37 C/4

2014–2021

MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY

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Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

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As approved by the General Conference at its 37th session (General Conference resolution 37 C/Res.1) and validated by the Executive Board at its 194th session (194 EX/Decision 18)

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Introduction by the Director-General

U NESCO has a unique role to play in strengthening the foundations of lasting peace and equitable and sustainable development. Advancing cooperation in education, the sciences, culture, communication and information holds strategic stakes at a time when societies across the world face the rising pressures of change and the international community faces new challenges.

The document 37 C/4 approved by the UNESCO General Conference is an opportunity for Member States to define a common strategic vision for the Organization for the next eight years and the century ahead. This is our chance to sharpen UNESCO's role and enhance its impact and delivery. This is our opportunity to set a new course for a revitalized, relevant and resilient UNESCO. The strategic orientations laid out in the present document will be translated into two consecutive programme and budget documents, beginning with document 37 C/5, each covering a four year cycle, while the budget allocation to the programmes will be appropriated biennially.

Drawing on UNESCO's humanist mandate and longstanding experience, document 37 C/4 must reflect the common concerns of all Member States. This is why consultation and deliberation have guided the process of developing this document, as requested at the 36th session of the General Conference.

The imperatives of UNESCO's reform are starting points. This must be consistent with the follow-up to the 2010 Independent External Evaluation of UNESCO and concentrate on four major agreed directions for change:

◗ Increasing UNESCO's focus;
◗ Positioning UNESCO closer to the Field;
◗ Strengthening UNESCO's participation in the United Nations system;
◗ Developing and strengthening UNESCO's partnerships.

The document 37 C/4 seeks to build on "the relevance of UNESCO's five major programmes or fields of competence and to develop "clear proposals for innovative, holistic and effective structures and programme delivery as well as enhanced interdisciplinarity".

We must strengthen the Organization's work across all its fields of competence, guided by the need for sharper concentration and focus, increased relevance and innovation.

At this critical juncture, we must strengthen the Organization for greater impact and sharper delivery. There can be no dilution of UNESCO's capacities or signature strengths. The Medium-Term Strategy stays true to the goals of UNESCO while shaping an organization that is more resilient, flexible, and fit for purpose.

Among the objectives that have guided the elaboration of the document are:

◗ To clarify UNESCO's comparative advantages and contributions to an accelerated achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, and to contribute towards shaping the post-2015 development agenda, in particular to reflect first of all the pivotal importance of education as well as the contributions of the sciences, culture and communication and information. The MDGs and its successor set of internationally agreed goals must yield concrete, measurable and time-bound results, while also recognizing those "softer" and hard to measure goals critical for peace and equitable and sustainable development. The document 37 C/4 outlines how each strategic objective will

strengthen UNESCO's global lead roles and how UNESCO will deliver effectively through collaboration with the United Nations system globally, regionally and at the country level.

▶ To strengthen UNESCO's participation and comparative advantage in a reforming United Nations system, which is increasingly collaborating and delivering as one, especially at the country level, in pursuit of internationally agreed development goals and national development priorities. UNESCO is contributing towards successful United Nations system-wide cooperation at country, regional and global levels, aiming at a strong and effective United Nations system, that is "fit for purpose", and able to deliver on the high expectations Member States have put in it, as expressed in the 2012 Quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR). UNESCO will participate fully through inter-agency mechanisms, including in assuming leadership positions in the CEB and its subsidiary pillars, as well as in United Nations country teams. At the policy and thematic level, UNESCO will continue to provide leadership and/or coordination functions in a number of United Nations system-wide initiatives, such as the two new initiatives of the United Nations Secretary-General – the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI), and the Scientific Advisory Board – which will shape both the contours and content of the post-2015 development agenda, while remaining fully committed to education for all (EFA) in the field of education;

▶ To implement concise strategies with a clear thematic focus and attainable expected outcomes and results for the two global priorities, Global Priority Africa and Global Priority Gender Equality, taking into account the results of evaluations with a view to ensuring effectiveness and tangible impact; the operational strategy for Africa and the Gender Equality Action Plan, as approved by the General Conference, are contained in separate complementary strategic publications to document 37 C/4;

▶ To mainstream specific interventions in relation to youth – with a complementary publication containing the UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth for 2014-2021 – the least developed countries (LDCs), the small island developing States (SIDS) – as called for in a dedicated General Conference resolution –, and the most marginalized social groups;

▶ To contribute to building knowledge societies, including by drawing on information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the Internet;

▶ To apply a peace, sustainable development, and human rights-based approach so as to give coherent strategic orientation to document 37 C/4 as a whole;

I am determined that interdisciplinary action is the guiding principle for the activities defined throughout document 37 C/4. Each of the strategic objectives of document 37 C/4 is being translated into thematic focus areas for document 37 C/5 with clear results expected at the end of the four-year period.

