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**COMMENTS BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
ON THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORTS  
SUBMITTED IN THE 2002-2003 BIENNIUM**

**SUMMARY**

In accordance with the provisions of 167 EX/Decision 4.4, the Director-General hereby submits to the Executive Board a short report on some of the evaluations carried out in the 2002-2003 biennium, together with his comments.

Decision proposed: paragraph 37.

## **BACKGROUND**

1. Executive Board decisions: At both the 167th session by 167 EX/Decision 4.4 and the 169th session by 169 EX/Decision 4.4, the Executive Board reiterated that the Director-General should continue to report periodically to it on evaluations that are carried out on the Organization's programme activities, on the progress made in the follow-up to evaluation recommendations and in strengthening the quality of the evaluations undertaken.

2. UNESCO evaluation strategy: The Organization continues to implement the UNESCO Evaluation Strategy (165 EX/19). The Director-General is committed to improving the quality of the evaluations undertaken, and to developing an evaluation culture to include effective learning from evaluation findings in managing for results. Three of the four evaluations presented here are from the regular programme, while the fourth covers extrabudgetary funded activities. Eight of the 10 evaluations scheduled in document 31 C/5 have now been completed with the final reports for the remaining two expected by July/August 2004. If these meet quality standards they will be presented to the 171st session of the Executive Board.

3. Layout of the document: The first part of the document presents, in summarized form, a description of each of the evaluation reports, including major findings (lessons and constraints) and main recommendations. This is followed by a brief account of the actions that the Director-General has taken already or is taking in response to the recommendations made in the evaluation reports. In the second part of the report, the Director-General presents the generic lessons that have emerged from the evaluations.

## **PART I – PRESENTATION OF EVALUATION REPORTS:**

- An evaluation of UNESCO's response to HIV/AIDS
- Mobile team of experts (MTE) for Education for All (EFA)
- Small Historical Coastal Cities (SHCC)
- International Hydrological Programme (IHP-V) 1996-2001

## **AN EVALUATION OF UNESCO'S RESPONSE TO HIV/AIDS**

### **Brief description and background of programme evaluated**

4. The HIV/AIDS epidemic: The imperative to combat HIV/AIDS is compelling. One of the Millennium Development Goals is to halt and begin reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015. The 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar acknowledged the threat of HIV/AIDS and called for education programmes and actions to combat HIV/AIDS as a matter of urgency. The United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on HIV/AIDS set in place a framework with targets for countries to attain. In 2002, UNAIDS produced a framework strategy to focus attention on what is known and what needs to be known about scaling up the response to the epidemic through education. Education has a key role in the international response to the epidemic. HIV/AIDS is also impacting on education systems as teachers and other key personnel are dying, becoming ill, and taking on added responsibilities in their homes and communities. There is also the issue of keeping children and young adults, especially girls, in school as parents fall sick. By virtue of being the United Nations agency for education, UNESCO has an important role to play.

5. UNESCO's activities: UNESCO's responses to HIV/AIDS fall into three distinct phases. The first phase spanned 1987 to 1996. UNESCO developed a preventive education plan of action together with WHO. The Venice Appeal of 1991 was a plea for action against HIV/AIDS in the field of education, training, and scientific research, and to support orphans by covering expenses for their education. Some field offices initiated activities in curriculum development with ministries of education, but they were few and far between. HIV/AIDS was not an organizational priority at the time, and received little funding. The second phase lasted between 1997 and 2000. During this time UNESCO's sectors showed an increasing willingness to work with HIV/AIDS issues. Coordination measures were introduced, and professional networks emerged. UNESCO's field office in Brazil established itself as an important partner and implementing agency for the government's programmes in HIV/AIDS prevention in Brazil. The third phase started in 2001 and is still ongoing in 2004. An organizational strategy was developed, a coordinator appointed in IIEP, HIV/AIDS focal points were established in field offices and in Headquarters Sectors. A network of professionals from different parts of the organization was consolidated. Some field offices initiated national and regional activities and the budget allocations increased. The total amounts that UNESCO devoted to HIV/AIDS activities for 2004 and 2005 are around US \$1.1 million from the regular budget, and about US \$7.4 million from UNAIDS Unified Budget and Work plan (UBW). The \$1.1 million is considered to be an underestimation by the evaluators. There are also extrabudgetary funds, but it is uncertain how much.

6. This evaluation: UNESCO commissioned an external evaluation of its response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the period 1987 to the end of 2003. The purpose of the evaluation was to analyse results, assess performance, and develop recommendations for future activities. It was to be a participatory exercise, which should contribute to capacity-building and learning in selected Member States and also in UNESCO. The evaluation, undertaken by a team selected after an international bidding process, was conducted in the period September 2003 to April 2004. The evaluation builds on data from Thailand and Viet Nam in South-East Asia; Mozambique, Angola and Namibia in Southern Africa, Ghana and Senegal in West Africa; Jamaica and Brazil in Latin America and the Caribbean; and Lebanon in the Middle East. Kenya was visited as part of a thematic study on gender issues. The organizational topics of strategy formulation, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, decentralization and coordination were analysed based on the field visits and on interviews at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. The evaluation team conducted some 300 interviews with staff of UNESCO, government representatives in the 11 countries in the sample, United Nations partner agencies, some Permanent Delegations to UNESCO in Paris, civil society and stakeholder groups concerned with UNESCO's HIV/AIDS activities. The evaluation perused documents in UNESCO and outside, and also drew conclusions from observing activities being implemented.

### **Major findings (lessons and constraints)**

7. The evaluation recognized several major **achievements** in UNESCO's response to HIV/AIDS, including:

- (a) Internal coordination and decentralization: The structures and processes employed for coordination of the work of the sectors, namely with the HIV/AIDS Coordination Unit in IIEP provided an unusual but seemingly appropriate mode of internal coordination up to this point in time. In no case did the evaluation find that the responses at national or regional levels were constrained by centralized management practices.
- (b) A flexible but opportunity-driven response: The variety of responses shows that UNESCO can be flexible and has the capacity to adapt to very different conditions. There are examples of how the HIV/AIDS activities have developed from nothing to

very significant and effective programmes in only a few years. There are examples of how significant capacities to manage large-scale projects were built up quickly, in response to local demand. Partnerships and coordination at country level were often stronger in several of the countries visited, than at the global level. Close cooperation with civil society produced good results. With regard to roles, UNESCO was found to be quite successful in the area of advocacy. The capacity-building activities were usually combined with advocacy and information sharing.

- (c) Results in Brazil: The evaluation observed UNESCO in the role of an implementer in Brazil where its activities in combating HIV/AIDS in Brazil have clearly contributed to the observed reduction in the spread of the epidemic, and a decrease in the number of people falling ill and dying from HIV/AIDS related illnesses. UNESCO's activities have had an impact in shaping public opinion through culture and media. The Government of Brazil, with funds from the World Bank, as well as from federal, state and municipal authorities, have channelled over US \$130 million through UNESCO to administer its HIV/AIDS projects.
  - (d) Other results overall: Overall, the evaluators concluded that UNESCO can respond effectively, and can make a difference in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Achievements leading to this assessment include: (i) the informal consultations between senior scientists of the World Foundation for AIDS Research has contributed to a more scientifically based understanding of HIV/AIDS among heads of governments and cabinet members, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa; (ii) the Havana declaration, signed by Ministers of Education in the Caribbean in the course of a UNESCO instigated conference, commits all governments in the region to introduce the subject of HIV/AIDS in the school system; (iii) the advocacy tool kit introduced in the Asia and the Pacific region is being widely used; and (iv) the outputs of the Culture Sector (the cultural approach to HIV/AIDS) with some 21 publications (country studies, methodological papers, manuals) over a three-year period.
  - (e) Reasons for results and impacts: UNESCO has achieved impacts in some countries (Brazil, Jamaica and Senegal), and the successes have been due to several reasons, including: Strong partnerships with civil society organizations, development of links with United Nations agencies, close relationships to Ministries of Education, often with the help of the National Commissions, leadership and commitment from UNESCO representatives in field offices, personnel resources in some field offices supplemented with high level external expertise, and the development of a programmatic response at country and regional levels.
8. The evaluation recognized the following **challenges** for UNESCO's response to HIV/AIDS:
- (a) Top-heavy programming and planning: UNESCO has several tools for planning at a high and abstract level, with the Medium-Term Strategy, the C/4 document; the Programmes and Budget, the C/5 document, and the global preventive education strategy being the most relevant for HIV/AIDS. There are also regional strategies and at times country strategies in place. The evaluators assessed programming and planning to be a top-heavy process, with a gap between the general directions provided in the strategy documents and the activities at country level. In particular, the evaluation noted the absence of a programme level to integrate activities at regional and country levels, with the exceptions of the Caribbean and in Brazil.

