



**UNESCO Forum on Higher Education,
Research and Knowledge**

Activity update: July–September 2004

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1. Update : Scientific Committee Policy and Expansion of Committees

In order to optimize the capacities of the Scientific Committees, the UNESCO Forum has decided to increase the number of members of each of its Regional Scientific Committees from nine to eleven. For LAC, Arab and ENA the nomination process has been finalized, and new Committee members have been chosen based on the Forum Scientific Committee Policy. In addition to this, the nomination procedure for the Africa, Asia and Global committees began on the 10th of September and the Secretariat will collect CVs and articles from nominees who have been recommended by committee members, delegations, universities, institutes and interested organizations in each region. The second wave will follow the same procedure for final selection as the first wave.

2. Update: Scientific Committees

(1) Regional Scientific Committee for Africa

The 3rd Scientific Committee meeting for Africa is scheduled to take place in Maputo, Mozambique, at the end of May 2005. The exact date will be decided at a later date by the Secretariat. In this meeting the Committee will focus mainly on the Historical Investigations on Higher Education in Africa.

(2) Regional Scientific Committee for Asia and the Pacific

According to the decision from the Tokyo seminar, the 3rd Regional Scientific Committee for Asia and the Pacific will be held on the last week of April 2005 in Seoul, South Korea, under the theme: “Advocating Research Policy Changes in the Higher Education System of the Asia-Pacific Region”. With regard to the preparation of this event, the Committee divided the work on the above theme between four teams, which would present papers for each topic such as best practices in relation to: (1) promoting research; (2) knowledge production; (3) gender equity and; (4) higher education quality. Based on this decision, each team is also preparing Terms of Reference on their topics.

(3) Regional Scientific Committee for Arab States

The venue of the 1st Regional Research Seminar for Arab States, which was originally to take place in Tripoli, Libya, was changed to UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (6-7 October 2004). The general theme of the Seminar was: “Restructuring and Differentiation of Patterns of Higher Education in the Arab States: Meeting the Challenges of the Present and the Future”, with the three sub-topics: (1) Quality of Higher Education; (2) Research, Researchers and Graduate Studies; (3) Policies and Institutional Set-Up. A pilot text for the seminar and a call for papers were sent out to higher education institutions and around 35 experts, researchers and policy makers participated in this event. From the many abstracts received, the leadership of the Committee has selected 8 papers that were presented at the seminar. The seminar was

composed of plenary sessions where each of the selected papers was presented. Each presentation was followed by the comments of the discussant and by a general discussion.

(4) Regional Scientific Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean

The 1st Regional Research Seminar for Latin America and the Caribbean took place from 1-3 September in Porto Alegre, Brazil. This event was hosted by the Latin American Institute of Advanced Studies (ILEA) at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul. The general theme of this event was “Science and Technology and Higher Education: Convergences and Tensions”. The Seminar was a two and a half-day event organized around three themes: 1) Development, 2) Knowledge and 3) Autonomy. The following Themes were addressed in the plenary session: “Science, Education and Development”; “Production and Use of Knowledge”; “New Experiences from the Public Sector and Civil Society”; “The State and the University Autonomy”; and “Research and Teaching. How to Evaluate?”; “New Technologies in Cuba”; and “The Latin American University as a Space for Scientific Research. Challenges in Higher Education, Research and Knowledge”.

During the Committee meeting following the seminar, the Committee established two ad-hoc committees. The first ad-hoc committee is responsible for the publication of the LAC seminar 2004 proceedings. This publication in Spanish will be in collaboration with the UNESCO Forum partner, the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul which has proposed to undertake the Portuguese version of the publication. The possibility of a publication in English will be explored at a later date. The second ad-hoc committee is responsible for the organization of the next seminar on GATS and its implication on Higher Education.

The 3rd Committee Meeting for LAC will be held in Mexico, 9-10 June 2005, back to back with the seminar on GATS and its implications on higher education on 7-8 June 2005, in Mexico, which will be organized together with the Forum partner CLACSO, and coordinated by the Forum Secretariat, following the track of the GATS workshop in Accra and the GATS seminar in Seoul.

(5) Regional Scientific Committee for Europe and North America

The 1st Regional Research Seminar for Europe and North America will be held in Paris, from 4-5 November 2004. The Seminar, which includes the Committee Meeting will be a two-day event focusing on the theme "Managerialism and Evaluation" with relation to their political dimension, their impact on Academic Identities, and Accreditation and Quality Assessment. The second day of this event will be dedicated to discussions on the content of the Conceptual Framework of the Committee.

(6) Global Scientific Committee

The second meeting of the Global Scientific Committee took place from 23-24 July 2004 in Sao Paulo, Brazil. This event addressed the preparations for the Colloquium

on Research and Higher Education Policy, December 2004. The meeting also discussed the future committee work, including the long-term goal and strategies. As a result of this meeting the committee chose the papers to be presented in Colloquium 2004 and decided to set up eight ad-hoc committees consisting of committee members in order to facilitate and handle the specific activities of the Committee: the Colloquium 2004, Global Research Seminar publication 2003, the Colloquium publication 2004, Forum steering document, the mapping exercise on higher education and research systems, policy brief series, future scenarios and upcoming events of the GSC, and the Forum website.

The Committee also endorsed a resolution addressed to the Director-General of UNESCO, in which the Committee expressed its concern over the Secretariat's lack of human resources, which jeopardizes the success the program, asking him and the Member States to do everything within their power to provide the Forum Secretariat with the necessary resources as soon as possible.

