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Review of UNESCO Liaison Offices

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brief description and background of the activities evaluated	
<p>The evaluation of liaison offices aims at assessing the effectiveness of the liaison functions of the New York and Geneva Offices and to provide recommendations on how to enhance their impact and contribution.</p> <p>The two recently established liaison offices in Addis Ababa and Brussels were also included in this review, with a forward looking focus.</p>	
Findings and conclusions	Recommendations
<p>Major achievements New York Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improved visibility of UNESCO and involvement in United Nations working groups – Timely and competent advice provided on areas related to UNESCO’s fields of competence – Improved networks and recognition by the United Nations Secretariat and Member States <p>Major achievements Geneva Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Contribution to PCPD activities valued by stakeholders – Events organized around UNESCO initiatives much appreciated by partner organizations <p>Establishment of the Addis Ababa and Brussels liaison offices is a positive development and initial reactions and contributions are encouraging</p>	
<p>Challenge: Strategic guidance for liaison offices is needed.</p>	<p>Liaison offices to develop strategic mission documents that explain their key priorities and objectives. Headquarters to provide support to this process.</p>
<p>Challenge: Clear expectations and profiles of liaison office staff including directors and liaison officers should be formulated.</p>	<p>Develop or revisit job descriptions of liaison office staff to ensure alignment with Office and Headquarters strategies.</p>
<p>Challenge: Better define representation in and contribution to technical meetings.</p>	<p>Clarify whether or to what extent technical contribution to relevant task forces is expected by Office staff.</p>
<p>Challenge: More extrabudgetary fundraising activities needed.</p>	<p>Clarify fundraising expectations for liaison offices and develop appropriate fundraising strategies.</p>
<p>Challenge: Reporting and communication lines with Headquarters and decentralized entities to be defined.</p>	<p>Establish clear reporting and communication lines with Headquarters and decentralized entities.</p>

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation 1** The functions of liaison offices need to be clarified as well as expectations, including targets for resource mobilisation, partnership development, information brokering events and technical contributions to relevant taskforces. Directors then need to be held accountable for delivery
- Recommendation 2** The content of reporting lines need to be clarified. Liaison offices should report administratively to BFC and provide functional reports on a quarterly basis to ODG and for Addis Ababa to the Africa Department, copied to BFC, ERI, BSP and programme sectors
- Recommendation 3** Liaison office directors need to develop strategic positioning papers that explain their key priorities and objectives, including those related to fundraising, based on the generic functions and expectations set by Headquarters and the specificities of the institutions with which they liaise
- Recommendation 4** Liaison office directors need to develop or revisit job descriptions of relevant staff to ensure alignment with the liaison strategies. This will entail clarification as to the extent to which Office staff should make technical contributions to relevant task forces and working groups
- Recommendation 5** When revisiting the field structure in Africa, it is recommended that all programme staff be given liaison responsibilities in the Addis Ababa Office, rather than continuing with one dedicated liaison officer in order to ensure UNESCO can make the technical contributions sought by the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa

1. REVIEW PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

Review Purpose

The Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of UNESCO called for the role of the New York Office to be enhanced. Subsequently, the Ad-hoc working group of the Executive Board to the follow-up on the IEE requested clarification of the role of liaison offices and a better communication mechanism. In response, a review was undertaken by IOS to determine how best to enhance liaison offices.

All liaison offices of UNESCO were assessed so that a coherent policy for all liaison offices could be developed and implemented. However, it was too early to undertake a full assessment of the Addis Ababa and Brussels Offices given their nascent stage, but findings and lessons learnt from this review will feed into the ongoing development of the offices.

The purpose of a review of the liaison offices was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the offices focusing on their effectiveness in performing liaison functions and their current and potential impact. The review provides recommendations on how to enhance their impact and contribution to the wider organization.