- (b) Problems with using strategic planning as a management tool: The strategy on preventive HIV/AIDS education was formulated in 2001. The purpose of the strategy is not clear and most stakeholders see it more like a pamphlet to inform others of what UNESCO does than to mobilize and direct action internally. In the view of the evaluators it has several flaws: too many and too complex design elements, no objectives and too much general information on the epidemic. It did not communicate effectively, and was not much known or read by those it was intended for. A new strategy has been developed and was made public in February 2004. It is clearer and it is a more concise document, but still aimed at an external audience. It is still not a management tool providing strategic direction and focusing the use of resources. The process aspects of strategy development employed failed to create sufficient ownership. Also, the focus on preventive education has been contested by some UNESCO's field offices, as it is seen to exclude elements necessary for the mobilization of all sectors.
- (c) Partnership with United Nations agencies: UNESCO is one of the co-sponsors of UNAIDS. In June 2003 UNESCO took over the Chair of the UNAIDS Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations (CCO). Other United Nations organizations assess UNESCO's role in the struggle against HIV/AIDS critically; while recognizing the importance of preventive education and the value of a cultural approach, they find the actual substantive contribution too small. Interviews in Geneva, New York and Washington, D.C. indicate that other United Nations partners are still waiting for UNESCO to get mobilized and to start playing a major role in the struggle against HIV/AIDS.
- (d) Is HIV/AIDS a priority? Even though UNESCO can play a significant role and can initiate worthwhile activities for the fight against the ills of HIV/AIDS, the response has been hampered by lack of resources. During most of the 1990s the financial allocations for HIV/AIDS were around 1% of the regular programme. The financial allocations have continued to be small (around 4% for 2004-2005). Consequently many activities have been too small to generate commitment, or they were isolated events that could not lead to sustained effects. The evaluators consider it particularly regrettable that UNESCO's activities appear to have been less significant and less successful in the countries that would have needed the support most: that is, in Africa south of the Sahara. The evaluators highlighted the question as to whether an activity, which receives less than 5% of resources can really be called a priority in practice.
- (e) UNESCO unclear about its role as a specialized agency: Unlike many other specialized agencies, UNESCO appears to have focused on its normative mission; meaning engaging in exchanges of ideas, being a platform of international cooperation within its sectors, developing norms and standards in research, education, protection of the cultural heritage, etc. Technical cooperation and technology transfer to developing countries have not come to play a large role in its affairs. Having kept to these traditional roles in its five sectors, UNESCO has not found an appropriate response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in terms of these roles.
- (f) Inadequate HIV/AIDS human resources and expertise: In several field offices, the HIV/AIDS activities are in the hands of junior personnel, national consultants on short-term contracts, or associate experts. UNESCO has been fortunate in finding people at these levels that do have appropriate qualifications. But these programme officers are constrained by being on short-term employment contracts – they cannot then interact effectively with senior personnel from other United Nations organizations who have substantial backing from their agencies, and they may not be as vocal, accomplished

and assured in negotiations. The evaluators did not find evidence that UNESCO assesses the competencies needed to play different roles, nor that any such sense of competence would be matched to human resource development.

- (g) **Low levels of organizational learning:** A focus on results must be combined with critical reflection and organizational learning. The network of HIV/AIDS focal points and similar formal and informal groups are steps in the right direction, but the learning potential of the network has not been fully realized. The major lines of communication and decision-making are still vertical, and thus most of the efforts to plan, implement and report goes into these lines of command. The communication relating to professional development of HIV/AIDS activities ought to be more horizontal, but it remains vertical. The evaluators also noted that there appears to be many aspects of structure, process and culture that are not conducive to a learning organization. They reported on seeing several examples where Programme Specialists spent their time in secretarial or administrative functions that they were overqualified for.
- (h) **Some activities did not produce any results:** The evaluation found several activities without results. Some of these had been implemented as long as ten years ago, and others more recently. The reasons why the activities had no impact varied from them being isolated events, which were not followed-up, through failures to generate commitment on account of their small sizes, wrong timing, vaguely articulated purposes, poor quality work, and not being sufficiently grounded in a clearly articulated demand.
- (i) **Unclear priorities by some Member States:** One of the reasons UNESCO has not responded to the HIV/AIDS epidemic earlier or in strength, is that the Member States have not made it a high priority. UNESCO does indeed have a mandate to act, and the General Conference as well as the Executive Board support the strategy. But Member States set many other priorities for the Organization, and thus it is not clear exactly how high a priority HIV/AIDS actually is. The evaluation's interviews with Member States' delegations indicate that some are quite sceptical, or even downright negative to UNESCO's engagement in HIV/AIDS activities.
- (j) **Low gender sensitivity:** The evaluation did not find many examples of UNESCO activities that had gender-specific approaches to preventive education. From the overriding strategy documents and down to the smallest of the field level activities, and indeed to monitoring and evaluation instruments, there was a surprising lack of gender sensitive approaches. In several field offices, the HIV/AIDS focal points and gender focal points are often different persons, and the contact between them limited.

## **Recommendations**

9. Following their analysis, the evaluators recommended that the following measures be considered:

- (a) **Financial resources:** UNESCO must increase its resources to contribute to the struggle against HIV/AIDS. The strength of the response can be measured in terms of the resources devoted to HIV/AIDS activities and there should be targets for how much should be allocated and mobilized. The targets should be realistic, but also challenging and they should express an increased ambition over time. The evaluation recommends the following budget targets rising from \$5.0 million in the current biennium to \$20.0

million by 2008/2009 from the regular programme, and rising from \$18.0 million in the current biennium to \$40.0 million by 2008/2009 for extrabudgetary funds to be raised.

