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(IFAP)**

5 March 2015

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Item 9 of the Provisional agenda

VISIBILITY OF IFAP

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19.02.2015 - Communication & Information Sector

IFAP Addresses Well Being in Digital Media



Organizers of the Well Being in Digital Media Conference, Ben Gurion University, Israel, February 2015. © UNESCO

More than 50 international experts representing 20 countries from across 5 continents are gathering in Israel for the first international conference Well Being in Digital Media to be held under the auspices of UNESCO and its intergovernmental Information for All Programme (IFAP).

This landmark event, organized by the Israel National Commission for UNESCO and its National IFAP Committee along with the Department of Education at Ben Gurion University, the Sammy Ofer School of Communication at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya and the Open University of Israel will be held from 17 - 19 February 2014 in Beer Sheba, Israel.

According to Mr Getachew Engida, UNESCO's Deputy Director-General, the Forum comes at a critical juncture. "We are living through times of incredible changes with new opportunities for addressing development challenges... But, we are also seeing new digital divides and new forms of exclusion that raise hard ethical questions about balance, rhythm and harmony, indeed about well-being. So we must give all people particularly young women and men the tools and opportunities to ensure that they are not controlled by technology but rather harness its full power for their own fulfillment and the benefit of all. Furthermore, as we look towards the post-2015 period, I think the outcomes of the Forum can help to shape more effective strategies and frameworks for enlisting information and communication technologies to implement the global sustainable development agenda".

The conference will take place in two phases consisting of a two-day expert conference followed by a one-day conference aimed at raising awareness amongst the general public.

The conference of experts will provide a forum for sharing and comparing the latest research and emerging global experiences and trends in this field. In particular, their deliberations will seek to deepen understanding of how the long-term interactions between digital media, on one hand and individuals and society on the other, are affecting well-being. These experts will also focus on the development of indicators and the establishment of a program to measure and assess well-being.

The one-day event for general audiences will be structured around lectures, panel sessions and debates that will culminate with the launching of the Forum on Well Being in Digital Media. The event is expected to attract media and generate broader awareness and understanding of the related challenges amongst the wider public.

The Forum on Well Being will serve as a global observatory supporting ongoing monitoring and measurement, collating research and policy documents on digital well-being. It will also host an online community of practice that links researchers, policy makers, users and industry actors to share information and develop responses that enhance well-being for individuals and society.

The intergovernmental Information for All Programme was established in 2001. It provides a platform for international policy discussions, cooperation and the development of guidelines for action in the area of access to information and knowledge. The Programme supports Member States to develop and implement national information policy and strategy frameworks.

Towards UNESCO's World Atlas of Languages: Final Recommendations for the Action Plan



Bunuba speakers in Australia. © Discovery Communications, Inc.

UNESCO has released a strategic document on the next steps to promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism in cyberspace. More than 60 leading experts and professional organizations from 25 countries contributed to the elaboration of this document and provided concrete suggestions for the preparation of a plan of action in order to launch UNESCO's World Atlas of Languages.

According to [this document](#), stakeholders such as governments, academia and professional community, industry, media and content producers, and others should, among others:

1. Formulate, contribute and adopt sustainable national language policies on the crucial issue of linguistic diversity and multilingualism, including promotion, safeguarding, representation, technological development, especially for the improvement of access to cyberspace for disadvantaged communities;
2. Encourage developments on language technology systems and tools with extensive multilingual capabilities, with regard to operating systems, search engines and web browsers and to consider facilitating affordable Internet access in public service institutions.
3. Strengthen international cooperation and building partnerships to support capacity-building for the production and distribution of local and indigenous content in digital and open forms and work to provide necessary resources to alleviate barriers for a different language users, including marginalized communities.

Recalling the importance of upscaling the existing tool for promotion and monitoring of linguistic diversity and multilingualism, experts recommended to develop [UNESCO's World Atlas of Languages](#) along the following steps over the next two-year period:

1. Establishment of an Advisory Group composed of professionals and experts within the relevant fields, respecting geographical representation and gender balance;
2. Development of a mechanism and sustainable tools for monitoring language vitality and for the assessment, promotion and preservation using innovative technological solutions;
3. Promotion of multilingualism in the context of the international frameworks such as Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals and on the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) outcomes implementation and seek support for other international events.