The document 37 C/4 highlights the development and strengthening of strategic partnerships with a broad range of UNESCO's partners, from civil society and private foundations to the private sector and multilateral organizations, building on the comprehensive partnership strategy adopted by the Executive Board at its 190th session.

The document 37 C/4 concludes with a chapter on management that sets out principles and targets for results-based management and budgeting, accountability for results, field presence, transparency and cost-effectiveness.

We must redouble all our efforts to raise the Organization's visibility and profile. I am determined to take forward an effective communication strategy to consolidate and expand UNESCO's outreach with the wide range of stakeholders, partners and UNESCO constituencies.

The changes under way across the world call for a renewed commitment by all to the principles that guide this Organization. More than ever today, lasting peace and equitable and sustainable development require international cooperation. These foundations cannot be built solely on political and economic arrangements – they must be

constructed in the minds of women and men. We are living in a new age of limits – in terms of the resources of the planet and material assets. In this context, we must make far more of the single most powerful and renewable energy there is – that of innovation. UNESCO must strengthen its work to release the full power of human ingenuity as a source of resilience at a time of change and as a wellspring for creativity and growth. Cooperation in education, the sciences, culture, communication and information has never been more urgent in this context.

The human rights and dignity of every woman and man – our ultimate beneficiaries and stakeholders – must be our starting point and the measure of our success. These times are calling for a new humanism that marries human development with the preservation of the planet and that provides equal access to all to the benefits of education, the sciences, culture, communication and information. This new humanism must build on renewed aspirations for equality and respect for tolerance and mutual understanding, especially between peoples of different cultures and beliefs. It must seek to craft more inclusive societies, guided by a profound concern for social justice and diversity.

This calls for the strategic vision set out in document 37 C/4. We must stay the course with reform, to build a sharper, more effective, more performing Organization.

Paris, February 2014
Irina Bokova

I. The evolving international environment and development landscape

1. UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021 responds to an international environment marked by rapid change, increased complexity, uncertainty and emerging new trends and challenges.

(a) The world's population has almost tripled since 1945 and now stands at seven billion inhabitants. This massive demographic change is accompanied by complex phenomena such as intensifying urbanization, over-exploitation of natural resources, accelerating pollution and environmental degradation, the relative ageing of populations, international and in-country migrations, and a growing rural-urban divide. Half of the world's population is under 25 years old. The percentage of young people in developing countries is set to rise to 89.5% in 2025. These young women and men will have to cope with the consequences of the unsustainable use of the Earth and its resources. Young people represent an enormous potential for change: yet they yearn for educational, scientific, cultural and communication resources and opportunities needed for their personal development, access to decent jobs, civic participation and mutual understanding. These young people represent a potential for change if access to education can be ensured and if their involvement in decision-making processes can be strengthened. Young people are not only agents for economic growth, but also a force for social transformation and progress, with peace and equitable and sustainable development as core objectives.

(b) The world is growing closer together. The speed at which economic, social, food, energy and climate crises have spread since 2007 has shown the extent of interconnections between States and societies, the vulnerability of some countries and population groups, in particular women and young people, the persistence of racism and discrimination and acutely apparent linkages between various sectors. No single country, however powerful, can cope on its own with the challenges that have arisen. Shared values and standards are increasingly necessary to ensure global peace and prosperity. Intercultural dialogue and rapprochement is increasingly necessary for social inclusion, mutual understanding and durable peace. Greater demand for international cooperation attests to the recognition of the importance of multilateralism.

(c) Climate change continues to be of paramount concern to the future of humankind, and has been characterized by the United Nations Secretary-General as the defining challenge of our time. It is a complex global problem because it is intertwined with many other issues, including economic development, poverty reduction and education for sustainable development. Addressing climate change and climate variability requires holistic action by the sciences, culture, education, and communication and information.

(d) The world is now reaching its biophysical limits. The current scales of unprecedented exploitation of our natural resources calls for improved governance and stewardship of the world's natural resources. As evidenced at the Rio+20 Summit, the quest for sustainable development in economic, social and environmental terms is now of global importance. The natural and social sciences are key drivers to attain sustainability and create green economies and societies. Particular attention must be paid in this respect to the crucial role of the ocean, freshwater and biodiversity, as reaffirmed by the Rio+20 Summit. Education for sustainable development is bound to play a particularly important role in changing habits, values and modes of consumption in order to support the path towards sustainable development. The ethics of science and technology, including bioethics, attract increasing attention. Recent focus is on the role of culture as a vector for sustainable development.