- (b) HIV/AIDS expertise: UNESCO must establish a critical mass of HIV/AIDS expertise and experience in the Organization. Suggestions from the evaluators include: one full-time Programme Specialist on HIV/AIDS in each Cluster Office/Regional Bureau, with 10 priority national offices identified and programme specialist posts created in 2005. Also an inventory for Headquarters and Institutes' needs for HIV/AIDS competence should be conducted during 2004. Each sector should have core HIV/AIDS competencies established.
- (c) Internal capacity-building: There is a need to design and launch a capacity-building programme on HIV/AIDS related work at all levels in the Organization. It is suggested that three competence building modules are designed, namely: (1) a four-hour module directed at UNESCO representatives, senior management at Headquarters, possibly UNESCO delegations, and Directors of Institutes, (2) a full day workshop for all staff members to introduce the strategy and motivate/mobilize their participation, and (3) a three-day seminar on activities in HIV/AIDS, presenting the research frontier, reviewing what other agencies do, specifying what UNESCO can do in different roles, and building capacity for fund-raising.
- (d) Strategic planning and priorities: HIV/AIDS should become more visible in the strategic planning framework. The evaluators suggested that HIV/AIDS is established as a cross-cutting theme in the Organization. That would make it one of three such themes, and it would contribute strongly to increased visibility and a sense of real priority to the issue.
- (e) HIV/AIDS Coordination Unit: UNESCO to establish a strong HIV/AIDS Coordination Unit. UNESCO should start recruiting a new HIV/AIDS Coordinator with suitable qualifications and decide on the location of the HIV/AIDS Coordination Unit – preferably in the Education Sector or directly under the Director-General.
- (f) Gender sensitivity: Any work UNESCO does in the area of HIV/AIDS must include a gender perspective. A lack of a gender sensitive approach undermines the effectiveness of all HIV/AIDS efforts. Given UNESCO's limited resources, it becomes even more important that it take advantage of partnerships with other specialist United Nations agencies (e.g. UNFPA, WHO), academic and applied research institutions, and NGO networks (particularly regional ones that represent people living with HIV/AIDS). Global efforts (the Global Fund, WHO's 3 x 5 Initiative) in the field of HIV/AIDS are quickly pushing the focus to treatment and care. Further, if the Culture Sector has the capacity and competence to rapidly update its theoretical perspectives on culture so that they better reflect current thinking in the field, this might be the place where UNESCO could begin to develop organizational competence in gender issues.
- (g) Management tool: The current HIV/AIDS strategy serves the purpose of a communication tool to inform others of UNESCO's intentions and reasons for being involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS. There is also a need for a much more strategic planning and management tool to translate intents into activities – to set clearer priorities for UNESCO's response.
- (h) Multisectoral response: The Education Sector has played the prominent role in the preventive education strategy while the other sectors have been more marginally involved. UNESCO's response to HIV/AIDS should be defined as multisectoral which

does not necessarily exclude a particular focus on the preventive power of education. The work of the Communication and Information Sector should be examined to see how it could best be part of an overall programmatic approach.

- (i) Shift attention from policy to programme planning: More coherent global and country programmes and programme documents are missing between the often-fragmented activities and the general policies. UNESCO should shift its attention from the general policy planning to programme development at country, regional and global level. Such a move will also contribute to more concentration and focus of resources and support a multisectoral response.
- (j) Clarification of roles: It will be helpful to clarify the roles of UNESCO as a specialized agency. The evaluation found that UNESCO has been hesitating between the normative and operational roles – ending up with too many tasks and dealing with too many issues rather than concentrating on roles and issues in which it has a comparative advantage and a realistic chance to make a difference. One possible way of developing the analysis could be to assess the core tasks of the strategy in the light of the roles identified in this evaluation.
- (k) Thematic and geographic priorities: With limited human and financial resources, there is a need to concentrate efforts in order to make an impact. UNESCO should consider focusing more of its resources in fewer countries where there is a need and scope for UNESCO's involvement in advocacy, information-sharing, and capacity-building. There are at least three key thematic areas in which UNESCO has been and should be involved: preventive education, the impact of HIV/AIDS on education systems and the cultural aspects of HIV/AIDS.
- (l) Quality management: The policies and procedures for quality management need to be revised as some of the outputs were found to be of mediocre quality. UNESCO needs to develop an approach that allows a qualitative analysis of how the organization contributes to the struggle against HIV/AIDS. To critically and continuously reflect on quality and impact is part and parcel of organizational learning. Systems for quality control, monitoring and evaluation should be seen as tools for knowledge management, and be designed to assist the organization to learn and improve its performance.

### **Actions taken/to be taken by the Director-General**

10. The Director-General closely followed the evaluation process and is grateful to the evaluation team for its constructive work and suggestions to improve UNESCO's response to the epidemic. The most recent HIV/AIDS initiatives and activities launched by the Director-General address the key recommendations raised by the evaluators and re-affirm the priority that UNESCO gives to its response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Given that most of the evaluation was conducted before the end of 2003, activities initiated as from January 2004 are not reflected in the final evaluation report. Further, the estimate of what UNESCO spends on its response to HIV/AIDS has been very much underestimated by the evaluators, based on the regular budget as drafted 10 months before it is presented to the General Conference. The estimation by the evaluators does not include staff costs for one half D-2, one D-1, one P-2, secretaries and staff members on extrabudgetary funding. Major actions already initiated, or to be initiated include:

- (a) As the Chair of the Committee of the UNAIDS Cosponsoring Agencies (July 2003-2004) UNESCO's Director-General invited UNAIDS Cosponsors in March 2004 to jointly launch a Global Initiative on Prevention Education. All the UNAIDS Cosponsors



positively responded to this invitation. The initiative is designed as a generic programme, simple and standardized yet comprehensive and sensitive to the particulars of each country, applicable and adaptable to each community, and integrated with other United Nations initiatives. It aims at protecting the core functions of education against the onslaught of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and will provide a resource for decision-making and for the consideration of policy options for affected countries. The work foreseen addresses issues ranging from treatment advocacy to curriculum development, teacher training, workplace policies, planning tools, promotion of policies to combat stigma and discrimination, integration of treatment and prevention.

- (b) Recognizing the importance of this Global Initiative, the Director-General has appointed a multisectoral, multidisciplinary UNESCO Management Team, chaired by the UNESCO HIV/AIDS Coordinator to organize the necessary internal consultation and follow-up for the initiative. And following up from the evaluation, the Management Team will look closely at the need to strengthen the planning processes, which translate our intentions into effective activities, and to pay particular attention to gender sensitivity of our response to HIV/AIDS. Further, they will give priority to essential awareness raising and capacity-building for our response to HIV/AIDS. The Director-General is also committed to strengthening human resources in UNESCO offices where the Global Initiative is to be piloted. Increased cooperation with civil society organizations is envisaged in future UNESCO work in HIV/AIDS.
- (c) With regards to geographic priority UNESCO is conscious of the urgent need for its response to be visible and effective in Africa. Member States in Africa have indicated this recently during consultations for the preparation of document 33 C/5. At the same time, the threat of rapidly increasing infection rates in other regions dictates that our efforts are also stepped up elsewhere. Consequently, in launching the Global Initiative, Cosponsors have already agreed to cover a first set of 12 countries. The Director-General's suggestion is that at least four of these countries should be from the hardest hit countries in Africa, to clearly reflect our geographic priority.
- (d) The Director-General has recognized the importance of adopting an integrated intersectoral response, which is why he established the cross-sectoral Consultative Group in 2001. The importance of increasing the visibility of UNESCO's efforts through effective information sharing and communication, all with a view to improving the effectiveness of our response, has been recognized. Consequently, modalities for bringing together prevention education, a cultural approach, and the human rights dimension have been put in place. The newly established Management Team for the Global Initiative on Prevention Education will strengthen this. The appropriate funding for such initiatives and for stepping up our efforts generally will be kept under close review, having regard to other priorities.
- (e) UNESCO is strongly committed to playing an important education role in support of the programme to provide anti-retroviral treatment to three million persons by the end of 2005 – the “3 by 5” initiative launched by WHO and UNAIDS. To this end the Director-General has requested that UNESCO field offices take immediate steps to advance the “3 by 5” initiative, including: (1) working closely with our partners within the UN Theme Group of HIV/AIDS to advocate for and support a government-led participatory “3 by 5” initiative, supporting and accelerating national care and treatment activities within each country; (2) collaborating closely to achieve complementarity of Cosponsors' efforts; and (3) work within UNESCO to develop a coherent and practical programme that is applicable in the field and to do so in a very short time frame.