Review Scope

The purpose of the review was to assess the role and effectiveness of liaison offices, focusing on the following main questions:

1. *How effective are the offices in representing UNESCO, particularly in interagency settings?*
2. *How effective are the offices in channelling information between UNESCO, other UN agencies and inter-governmental institutions?*
3. *How effective are the offices in their advocacy, particularly with Permanent Missions to the UN?*
4. *How effective are the offices in promoting information on what UNESCO is doing and can do?*
5. *How effective are the relationships the offices maintain with relevant partners?*
6. *How effective are the offices in raising funds for UNESCO?*
7. *How effective are the channels between the liaison offices and other parts of UNESCO?*
8. *How can liaison offices strengthen their advocacy for and branding of the Organization?*
9. *What is the impact to the wider organization of the liaison offices?*
10. *How could the impact of liaison offices be enhanced?*
11. *How could the strategic role of liaison offices be remoulded to enhance impact?*

Review Methodology

The review was undertaken by the Evaluation Section at IOS and involved the following methodology:

1. Field missions to New York, Geneva and Addis Ababa and an interview with the head of the Brussels office
2. Meetings with Resident Coordinators, representatives of UN agencies, Permanent Missions and other relevant partners in each field location: e.g. in Geneva AEDIDH, ILO, Maldives Permanent Mission, OCHA, OHCHR, OIF, UNDP, UNICEF, UNOG, WHO,

WIPO; in Addis Ababa UNDP, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UN Women, IOM, several commissions of the African Union and programme implementation partners

3. Meetings with programme sectors at Headquarters as well as with ERI and other relevant Central Services
4. Comparative analysis of the liaison offices of other similar agencies, focusing on budget allocations and staffing from the 2007 JIU report on liaison offices
5. Incorporation of the draft decisions emerging from the Ad hoc working group on the IEE:
 - ◆ Invite the Director-General to provide, when reporting on the Field Network, a clear definition of the role of the UNESCO liaison offices to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, as well as of the role of the newly established liaison offices with the African Union and the European Union;
 - ◆ Further request that the Director-General develop a communication mechanism to provide Member States with systematic updates on the work of the liaison offices in New York and Geneva on issues related to UNESCO's mandate, with a view to enhancing policy coherence.

2. THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF LIAISON OFFICES

A liaison office represents its parent organization to many diverse partners, acting as the ears, eyes and mouth of the parent. As the ears and eyes, it gathers, analyses, evaluates and reports on selected information deemed to be of interest to its parent. As its organization's mouth, a liaison office uses both public and private opportunities to explain the mandate and activities of the organization and its current and planned activities.

The functions of liaison can be represented as follows:

- ❑ **Institutional representation:** Act as representative of UNESCO at the political level and official working group level within the UN and the relevant inter-governmental and regional organisations
- ❑ **Advocacy:** Advocate for UNESCO areas of concern across the five sectors of the Organisation, including intersectoral issues such as gender
- ❑ **Information Broker:** Channel information between the various parts of UNESCO and with other UN agencies and relevant inter-governmental and regional organisations
- ❑ **Partnership mobiliser:** Forge partnerships with UN agencies, inter-governmental and regional organisations, and donors as well as with civil society.

UNESCO has established liaison offices in the UN hub locations of New York and Geneva, the African institutions' hub of Addis Ababa and in the EU hub of Brussels. With the exception of Addis Ababa, a national office, and a few very small CI programmes implemented by the New York Office, UNESCO's liaison offices do not implement programmes, nor do they manage any extrabudgetary projects. Regular Programme funding relates to staff costs, public information campaigns or awareness raising.

The total budget allocated for the four liaison offices for this biennium is around \$7.8 million. This includes all staff and operating costs and incurred expenditure for the Brussels office. The figure represents 4% of all field office budget allocations for the 2010–2011 biennium.

The offices have been allocated with 17 professional posts (one D/2, two D/1, four P/5, four P/4, five P/3 and one AO) and around 20 support staff. In addition, Addis Ababa employs three national program officers and three consultants. Interns are often used, particularly by the New York office (15 as at 31 December 2010) and to a lesser extent the Geneva office.

3. SYSTEMIC ISSUES ACROSS ALL LIAISON OFFICES

The evaluation team was able to identify a number of systemic issues of relevance to all liaison offices. These involve strategy guidance and the setting of expectations, contribution to technical meetings and reporting lines. Each is discussed below.

Strategic guidance

One striking finding from this review was that UNESCO liaison functions have no blueprint guiding their work. Headquarters has yet to set out the roles and functions of liaison offices. Staff working in liaison offices are seldom clear on what liaison means, either as a concept or what it means for their day-to-day work. This is complicated by the fact that each liaison office is different, liaising with a unique set of institutions. New York's focus is the UN Secretariat, Geneva's other UN agencies and the fields of post-conflict and post-disaster and human rights, Brussels' the European Union, Addis Ababa's the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa. While it is up to the office to determine the specific details of how best to liaise with these various bodies, an overall framework needs to be developed by Headquarters for all liaison offices.

