



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

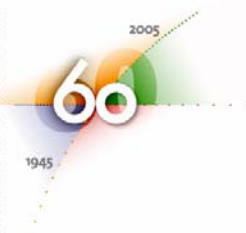
Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织



Post-conflict reconstruction

Natural disasters and civil strife are more and more common. UNESCO has been increasingly called upon by its member states to react in immediate post-conflict and natural disasters situations.

UNESCO concentrates its efforts on the human and intellectual aspects of peace-building through four fundamental pillars, namely education, culture, sciences and communication. Actions in these fields have proven to be significant in breaking conflict cycles and preventing relapse.

UNESCO has proved in several situations that it can intervene with immediate short-term quick impact activities early enough during the initial humanitarian phase of a PCPD situation to secure immediate needs, while first of all having the capacity to bridge

activities to the early recovery and reconstruction and development phase. UNESCO assistance is aimed not only at providing urgent help by assessing damages and mitigating losses but also by preparing national authorities, and professional and civil society organizations for longer-term sustainable reconstruction through technical expertise and advisory services.

UNESCO places a strong emphasis on country ownership and local capacities enhancement to handle post conflict rehabilitation through:

- rehabilitation of educational systems;
- promotion of cultural diversity including protection of cultural/natural heritage at risk; and
- reconstruction and promotion of independent and pluralistic media protection of environment and biological diversity.

Promotion of education

The right to education in emergency situations is fully recognized. UNESCO PEER (Programme for Education for Emergencies and Reconstruction) began its existence in Mogadishu as UNESCO-Somalia in January 1993. As the only decentralized UNESCO programme of its kind, PEER, from its inception, has responded to crises in the Horn of Africa, Great Lakes, Angola, Burundi, Mozambique, Guinea, Haiti, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Bosnia-

Herzegovina, etc. The Organisation developed the Teacher Emergency

Package (TEP). It consists of a kit of materials and a methodology of teaching basic literacy and numeracy in the mother language of the pupils. Each TEP contains basic teaching equipment for children and teachers (textbooks, teacher's manual, pens, pencils, eraser, exercise books, books, blackboards, chalks, etc.) and can cater for the daily needs of 80 pupils. Teachers are given on-the-spot training in their use.

Protection of cultural heritage

UNESCO is dedicated to promoting better understanding of the proactive role of cultural heritage, cultural diversity and human creativity as a basis for dialogue and reconciliation and a vehicle for peace-building, social stability, respect for human rights, and disaster reduction. In addition to provide international coordination mechanisms and enhance the application of normative tools for the protection of



Destroyed in 1993 during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Old Bridge of Mostar was rebuilt 11 years later. It is a reconciliation symbol.
(© A. Roussel/UNESCO)

Post-conflict reconstruction

Post-conflict reconstruction

Facts and figures

Since 1945, we have seen **150 conflicts** erupt on every continent, resulting in **20 million deaths and 60 million casualties**. In the First World War, civilians accounted for 5% of the victims

That figure has now risen to **80 per cent or even 90 per cent, half of these being children**.

In addition more than **20 million refugees and 30 million displaced** persons are today living in the most precarious of circumstances, and at least 60% of their number are children.

(Source: UNESCO)

cultural heritage, UNESCO has implemented several projects for the rehabilitation and safeguarding of cultural heritage, notably through: the training of cultural professionals (Cambodia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan), protecting and preserving archaeological sites (Angkor, Bamiyan and Jam), rehabilitating historic buildings and monuments (Mostar bridge) and museums (National Museum in Baghdad, museums of Kabul and Ghazni, National Museum of Khartoum), and supporting cultural institutions (National Heritage Institute National Library, and Regional Conservation Centre in Baghdad). Specific training courses for site guards and border patrols have also been developed in Cambodia and Iraq to prevent looting and to fight against illicit traffic of cultural property. Concerning natural disasters, the Organisation played an important role in the emergency assessment of the damage to the Citadel of Bam in Iran, as a result of the severe earthquake of December 2003. The cultural programmes have also been developed for Tsunami-affected children in Southeast Asia.

Promotion of independent media

UNESCO has advanced understanding about the role that freedom of expression and independent media play in avoiding violent conflict. The Organisation has facilitated projects across the globe as diverse as supporting election reporting, awareness-raising on principles of freedom of expression, constructing community radio stations, broadening access to information technology, and providing training and equipment for television production.

In Iraq as part of a UN umbrella program, UNESCO supported local initiatives in defense of freedom of expression and human rights. A focus

was placed on supporting the Iraqi constitutional process, ensuring that freedom of expression was protected in the new constitution. Key elements included capacity building for officials and journalists and engaging the wide Iraqi community in debate about the constitution. In Liberia, Rwanda and Burundi, UNESCO supports Press Houses in order to enhance their role as professional resource centres. Television co-production between Israeli and Palestinian journalists has been supported in Israel and Palestine to further the dialogue. On-the-job training of journalists has been provided in Afghanistan, Liberia, Republic of Central Africa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda. National conferences on Media Policy were held in Liberia and DRC, which lay the groundwork for media law and policy reforms in these countries. Since 1996 when UNESCO was designated as lead agency for assistance to independent media for the reconstruction period in the former Yugoslavia, the Organization has been recognized as the UN lead agency in assistance to media in Afghanistan, DRC and Iraq.

In 2004 the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day celebrations in Belgrade adopted a Declaration addressing the role of the international community in assisting independent media in conflict. The Belgrade Declaration, endorsed by the UNESCO General Conference in October 2005, stresses that independent local news media are essential to provide trustworthy information that is vital for peace and reconciliation efforts.

Contact

Louise Haxthausen
l.haxthausen@unesco.org