevertheless, after the presentation of these projects, we feel confident that if the knowledge produced by the social sciences is used in an operational, creative and strategic way by the intellectual actors as a source of inspiration in their essential task of exploring economic and social realities; if this knowledge is informed by recursive factors; and if it is reformulated in the light of these new data, it can make an effective contribution to guiding decision-makers in their policy-making practices. Here we must refer to the notion of governance, which has the advantage of clearly showing how this sometimes problematic link is to be established … but that is another issue altogether! Thank you.

ANNEX IV

SHS-01/CONF. 202/1
Paris, March 2001
Original: English

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

**Fifth session of the Intergovernmental Council (IGC)
for the "Management of Social Transformations" (MOST) Programme**

**UNESCO, Paris – Room IV
14 to 17 March 2001**

AGENDA AND TIME-TABLE

Wednesday, 14 March

9:00-9:45	Welcome and registration
10:00	Opening session: Welcome by the Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO a.i.
10:15	Keynote address "Scientists and Policy Makers: The New Partnership" by the outgoing President of the IGC, Mr. Kenneth Wiltshire
11:30	Coffee break
11:45	Election of the Bureau - Welcome speech by the new President of the IGC - Adoption of the Agenda - Election of a Drafting Group
13:00	Lunch
15:00	Joint session of the Scientific Steering Committee and the Intergovernmental Council of MOST
16:15	Coffee break
16:30-18:00	Discussion
18:30	Reception

Thursday, 15 March

9:00	Meeting of the Bureau
10:00	Report by the MOST Secretariat on MOST activities since February 1999
10:45	Discussion
11:30	Coffee break

11: 45	Report on the Evaluation of the “Cities: management of social and environmental transformations” Project followed by discussion
13:00	Lunch
15:00	Partnerships between MOST and scientific INGOs (ICSU, ISSC, CIPSH) followed by discussion
16:15	Coffee break
16:30-18:00	Terms of reference for the forthcoming evaluation of the MOST Programme (1994-2002) followed by discussion

Friday, 16 March

9:00	Meeting of the Bureau
10:00	Panel on “Research-policy interactions from the perspective of the MOST Programme”
11:15	Coffee break
11:30	Discussion
13:00	Lunch
14:30-18:00	Meeting of the Bureau and of the Drafting Group

Saturday, 17 March

10:00	Distribution of Draft Report and Recommendations
10:30	Closing Session :
	Discussion on the draft report to the General Conference
11:30	Adoption of recommendations
12:45	Closure of the session

ANNEX V/ANNEXE V/ANEXO V

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS/ LIST OF PARTICIPANTS/ LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES

SHS-01/CONF.202/INF.2
Paris, March/mars/marzo 2001
Original : English/French/Spanish
Anglais/Français/Espagnol
Inglés/Francés/Español

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES
POUR L'EDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE**

**ORGANIZATION DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS
PARA LA EDUCACION, LA CIENCIA Y LA CULTURA**

**Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Council (IGC)
for the "Management of Social Transformations" Programme (MOST)**

**Cinquième session du Conseil intergouvernemental (CIG)
pour le programme "Gestion des transformations sociales" (MOST)**

**Quinta reunión del Consejo Intergubernamental (CIG)
del Programa "Gestión de las Transformaciones Sociales" (MOST)**

**UNESCO, Paris - Room/Salle/Sala IV
14-17 March/mars/marzo 2001**

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