Once operational, the [UNESCO's World Atlas of Languages](#) should contain a full data on languages, policies, regulations, technical recommendations and best practices in this field. It is expected that a new globally accessible and open online platform will be used for monitoring and promotion of the world's languages online, strengthen cooperation and knowledge sharing using open and inclusive technological solutions among international, regional and national language institutions.

The [international expert meeting](#), held from 28 to 29 October 2014 in Paris, was organized by UNESCO in cooperation with the Government of Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug-Ugra (Russian Federation), the Permanent Delegation of the Russian Federation for UNESCO and the Russian Committee of the [UNESCO Information for All Programme](#).

30.01.2015 - Communication & Information Sector

UNESCO Global Questionnaire on Internet study: around 200 responses received

Following UNESCO's launch of a global questionnaire during July-December 2014 to collect inputs and research from a range of stakeholders on internet study, around 200 responses and submissions were received which provide diverse and substantial inputs in the areas of access to information and knowledge, freedom of expression, privacy, and ethical dimensions of the information society as well as options for future actions.

The questionnaire consultation consists of two components: a global consultation through UNESCO website with 94 responses submitted and a regional pilot one with 102 questionnaires completed in the Latin America through a portal website of Observacom as ensured by UNESCO Advisor for Communication and Information in Montevideo Office.

The 94 responses and submissions to the global consultation are submitted by all stakeholders including Governments (14), International Organization (5), Civil Society and NGOs including individual users (41), Private Sector (3), Academia (27), Technical Community (2) and Others (2).

In the regional consultation in Latin America, the actors who participated in the consultation were from the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, USA, El Salvador, Spain, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela. According to the record participation stemmed from the following sectors: Civil Society and NGOs, including individual users (32.65%), Academia (36.73%), Private Sector (3.06%), Technical Community (1.02%), International Organizations (3.06%), Government (4.08%), Individual users (19.39 %).

These responses, will feed into a comprehensive Internet-related study in access, freedom of expression, privacy, and ethical dimensions of the information society as well as options for future action, as mandated by UNESCO's 195 Member States through Resolution 52 of the Organization's 37th General Conference (November 2013). It will also help with the discussion of the first draft in the forthcoming Multistakeholder Internet Conference: **CONNECTing the Dots: Options for Future Actions** at UNESCO headquarters on 3-4 March 2015. More information on the Internet Conference is available [here](#).

UNESCO thanks all those submitters, whose responses have been well considered and provide solid basis for the implementation of the Internet study. These responses and submissions are therefore published at the below link, for the reference of general public.

Please note that all submitters have been explicitly informed that their responses would be published on UNESCO's website prior to their submission. The ideas and opinions expressed in their responses and references are those of the submitters; they are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

19.11.2014 - Communication & Information Sector

UNESCO's Information for All Programme contributes to the successful outcome of an international conference on electronic governance



The 8th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance was held in Guimarães, Portugal from 27 to 30 October 2014. Organized by the United Nations University Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV), the University of Minho and the Agency for Administrative Modernization of the Portuguese Government, the event was held under the High Patronage of His Excellency the President of the Portuguese Republic.

With a theme of ‘The Rise of Data Post-2015 – Empowered Citizens, Accountable Institutions’, the event generated considerable interest amongst governments, academics and practitioners attracting papers from 330 authors from 50 countries as well as hundreds of attendees. The conference was structured around daily plenary sessions, six thematic parallel tracks which ran over three-days as well as 8 thematic and 13 invited sessions.

The conference’s outputs will be distributed by UNU-EGOV to inform the preparation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda being developed under the leadership of the United Nation System.

UNESCO/IFAP’s contribution to the event comprised co-organization and co-chairing of the conference track on “Ethics, Accountability and Transparency”, as well as two UNESCO-sponsored sessions. The Ethics, Accountability and Transparency Track included tutorials, presentations of national experiences from Portugal as well as academic and practitioner papers which highlighted experiences from developed and developing countries. The first UNESCO-sponsored session “Ethical Challenges of the Information Society” presented work being undertaken to develop an Information Ethics Training Kit for policy makers that builds on activities in the framework of the WSIS C10 Action Line “Ethical Dimensions of the Information Society”. The session provided an opportunity to conduct a tutorial for policy-makers and receive feedback on the Training Kit. The second UNESCO-sponsored session, “Building Knowledge Societies: Lessons from the Mekong River”, brought together senior government officials from Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam to share experiences on national strategies, lessons and achievements towards equitable and inclusive knowledge-based development.