(e) More than 40% of this global population lives within 100 kilometers of a coast, with projections that by 2025 this number will rise to 75%. Rapid urbanization will lead to more coastal mega-cities containing 10 million or more people. Thirteen of the world's 20 megacities lie along coasts and nearly 700 million people live in low lying coastal areas less than 10 metres above sea level. Yet the ocean, once thought to be a vast, resilient area able to absorb practically unlimited waste and withstand increasing human population, fishing and shipping pressures, is increasingly vulnerable. At least 40% of the global ocean is "heavily impacted" by human activities, and 60% of the world's major marine ecosystems that underpin livelihoods have been degraded or are being used unsustainably. This has a direct impact on sustainable development since hundreds of millions of people depend on the quality of the marine environment and the availability of living marine resources for their wellbeing.

(f) While extreme poverty has been reduced, inequalities are growing within and among countries. Mounting inequalities raise new challenges to the enjoyment of human rights and to the values of social justice, solidarity and inclusion. They translate into unequal access to quality education, to the benefits of scientific information, to freedom of expression, to the right to participate in cultural life. The narrowing of inequality gaps is a major strategic challenge. Even though the percentage of the population living on less than US $1.25 a day – the amount determining extreme poverty - has been halved between 1981 and 2008, falling from 52% to 22%, or from 1.9 to 1.3 billion inhabitants, socio-economic

inequalities have risen on average. Absolute poverty has increased in sub-Saharan Africa. Gender inequalities continue to give cause for concern everywhere. Income inequality is a challenge for developing countries and for many OECD member countries alike.

(g)   Literacy and access to primary education have made significant progress in the past 10 years, thanks to an unprecedented international and national-level mobilization promoting Education for All (EFA). Nevertheless, EFA remains unfinished business. There is a growing call for increasing the quality and relevance of education, and for supporting countries in the development of "neglected" education areas – early childhood care and education, secondary education, technical and vocational education, and tertiary education and research. Reviewing the content of education and the learning/teaching processes – including science education, technical and vocational education and training, education for global citizenship and learning to live together –, as well as the assessment of learning outcomes have become a growing concern for the majority of Member States. Education systems designed for the second half of the twentieth century begin to fall short of meeting the demands for twenty-first century knowledge societies.

(h)   Increasingly, culture has been recognized as an enabler and driver of sustainable development, peace and economic progress. Culture, in its multifaceted form, holds societies and nations together. The emergence of the creative economy demonstrates its relevance for the economic and social well-being of countries. This is underlined by the growing demand of cities to become members of UNESCO's creative cities network. Attention needs to be paid to the preservation and protection of cultural heritage as a whole, including underwater cultural heritage, and the fight against illicit traffic in cultural property, especially in conflict-afflicted areas.

(i)   Countries' needs and capacities are increasingly diverse. According to the United Nations classification, 49 countries are still considered as LDCs, with half of the world's population living in extreme poverty. 86 countries are designated by the World Bank as Middle-Income Countries (MICs) and are home to one-third of people across the globe living on less than $2 per day representing the level of poverty. New centres of economic dynamism are emerging, including in Africa, with differing challenges and needs affecting social transformations. At the same time, the LDCs and the small island developing States (SIDS) remain particularly vulnerable to crises, to the effects of climate change and to environmental degradation. The booming middle-income countries constitute a major new development that challenges traditional cooperation models. In 1990, 90% of the poorest people lived in low-income countries. Today, 75% of them live in middle- income countries.

(j)   Peace and security remain key challenges. Conflicts continue to threaten the fragile development progress of many developing countries. More than 1.5 billion people live in countries affected by violent conflict and an estimated 40% of fragile and post-conflict countries relapse into conflict within 10 years. At the same time, many countries are engaged in a process of democratic opening or are rallying to ensure respect for human rights, dignity and freedom. It is a call to achieve the universal promise of human emancipation and to forge a new humanism. A growing number of countries in transition, including those undergoing democratic change, also requires renewed means of support. Such situations cannot be tackled with conventional tools. The number of countries in "post-conflict" situations, in the strict sense of the term, has fallen, but one fifth of humanity lives in conditions of permanent tension, characterized by myriad stress factors such as struggles for access to resources, including freshwater, socio-economic inequalities and various forms of violence. Acknowledgement of these precarious situations and support for conflict prevention and transition and/or fragile countries require comprehensive, coordinated long-term approaches, with major emphasis being given to building capacities in and through education, culture and the sciences. The factors of sustainability, continuity and resilience are paramount in this regard. Experience gained in promoting a culture of peace and non-violence as well as intercultural dialogue will be highly relevant in this endeavor as will lessons learned from supporting post-conflict and post-disaster (PCPD) countries in tackling the new problems of fragile and transition countries.