## **MOBILE TEAM OF EXPERTS (MTE) FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA)**

### **Brief Description and background of programme evaluated**

11. Mobile team of experts for Education for All (EFA): UNESCO defines its functions and actions for the Dakar follow-up in four areas: (1) supporting National EFA Action Plans, with the focus on assisting the countries to develop (according to their needs) and implement their national EFA plan; (2) capacity-building, first for national stakeholders who are responsible for preparing and implementing the national EFA plans and secondly, in building and sustaining capacity among educators, including policy- and decision-makers, heads of institutions, curriculum developers, trainers and teachers; (3) mobilizing partners at the global and regional level to mobilize resources and promote inter-agency cooperation and collaboration in the various EFA processes. The meetings of the High-level Group and Working Group of EFA are the key mechanisms for discharging this role; and (4) monitoring progress by issuing an independent annual EFA Monitoring Report. It is in pursuit of the first two functions above that UNESCO implemented the “Mobile Teams of Experts” project. The Norwegian funded “Mobile Teams of Experts for EFA” project was established through an agreement between the Government of Norway and UNESCO. The project has been funded through Norwegian Funds-in-Trust (NFIT) to UNESCO. The concept of Mobile Teams of Experts evolved over time. Early thinking was for the setting up of mobile teams in Headquarters and possibly in field offices. The teams would then be required to move from one country to another providing technical assistance as and when needed. What actually emerged was a concept that was implemented flexibly with different groups of experts and different types of inputs, as needed and requested by particular countries in developing EFA plans and supporting capacity-building – items No. 1 and No. 2 of UNESCO’s functions and actions on the follow-up to Dakar. The use then of the acronym “MTE” refers to this mode of providing technical assistance as opposed to the original concept involving “mobile teams”.

12. UNESCO’s activities: The aim of the programme as stated in the agreement signed in November 2001 was “to assist UNESCO in implementing the following activities: Forming and operationalizing Mobile Teams of Experts for technical assistance and sending the Mobile Teams of Experts to no less than 10 identified target countries”. ED/EPS was entrusted with the overall responsibility for technical support and monitoring while the field offices were to be fully responsible for the implementation of their activities. The Education Sector then instituted a bidding process, and in January 2002 ED/EPS invited field offices to present countries for selection under the project. A technical team comprising of representatives from ED/BAS, ED/EPS and ED/EO, proceeded with the evaluation of the applications judged against four main criteria: (1) development levels of the countries for which support was requested; (2) the efforts made so far by the field offices in assessing the countries’ needs for technical assistance; (3) the mode of support requested; and (4) the priority given to EFA planning. The technical team proposed 16 countries (as against the initial target of 10 countries), namely: Comoros, Sierra Leone, Cambodia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Indonesia, Thailand, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Tajikistan, Haiti, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Sudan, Yemen, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The respective field offices responsible for these countries then proceeded with the implementation of the programme, beginning in March 2002.

13. This evaluation: This evaluation was foreseen from the outset of the project and therefore, is stipulated in the donor agreement. The donor and UNESCO agreed that the contribution for this particular project would be the initial stepping-stone for Norway-UNESCO’s larger scale cooperation under the EFA Programme, and as a secondary objective, a thorough evaluation of the activities undertaken covering the efficiency of the implementation modalities, the relevance and effectiveness of the project, and the sustainability of the capacity of beneficiaries. The evaluation, undertaken by a team of external consultants, was conducted in May and June 2003, and the final

report was submitted and approved by UNESCO in February 2004. Four “case study” countries were included in the evaluation, and visited by the evaluators. The countries were: Cambodia, Haiti, Indonesia and Sudan. The evaluators reviewed documentation pertaining to the project, and met and interviewed some 130 people in the four countries and at UNESCO Headquarters. Persons interviewed included ministers and other government officials, and officials from UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, NGOs, INGOs and bilateral donors.

### **Major findings (lessons and constraints)**

14. The evaluation recognized several **achievements** arising from UNESCO’s implementation of the project, including:

- (a) Decentralized structures: UNESCO’s decentralized structures (field offices) played an important role in putting the MTE concept into operation. Major activities included: identification of the needs of the Member States, completion of the proposals/applications which were submitted to Headquarters, coordination of the activities under MTE once the funds had been received for the various countries, and progress reporting to Headquarters. The evaluation concluded that EFA plans have been advanced or strengthened in all the cases studied. Coordination within the UNESCO decentralized structures has been generally satisfactory with one exception. Overall, the evaluators assessed the cluster concept to be important and of value in the decentralization process.
- (b) Relevance and effectiveness: With respect to supporting national EFA action plans, these (the plans) have been advanced or strengthened in all four case study countries. The products from the MTE process were generally identifiable in terms of enhanced quality of final plans. In terms of effectiveness, the quality of planning has also been enhanced. With respect to the mobilization of partners, coordination with donors has been well managed. In Haiti for instance UNESCO played a fund-raising role with national and international organizations for projects linking education and culture.

15. The evaluation recognized the following **challenges** from UNESCO’s implementation of the Mobile Teams of Experts (MTEs) project:

- (a) MTE concept and strategy: The “MTE concept and strategy” was not defined and was not “marketed”. As such since the original concept of “mobile teams” was not implemented, the initiatives by and large could have passed for any other technical assistance efforts. An “MTE label” as such was not recognized by the countries, donors and field office staff as belonging to UNESCO. Even some of the consultants who were hired under the project didn’t quite know of the MTE strategy. Capacity-building and competence enhancement were not always achieved. As a general observation these processes need to be given greater prominence in UNESCO’s support to EFA. More needs to be done in terms of transparency, ownership and the greater use of local competence.
- (b) Issues of relevance and effectiveness: The effectiveness of the implementation modalities was not especially evident. On the whole, most of the criteria for decentralization were observed to some extent but the modality still needs time to get established fully and will need continuing support. Monitoring has not been a strong feature of the MTE programme. Funds remained underspent at the time of the evaluation. Cambodia was able to use 85% of the budget available, Haiti has spent the available budget according to plans while Indonesia had utilized only 33%. In some

cases, assessment of products or outcomes was made more difficult by the lack of record keeping. There were few records available for Haiti or Sudan. Capacity, especially that of NGOs, has been built. Assistance has not always been compatible with national requirements and much more needs to be done in terms of ensuring real ownership. Risks associated with the MTE concept include ensuring ownership by the recipients, more careful selection of consultants, deeper engagement by existing structures (such as the EFA WGs), ensuring a proper balance between products (plans) and processes (capacity-building). In addition, it is essential that the potential and capacity of UNESCO at its various levels be fully understood by Member States, within the United Nations system, within government and particularly within the Ministry of Education.

With regards to the case study countries, the evaluators recognized the following:

### **Cambodia**

- (c) **Achievements:** The evaluation in Cambodia revealed that EFA Working Groups (WGs) were in place and that the relevance and quality of MTE inputs were gauged as high. Three out of four assignments had been completed and the outcomes were generally satisfactory despite some criticisms from Working Group members. The WGs were in fact strengthened, adding to the sustainability of EFA work in Cambodia. Cambodia had been proactive in getting EFA planning off the ground and had developed strong ownership through the partnerships developed with UNESCO and NGOs. NGOs now occupy a more prominent position in planning and preparation and were included in the donor meetings.
- (d) **Challenges:** Overall the “MTE concept” was not explained or understood in Cambodia. The Cambodian Ministry of Education felt that they could have been more involved in the preparation of the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the consultants. A major debate had arisen over the use of consultants for capacity-building. Experience from the MTE programme had shown that short-term consultants did not contribute much to local capacity-building. Funding for MTE had not been used efficiently and the demands placed on consultants were complex.

