



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

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

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

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

September 2008 Cycle on the Intersectoral Platforms

This week: the platforms on HIV and AIDS, Strengthening National Research Systems and on Foresight and Anticipation



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HIV and AIDS Platform

The overarching goal of the Platform is to contribute to the achievement of the MDG target on HIV and AIDS – specifically to halt the epidemic and begin to reverse it by 2015. The Platform involves substantial contributions from all five Programme Sectors of UNESCO, with global coordination based within the Education Sector linking with a network of HIV and AIDS Focal Points based in UNESCO field offices.

The Platform builds upon UNESCO's longstanding Consultative Group on HIV and AIDS, established to exchange information and improve coordination, bringing together staff in all Sectors working on the issues once a month. Last year, this Group revised UNESCO's *Strategy for Responding to HIV and AIDS*, taking an interdisciplinary approach. This more focused strategy provides an important foundation for supporting and strengthening the work of the new Platform.

The new framework recently provided a forum for coordinating UNESCO's successful intersectoral involvement in the XVII International AIDS Conference in Mexico City. The Platform maintains the pre-existing focus on EDUCAIDS, the UNESCO-led UNAIDS Global Initiative on Education and HIV & AIDS. All Sectors are supporting comprehensive education sector engagement as part of the national response to HIV and AIDS.

UNESCO concentrates most of its resources on the countries in East and Southern Africa that have generalised epidemics with high HIV prevalence. In other regions, different approaches are needed for concentrated and low-level epidemics and the Platform provides a forum for coordinating these tailored approaches. A key priority for the Platform is gender mainstreaming, as this is vital for the effectiveness of UNESCO's work on HIV and AIDS. Tackling the epidemic requires changing social norms, attitudes and behaviours in which gender inequality is a key interrelated factor.

UNESCO benefits from funding through UNAIDS, totalling US\$ 10.6 million this biennium. A participatory process determines how to allocate these funds to projects across UNESCO, principally in the field. For the next biennium, the Platform can provide a framework for discussing and determining this budget allocation.

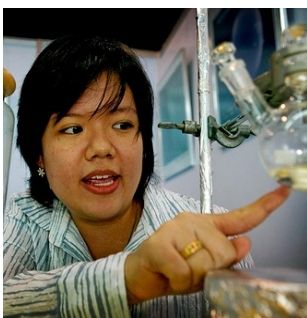
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Link: www.unesco.org/aids

Intersectoral Platforms 2.

Platform on Strengthening National Research Systems



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This Platform aims at strengthening the contribution that research can make to social and economic development, in particular by supporting Member States in improving their national research systems and by providing policy recommendations to build up their research and science capacities for development. It promotes research and knowledge management as a driver of development with a particular focus on internationally agreed development goals,

including poverty eradication, universal education and improved health care.

The Platform is refining a methodology for country reviews of research systems, based on existing templates from the Science Sector, the Forum on Higher Education and Knowledge and from the OECD. The Science Sector (SC) leads the country reviews, together with the Social and Human Sciences Sector (SHS), initiating a stock-taking exercise in response to requests by national governments. Priority is given to developing countries.

The Platform brings together the Major Programmes of Education, Science, Social and Human Sciences and Communication and Information (CI). Initial joint activities are implemented by the Division of Science Policy and Sustainable Development (SC) and the Division of Social Science Research and Policy (SHS). The Division of Higher Education (ED) will contribute through the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme. CI has offered to contribute expertise on the role of ICTs in research and on the need for access to scientific information. SHS will further contribute expertise on the ethics of science and technology.

A first joint Platform activity, the country review of the national research system of Madagascar, is underway. A first extra-budgetary project that will contribute to the Platform has been approved for funding by the Government of Italy, in particular to strengthen scientific and social science research to effectively contribute to the struggle against poverty. This project will focus on developing countries in Africa.

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Platform on Foresight and Anticipation

The main goal of this platform is to foster a culture of anticipation in the Organisation, to prepare it to face challenges in the 21st Century, and to strengthen the laboratory of ideas and intellectual watch function of UNESCO, in particular through intersectoriality and interdisciplinarity.

To reach this goal, three objectives have been assigned to the platform: enhance the linkage between UNESCO's programme and policy priorities and foresight activities; identify themes of strategic relevance to UNESCO; and sharpen modalities for action that make a substantive impact.

The platform develops number of activities in connection with major international events. In this line, a session of the 21st Century Talks was held in Montreal during the International Economic Forum of the Americas/Conference of Montreal in June 2008 on the theme "Sustainable Development, Innovation and Competitiveness: Anticipating Strategic Changes". To raise the awareness of Member States, scientific and intellectual communities, the media, civil society and the public at large, an article by the Director-General summarizing the key messages of the 3rd anthology of the 21st Century Talks, *Making Peace with the Earth*, was published by 75 leading newspapers from the different regions of the world.

In order to strengthen the capacities for anticipation of the Organization and to stimulate future-oriented thinking, the platform convened in early July an International Foresight Meeting intended both as a capacity building event and a brainstorming opportunity. This event served as a basis to generate reflections on how to integrate the diverse ways of practicing foresight and anticipation into the workings of the Organisation. Building on the results of that meeting, the platform is now engaged in the more specific task of organising an internal Secretariat workshop on foresight involving all Programme Sectors. This workshop aims to sensitise colleagues to the potential role and contribution of foresight in programming and on approaches, methodologies and tools to be used, so that future-oriented thinking and strategy form part of all UNESCO programmes.

Lead ADG: chaired by the Director-General, supported by Hans d'Orville, ADG/BSP

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