Clear expectations

In addition to specifying roles and functions, a liaison office framework would need to specify general expectations for all offices. IOS found that expectations are neither clear for directors of liaison officers nor for their staff. Profiles of liaison office staff could then be worked up on the basis of these expectations.

Discussions with programme sectors indicated that there is a demand in programme sectors for information from liaison offices on what is happening in other organizations in particular fields. Programme sectors also want liaison offices to cooperate more with other organizations to ensure UNESCO's work is complementary but also visible. These programmatic expectations need to be specified along with those of a more general nature, such as raising extrabudgetary funding. This would also form the basis of an accountability framework for liaison offices.

Technical contribution

Key stakeholders emphasized the importance of UNESCO being able to bring technical expertise to the table. The review found that there was little added-value from having general liaison officers that covered the whole work of the Organization. Effective liaison requires a certain degree of technical knowledge in the concerned field and is most effectively carried out by a programme specialist. Liaison officers in New York are, in general, specialized in a particular sector and are therefore relatively effective. The contribution liaison officers are expected to make in relevant task forces and working groups needs to be clarified. This is of particular importance to Addis Ababa and Brussels given that these offices do not currently have sector-specific liaison officers.¹

Reporting lines

Several months ago, the Director-General decided that all liaison offices would report to the Office of the Director-General (ODG). This decision was taken in light of the significance now

¹ Geneva does not have sector-specific liaison officers, but the liaison work in Geneva is mostly related to two fields only: post-conflict and post-disaster work and human rights.

attached to their function and to their potential in improving UNESCO’s work with the UN family and in lifting UNESCO’s visibility. It was also considered that improved liaison would make UNESCO more effective. The decision clearly separated liaison offices from other field offices which continue to report to the Bureau of Field Coordination.

It is not clear that reporting to the ODG for all matters is the most optimal situation. The ODG is not designed to deal with administrative matters or the day-to-day running of an office. BFC houses these capacities and thus it would be more efficient for liaison offices to report to BFC for administrative matters, including leave requests for the directors of offices. Quarterly reports on matters of substance could instead be issued for the ODG, and the Africa Department in the case of Addis Ababa with copies to BFC, BSP, ERI and programme sectors as appropriate. In addition, capacities in the ODG are stretched resulting in delays in decisions at times.

Table 1 Proposed reporting lines

Liaison Office	Administrative reporting to	Quarterly functional reports sent to	Quarterly functional reports copied to
Addis Ababa	BFC	ODG and Africa	BFC, BSP, ERI and programme sectors as appropriate
Brussels	BFC	ODG	BFC, BSP, ERI and programme sectors as appropriate
Geneva	BFC	ODG	BFC, BSP, ERI and programme sectors as appropriate
New York	BFC	ODG	BFC, BSP, ERI and programme sectors as appropriate

4. NEW YORK LIAISON OFFICE

Office background

New York is the most important UN hub in the world hosting the United Nations Headquarters. The General Assembly, the Security Council, the UN Economic and Social Council, and the UN Secretariat as well as the headquarters of a number of UN organizations such as UNDP and UNICEF all operate out of New York. In addition, a number of multilateral organizations are based in Washington DC and the North American continent is home to a large number of non-governmental organizations and private donor funds.

The New York Office is the largest liaison office with a Director, five specialist liaison officers, and support staff. The Office, established in 1948, was one of the first field offices UNESCO created. Funds allocated through the Regular Programme budget to the New York Office have been declining in recent years (see Table 2). The majority of the funding (around 70%) is consumed by running costs, the remainder for awareness-raising activities, particularly in the Communication and Information sector. Funds allocated to staff costs for the 2010–2011 biennium total \$2,902,401. The Office has one D/2 post, two P/5, two P/4, two P/3, four L posts and one G4 post. In addition, as at 31 December 2010, the Office had one P/3 consultant, one SSA G/4 position and 15 interns.

Table 2 New York Office Regular Programme Budget

Biennium	RP Allocation (\$)
2006–2007	400,185
2008–2009	385,234
2010–2011	325,250

Source: FABS. Note: Staff costs are excluded.