### **Haiti**

- (e) **Achievements:** In Haiti, support from the project enabled the Ministry to complete its National EFA plans in March 2003 within a more general strategic plan for education. A strategic focus had been developed and there was good cooperation among donors, government and NGOs. MTE was used to consolidate the present arrangements for planning and UNESCO took a key role in the preparation of special studies. UNESCO itself has become a stabilizing influence in a difficult environment and local networks are also strong. The Haitian Ministry of Education regarded the MTE inputs as “central” to their requirements.
- (f) **Challenges:** Haiti has completed their EFA Action Plan. However, the assessment of products and outcomes was made difficult due to the lack of adequate record keeping. Further, the long-term needs remain to be filled and the evaluators found that sustainability in a context of systemic deterioration in the operating environment was a matter for concern.

## **Indonesia**

- (g) **Achievements:** Indonesia's planning for EFA is developing within a context of education sector reform. EFA will be integrated into the current five-year plan (1999 to 2004). Working Groups for EFA have been set up as elsewhere and a plan of action is being prepared. Coordination between the EFA work and that for the education sector reform is an issue, which is being addressed.
- (h) **Challenges:** The MTE modality has not proved fully effective in Indonesia. Because of the size and complexity of Indonesia's education system there has only been a limited contribution to planning capacity. National impact was not identified, as there are considerable variations in capacity from province to province. Sustainability demands a longer time span for MTE inputs. Lessons learned from Indonesia include the need for more open and participatory procedures.

## **Sudan**

- (i) **Achievements:** In Sudan, the national EFA plan has been completed. Local planning competence is high.
- (j) **Challenges:** Paris, Beirut, Cairo and Khartoum were all involved in the MTE project in Sudan. However, the input from UNESCO has not been extensive and the linkage between Beirut, Cairo and Khartoum has not worked well. The advantages of decentralization were not realized due to the differing degrees of commitment of staff at the various levels. There has been poor communication between Cairo and Khartoum in particular. Inputs from Cairo have been too few and goals had not been clearly identified. UNESCO's role could have been much more effective and sustained. It is important that UNESCO continues to support capacity-building more effectively in order to sustain the EFA momentum.

## **Recommendations**

16. Following their analysis, the evaluators recommended that the following measures be considered:

- (a) **Concept of MTE:** As the MTE approach was not clearly recognized or understood by the governments, donors and other partners, consideration should be given as to how it can best be used to promote innovative approaches. It is essential that UNESCO's work in this should be recognizable.
- (b) **Capacity-building:** It is important that UNESCO continues to support more effective capacity-building in Member States in order to sustain the EFA momentum, and, where the implementation of EFA plans poses a major challenge to governments, the MTE model should be replicated.
- (c) **Decentralization:** It is important to review the role of the Cairo Cluster Office as facilitator, where the decentralized model did not work well. From the four case study countries discussed, there is no reason why decentralization should not be a very satisfactory mode of operation, given time and continued support. The structure is in place and the criteria for their operation have been established. There is scope to strengthen local partnerships.

- (d) Monitoring: Attention must be drawn to the role of Headquarters in monitoring agreed priorities and their implementation at the field office level. Further attention is to be paid to how monitoring is used to strengthen the accountability required of field offices.

### **Actions taken/to be taken by the Director-General**

17. The Director-General has acknowledged the findings of the evaluation, which *inter alia* has demonstrated that UNESCO field offices have played a major role in putting several aspects of the MTE concept and approach into operation. He notes that EFA plans have been advanced or strengthened in all the four cases studied. Constructive local partnerships were identified as critical success factors. The Director-General in particular notes that the recommendations from the evaluator were somewhat too general, but that the following actions have already been initiated, or are to be initiated by the Sector:

- (a) Initiatives taken by the Education Sector within the context of the EFA Strategic Review (169 EX/Decision 3.4.4, and document 170 EX/8) follow up on the issues raised by this evaluation. For example, UNESCO is committed to strengthening its communication with Member States concerning the strategies and various approaches being employed for the delivery of technical assistance at country level in the field of EFA.
- (b) UNESCO will intensify its capacity-building efforts at country level in order to provide relevant and effective technical assistance to Member States implementing EFA plans. National ownership of capacity-building activities and better use of local expertise will be encouraged.
- (c) The roles of the Cluster Offices, Regional Bureaux and Institutes in relation to Headquarters in the implementation of EFA will further be clarified.
- (d) UNESCO will further improve and promote a more proactive monitoring of technical assistance activities and develop better links between the coordination mechanisms and both capacity-building and technical assistance.

## **SMALL HISTORICAL COASTAL CITIES (SHCC)**

### **Brief description and background of programme evaluated**

18. Small Historical Coastal Cities: The initiative on Small Historical Coastal Cities (SHCC) was launched in 1996 on the Coastal Regions and Small Islands (CSI) platform for intersectoral cooperation. It had as its main objective the promotion, among public policy-makers, of the principles of an integrated approach to the sustainable social and urban development of small and medium-sized historic cities in South-Eastern European and Mediterranean coastal regions. The initiative has its origin in a meeting of a group of experts in Malmo in 1996. UNESCO had brought together anthropologists, hydrologists, architects, social scientists and other specialists to share their expertise and contribute to efforts aimed at preventing or stopping deterioration in cities in these regions. This initiative is based on research that has been done on rural-urban migration in the Arab region by the Social and Human Sciences Sector. It takes into account the priorities that have been set by the UNESCO Science Sector for the sustainable management of freshwater resources and the sustainable development of coastal regions. The SHCC initiative functioned as an intersectoral network involving the Management of Social Transformation (MOST) Programme, the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), and the CSI Programme, with the cooperation of the UNESCO Field Offices in Beirut, Rabat, Tunis (Office closed in December 2001) and Venice. The

CSI Programme provided a platform for several working groups in the implementation of the initiative.

19. UNESCO's activities: Since 1996, UNESCO's intersectoral effort to support the environment and development of coastal regions has been promoted: the Coastal Regions and Small Islands platform for intersectoral cooperation was launched in 1996 by the General Conference to establish and support various intersectoral initiatives. It has focused *inter alia* on: implementing a programme providing technical assistance and exchanging expertise among coastal cities; promoting the use of a common language among different groups of experts who play an active part in the development of coastal cities; heightening public awareness among local populations and supporting their participation; identifying and mapping areas where urgent intervention is needed; and conducting case studies which will help to both refine the methods used in the project and evaluate its impacts. The first five case studies included in the SHCC initiative involved Essaouira, Morocco (1997), Omišalj, Croatia (1998), Madhia, Tunisia (1999), Saida, Lebanon (2001) and Jableh, Syria (2003). These cities were selected after official requests from Member States.

20. This evaluation: The evaluation was launched at the initiative of the MOST programme to strengthen the ongoing general evaluation and the reorientation for MOST Phase II (2004-2009). The overall purpose of the evaluation was to measure the impact of the SHCC initiative on urban development in the five pilot cities, to identify lessons learned aimed at ensuring sustainability and eventual replication to other regions. The evaluation was conducted in two parts: first, the evaluator produced a preliminary report based on the study of SHCC documents and interviews conducted with stakeholders in three of the five pilot cities (Essaouira, Mahdia, Omišalj) and with UNESCO staff. Secondly, UNESCO organized a meeting with all partners including mayors, national and international experts, and NGO representatives at the site of the first pilot city in Essaouira, Morocco. The evaluator presented the draft evaluation report at this meeting, and obtained further inputs, including feedback on the draft and recommendations on the future orientation of the initiative, from the stakeholders.

