



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



## **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

**BETWEEN**

**THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**AND**

**THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND**

UNESCO Headquarters  
Paris, 28 April 2015

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## Strategic Partnership Agreement

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereinafter referred to as “UNESCO”, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07, France), represented by its Director-General, Irina Bokova,

*and*

The United Nations Population Fund (hereinafter referred to as “UNFPA”, 605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158, United States of America), represented by its Executive Director, Babatunde Osotimehin,

UNESCO and UNFPA together hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”.

**Whereas** the United Nations and UNESCO established a relationship by the Agreement concluded on 14 December 1946, pursuant to Article 57 of the United Nations Charter and Articles X and IV, paragraph B, sub-paragraph 5, of the UNESCO Constitution;

**Whereas** the aforementioned agreement provided, in its Article XX, that the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General may enter into such supplementary arrangements for the implementation of the agreement as may be found desirable in the light of the operating experience of the two Organizations;

**Whereas** UNFPA was established by the United Nations General Assembly as a subsidiary organ of the United Nations pursuant to resolution 3019 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972;

**Whereas** UNESCO and UNFPA recognize that education is a fundamental human right and an indispensable means to realizing other human rights, and that culture is an enabler and a driver of sustainable development. Based on this common understanding, UNESCO and UNFPA hereby establish a strategic partnership (‘the Partnership’) with the aim of enhancing and promoting various issues in education, as well as in population and development;

**Whereas** UNESCO and UNFPA have a long-standing history of collaboration on a wide range of global, regional and national initiatives. Education and culture are at the heart of the UNESCO mandate. Regarding Education, UNESCO has, since 2000, been the lead agency of the Education For All movement and has been co-leading the consultation process of the post-2015 education agenda, and UNFPA, which has been one of the EFA co-convening United Nations agencies since 1990 and a co-convenor of the World Education Forum 2015, actively advocates for achieving universal quality education, for promoting literacy and reducing gender disparities in education. UNFPA has, in particular, been instrumental in supporting education and training with a focus on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and reproductive rights, for which comprehensive sexuality education is a critical component. Regarding culture, UNESCO is the UN specialized agency in the field of culture and has developed a global approach on culture and heritage, as well as on the link between culture and sustainable development. UNFPA has developed a strong expertise on cultural sensitivity in programming, notably with regard to reproductive rights within the human rights agenda. UNESCO and UNFPA also have led joint advocacy efforts over the years in the field of culture in order to promote the creative industries and the role of culture as an enabler

and driver of sustainable development, including within the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) framework;

**Whereas** new opportunities to strengthen the UNESCO and UNFPA partnership emerged in line with the preparation of the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals. The UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy (2014-2021) and the UNFPA Strategic Plan (2014-2017) are center pieces in the effort to identify potential lines of cooperation. Furthermore, the establishment of joint offices at the country level challenges both organizations, as members of United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs), to align and harmonize their efforts to develop national capacities and ownership, to manage for results with respect to the MDGs and the proposed sustainable development goals (SDGs) and targets, and to improve accountability mechanisms.

***Hereby agree as follows:***

### **Article 1 - Principles and Objectives**

1.1 By the present Strategic Partnership Agreement (hereafter referred to as the "Agreement") the Parties express their wish to mutually benefit from, develop and structure their cooperation in areas of common concern, and decide to work together with the shared aim of promoting the achievement of the agreed international development goals and targets.

The Partnership will be based on respect for and mutual understanding of the respective strengths, organizational structures, mandates, institutional capacities and policies of both institutions.

The Partnership will aim to enhance country ownership and the overall effectiveness of the two organizations in the areas covered by the Partnership.

1.2 The objectives of the Agreement are to:

- a. foster close collaboration on common policy approaches and ensure a more strategic framework for cooperation at all levels between UNFPA and UNESCO;
- b. facilitate joint identification of programmes in the areas covered by the Partnership;
- c. enhance knowledge-sharing with a view to fostering improved coordination and synergies in the field, and help support best practices; and,
- d. build on each others' comparative advantage, particularly to advance the effectiveness of the actions of both institutions.

1.3 The objectives of the Agreement will be achieved through:

- a. regular policy dialogue between UNFPA and UNESCO; and,
- b. enhanced programme collaboration at all levels between UNFPA and UNESCO, including at the global, regional and country levels.

1.4 Within this Agreement, specific areas of policy dialogue, programming, common approaches and cooperation will be defined jointly by both institutions on an ongoing basis. The following basic cooperation principles shall guide both Parties:

- a. **Functionality:** cooperation shall be based on a mutual understanding of the programmatic concerns and mandates of the two Parties; both agencies have the responsibility to ensure that their Headquarters and field staff are aware of available opportunities for cooperation as well as of its scope and orientation;
- b. **Complementarities:** country (field) representatives of both Parties, with the support of their respective Headquarters, are encouraged to devise creative, complementary and mutually reinforcing operational initiatives to promote the United Nations 'delivering as one' initiative; and,
- c. **Decentralization:** flexible and practical operational procedures, with adequate delegated authority to country (field) representatives for planning and management, will ensure that opportunities for cooperation are seized and allow for the necessary operational variations.