Achievements

The arrival of a new director in mid-2010 has significantly increased UNESCO's presence in UN forums. The new director is more visible and active than his predecessor, with all stakeholders noting a marked change in energy and UNESCO's approach. It is, however, too early to determine concrete results from this new visibility. It does appear that other UN organizations are more aware of UNESCO's fields of work and potential added-value than previously. Feedback from programme sectors at Headquarters was largely positive, particularly from Education, Culture and Communication and Information which emphasized the important advocacy and negotiation roles of the Office.

A number of important events for raising the profile of UNESCO have been held, such as awareness raising around the media development indicators and celebrating World Press Freedom Day. The Office also holds briefings to UN delegates and the Secretariat as required on particular subjects, such as partnership development related to the World Digital Library. The examples provided show that the Communication and Information sector has been the most active in taking advantage of UNESCO's presence in New York.

The New York Office participates in a wide range of working groups and taskforces within the UN Secretariat. This participation has led to greater visibility of UNESCO's work amongst other UN agencies. The Office staff represent the interests of UNESCO on such groups, relaying messages both to the groups and back to Headquarters. Given the fact that the

liaison officers also tend to be specialists for particular sectors, they are also able to contribute to the debate substantively, rather than simply just acting as a mailbox function.

Over the years Office staff have developed and nurtured extensive networks among Member States' delegations and the UN Secretariat. Given that New York hosts the General Assembly and a wide number of important conferences throughout the year, it is vital to have networks through which UNESCO can influence decision making and ensure that the interests of the Organization are taken into consideration. Liaison officers provided a number of examples where the New York Office had worked with delegations based in New York to shape decisions by the General Assembly to advocate for UNESCO's priorities and approaches. This was important for ensuring UNESCO's agenda was recognized and that key issues, such as culture and development, were represented in key resolutions.

The liaison officers are able to adequately cover all five sectors of UNESCO as well as the work of key sectors, in particular ERI and BSP. The possibilities for involvement are endless, but, on the whole, the liaison officers appear to have covered the key areas of interest to UNESCO. This is not surprising given that the UNESCO New York liaison office is one of the best resourced liaison offices in New York amongst UN agencies.² In fact, only OHCHR and UNHCR have more staff in their New York offices at 16 and 15 respectively (figures include posts, consultants and interns as of June to October 2006). Refer to the Annex for further details.

Challenges

Interviews with Office staff showed that the strategic priorities of the Office are not clear. This is a particular issue in New York where the possibilities for involvement are almost endless. At any given moment there are multiple events taking place in UN forums of potential relevance to UNESCO. In the absence of strategic priorities for the Office, which have been worked up in close collaboration with Headquarters, the effectiveness of the Office is limited. In addition, while liaison officers have internalized what it means to be a liaison officer, there was still confusion as to what exactly the overall role of the office was and what individual liaison officers were expected to do.

The mission to New York identified that the internal functioning of the Office required strengthening. Management practices need attention as does communication between staff and intersectoral work. The balance between internal and external functions of the Director needs to be revisited to ensure the dynamics of the Office and staff issues receive adequate focus. The reporting lines of the Office need clarification given the fact that the ODG does not have the capacities to adequately monitor the office and follow-up on requests.

North America is home to a raft of non-governmental organizations and private donor funds. The Office has yet to tap into the potential these institutions offer to UNESCO. To date the Office has not devoted a lot of resource into forging partnerships with North American organizations. Headquarters staff mentioned the missed potential for UNESCO, both in terms of visibility and impact of the Organization given the immense funds available.

Conclusion

While the New York Office has clearly demonstrated it can add value to the Organization, it still lags behind expectations. It is not evident that more staff are required in the office or that the current level of posts needs to be increased. Rather, the internal functioning of the

² *Liaison Offices in the United Nations System*, Joint Inspection Unit, Geneva, 2007 (Table 2 page 15)

Office needs strengthening and reporting lines to Headquarters clarified. More attention to the management of staff is needed which should be balanced with the external duties of representing UNESCO. Communication between the liaison officers requires improvement as the current modus operandi is very silo-like. Finally, the Office needs to tap into the vast donor opportunities that exist on the North American continent.

5. GENEVA LIAISON OFFICE

Office background

The Geneva Liaison Office (GLO) is a very small office with only three full-time staff members: the Office Director (D1), a Liaison Officer (P4) and an Office Assistant (G5). The office also regularly hires interns to follow various conferences, particularly in the area of human rights. Table 3 shows how the office's budget has decreased over the past few biennia, especially following its move into the premises of the International Bureau of Education (IBE) in 2008. GLO does not receive any extrabudgetary funding. Funds allocated to staff costs for the 2010–2011 biennium total \$1,097,700.