### **Major findings (lessons and constraints)**

21. The evaluation recognized several **achievements** arising from UNESCO's implementation of the initiative, including:

- (a) The first in UNESCO: The SHCC initiative was launched in 1996, thus becoming a forerunner of cross-cutting intersectoral initiatives in UNESCO.
- (b) A compendium of characteristics: A compendium of characteristics observed in the five cities was compiled. These characteristics include: (1) threats to the sustainable provision of clean water and sanitation facilities; (2) increasing instability of the coastlines; (3) the destruction of archaeological heritage and loss of the city's sociocultural heritage; (4) untamed consumption of coastal lands and natural zones by urbanization; (5) the disappearance of traditional and artisanal activities; and (6) the overpopulation of historical city centres due to waves of rural migration and the flight of youth to regional capitals. This compendium has been instrumental in drawing the attention of local decision-makers to the socio-economic, cultural and environmental aspects of urban development and the need to define multidisciplinary approaches to the urban development problems in their cities.
- (c) Re-looking at urban development: The significant participation of high level international experts in meetings organized by the SHCC initiative led to extensive discussions and critiques of various urban development plans based primarily on the

results of scientific research. A public debate was thus opened within the municipalities, which in part had led to the reformulation or cancellation of several urban development projects that could have worsened the deteriorating conditions in the cities concerned.

- (d) Some results at pilot country level: Results at the pilot country level include: (1) In Mahdia, Tunisia, the local authorities relocated a marina project that was planned for a site near the Punic port. This was seen as the first major action denoting concern for the preservation of cultural heritage; (2) in Omišalj, Croatia excavations and archaeological restoration of the Basilica of Fulfinium were successfully integrated in the overall Urban Master Plan; (3) in Saida, Lebanon the local and regional authorities have launched several initiatives concerning the redevelopment of the coastline near the old city and the redesign of the urban waterfront; (4) in Jableh, Syria there is now a heightened sense of awareness of the value of archaeological vestiges from the Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman eras and the environmental value of the seaside; and (5) in Essaouira, Morocco national and regional authorities have supported municipality efforts to implement some major UNESCO recommendations relating to the opening of the airport and a plan to safeguard the medina. The medina has since been included on the World Heritage List.
- (e) SHCC initiatives and partnerships: The qualities of partnerships involved in the SHCC initiative were recognized by the evaluation to have greatly improved as the implementation progressed over the years. At the start, European universities undertook the diagnostics and analyses, but later European universities and local universities, and NGOs collaborated in various studies and initiatives in urban development. Examples include: (1) in partnership with the Nantes and Tunis Schools of Architecture, a local NGO had the responsibility to put into service the Maison-Laboratoire which helped to reconstitute traditional knowledge and to ensure its transfer to the city residents, and (2) European universities, including the Architectural Faculty of Zagreb, Croatia worked in a multidisciplinary manner in the implementation of the Omišalj pilot case.

22. The evaluation recognized the following **challenges** from UNESCO's implementation of the SHCC initiative:

- (a) Coordination mechanism: The SHCC initiative, while intersectoral in its design and implementation, preceded the establishment of UNESCO's cross-cutting themes and as such was not supported by a formal coordination structure at Headquarters or in the field. The evaluation identified the absence of a formalized coordination mechanism as one of the key shortcomings. Without it the initiative was not able to attend fully to operational and support functions such as ensuring administrative coordination between the sectors, information transfer, and sharing of best practices. As a result, both UNESCO and the municipalities were unable to learn effectively and capitalize on the successes as well as the challenges.
- (b) Absence of a unified conceptual approach: Absent in the SHCC initiative was a unified conceptual approach formulated in the form of a standard project document. In order to reinforce the initiative for the future, there is a need to develop a common conceptual approach, to convert individual criteria from each pilot into a unique approach that is coherent and able to be adapted on a case-by-case basis and also serve as a basis for measuring progress. To create such an integrated approach would require putting stakeholders from each pilot city into a position where they can share information on their individual experiences.



## Recommendations

23. Following their analysis, the evaluator recommended that the following measures be considered:

- (a) Global concept of the SHCC initiative: On the basis of the knowledge acquired, UNESCO needs to develop a concept document for the initiative that clearly articulates its key aspects and to ensure its wide distribution. In particular, it is necessary to clarify the links between the components of the problem (the land-sea interface, urban and cultural heritage). This multidisciplinary approach should permit the development of terms of reference around which an approach appropriate to each of the existing cities in the pilot study is to be constructed, thus providing a framework for the transfer of experience to other areas.
- (b) Equip the future SHCC cross-cutting project with a steering committee: Transform the SHCC informal intersectoral initiative into a formal cross-cutting project. In light of the complexity of the initiative, UNESCO should formalize a steering committee that would link Headquarters and the field offices with the support of a committee of specialists. The initiative covers territory falling within the responsibilities of the Regional Bureaux in Venice and Beirut, and the Rabat Office. To take advantage of competencies of the field offices and to strengthen the management group (the steering committee), the evaluation suggests that the steering committee be composed of one individual from each of these field offices, in addition to international experts and programme specialists from Headquarters.
- (c) Internal procedures: UNESCO should establish the conditions and roles of each partner (Headquarters and field offices), the distribution of resources, relations with other stakeholders, identical to the procedures that guide cross-cutting theme projects.
- (d) Thematic specializations: Each of the participating field offices should be responsible for a specific thematic area. The distribution could be the following: Venice: coastline, hydrology, hydro-ecology, humid zones, cultural and ecotourism; Beirut: heritage, architecture, urban issues; Rabat: Cultural and ecotourism; Paris: the coastal regions and small island (CSI) platform with the technical assistance of the Division of Water Sciences and the section for Urban Development in the Social and Human Sciences Sector.
- (e) Information exchanges: Ensure the publication and dissemination of conceptual and methodological work completed by experts and the universities working in the pilot study cities.
- (f) Development of training activities: It is recommended that the lessons learned serve towards the development of a training of technicians and municipal leaders, as well as the creation of appropriate curricula in the universities of the region.
- (g) Creation of a network among the five pilot cities: UNESCO should promote the creation of a network among the five pilot cities for the purpose of facilitating exchanges (visits by professionals, students or residents) by the municipality in order for the partner cities to know one another. UNESCO should further promote contact between the universities already engaged in the pilot study cities with counterparts in university and research centres in Europe and in other cultural areas with a view to raising their awareness and interest in the approach.

- (h) Prepare an effective transfer to additional cities: The conditions by which additional cities might join the network should take into account the lessons of the initiative, namely: there should exist a local project that fulfils the criteria to be announced by UNESCO; there should exist local partners who clearly express their interest to work in concert with others in the project; and UNESCO should engage local authorities, municipalities, regional and national associations and universities in the project.

### **Action taken/to be taken by the Director-General**

24. The Director-General has together with all major partners in the SHCC initiative acknowledged the findings of the evaluation, which demonstrate that the initiative has achieved important results in each of the five cities involved in the pilot studies. The evaluator noted the shortfall of the initiative not having a formalized coordination structure, and argued that it would now make sense for it to be aligned as a cross-cutting project. The Director-General recognizes that several pertinent details still have to be developed before a decision is taken on transforming the SHCC initiative into a set of cross-cutting projects. Further, he notes that UNESCO is reviewing the effectiveness of the mechanisms for managing existing cross-cutting intersectoral activities. He therefore calls on the respective stakeholders to take the following actions:

- (a) Prepare the necessary project documentation for future SHCC initiatives covering details such as the collaborating sectors/divisions, the overall strategies, including the thematic and managerial issues, the expected results, how best to structure the set of projects for UNESCO to be able to effectively achieve results, networking, information exchange, training, and the modalities for additional cities to join the initial five cities.
- (b) Consider how best to appropriately programme a cross-cutting set of projects with a view to reinforcing municipalities' awareness and action on their roles in countering rural urban migratory movements, revitalizing coastal historic districts and enhancing coastal environment for sustainable urban development. Municipalities are to be encouraged to include in their new urban public policies the principles of "the Right to the City": respect and protection in fulfilling the basic needs for all inhabitants – issues important to UNESCO's mandate.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROLOGICAL PROGRAMME (IHP-V) 1996 – 2001**

### **Brief Description and background of programme evaluated**

25. Purpose and membership: The International Hydrological Programme (IHP) is UNESCO's major intergovernmental machinery in the science sector for advancing cooperation and collaboration between Member States in the field of research and practice in water resources and in their assessment, development and management. The cooperation is aimed at improving and upgrading these activities, particularly in developing countries. IHP operates with a total of some 163 national committees, with activities reinforced by inputs from other United Nations agencies, IGOs and NGOs.