The ICEGOV2014 event represented the 4th step in the UNESCO/IFAP – UNU collaboration that began last year. This collaboration commenced in July 2013 with the organizing of a one-week Executive Training on Foundations of Government Information Leadership in Kampala, Uganda for senior policy makers from Burundi, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda. In November 2013, a similar event was held in Yangon, Myanmar, attracting policy makers from Mongolia and Myanmar. During the ICEGOV2013 organized in Seoul, Korea in October 2013, UNESCO/IFAP co-organized several sessions including a Town Hall-style plenary debate on Building Knowledge Societies.

ICEGOV2014 also provided opportunities for Mr. Paul Hector, UNESCO Programme Specialist with responsibility for IFAP's overall operations worldwide, to explore opportunities for collaboration with a variety of participants working in the IFAP priorities areas. According to Mr. Hector, "ICEGOV was an excellent opportunity to meet with a number of new potential partners working on many of the policy, programmatic and technical issues central to building knowledge societies. I was able to share and explore areas of complementary activity particularly around accessibility, multilingualism and information ethics".

Speaking about the prospects for UNESCO/IFAP - UNU-EGOV cooperation, "As further concrete steps we are exploring engagement of UNESCO/IFAP at ICEGOV2015 in Tunis and how to incorporate the UNESCO/IFAP Information Ethics Training Kit and other courses into our Government Chief Information Officer training", said Dr. Tomasz Janowski, Head of the United Nations University Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance and Coordinator of ICEGOV.

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UNESCO/IFAP expert meeting endorses an action plan for a multilingual cyberspace



Participants of the International Expert Meeting on Improving Access to Multilingual Cyberspace, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, October 2014. © Modern Library

The International Expert Meeting on Improving Access to Multilingual Cyberspace came to a successful close on the evening of 29 October 2014 following two days of intensive and productive deliberations by some 50 global experts representing 26 countries.

This major event, held at UNESCO's Paris-based Headquarters, was organized by UNESCO's Knowledge Societies Division and the Information for All Programme (IFAP), in cooperation with the Government of Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug-Ugra (Russian Federation), the Permanent Delegation of the Russian Federation to UNESCO, the Interregional Library Cooperation Centre (Russian Federation) and the Russian Committee of the Information for All Programme.

A selection of national and regional successes and lessons from governmental, academic, public-private partnerships and civil society settings provided a rich body of relevant policies and practices that informed the discussions. "By drawing inspiration from these case studies, generalizing and adapting them, we were able to identify critical success elements and benefit from useful insights that assisted us in gaining clarity on the way forward and subsequently formulating the meeting's recommendations and action plan", said Ms Chafica Haddad, Chair of the Intergovernmental IFAP Council.

In particular, the endorsed action plan and recommendations will:

- support national policy development and the adoption of strategies for promoting language survival in cyberspace, language learning and universal access to cyberspace;
- promote the development and dissemination of technological solutions, best practices and standards that facilitate access to multilingual content, including automatic translation and intelligent linguistic systems; and
- strengthening multi-stakeholder international cooperation and partnerships to support capacity building and access to resources.

The experts elaborated on concrete proposals for upscaling the existing Atlas of Languages in Danger towards a UNESCO World Atlas of Languages. It is expected that a new online platform will be used for monitoring and promoting most worlds' languages as well as for providing an online space for relevant language institutions of UNESCO's Member States to share their e-content on languages using open and inclusive technological solutions.

At the closing session, the representative of the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Boyan Radoykov, expressed full satisfaction with the outcomes of the meeting and underscored: "This extremely rich and productive meeting of experts highlighted the critical role of linguistic diversity and the importance of its advancement in cyberspace for ensuring universal access to information and for supporting the creation of equitable and inclusive knowledge societies, which are the key to our common sustainable future."

Other post-conference plans discussed during the meeting included the proposed organization of a World Summit on Multilingualism.