Table 3 Geneva Office Regular Programme Budget

Biennium	RP Allocation (\$)
2006–2007	152,700
2008–2009	98,082
2010–2011	104,950

Source: FABS. Note: Staff costs are excluded.

Table 4 shows the range of Geneva-based Organizations and the degree to which GLO liaises with each. More liaison is carried out by Headquarters directly, while GLO deals frequently with OHCHR and UNDP.

Table 4 Liaison with Geneva-based Organizations

	Very Frequent	Regular	Occasional	Mostly done by HQ	Also done by HQ
UNOG		X			
OHCHR	X				X
UNHCR			X	X	
WHO				X	
UNAIDS				X	
UNDP/OCHA	X				X
UNDP/BCPR	X				
ILO/FAO			X	X	
ITU/IMO				X	
WIPO			X		
NGO/Civil Society		X			X
UNICEF				X	

Source: Geneva Office

Achievements

Regular coverage of post conflict/post disaster processes: GLO's work is concentrated on two major areas: post conflict/post disaster (PCPD) and human rights. It is most active in PCPD, participating on a regular basis in the Consolidated Appeals Process coordinated by OCHA and in the Global Cluster on Global Recovery coordinated by UNDP. Both UNDP and OCHA were positive with regard to the level of GLO participation in the various processes.

Collaborating with partners in advocacy activities: GLO has been involved in a number of advocacy activities and has organized events. The Office highlighted two recent examples:

the launch of the Global Monitoring Report (GMR) and the launch of the World Report on Cultural Diversity. Partner organizations such as WIPO, UNDP and OIF much appreciated participating in these events and expressed interest in collaborating with UNESCO in the future. Furthermore, in partnership with OIF and UNHCR, GLO organized a workshop on cultural rights, which was also attended by Headquarters staff from the Culture sector. Partner organizations expressed their belief that UNESCO had much to bring to the table in this field.

Information broker: GLO disseminates information on UNESCO's activities to Geneva-based organizations. The United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG) organizes information meetings for students three times a year at which GLO provides information on UNESCO. GLO also requests UNESCO publications from Headquarters and distributes them to partners. Finally, an electronic newsletter is prepared with highlights of the UNESCO website and sent out to partner organizations. Its impact, however, is likely to be quite limited, as it contains general information on UNESCO which is not specifically targeted at Geneva-based organizations.

Interest in working with UNESCO: Most partners expressed interest in working with UNESCO. They believe that the Organization has real expertise to bring to the table in areas such as PCPD, cultural aspects of human rights and human rights education.

Challenges

Absence of Office Strategy: GLO has been operating for the past few years without an agreed-upon strategy. As a result its mission, main functions and priorities remain ambiguous. This has created many challenges for the office, most importantly as it concerns the results based management of the office and its accountability.

Lack of visibility and poor understanding of UNESCO's potential contributions: Linked to the absence of a strategy, GLO also does not have at its disposal the necessary messages and tools to explain and defend UNESCO's vision and strategy when working with other organizations.

As a concrete example, many stakeholders in the area of PCPD stated that UNESCO's priorities are not clear and they were not well informed on what the Office and UNESCO could bring to joint planning exercises. There are many opportunities for UNESCO to reaffirm its participation in this field. For example, a guidance note on early recovery is to be developed by UNDP and this presents an opportunity for UNESCO to contribute and explain its role in the process. Both OCHA and UNDP reaffirmed the need for UNESCO to develop a corporate approach on PCPD. Furthermore, with the structural and managerial changes at Headquarters as well as shifting priorities in programmes, GLO must remain informed if it is to effectively defend the Organization's positions.

Absence of up-to-date post descriptions for Office staff: The Director of the office has been on the job since June 2008 without a formal post description. At the same time, the Liaison Officer's post description has not been updated for several years, while priorities at UNESCO Headquarters and for GLO have been changing. Without clear post descriptions that are aligned with UNESCO's strategy for liaising with Geneva-based organizations, the responsibilities assigned to GLO's staff remain unclear.

Unclear reporting lines and weak accountability: In the past, UNESCO's Liaison Offices reported directly to the Sector for External Relations. Reporting lines were then transferred to the Bureau of Field Coordination. In 2010 the Director-General decided to place the Liaison Offices under her direct authority. Since the current Director took up post in 2008,

GLO has not been asked to submit any regular, results-based activity reports back to UNESCO Headquarters. The lack of clear reporting lines, job descriptions and performance agreements significantly weakens accountability and affects performance.