(k)   The development landscape has changed. New partners and new forms of cooperation are emerging, which put a premium on national ownership, high-quality delivery and mutual accountability. Regional integration everywhere is stronger, with increased commitments to regional cooperation frameworks, and expanded South-South and North-South-South cooperation. Developing countries maintain economic and other cooperation relations with each other to an unprecedented extent. With the volume of bilateral cooperation on the rise, there is increasing pressure on the United Nations system to deliver through high-quality results, effectiveness and efficiency. The quest for increased system-wide coherence, building on the achievements of the "Delivering as One" model will remain high on the agenda. This was underlined by the United Nations Secretary-General in his Five-Year Action Agenda (2012-2016) when he called for a second generation of "Delivering as One", focused on managing and monitoring for results, increased accountability and improved outcomes as key features of a modern United Nations system.

(l)   Even though "traditional" funding (official development assistance from OECD donor countries) is still the bedrock of operational activities for development in the

United Nations system, new funding sources, including self-benefitting modalities, must be sought in a context in which growing expectations are to be balanced against the financial realities and constraints of many countries and organizations. New and innovative models to fund the United Nations development system and its resident coordinator and country team structures are in demand, including the Delivering as One modality or new approaches for Resident Coordinator cost-sharing arrangements. All this has been captured in the November 2012 landmark resolution by the United Nations General Assembly on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development (QCPR).

(m) The opportunities of the digital revolution are enormous. ICTs are challenging the social fabric of societies, and open up innovative perspectives to education, sciences, creativity, innovation and the media, but they are unequally distributed and give rise to a knowledge divide for much of the world. Many societies are thus prevented from benefitting equally from the potential of modern ICTs. While the digital divide has been shrinking over the last 10 years in terms of numbers of fixed phone lines, mobile subscribers, and Internet users, it is estimated that some 800,000 villages – representing around one billion people worldwide – still lack connection to any kind of information and communication technology. Despite growing connectivity in all regions, the majority of the more than 7 billion people who inhabit our planet have been completely shut out of the digital revolution and the promise it holds.

(n) Progress in the field of ICTs requires the media to rethink its operational models. Yet, at the same time, ICTs have created unprecedented and almost unlimited possibilities of access to information. The increase of information flows itself strains the human ability to navigate the deluge of information available. Therefore, new skills need to be developed in order to help citizens use and utilize information in an intelligent way and prevent them from suffering harmful impacts. New technologies, creative industries and innovative financing are among the inventive solutions that exist to extend and strengthen the basis of scientific knowledge, ensure universal access to information, and intensify scientific cooperation for sustainable development in order to ensure that needs are met better with fewer resources, while human rights are fully respected.

(o) The digital age has revolutionized freedom of expression which is a fundamental human right underpinning all other civil liberties and which is vital for open societies, the rule of law and democratic governance. It is also a key ingredient for development, for innovation and creativity. This requires a free, open and accessible Internet.

(p) The world is witnessing an increasing violence against journalists. Such violence must not be allowed to mute the freedom of speech and freedom of expression. This is the goal of the United Nations-wide Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity that UNESCO is leading – to halt a scourge that kills many and silences many more through fear, and to seek redress for these crimes.

2. These diverse challenges open up as many opportunities for action as demonstrated by the decisions of the United Nations Secretary-General to entrust UNESCO with major leadership responsibilities in two key initiatives: the *Global Education First Initiative (GEFI)* and the Scientific Advisory Board on sustainable development. It is the first time in decades that UNESCO has been called upon in this way by the Secretary-General to take on such a level of responsibilities. UNESCO has also issued the global report on the creative economy together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In parallel, the United Nations Development Group has set up a Task Team on Culture and Development with a strong focus on operational activities, led by UNESCO. This shows that the Organization is well integrated into the United Nations system and UNESCO's role as a lead agency in several programme areas is recognized by its sister organizations.

3. In an environment characterized by rapid shifts and flux, updated UNESCO approaches are in demand:

(a) More differentiated approaches must be deployed, better adapted to each local setting and to development needs and priorities that may vary from one country to another ("one size does not fit all"). Sound and scientific anticipation of future challenges will be in demand, so as to develop pragmatic and possible unconventional ways for addressing them. UNESCO's multidisciplinary approaches in addressing complex challenges such as climate change, ocean and coastal deterioration, disaster risk reduction or water security represent clear added value to the United Nations system activities.