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27.10.2014 - Communication & Information Sector

UNESCO/IFAP International Expert Meeting on Improving Access to Multilingual Cyberspace



From 28 to 29 October 2014, in cooperation with the Government of Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug-Ugra (Russian Federation), the Permanent Delegation of the Russian Federation for UNESCO and the Russian Committee of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Information for All Programme (IFAP), UNESCO's Knowledge Societies Division will organize a two-day international expert meeting on multilingualism in cyberspace.

This two-day event will bring together more than 50 leading experts from 26 countries representing all of UNESCO's regions to discuss trends, challenges and opportunities for linguistic diversity in cyberspace.

The event will focus on supporting Member States to more effectively implement UNESCO's Recommendation Concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace (2003), on advancing the recommendations adopted by the third IFAP International Conference, "Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Cyberspace", held in Yakutsk, Russian Federation from 28 June to 3 July 2014, and also on developing a plan of action aimed at transforming UNESCO's *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* into a global platform for sharing languages resources and technological solutions, monitoring and promoting the world's languages.

"Every nation's mother tongue is the cultural code and basis of its moral values... so that is why we provide government support for the indigenous Northern languages", indicated Ms Natalia Kimarova, Governor of the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug-Ugra in the Russian Federation. "Through UNESCO's Atlas we will share our experiences such as those of the Yugra region where 80,000 local people have acquired computer literacy in their own languages through the Electronic Citizen programme",

"Political, technological, social, cultural and economic challenges are threatening the survival of humanity's linguistic heritage and their rich store of knowledge and wisdom. However, this international expert meeting is another strong demonstration of UNESCO's and IFAP's convening power and their role as catalysts in bringing together experts to address complex, urgent, global problems", said Ms Chafica Haddad, Chair of the Intergovernmental IFAP Council

Mr Getachew Engida, UNESCO's Deputy Director-General is confident that "the event will contribute to implementing UNESCO's Medium Term Strategy and to the realization of the objectives adopted by IFAP under its strategic priority on multilingualism. and support the future orientation of UNESCO's and IFAP's work in this area. This event is an important opportunity for us to advance our efforts in overcoming key challenges and obstacles faced by linguistic communities around the world".

While recognizing the important contribution of research and the development of language technologies in overcoming threats to linguistic diversity, Ms Eleonora Mitrofanova, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Russian Federation to UNESCO, urges on that occasion experts and nations "not to lose sight of the role of languages as a principal way to promote mutual understanding, overcome marginalization and attain peaceful, sustainable development in our contemporary civilization".

The two-day meeting will produce a plan of action aimed at extending global partnerships and translating the recommendations developed by the experts into concrete national and regional actions.

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24.10.2014 - Communication & Information Sector

South Africa establishes its National IFAP Committee



Coetzee Bester, Director of the African Centre of Excellence for Information Ethics (ACEIE) and Chairperson of the South African National IFAP Committee

On Wednesday 15 October 2014, with the support of the South African National Commission for UNESCO and Mr Hezekiel Dlamini, Advisor for Communication and Information in UNESCO's Harare Office, the South African National Committee of the Information for All Programme (IFAP) was officially formed.

With a membership drawn from governmental, non-governmental and civil society organizations in South Africa working in the six priority areas covered by IFAP, the newly established National IFAP Committee is well positioned to support the development and implementation of information policy strategies and frameworks in South Africa.

A three-person executive comprising of Mr Coetzee Bester, Director of the African Centre of Excellence for Information Ethics (ACEIE), as Chairperson; Mr George Molepo, CI Programme Officer in the South African National Commission for UNESCO, as Secretary; and Ms Sebenzile Zibani of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), as Deputy-Secretary were selected by the members of the newly formed National IFAP Committee members to lead its work.

Through the ACEIE as well as the African Network for Information Ethics (ANIE), Mr Bester has been an invaluable partner, in a variety of activities in the IFAP priorities at the national, regional and international level. In concert with UNESCO's Harare Office, ACEIE is also organizing 4 national information ethics workshops in Mozambique, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland. The ACEIE will also provide office space for the National IFAP Committee.