Limited capacity to provide needed programme substance: Contacts with many Geneva-based organizations are maintained directly by Headquarters, not GLO. FABS data shows that a total of 224 missions were undertaken to Geneva by UNESCO staff in 2010. Most partners explained that it is UNESCO Headquarters staff that provide the substance on issues such as One UN (BSP), Chief Executives Board (BSP, ODG, HRM), HIV AIDS work with UNAIDS (ED) and human rights (on occasion, SHS and CLT). In most cases GLO is not even informed of these Headquarters' missions to Geneva. Most stakeholders believe that UNESCO has expertise to bring to the table, but that it is rarely present in the working groups on issues of substance despite the high number of missions.

Fully contributing to the human rights related work: UNESCO's mandate also includes contributing to human rights monitoring mechanisms in the UN system. Extensive work on human rights is undertaken in Geneva, including: the work of the Human Rights Council, various human rights treaty bodies such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and numerous Special Procedures such as the Special Rapporteur on the right to education. The work of the Human Rights Council includes more than 70 weeks of meetings during the year. Although GLO does its best to cover these various mechanisms, it does not have the capacity to actively participate nor to add significant value. OHCHR explained that UNESCO is not always present at the table and the expertise required to contribute to these fora comes from Headquarters.

Relevance of information relayed back to Headquarters: One of GLO's functions is to participate in interagency coordination mechanisms and to ensure the institutional representation of UNESCO in Geneva. This includes following important conferences and meetings and relaying the information back to Headquarters. With the exception of the work in PCPD, the usefulness and relevance of information gathered by GLO and shared with staff in Paris is not readily apparent.

Ad-hoc representation and advocacy activities: GLO's work in support of the 'representation' and 'advocacy' functions is mostly ad-hoc in nature. Stakeholders expressed interest in cooperating with UNESCO and in being informed about what UNESCO is doing, but are only concerned with being invited to events and receiving targeted information that directly concerns their areas of work.

Future scenarios for the Office

Moving forward, this review has identified two scenarios for the future of the Geneva Liaison Office.

Scenario A – Status quo

GLO is maintained under the same arrangements, but the Office would need to redefine priorities to a few key areas in view of its limited capacities. The Office might focus on PCPD work with Headquarters continuing to play a prominent role in other areas. Assuming that the human rights area continues to be a key focus, the new strategy would need to clarify how to more effectively cover this field. One disadvantage of maintaining the status quo is that the lack of presence and regular, substantive inputs are perceived by partners as a lack of commitment.

Scenario B – liaison antenna

Under this option, a liaison antenna would be established. The rationale for this scenario is that the Office does very little work at the political level and that Headquarters already sends specialist staff to Geneva for participation in UN fora. The antenna could consist solely of the Liaison Officer post, but at an upgraded level, such as P5 in line with Brussels, in recognition of the fact that a certain number of political tasks would need to be undertaken by the Liaison Officer. This option would lead to cost savings overall, even if a few more missions from Headquarters would be required for high-level political meetings.

Scenario C – strengthened office

A common feature of a number of UN liaison offices in Geneva was staff 'outposted' from their Headquarters. This scenario would involve placing additional staff to GLO to cover those areas of highest priority for UNESCO for which there is significant interagency activity in Geneva. In practice, this is limited to PCPD and human rights. UNESCO could thus 'outpost' a human rights specialist to Geneva to complement the current liaison officer who could work solely on PCPD. This option would have the effect of strengthening presence and participation in the two key areas in Geneva, and would not come at great cost if only shifting existing staff resources. This scenario is not supported by IOS.

6. ADDIS ABABA LIAISON OFFICE

In October 2010, the Director-General decided to strengthen UNESCO's cooperation with the African Union by transforming the UNESCO Office in Addis Ababa into a liaison office with the African Union (AU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The additional liaison function took effect on 1 January 2011, with the Director of the Office now acting as the Organization's Representative to the Ethiopian authorities as well as fulfilling the liaison responsibilities. A dedicated Liaison Officer (P4-ALD) was deployed to the Office in October.

The additional liaison function in Addis Ababa brings UNESCO into the mainstream. Most other UN agencies have either assigned liaison functions for the AU and the ECA to their country offices in Addis or established separate liaison offices. This reflects the importance UN organizations have attached to Africa and the fact that Addis houses the Headquarters of both the AU and ECA.