(b) Better integrated approaches, capable of cutting across disciplines and tools need to address as a whole the social, economic and environmental aspects of development that are mutually reinforcing and cannot be dealt with in isolation. Likewise, UNESCO's role and support for the implementation of existing standard-setting instruments, especially in the field of culture, require strengthening.

(c) Increased and better targeted attention must be paid to young people, in both the design and the implementation of programmes in order to empower them as agents for change. Young people represent a potential for mobilization, renewal and progress and are thus a "natural" priority target for UNESCO's activities.

(d) Policies must address the question of inequalities more directly, lay greater emphasis on inclusion, empowerment and equity and highlight the sustainability of results and

long-term transformations in an unstable context, in accordance with the conclusions of the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan in June 2012.

(e)   Policies must rely on each country's specific capacities, on greater national and local ownership and on greater community participation in development efforts, including resort to indigenous knowledge systems.

(f)   Partnerships will be increasingly essential for the effectiveness of United Nations action. The capacity of the United Nations development system, including UNESCO, to enter into innovative partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders and networks (including civil society, the private sector, media, foundations, networks of institutes and centres, UNESCO Chairs, parliamentarians), to reinforce partnerships or to engage more closely with UNESCO category 2 centres and institutes and UNESCO chairs, and to engage with the international financial institutions needs to be boosted. UNESCO will need to act increasingly as the moderator and instigator of a multifaceted energized global network.

(g)   In response to the sensitive and unstable situations in many countries, "post-conflict" intervention models must be replaced by a model that supports conflict prevention in fragile countries or countries in transition, which would improve the coordination of prevention, early warning and risk reduction programmes on the one hand, and emergency response, reconstruction and reconciliation programmes on the other.

(h)   The United Nations system – including UNESCO as a source, broker and crossroads of knowledge – must strengthen the coherence, effectiveness and interoperability of its components in order to tackle highly complex challenges with finite resources. The United Nations system, and the norms and values it represents, are more relevant than ever, yet the system must strive to effectively deliver on its potential – overcoming programmatic fragmentation and negative competition as well as incompatibility of operations and business models.

(i)   The promotion of a results and learning culture, focusing on more regular and more rigorous evaluations and based on quantitative and qualitative indicators as well as on evidence-based impact assessments of the various programmes is indispensable.

(j)   The introduction of sunset clauses according to which programmes will be terminated after a four-year period, in line with UNESCO's new programming cycle, unless the General Conference explicitly decides to either extend them – acknowledging the need to run certain programmes for a longer time – or end them early.

4.   In sum, UNESCO must demonstrate its capacity to contribute to peace in a world of diversity, to contribute to sustainable development in a world of finite resources and a changing climate, to strengthen societies' inclusion and resilience in the face of a complex and rapidly changing world situation. The aspiration to a new humanism may be regarded as human beings' need to establish new relations with each other, on the basis of gender equality, mutual understanding and tolerance, non-discrimination and non-violence, new relations with the environment (taking account of its fragility and its limitations), new relations among cultures (taking account of their diversity and interrelationship through education for mutual respect) and new relations with future generations.

5.   UNESCO has already introduced major reforms, in particular on the basis of the recommendations of the Independent External Evaluation. The Organization has come significantly closer to other United Nations agencies and has formed a host of new inter-agency, public-private or civil society partnerships, such as in the follow-up to the recommendations of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and with the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, co-chaired by UNESCO and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in the context of education for all and in the framework of UN Water as well as in implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. In addition, UNESCO has expanded quite significantly its partnership with ICT companies like Nokia and Microsoft in mobile learning, in TVET, literacy, gender-related programmes and digital preservation. The partnership with Procter & Gamble in support of girls' education in Africa has proved to be exceedingly successful. Visibility of world heritage was enhanced as a result of a partnership with Panasonic. Similarly the Partnership with L'Oreal, driven towards the promotion of Women in Sciences, has evolved throughout the years to also cover preventive education against HIV and AIDS. Most recently, UNESCO has teamed up with Chinese partners, like Phoenix Satellite TV, the Dalian Wanda Group, the Ruby Group, Mercedes-Benz China, the CHIC Group or the municipalities of Beijing, Hangzhou, Shenzhen and Shaoxing to support activities pertaining to culture and development, the creative economy and creative cities, heritage management as well as biospheres.

6.   Yet, the Organization must be further reformed in order to provide Member States with a structure and approach adapted to the exigencies of the new global environment. This does not mean marginal rearrangements of a few mechanisms, but reassessing all of the Organization's programmes and components. UNESCO must lay better emphasis on its specific contribution to lasting peace and sustainable development and must do so more effectively, more efficiently and more holistically.