26. UNESCO's activities: Starting with the International Hydrological Decade (IHD 1965-1974), which involved a number of United Nations bodies and agencies together with several international non-governmental organizations, UNESCO has promoted the long-term programme of the IHP through its successive phases. The fifth phase (IHP-V, 1996-2001), the subject of the evaluation, addressed the theme "Hydrology and Water Resources in a Vulnerable Environment". The current sixth phase (2002-2007) is entitled "Water Interactions: Systems at Risk and Social Changes". Like

previous phases of the IHP, IHP-V was a collaborative programme with 90% or more of the effort and resources being committed nationally – UNESCO and the IHP Secretariat playing an essentially catalytic role, with a programme budget of just over \$1 million a year available over the six years to support IHP-V. The programme was organized in eight thematic groups. Theme-1 covered global processes, concerned with climate/atmosphere/water relations. Theme-2 focused on Ecohydrology, an area of growing importance, one new to the IHP, but with strong links to Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme. Work was undertaken in the areas of land/water relations, soil erosion, wetlands and sediment with a view to assembling better knowledge of the vulnerability of land-water systems to the impact of human activities. Theme-3 was concerned with Groundwater resources at risk, dealing with the very serious problem of degradation of groundwater. This was, in fact, a priority theme for IHP-V. Theme-4 considered strategies for water resources management in emergencies and conflicts. Theme-5 dealt with water resources management in arid and semi-arid zones. This theme had two main aims: the first was to gain better knowledge of hydrological processes and improving methods of water resources assessment, and the second was improvements in integrated management and conservation of scarce water resources. Theme-6 was devoted to humid tropics and water management. Theme-7 emphasized work on integrated urban water management with urban drainage, non-structural urban flood control measures, dissemination of knowledge on integrated urban water management and the establishment of regional centres in different climatic zones as the principal thrusts. Theme-8 covered transfer of knowledge, information and technology (KIT).

27. This evaluation: The External Evaluation of the Fifth Phase of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) Hydrology and water resource development in a vulnerable environment (1996-2001) was foreseen in document 31 C/5. Further, the 31st session of the IHP Bureau endorsed the proposed evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation was to examine the problems the IHP has been called upon to resolve, the efficiency of the implementation of the plan, the effectiveness of the governing mechanisms and to assess the results obtained over the period 1996-2001. An external team of evaluators established in October 2002 conducted the evaluation. Methods employed by the evaluators included: review of relevant documentation, a questionnaire survey, visits and interviews of stakeholders in IHP projects and IHP National Committees, and attendances at hydrogeological events. Discussions were also held with various United Nations agencies, and international non-governmental organizations. The evaluation had a worldwide coverage. The final report was submitted in December 2003, and had since been discussed in the 36th session of the IHP Bureau held in Paris, 31 March-2 April 2004.

### **Major findings (lessons and constraints)**

28. The evaluation recognized several major **achievements** with IHP-V, including:

- (a) Scientific merit: The evaluation found that major achievements within the different themes in IHP-V consisted of publications, including conference proceedings, books, and databases; the development of strategies, and the production of guidelines for dealing with relevant water issues, the establishment of various centres dealing with water research and education; instituting a prize, and the launching of a UNESCO chair. Examples of publications include: the World Atlas of Snow and Ice and the Proceedings of the International Symposium “Water: A Looming Crisis?” (Theme 1). Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Groundwater Quality (Theme-3), the “Hydrology of Wadi Systems” (Theme-5), a three-volume series on urban drainage in different climates, and the “Frontiers in Urban Water Management: Deadlock or Hope?”, a comprehensive book on the subject (Theme-7). The evaluation found that several of IHP-V successes, particularly in the Arab countries, had been achieved because of the guidance given by UNESCO staff.

- (b) The FRIEND Programme: The FRIEND (Flow Regimes from International Experimental and Network Data) programme under Theme 1 succeeded in the establishment of regional hydrological databases and the sharing of data between countries. This has resulted in FRIEND becoming a major cross-cutting theme within IHP-VI. The promotion and establishment of ecohydrology as a discipline with the development of strong links to the Man and the Biosphere Programme provides a basis for joint IHP/MAB cooperation in IHP-VI (Theme 2).
- (c) Strategies and guidelines: In addition, several strategies and guidelines were developed, including: strategies for detecting groundwater quality problems, studies of urban and agricultural threats to groundwater (Theme-3), the water-related vision of the Aral Sea Basin region (Theme-4), guidelines for professionals and planners on public participation for formulation of flood control policies (Theme-7).
- (d) Centres, Prize and Chair: Centres were established or reactivated including: two centres for the study of the arid zone, one in Chile and the other in Egypt (Theme-5), two regional humid tropics centres, the first in Panama and the second in Malaysia (Theme-6), the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management in Tehran (Theme-7), and two collaborating centres on research and training on urban drainage were activated in São Paulo and Trondheim, Norway (Theme-7). The International Prize for Water Resources in Arid and Semi-Arid Areas was launched (Theme-5), and a UNESCO Chair of Wadi Hydrology was established in 1999 at the University of Jordan (Theme-5).
- (e) Dissemination of knowledge: In addition, the dissemination of knowledge through courses and through water knowledge clearing-house activities was achieved (Theme-8). Further, the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was promoted and public information and non-formal educational material developed and disseminated through television programmes, videos and CD-ROMs (Theme-8).

29. The evaluation recognized the following **challenges** for UNESCO from implementing IHP-V:

- (a) Shortfalls: Several planned initiatives and activities were not implemented mainly due to lack of funds. Examples here include: planned work on the Role of Unsaturated Zones (Theme-3), and the proposed regional humid centre for Ghana (Theme-6).
- (b) Efficiency and effectiveness: The evaluation team perceived many IHP National Committees to be ineffective. This perception is supported mainly by the “low impact on national water activities” as assessed by the evaluation. The operations of the Intergovernmental Council and the Bureau could be improved as it was found that much time was usually spent discussing matters which should simply have been “for noting”, and for which “no decisions” were required. It was also noted that presentations made at Council and Bureau meetings were “unnecessarily long”. Further, the times required for publications to be released were also considered to be “too long”. The evaluators expressed concern as to the capacity of the Division of Water Sciences to meet the ever-expanding interests of the programme.
- (c) Relevance and impact: With the exception of Theme 3 (Groundwater resources at risk) and Theme 8 (transfer of knowledge, information and technology), stakeholders consistently rated as “below average” the relevance and impact of the various IHP themes to the water activities in their respective countries. The evaluation found that IHP-V had a lower impact on national water activities than it did on the furtherance of

the hydrological sciences. In addition to the perceived ineffectiveness of many National Committees, the apparent absence of impacts may also be partly due to the fact that much of hydrology and hydrological research is long term. Although initial evidence of outcomes and impacts from IHP-V should by now (i.e. IHP-VI, 2002-2007) be traceable, it is reasonable to expect to find even more later within IHP-VII (2008-2014), which is currently being planned. Work in Theme 3 (Groundwater resources at risk) and Theme 8 (Transfer of Knowledge, Information and Technology), was perceived by stakeholders to be relevant to/for the water activities of their countries, on an above-average basis.

