



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

SHS/EST/ABC/REP/12

UNESCO ASSISTING BIOETHICS COMMITTEES PROJECT
2008

**Meeting to discuss the establishment of the
National Bioethics Committee
Conakry, Guinea,
24-27 July 2008**

I. Purpose

The mission had two main objectives:

- To study the draft Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and the National Bioethics Committee ;
- To determine the dates and modalities for the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding and the training workshop for committee members.

II. Participant

The mission was undertaken, in cooperation with the Division of Ethics of Science and Technology in headquarter, by mr Christophe Dikenou, Consultant (and acting as Regional Advisor for the ethics programme), UNESCO Office Dakar.

III. Activities

A. National Commission for UNESCO

Two work sessions took place at the National Commission for UNESCO on July 24, 2008. During the first one, the purpose of the mission was explained to the Secretary General of the Commission, Mr. Ibrahima Magassouba and to Prof. Ibrahima Boiro, President of the National Bioethics Committee of Guinea.

The latter in turn expressed the will of the National Bioethics Committee of Guinea to cooperate with UNESCO. The committee had previously hold two work sessions for preparing this mission and setting its agenda.

During the second work session, which included most committee members, the draft MoU was reviewed and adopted with a few amendments.

B. Ministry of higher education and scientific research

In the morning of July 25, 2008, a courtesy visit was made to Mr. Nianga Komata Goumou, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, along with the president of the National Bioethics Committee, the Secretary General of the National Commission for UNESCO and a few members of the Bureau of the Committee. The minister expressed his appreciation of the multidimensional support that UNESCO keeps bringing to Guinea. He then emphasized the support of the Guinean government for the National Bioethics Committee and for the future ceremony for the signature of the MoU in Conakry, which will be as brilliant as is required.

Finally, the Minister was offered copies of the three UNESCO declarations in bioethics as well as the guidebook n°2: *Les comités de bioéthique au travail : Procédures et Politiques*.

C. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

That same morning, a visit was paid to UNDP for a security briefing as well as a courtesy visit was made to the focal point for UNESCO in Guinea, Mr. Mamadou Dian Diallo, and Mr. Magatte Faye, project manager.

D. Environmental Study and Research Center (CERE) of the University of Conakry

In the afternoon of July 25, 2008, to the director of CERE, Prof. Ibrahima Boiro, the vice-dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Conakry and Dr. Fodé Mohammed Sylla, National Bioethics Committee member welcomed the UNESCO delegation. Professor Boiro gave a tour of the Center. Dr. Sylla informed the Delegation of the existence of a Biomedical Research Ethics Committee, created by the ministry of Health. Mr. Mamadou Bhoie Bah presented the environmental ethics programme of CERE.

E. Research centre for the valorization of medicinal plants (CRVPM) of Dubréka

Accompanied by Prof. Boiro, this centre, which is located ca. 50 km away from Conakry, was visited. The mission of CRVPM is to implement the policy defined by the government of Guinea with regard to research and valorization of medicinal plants.

The director and vice-director conducted the presentation as well as a guided tour of the centre.

IV. Mission results

Both major objectives of the mission were met.

The draft MoU between the National Bioethics Committee and UNESCO was reviewed, edited, adopted and transmitted to Headquarters so that it can enter the visa process in UNESCO in Paris.

The dates 6-10 April 2009 were suggested for the signature of the Memorandum and the first workshop for training committee members.

The mission also proved to be a good opportunity to identify what UNESCO brings to Guinea in ethics and bioethics, be it through the Committee or the country's universities. UNESCO/BREDA's contribution to higher education of bioethics and ethics of science and technology is much looked after.

In this regard the guidebook on Educating Bioethics Committees, recently published by the Division of Ethics of Science and Technology will be a significant asset.

The CERE's programme has an environmental ethics component. Such an experience could be reinforced by UNESCO and extended to other environmental science institutions in the subregion.

The planned workshop on Environmental Ethics Education in higher education could be organized with CERE.