7.   As the 2015 deadline looms large, the Organization must both increase its efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals – in particular Goal 2, achieving

universal primary education, for which it is responsible – and position itself in the post-2015 development agenda by proposing its ideas and suggestions to feed into inter-agency and the all-important intergovernmental

discussion on the sustainable development goals, which are yet to be defined by the United Nations General Assembly. The present new Medium-Term Strategy will be the main driver for this effort.

II. Guiding principles for the Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021 (37 C/4)

8. The elaboration of the Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021 has been guided by the following fundamental principles to ensure greater consistency with the objectives and activities of other United Nations bodies, in accordance with the expectations expressed in the QCPR.

(a) Refocus UNESCO on its core mandate and main priorities and ensure the overall consistency of its action;

(b) Define the Organization's basic functions better at its global, regional and national levels;

(c) Accelerate and increase field network reform;

(d) Encourage innovation and creativity in UNESCO's various fields of competence;

(e) Strengthen resolutely UNESCO's cooperation and partnerships, in particular in a reforming United Nations system and with new partners.

9. The selection of overarching objectives is designed to include contributions and interventions from several programmes in an interdisciplinary manner to address today's multifaceted challenges. The intersectoral platforms implemented throughout document 34 C/4, and in particular during the 36 C/5 period, will be replaced by greater flexibility and specifically designed mechanisms in programme implementation at both the global and the country levels.

10. To retain flexibility over eight years and allow the Organization to adapt to new developments and changes in the external environment throughout the new programming cycle, document 37 C/4 shall be considered as a rolling strategy, monitored and adjusted as necessary by the General Conference upon proposal by the Executive Board.

III. Mission statement

11. UNESCO's mission statement shall be:

As a specialized agency of the United Nations, UNESCO – pursuant to its Constitution – contributes to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, and sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information.

Medium-Term Strategy 2014–2021 (37 C/4)

Mission statement

As a specialized agency of the United Nations, UNESCO – pursuant to its Constitution – contributes to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, and sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information

Overarching objectives

| Peace | Equitable and sustainable development |

Global priorities

| Africa | Gender equality |

Strategic objectives

SO 1: Supporting Member States to develop education systems to foster high-quality and inclusive lifelong learning for all

SO 2: Empowering learners to be creative and responsible global citizens

SO 3: Advancing Education for All (EFA) and shaping the future international education agenda

SO 4: Strengthening science, technology and innovation systems and policies – nationally, regionally and globally

SO 5: Promoting international scientific cooperation on critical challenges to sustainable development

SO 6: Supporting inclusive social development, fostering intercultural dialogue for the rapprochement of cultures and promoting ethical principles

SO 7: Protecting, promoting and transmitting heritage

SO 8: Fostering creativity and the diversity of cultural expressions

SO 9: Promoting freedom of expression, media development and access to information and knowledge

Responding to Post-Conflict and Post-Disaster Situations

IV. Functions

12. UNESCO's five functions will be as follows:

(a) Serving as a laboratory of ideas and generating innovative proposals and policy advice in its fields of competence;

(b) Developing and reinforcing the global agenda in its fields of competence through policy analysis, monitoring and benchmarking;

(c) Setting norms and standards in its fields of competence and supporting and monitoring their implementation;

(d) Strengthening international and regional cooperation in its fields of competence, and fostering alliances, intellectual cooperation, knowledge-sharing and operational partnerships;

(e) Providing advice for policy development and implementation, and developing institutional and human capacities.

13. These functions shall be implemented at global, regional and national levels, with different degrees of emphasis. While global normative work should mostly be carried out by Headquarters, policy advice and related capacity development should mostly be provided at national level. Adequate delegation of authority will be provided to field units to allow them to respond to national needs, with suitable accountability mechanisms. The following indicative list clarifies the functions performed by UNESCO at different levels, and with a view to ensuring that operational activities are delegated to the appropriate levels:

Relevance of UNESCO's functions at the global, regional and national levels: Indicative list

	International level	Regional level	National level
1. Serving as a laboratory of ideas and generating innovative proposals and policy advice in its fields of competence	High	Low	Low
2. Developing and reinforcing the global agenda in its fields of competence through policy analysis, monitoring and benchmarking	High	Low	Low
3. Setting norms and standards in its fields of competence and supporting and monitoring their implementation	High	Low	High (national implementation)
4. Strengthening international and regional cooperation in its fields of competence, and fostering alliances, intellectual cooperation, knowledge-sharing and operational partnerships	High	High	High (fostering alliances, intellectual cooperation, knowledge-sharing and operational partnerships)
5. Providing advice for policy development and implementation, and developing institutional and human capacities	Low	Low	High

V. Global priorities

14. All thematic focus areas define in clear terms the strategic action to be pursued in support of Africa and gender equality, which continue to be UNESCO's global priorities.