## **Article 2 - Policy Dialogue and Areas of Cooperation**

2.1 Education will be the first thematic area of cooperation between the Parties, which will collaborate *inter alia* in the following areas as a **starting point** for the Partnership:

**(i) *Advancing universal access to basic quality education and literacy programmes by:***

- contributing, through advocacy and partnership-building, towards raising international, regional and national awareness on the importance of achieving universal quality basic education, life-long learning and literacy for all, and on closing gender disparities in education, within the context of poverty reduction and sustainable development;
- strengthening UNFPA participation in UNESCO's education and literacy programmes, especially for women and adolescent girls, including relevant issues related to human rights, gender equality, culture, gender-based violence (GBV), SRH and linking literacy with other aspects of development, such as sexual and reproductive health;
- fostering collaboration, as EFA-convening UN agencies, through the EFA Steering Committee and future coordination mechanisms that will guide the post-2015 education agenda, the Secretary General's Global Education First Initiative, as well as in the context of the Joint Programme for Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education, and other appropriate mechanisms, in order to enhance action, cooperation and synergy in the field of education;
- fostering linkages between the post-2015 education agenda and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) agenda in national development frameworks, strategies and programmes;

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18

- increasing collaboration in both organizations' institutional strategies, campaigns and flagship publications (UNESCO's *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* and UNFPA's *State of World Population Report*); and,
- Enhancing systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess education-related post-2015 SDGs and targets, supported by research and data collection.

**(ii) Implementing integrated population, SRH, GBV and HIV/AIDS education approaches and programmes by:**

- strengthening collaboration on curriculum review and materials development as well as on teacher training and advocacy, with policy-makers to ensure that the topics of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), HIV, gender equality and skills-based health education and other emerging health issues are aligned with international standards and integrated into formal education, especially primary and post-primary/secondary levels. Focus also on promoting gender equality and global citizenship through other education efforts, and promoting zero tolerance for all forms of discrimination and violence, especially gender-based violence;
- fostering collaboration to support country efforts in introducing or strengthening comprehensive sexuality education that emphasizes human rights and gender equality, and that addresses GBV, HIV, life skills and other emerging issues through the development of guidelines, the documentation of good policy and practice, the expansion of the evidence base, advocacy efforts and the provision of good quality technical support;
- strengthening linkages between formal and non-formal education programmes and health programmes inclusive of information and services, addressing a broad range of health issues including sexual and reproductive health and rights affecting children, adolescents and youth. Enhancing collaboration on non-formal education, such as through curriculum-based CSE, innovative modalities such as through ICT and other training in the areas of population and development, gender equality, SRH, GBV and HIV/AIDS;
- strengthening both organizations' partnership and collaboration within international groups such as the UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on Education, the Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on HIV Prevention and Young People, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations for Development through regional mechanisms and spaces on SRH and HIV/AIDS, including intensified partnership in initiatives such as EDUCAIDS and Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH);
- advancing coordinated responses on SRH, gender equality, human rights, GBV and HIV/AIDS in both formal and non-formal education, highlighting the rights and needs of adolescent girls and boys at the country level through mechanisms and processes undertaken in the context of the United Nations reform (Common Country Assessment, United Nations Development Assistance Framework, joint country teams on HIV/AIDS and United Nations theme groups on HIV/AIDS, among others); and,

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- supporting joint national situation analyses, research and studies to identify strengths and weaknesses, capacity gaps, areas of duplication, integration of SRH, HIV/AIDS, life skills and GBV issues within curricula, especially through CSE and non-formal activities, teacher training needs especially for gender-transformative education, availability of relevant and quality educational materials, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, reaching of vulnerable groups especially among adolescents, and the systematization of experiences and lessons learned.

***(iii) Addressing young people's rights and needs within the overall development context by:***

- advocating for increasing the participation of youth, especially young women, in national policy development and integrating young people's rights and needs into national public policies, sector-wide approaches and national poverty-reduction strategies based on the MDGs and the future SDGs, once they are agreed upon;
- strengthening partnerships with governments, development partners, civil society, youth organizations and the media to leverage resources for increased investment in the social sectors, including health, education, culture and employment, to benefit adolescents and youth, particularly young women, and other marginalized groups;
- advocating for adolescent girls' rights to quality and relevant education, promoting education policies and practices that support pregnant and parenting girls to stay in school, promoting a safe and non-discriminatory learning environment in and around schools, and supporting their acquisition of the requisite skills to transition successfully to remunerative work;
- supporting joint initiatives aimed at promoting young people's social participation, ownership, empowerment and exercise of their rights, within the wider context of citizenship-building, focusing on those living in poverty and exclusion. Actions could be centred on strengthening international, regional and national youth networks, including those composed of and/or led by young women.