Cooperation with the AU is not new. UNESCO had already been participating in the UN-AU coordination mechanism including its various cluster and sub-cluster groups and has always had relations with the AU. The liaison office, however, seeks to strengthen the collaboration. The very addition of the liaison function to the Addis Office is raising expectations on the part of the AU concerning future cooperation. The UNESCO Office is already partnering with the AU and the ECA, but expectations are growing as the Office's new function becomes known.

The current liaison model of the Addis Ababa Office might not be the most effective for UNESCO. Under this model, the Director of the Office takes care of the political role of the liaison function, representing UNESCO in high-level fora. The liaison officer, an ad hoc arrangement, has been charged with a wide range of responsibilities, including:

- coordinating the implementation of the action plan for the Second Decade for Education in Africa and the consolidated action plan for the AU in sciences and technology
- coordinating the work of the Culture sector at the regional level
- developing concrete actions in cross-sectoral themes, particularly peace and security, post-conflict countries and gender
- preparing interventions for summits, conferences and meetings
- participating in joint AU-ECA activities.

The range of tasks assigned to the liaison officer is very broad and requires more definition, particularly with respect to how the liaison officer is to work with programme specialists and other parts of the UNESCO family. Clarity is needed to ensure value-added can be demonstrated by this new position. Details of how communication could best function between the AU and the Office is also in need of clarification.

Discussions in Addis with a range of UN agencies enabled IOS to identify the following liaison office models:

- Model A: separate country office and liaison office (adopted by several UN agencies, such as UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women)
- Model B: separate country office and liaison office, but with joint support services (adopted by UNAIDS)
- Model C: joint country and liaison office, but with dedicated liaison staff (adopted by UNDP, IOM and UNESCO (with the exception of the CI sector)). Liaison staff draws on country office technical resources whenever needed.

- ❑ Model D: joint country and liaison office, with liaison functions carried out by programme specialists.

Each model has advantages and disadvantages, which need to be considered when choosing a specific option for the Addis Ababa Office. Other issues to be taken into consideration are UNESCO's future field structure, ongoing reform efforts at HQ and resource constraints. The most effective structure for the Ethiopia Office will need to be determined in conjunction with the multisectoral offices in Africa, in particular those in East Africa.

Management might wish to specifically consider Model D, which could be one of the most appropriate models for UNESCO given the fact that UNESCO is a relatively small agency, has very limited resources and has a multisectoral mandate. Except for at the political level, where liaison is undertaken by the Director, effective liaison requires technical expertise. Interviews with the AU highlighted the need for subject-specific technical expertise rather than general liaison staff as under Model C. Delivering on specific expertise would require programme specialists to take on the liaison function. Given the relatively small size of UNESCO, two separate directors as in Models A and B would not appear to be a cost-effective option.

In the UNESCO context, Model D could imply relocation of the regional advisors for Africa, currently placed in Dakar (Education), Dar es Salaam (SHS) and Nairobi (NS) to Addis. Management could also consider whether UNESCO's future multi-sectoral sub-regional office for Eastern Africa could be located in Addis Ababa with the additional liaison function for the AU and ECA. In order to ensure country responsibilities for Ethiopia were not neglected, two or three additional programme officers could be employed for the country office work. They would work closely with the international programme specialists who would oversee their work, provide programmatic direction and fulfill their liaison function for the AU and ECA. It is important that strong communication ties are developed with the Brussels liaison office in order to establish pan-African initiatives in cooperation with the AU and EU.

7. BRUSSELS LIAISON OFFICE

The Brussels Liaison Office was established in October 2010 and officially inaugurated in February 2011. The Office is staffed with a Head of Office (P5) and a liaison officer (P3 still under recruitment). The main purpose of the Office is to reinforce cooperation with the European Union and its subsidiary bodies. UNESCO now joins other UN agencies in having a liaison office in Brussels.

IOS held discussions with the Head of Office and a number of staff at Headquarters but did not visit the Office or partners in Brussels. Those discussions and the lessons coming from IOS work in Geneva, New York and Addis Ababa should feed into the overall development of the Brussels Office. The development of the Office will need to take into account the following points.