- (d) Increased competition: At the time of the establishment of the IHP in 1975, the Programme was virtually unmatched by competing similar initiatives on the global water stage. At the start of the new millennium, however, the situation was different with many new, competing players emerging. How the IHP retains its competitive edge with these other global water initiatives needs to be addressed by the Member States, the Intergovernmental Council and the Bureau as part of the planning of IHP-VII (2008-2014).

## **Recommendations**

30. Following their analysis, the evaluators recommended that the following measures be considered:

- (a) To National Committees:
  - 1. Strengthen National Committees for the IHP, especially those in Africa. This would include securing governmental funding to support the work of the committee, the committee to meet at least once a year, drawing its membership from bodies involved in a wide range of the nation's activities especially water policy, and work through various partnerships.
- (b) To the International Council and the Bureau:
  - 2. Make sessions of the Intergovernmental Council and the Bureau more efficient and effective, by working with shorter agendas, giving priorities to matters requiring decisions, and putting time limits on presentations.
  - 3. Improve the process of planning of IHP, including instituting a more "bottom-up" approach in planning IHP-VII and future phases.
  - 4. Give more guidance to National Committees. This would include: drawing up and adopting suitable guidance material, holding workshops to disseminate these to the Committees, and organizing more visits from the secretariat to the National Committees.
  - 5. Monitor projects more effectively to cover the introduction of a system of regular reporting by Working Groups.
- (c) UNESCO, the Division of Water Sciences and the Regional Offices:
  - 6. Balance the human and financial resources against the needs of the Programme in a better fashion.

7. Increase the speed of publishing through tighter schedules and encouraging authors to keep to them.
  8. Make publications more readily available by giving preference to outlets, which ensure distribution to the largest number of stakeholders. Also encourage National Committees to translate whole or parts of IHP publications into their own languages.
  9. Maintain the level of advocacy for the IHP by continuing to give a high level of visibility to the IHP and UNESCO in the water affairs of the United Nations system and in forums where world water is debated.
- (d) To partner organizations:
10. Share in the activities of the IHP to a greater extent and encourage links between programmes, by taking part in the planning processes, sending observers to the Council, taking responsibility for certain projects, participating in working groups, and producing joint publications.

#### **Action taken/to be taken by the Director-General**

31. The Director-General has, together with all major partners in the programme, acknowledged the findings of the evaluation, which demonstrate that IHP-V has been instrumental in promoting the hydrological sciences, but that the impact of IHP-V on the water activities of Member States could have been higher. He notes that the shortfalls in funding, as assessed by the evaluation team, have now been addressed through making “water” a principal priority of the Organization. He calls on the respective stakeholders to take appropriate actions in line with the recommendations. In particular:

- (a) The observations concerning effectiveness and efficiency, including issues dealing with the functioning of the IHP National Committees, need to be closely examined and debated by the Intergovernmental Council and Bureau, within the context of the ongoing discussion on the governance of IHP. The IHP should also adopt practices that will make the governing bodies more efficient and effective.
- (b) As the IHP approaches its thirtieth anniversary, there should be conscious reflection on the development and establishment of a clear long-term vision of future directions and objectives. Such a vision should involve effectively broadening the scope of IHP beyond purely scientific hydrological concerns into water resources management and related cultural, societal and capacity-building issues responding to the needs articulated by the Member States and to the growing emphasis placed by the international community on the critical importance of freshwater issues. IHP may thus envision as its main thrust for the future the production of policy-relevant science and an expanded knowledge base for sound water resources management and direct a sustained effort to promote the linkages and mechanisms necessary to further its impact on national water activities.
- (c) Even though major steps have already been taken to improve information transfer through the establishment of the Water Portal (<http://www.unesco.org/water/>), further initiatives are necessary to increase the speed of publishing, provide greater access to IHP publications and improve the impact of IHP on the national water activities of Member States. These initiatives may include: (1) matching IHP materials and findings

to stakeholders/users needs, particularly where IHP can point to “new knowledge”, which has been gained or developed in a regional or international setting, but which is not readily available in individual Member States; (2) advocating the incorporation of the relevant findings into water policy and management instruments in Member States; (3) keeping track of the extent to which the products and services of IHP are being used in managing water resources (ongoing self-evaluation) with a view to gauging the impacts of IHP’s products and services; and (4) learning from the use (or non-use) of IHP products and services, as a means of informing possible further development of the programme.

## **PART II – CONCLUDING REMARKS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

32. Lessons learned: The Organization continues to implement the UNESCO Evaluation Strategy (165 EX/19), and as already reported in the 169th session of the Executive Board (169 EX/22) the Organization is taking an increasing interest in evaluations. What is more, the findings from several of the evaluations are recognized to have implications far beyond the confines of the specific activities that were evaluated. Cumulatively, the evaluations conducted in the last biennium have pointed to several important lessons for programmes in UNESCO. These are discussed briefly below.

33. Questions of priority setting: The HIV/AIDS evaluation in particular raised questions as to how UNESCO sets its priorities. Urgent questions for UNESCO therefore are: How does UNESCO identify priority activities and how should UNESCO take these forward? Answers to these and similar questions will clearly contribute to more effective management of the Organization’s programmes as we seek to fulfil our mandate.

34. Multisectoral/multidisciplinary approaches: Several of the evaluations highlighted the importance of multisectoral/multidisciplinary approaches to programme design and implementation. There are clearly opportunities for UNESCO to capitalize on the advantages offered by such approaches to programme design and delivery. As a case in point, the Director-General recently appointed a multisectoral, multidisciplinary UNESCO Management Team to organize necessary internal consultation and follow-up for the proposed Global Initiative in Prevention Education in HIV/AIDS being launched under the umbrella of the Cosponsors for UNAIDS.

35. Workable local partnerships: All the evaluations indicated that several of the results achieved were traceable to workable partnerships at the local level. There were examples of success stories with implementation actually taking place “on the ground” in collaboration with the local partners. This major finding from evaluations is also important as a marker of UNESCO’s increasing success in implementing its decentralization policy, which is after all about effective programme delivery. Furthermore, workable partnerships at the local level provide the necessary environment for effective capacity-building. UNESCO’s programmes should therefore increasingly seek to be delivered in the context of workable local partnerships.

36. Management’s interest in evaluation: Management has continued to actively support, participate, and draw lessons from evaluations. The support includes active participation in the formulation of Terms of Reference (TOR), the willingness to supply information and hold discussions with evaluators, and the provision of logistics for the conduct of evaluations. Increased participation is seen from the lively and informative discussions characterizing briefing and debriefing meetings, which are held for the various evaluations. The participation of senior management in meetings in which evaluators present their findings and discuss issues pertaining to the various programme activities is a very welcome development. The lessons being learned from

evaluations are increasingly being used to inform subsequent planning and programme implementation. The IOS continues with its efforts to build evaluation capacity covering both self-evaluation and external evaluation. As capacities in the sectors and field networks are enhanced, additional benefits from the use of the findings from evaluations will be secured.

### **Proposed draft decision**

37. The Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 167 EX/Decision 3.1.4, and 169 EX/Decision 4.4,
2. Having examined document 170 EX/14 and taking into consideration the evaluation reports that have been presented,
3. Taking note of the recommendations made by the evaluators as well as the report of the Director-General on the implementation of these recommendations,
4. Invites the Director-General to implement in appropriate manner recommendations, which improve the programmes to which they relate, and to continue to improve the quality of evaluations by implementing the UNESCO Evaluation Strategy;
5. Requests the Director-General to continue to report to the Executive Board on evaluations that are carried out on the Organization's programme activities, on the progress made in the follow-up to evaluation recommendations and in strengthening the quality of the evaluations undertaken.