After the GSC meeting, members of the Global Committee participated as speakers and moderators in the General Conference of the International Association of Universities (IAU): "The wealth of diversity: the role of universities in promoting dialogue and development", which was held in Sao Paulo 25-29 July, 2004.

3. Global Events

(1) Colloquium 2004

The 2004 UNESCO Forum Colloquium, 'Knowledge, Access, Governance: strategies for a change' is a key global event, bringing together researchers, policy-makers and experts from across the world. The aim is to connect the worlds of research and policy in higher education by critically debating research results and policy experiences at national, regional and global levels. The UNESCO Forum Colloquium will be held in the UNESCO headquarters, Paris, France, from 1-3 December 2004. It will be open for papers and other forms of information dissemination on a broad basis.

The Forum Global Scientific Committee held its second meeting on 23-24 July 2004 in São Paulo, Brazil. At its meeting, the Committee processed the selection of papers that will be presented at the UNESCO Forum Colloquium. The members of the Global Scientific Committee selected 30 out of the 102 abstracts submitted. These papers, which were focused on Knowledge, Governance and Access, have been divided into clusters.

The Forum Secretariat is very happy to announce that the Keynote Speakers for the Colloquium will be Professors Homi K. Bhabha and Paulin J. Hountondji. Professor Bhabha is currently Professor of English Literature and Chair of the Committee of Degrees on History and Literature in the Faculty of Arts and Science at Harvard University. Professor Hountondji is currently Professor of Philosophy at the National University of Benin in Cotonou.

(2) Scientific Committee Day and Field Office Day

The UNESCO Forum Scientific Committee and Field Office Day will take place on the 30th of November 2004, at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, back to back with the Colloquium on Research and Higher Education Policy. The Scientific Committee Day is organized with the aim of giving an opportunity to the members of all the UNESCO Forum Scientific Committees to meet and exchange in their regions with a global view, particularly based on the Forum activities and long term plans. Staff from UNESCO Field Offices involved in the Forum activities are also invited to participate in this session to further enhance cooperation and information sharing. The Field Office Day is also an opportunity for field office staff to learn more about and share the research results with the UNESCO Forum Scientific Committees. The aim is to strengthen and elaborate decentralisation of Forum coordination to the Field Network.

4. The Fifth Coordinating Committee Meeting

The 5th Coordinating Committee Meeting took place at UNESCO Headquarters on 22nd of September 2004. In this meeting, reports were given along with an evaluation of the Forum activities this year. The participants also exchanged information on events pertaining to their sectors and institutions. The Forum was given several suggestions: (1) the necessity of working on Knowledge Management Systems; (2) focusing on Basic research program; (3) enhancement of the coordination of different UN agencies in Africa in Science and Technology; and (4) more linkage and participation on many other events such as Social Science Forum in Argentina (2005), 2005 Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology, 2005 World Summit on Science Policy and Information Technology, etc.

5. Forum Database

The Forum has created a “Forum Database” as an information tool, which includes scientific committee members, researchers, experts, and policy makers, related to higher education and research issues. The database is expected not only to help the Forum collect information on its committee members and partners, but also to be a tool for the whole Division of Higher Education in networking activities.

6. Partnership Activities

(1) Regional Partners:

- A Project Cooperation Agreement with the Central American University Superior Council (CSUCA) was finalized.
- A collaboration conference on Science with CLACSO is being planned under the title of “Science Policy Workshop” on 14-18 March 2005 in Cuba.
- The discussion regarding the conference on Academic Freedom in cooperation with CODESRIA, the UNESCO Office in Beirut, and the Regional Scientific

- Committee for Arab States is undergoing between Arab Africa Research Center in Cairo (AARC) and UNESCO Forum.
- The program and the cooperation for the GATS Seminar in Seoul with the Korean National Commission for UNESCO are currently being negotiated.
 - Discussions regarding cooperation with the UNESCO New Delhi Office are underway with regard to a preparatory expert meeting in December 2004, prior to the GATS seminar in Seoul, 2005.
 - Discussions between the Forum Secretariat and the UNESCO office in Bangkok and Regional Bureau for Education are ongoing with regard to the cooperation about facilitating partnerships with regional network within Asia-Pacific region.

(2) National partners:

- A Project Cooperation Agreement with the Centro de Estudios para el Perfeccionamiento de la Educación Superior, University of Havana (CEPES- UH) was finalized.

7. Publication and Dissemination

The Forum is in the process of publishing four books. They are the outcome of the Global Research Seminar in 2003, the focus of the Scientific Committee for Africa on the World Bank and Higher Education Policy, and the LAC and Asia Pacific Regional Research Seminars. Most of the publications are now proceeding through the editorial committee under their respective Scientific Committees; Prof. Guy Neave is responsible for the GRS book, Prof. Mala Singh for the Africa book, Prof. Lynn Meek for the Asia-Pacific book, and CLACSO for the LAC book. In addition, the Forum Secretariat also plans to present six more occasional papers in 2005.

8. Forthcoming Events (2004)

- 1st Regional Research Seminar for Europe and North America, 4-5 November 2004 (Paris)
- Scientific Committee Day and Field Office Day, 30 November 2004 (Paris)
- Colloquium on Research and Higher Education Policy, 1-3 December 2004 (Paris)
- Preparatory Experts Meeting on the Implications of WTO/GATS on Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific, 9-10 December (New Delhi)