Priority Africa

A united and prosperous Africa, at peace with itself and with the rest of the world, governed and built by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force on the international scene – that is the African Union's vision, in pursuit of which African States have designed their development efforts individually and collectively. UNESCO has supported Africa in the pursuit of that collective goal by continuously granting the Organization's "global priority" status to Africa in its programmes for over 20 years.

The African continent is at the forefront of economic, political and demographic change in the international environment. It is most severely stricken with extreme poverty, while some regions are experiencing unprecedented growth that must be sustained in the long term. It is important for Africa to build inclusive knowledge societies in order to improve the continent's connectivity with information- and knowledge-sharing networks.

Through its own dynamism and its partners' support, Africa has made significant progress in several areas of activity in UNESCO's fields of competence. Nevertheless, although the Afro-pessimism of the 1990s has given way to a positive view of the continent's development prospects, there is still much to be done to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and, thereafter, to turn globalization into a positive force redounding to the benefit of all.

UNESCO's operational strategy for Priority Africa sets out a forward-looking vision for the continent, by paying attention to trends and to the germs of change that will influence its development in the decade ahead. The operational strategy clearly identifies areas of priority interest to Africa, obstacles and constraints to their implementation and levers for their alleviation, such as:

1. the heightened need for education, training and social and occupational integration in order to respond to the changing demographic structure of Africa, which will have a population of 2 billion, consisting mostly of young people, by 2050;

2. the building of knowledge societies to effect the transition to a knowledge economy driven decisively by scientific research, technology and innovation, knowledge production and application, access and fairly shared knowledge;

3. the concomitant need to build inclusive resilient societies capable of supporting the unprecedented change in social relations which is narrowing the core traditional foundation on which social cohesion rests;

4. the pressing need to create and maintain conditions for the preservation and promotion of lasting collective peace and security, which are prerequisites for and the ultimate goals of development.

It also sets out six flagship projects, with expected results that shall be implemented beginning with document 37 C/5.

It is published in a separate booklet complementing documents 37 C/4 and 37 C/5.

Gender Equality

UNESCO considers gender equality as a fundamental human right, a building block for social justice and an economic necessity. It is a critical factor for the achievement of all internationally agreed development goals as well as a goal in and of itself. Sustainable development and peace at the global, regional and local levels can only be realized if women and men enjoy expanded and equal opportunities, choices and capabilities to live in freedom and dignity as full and equal citizens.

UNESCO's vision of gender equality is in line with the relevant international agreements – the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PfA), the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the Secretary-General's Five-Year Action Agenda where gender equality is highlighted as an accelerator for sustainable development.

UNESCO will continue to pursue its Priority Gender Equality through a two-pronged approach – which, together with capacity development, has been one of the main recommendations of the external evaluation: gender-specific programming – focusing on women's and men's social, political and economic empowerment as well as transforming norms of masculinity and femininity; and mainstreaming gender equality considerations in its policies, programmes and initiatives. Building commitment, competence and capacity for the effective implementation of Priority Gender Equality in programming with concrete impact at the field level will continue to be a focus area complemented by actions within the Secretariat that support equal career opportunities for staff and appropriate working arrangements to balance work and life while progressively increasing the representation of women in decision-making levels within the Secretariat to achieve gender parity by 2015.

The ultimate goal of UNESCO's Priority Gender Equality is to strengthen the Organization's ability, through its policies, programmes and initiatives, to support the creation of an enabling environment for women and men from all walks of life, to contribute to and enjoy the benefits of sustainable development and peace. UNESCO also commits itself to ensure that the Organization's contributions to peace and sustainable development have a positive and lasting impact on the achievement of women's empowerment and gender equality around the globe.

UNESCO's second Priority Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2021 (GEAP II), approved by the General Conference, provides a roadmap to translate the Organization's commitment into specific actions, outcomes and expected results for each Programme by adopting a concerted and systematic gender equality perspective. It describes the actions UNESCO will take in all its fields of competence between 2014 and 2021 to contribute fully and actively to the pursuit of women's empowerment and gender equality efforts in and with its Member States.

The GEAP II is published in separate booklet, complementing documents 37 C/4 and 37 C/5.

VI. Overarching objectives

15. All strategic objectives and thematic focus areas must respond to the following two overarching objectives:

◗ Peace – Contributing to lasting peace;

◗ Equitable and sustainable development – Contributing to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.