In thanking the South African National Commission for UNESCO and the Advisor for Communication and Information in UNESCO's Harare Office, Coetzee Bester referred to the support and guidance from all UNESCO structures related to Information Ethics since 2007: "During this period we have conducted ground breaking research and issued publications on Information Ethics in Africa which has also benefited from the invaluable support of the more than 50 academic and training institutions across the continent who are active members of ANIE". He committed to a strong focus on a safe cyber environment within the IFAP objectives for South Africa and hopefully the UNESCO Africa Region and indicated that "plans are underway to organize during the period 2015 – 2019 school programmes to ensure safe access to safe information for all learners, teachers and parents and I expect that this will be shortly announced by ACEIE".

Other organizations participating as founding members of the South African National IFAP Committee include the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services, the Department of Communications, the Department of Science and Technology, the National Library of South Africa, the National Archives of South Africa, the South African Digitisation Initiative, the Kara Heritage Institute, the National Research Foundation, the Human Science Research Council (Africa Institute of South Africa), the University of Pretoria and the Ditsong Museum of South Africa.

In addition to activities to be undertaken in South Africa, the newly formed National IFAP Committee will also contribute to strengthening IFAP's contribution in the Southern Africa Region further bolstering the gains that have been made in Botswana and Zambia. A regional meeting of Southern African National IFAP Committees is also being planned for the first quarter of 2015. Reacting to the good news, Mr. Dlamini, UNESCO's Adviser for Communication and Information for Southern Africa said: "This is a very important development, Southern Africa needs National IFAP Committees that have the capacity to become active partners in shining the torch on IFAP priorities in the region".

Satisfaction and congratulations were also extended by Mr Paul Hector, Programme Specialist at UNESCO Headquarters coordinating IFAP's activities worldwide: " This is a timely and significant contribution to strengthening IFAP's global outreach and we are committed to working with you to build knowledge societies in South Africa and the region".

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IFAP publishes 17-Country readiness study on FOSS and Open Solutions



The final report and findings of a one-year long Caribbean study and national consultation processes conducted under UNESCO's Intergovernmental Information for All Programme (IFAP) is now available for free download. This project was made possible with the financial support received from UNESCO's Emergency and Multi-donor Fund.

The study has provided the basis for developing several national implementation roadmaps, highlighted regional best practices and identified areas where improvements can be undertaken.

In November 2012 the study was launched by UNESCO's Kingston Office with the assistance of two Caribbean consulting firms. The study examined such aspects as awareness levels, relevant policy and legislative support and the use of free and open source software, open data, open education resources and open standards by governments, the private sector, civil society and individuals.

The study revealed that countries in the region were at very different stages of development in this area. In Belize for instance, national training activities began as early as 1997 and this has contributed to the development of significant national capacity which has enabled educational institutions like the Corozal Community College to provide a range of services to high-school students and persons enrolled in adult education programmes. In Trinidad and Tobago, several open data portals have been established that support activities in the agricultural, financial and law enforcement sectors and through an innovative Fisheries Project, many families who depend on fishing have experienced positive benefits.

While most Caribbean countries and territories surveyed have national ICT policies in place, with the exceptions of Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts-Nevis, St Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines, they contain little if any explicit reference to FOSS and Open Solutions. The study however came at an opportune moment as it has served to sensitize several ongoing policy-reviews to the need and benefits of Open Solutions which in turn is paving the way for their incorporation into the national frameworks and strategies. Nevertheless, even among some countries without direct policy references there is active use of open solutions as was seen in Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Curacao and Grenada particularly in applications such as archive and records management, education and disaster management services.

The findings of the IFAP study were first presented at the Caribbean Open Data Conference and Code Sprint, which was held in April 2013 under the theme Developing the Caribbean. The event which was simultaneously organized in 7 countries provided an important opportunity to discuss emerging findings with regional practitioners and gain broader insights into experiences, lessons and possible remedies. Participants welcomed the IFAP initiative.

In July 2013, a consultation meeting attended by some 40 regional policy-makers was organized in St Lucia and this served to validate the findings and to support the development of national implementation roadmaps.

Through IFAP and other UNESCO programmes, these national plans and the recommendation of the study will be supported during the 2014-2016 biennium. Already the lessons and experiences from the Caribbean captured in the report are attracting the attention of countries and partners in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, supporting and informing pilot initiatives in these regions.

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