- ❑ **Build upon the momentum** generated by the recent inauguration of the Office. There is a great interest in UNESCO's presence as attested by the attendance of 35 ambassadors to the inauguration ceremony.
- ❑ **An office strategy** will need to be formulated quickly thereby providing an additional thrust to the inauguration of the office. The strategy should clarify the key functions and the priority areas where the office will concentrate its efforts. The future strategy should be defined taking into account not only the expectations of Headquarters, but also those of the organisations and partners with which the office is to liaise. The Head of Office expressed some clear directions and the need to demonstrate quickly the added-value of UNESCO's programmes, especially in terms of economic development e.g. priority areas such as technical and vocational education.
- ❑ The **presence of UNESCO programme specialists** at regular working group meetings and **the provision of relevant expertise** on issues pertaining to UNESCO's mandate will be required in order to demonstrate UNESCO's added value and to increase credibility. The Head of Office observes the need for expertise, first and foremost, in education and natural sciences. This issue will need to be carefully surveyed in the Office strategy.
- ❑ The **role of Headquarters programme specialists** in providing the needed expertise will need to be clarified in the Office strategy. Senior management could potentially consider placing technical staff in Brussels. However, any specialist posts in Brussels would require careful analysis demonstrating a clear need for specialist expertise, particularly given the ease of travel between Paris and Brussels. IOS is of the view that it would be more effective for Headquarters to support the Brussels office as needed for technical contributions.

ANNEX: STAFFING OF LIAISON OFFICES

The table below shows the staffing of those liaison offices inspected by the JIU. The table is contained in the report *Liaison Offices in the United Nations System*, prepared by Gérard Biraud, Joint Inspection Unit, Geneva 2007.

Table 2. Staffing of inspected liaison offices (June to October 2006)

ORGANIZATIONS	ENCUMBERED POSTS			CONSULTANTS	INTERNS	TOTAL	VACANT POSTS
	D	P	GS				
RCNYO	1D-1	1 P-5	1G-7, 1G-6, 1G-4			5	1 P-4
FAO GVA	1D-2	1 P-5, 2 P-4	1G-6, 3 G-5	1		9	
FAO NY	1D-2	1 P-5, 2 P-4	2 G-6, 2 G-5, 1G-4			9	
ILO NY	1D-1	3 P-2	1 G-7, 1 G-6, 1G-5, 1G-4, 1G-2		2	11	1 P-5, 1 P-3
OHCHR NY		2 P-5, 3 P-4, 2 P-3	1 G-7, 1 G-6, 1 G-5, 3 G-4		2	15	1 D-2
UNCTAD NY		1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3	1 G-6, 1 G-5		2	7	
UNDP GVA	1 D-2, 1 D-1	5 P-5, 2 P-4, 5 P-3, 1 P-2	4 G-7, 3 G-6, 1 G-5	3		26	
UNEP NY		1 P-5, 1 P-4, 2 P-3	1G-6, 1G-5, 2 G-4			8	1 D-1, 1G-6/7, 1G-3
UNESCO GVA	1 D-1	1 P-3	1 G-5			3	
UNESCO NY	1 D-2	2 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2	1 G-5, 2 G-4	2	2	14	
UNFPA GVA	1 D-1	2 P-5, 1 P-4	1 G-6, 1 G-4	2	3	11	
UNHCR NY	2 D-1*	3 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2	2 G-7, 1 G-6, 2 G-5			14	1 D-2
UNIDO GVA	1 D-1		2 G-3			3	1 P-5
UNIDO NY		2 P-5	1G-5	1		4	1D-1
UNRWA GVA		1P-5	1G-6		1	3	
WFP GVA	1D-2	2 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-2	1 G-6, 1 G-4	1	1	9	
WFP NY	2 D-1	1 P-5, 3 P-4	1 G-6, 1 G-5, 1 G-4	2	1	13	
WHO NY	1 AD-G	2 P-3, 1 P-2	1 G-7, 2 G-5, 1 G-4		4	12	1D-1, 2 P-5, 1 G-5
TOTAL	1 AD-G	24 P-5	10 G-7	12	18	175	2 D-2
	5 D-2	20 P-4	16 G-6				3 D-1
	10 D-1	15 P-3	19 G-5				3 P-5
		8 P-2	13 G-4				1 P-4
			2 G-3				1 P-3
			1 G-2				1G-6-7
							1 G-5
							1 G-3
	16	68	61				
		145		12	18	175	13

Source: Inspections

* One of these posts is encumbered by a WFP staff member seconded to UNDG for which he works full time.