***(iv) Building on the role of culture for sustainable development by:***

- strengthening UNESCO and UNFPA collaboration to enhance the role of culture and cultural sensitivity for sustainable development, particularly in eradicating poverty and combating inequality and discrimination within a human rights-based approach, and as a catalyst for gender equality and women's empowerment, sustainable cities, global citizenship education, sustainable environmental management, social cohesion and inclusion, creativity and innovation;
- advocating for the integration of culture, as an enabler and a driver of sustainable development, into the post-2015 development agenda and its implementation, building on the power of culture and culturally sensitive development approaches;

13

- promoting the role of culture as an enabler of sustainable development, specifically as a source of identity and social cohesion, contributing to stronger ownership of policy-making processes and helping people make sense of the future; and,
- strengthening the role of culture as a driver of sustainable development, especially in generating income, creating decent jobs and improving livelihoods.

2.2 Other areas of cooperation may include the fight against discrimination and marginalization, information and communication technologies, and distance learning methodologies to promote education and population issues.

2.3 Particular attention will be paid to challenges facing countries in crisis or emerging from crisis, which are situations that necessitate the development of comprehensive preventive or early recovery strategies. In addition, particular attention will be devoted to human rights and gender equality as cross-cutting issues when developing cooperation in these areas.

### Article 3 - Working Principles of the Parties

In all the areas covered by the Agreement, cooperation will include efforts to develop, strengthen and/or harmonize the following:

- exchange of information and informal consultation;
- knowledge networks;
- collaborative research and sharing of ideas;
- shared approaches and analysis, tools, performance reviews, assessments and methodologies of mainstreaming;
- joint advocacy initiatives on culture and adolescent and youth development;
- field coordination and collaboration within United Nations Country Teams;
- pilot-testing policy options and pilot programmes; and,
- joint Programming and joint programmes.

### Article 4 - Arrangements

The Parties agree that the following arrangements for the Agreement will apply:

- 4.1 In addition to establishing high-level contact on a regular basis, the Parties will consult each other, on a biennial basis, to review progress of work in the priority areas of cooperation and to discuss policy, technical and operational issues with a view to furthering the objectives of the Partnership. Senior level meetings may take the initiative of proposing to review and adapt the Agreement in the framework of a high-level bilateral meeting.
- 4.2 Further bilateral policy dialogue will be organized on an *ad hoc* basis as deemed necessary by the two Parties, to address linkages, exchange information or conduct policy debates on matters of common interest regarding priority themes. The dialogue may take the form of workshops or seminars.

16

17

- 4.3 In order to implement specific activities in the areas of cooperation envisioned herein, UNFPA and UNESCO will conclude specific arrangements as may be necessary and appropriate. The activities envisaged under the Agreement will be carried out in accordance with each organization's internal regulations, rules and directives.
- 4.4 The Parties may conclude such supplementary agreements or contracts as may be necessary for the execution of the Partnership.

#### **Article 5 - Miscellaneous**

The designated contact point at UNFPA will be Mona Kaidbey and at UNESCO Clare Stark. Individual activity coordinators in the organizations in charge of specific work areas will remain directly responsible for achieving the agreed outputs in these areas.

#### **Article 6 - Final Provisions and Termination**

- 6.1 The Agreement shall enter into force on the date it is signed by both Parties.
- 6.2 The Agreement may be amended through an exchange of letters between the Parties, following appropriate consultations. Should there be any change of address contacts may simply be notified in writing to UNFPA by UNESCO, and by UNFPA to UNESCO.
- 6.3 The Agreement shall remain in force unless terminated by mutual agreement or by one Party by three months' written notice to the other Party. Upon termination of the Agreement, and unless the Parties agree otherwise, contractual obligations entered into between UNESCO and any third party prior to the receipt of the notice of termination of this Agreement shall, within reasonable limits, not be affected by the termination.
- 6.4 Any dispute which may arise between the Parties as to the interpretation, application or performance related to the Agreement, shall be settled by negotiation. However, if no amicable settlement can be arrived at, any dispute shall be arbitrated in accordance with the rules defined by the United Nations Conference on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

#### **Article 7 - Visibility**

- 7.1 The Parties shall separately or jointly give appropriate visibility to the projects/programmes, their conception, their implementation, their impact and their outcomes through information and promotional activities.





7.2 Each Party is authorized to use the name, logo and any element of the other's identity, through the use of citations, references to, reproductions, representations on the occasion of the promotion of projects, of public relations operations, of interviews, of relations with the media (press files, articles, releases etc.) throughout the world. This use, which must adhere to the image of the concerned Party, must receive the prior, written consent of the other Party.

Done in two original copies in the English language


For UNESCO:



Irina Bokova  
Director-General

Date: 28 April 2015

For UNFPA:



Babatunde Osotimehin  
Executive Director

Date: 28 April 2015