16. The overarching objectives must also guide the Organization's work with respect to the two global priorities – Africa and gender equality – and to activities for youth, LDCs, SIDS and countries in transition.

17. The needs and aspirations of youth are central concerns to UNESCO. Young people carry the greatest burden of change across the world, especially young women. They are also setting the pace for key social transformations. UNESCO has a powerful contribution to make in the mainstreaming of youth issues. UNESCO will put forward and operationalize a holistic, comprehensive vision across the Organization to harness the potential of youth as change-makers for peace and development. UNESCO's work will focus on enabling youth to engage in their societies and will embody the different ways in which youth are concerned or affected by such work: as beneficiaries of services and activities; as independent actors; as UNESCO's partners through their organizations.

UNESCO's Operational Strategy on Youth is available as a separate booklet, complementing documents 37 C/4 and 37 C/5.

18. Specific focus will be given to the LDCs in line with the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, which includes among its priority areas: education and training, water and sanitation, science technology and innovation, climate change and environmental sustainability, disaster risk reduction, the development of ICT infrastructure and internet access, gender equality and empowerment of women as well as youth development and civic engagement.

19. Building on UNESCO's contribution to the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS, UNESCO will develop

an action plan for implementing the outcome of the Third International Conference on SIDS, to be held in Apia in 2014. It will also support SIDS in identifying priorities to be considered in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda

20. The needs of indigenous peoples will also be addressed by UNESCO's action. They continue to be disproportionately represented among the most marginalized and impoverished segments of society, while being recognized as the stewards of the major part of the world's biological, cultural and linguistic diversity. The Organization will implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples across all relevant programme areas and contribute to the high-level UNGA World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in 2014.

VII. Strategic objectives

21. The strategic objectives are not linked in an exclusive unidimensional way to any particular programme or area of competence. Rather, their respective content will normally require contributions and interventions from several programmes in an interdisciplinary manner.

 Major Programme I – Education

 Major Programme II – Natural Sciences

 Major Programme III – Social and Human Sciences

 Major Programme IV – Culture

 Major Programme V – Communication and Information

22. The nine strategic objectives (SO) are the following:

 SO 1: Supporting Member States to develop education systems to foster high quality and inclusive lifelong learning for all

 SO 2: Empowering learners to be creative and responsible global citizens

 SO 3: Advancing Education for All (EFA) and shaping the future international education agenda

 SO 4: Strengthening science, technology and innovation systems and policies – nationally, regionally and globally

 SO 5: Promoting international scientific cooperation on critical challenges to sustainable development

 SO 6: Supporting inclusive social development, fostering intercultural dialogue for the rapprochement of cultures and promoting ethical principles

 SO 7: Protecting, promoting and transmitting heritage

 SO 8: Fostering creativity and the diversity of cultural expressions

 SO 9: Promoting freedom of expression, media development and access to information and knowledge

23. The strategic objectives will be translated into action in a seamless manner in the relevant C/5 documents, guided by the principles of a peace-, sustainable development- and human rights-based approach through education, the natural sciences, the social and human sciences, culture, communication and information, which cover all fields of competence of the Organization and give strategic orientation overall.

Strategic Objective 1

Supporting Member States to develop education systems to foster high quality and inclusive lifelong learning for all

24. Education, learning and skills are both enablers and drivers of inclusive and sustainable development and it is widely acknowledged that no country can improve the living conditions of its people without significant investment in education. While substantial progress has been made since 2000 in increasing access to basic education and reducing gender disparities in enrolment, there are still millions of children, youth and adults who are deprived of opportunities for learning, the majority of whom are girls and women. More efforts are needed to accelerate progress to further expand learning opportunities, particularly for the most disadvantaged groups, in order to address the challenges of social inequality.

25. Moreover, the remarkable progress made in increasing access to basic education has not been accompanied by a commensurate improvement in the quality and relevance of education. Millions of children leave school without having acquired basic skills like reading and writing. In many countries, young people are graduating without the skills required to enter, or remain

on, a fast changing labour market. In addition, the increasing availability of information and knowledge through technology is transforming education systems, expanding learning opportunities as well as generating demand for new skills. This is impacting on the type of competencies required of teachers, as their role is changing from that of "transmitter of knowledge" to "enabler of learning". At the same time, there is a crucial shortage of qualified teachers in many countries to provide quality education to a growing number of learners.

26. During the 2014-2021 period, UNESCO will respond to these challenges by placing greater focus on improving the quality of education, learning processes and outcomes in its education programme. It will continue to be guided by a rights-based and holistic approach to education aiming at the realization of inclusive lifelong learning and knowledge societies. UNESCO will promote expanded access to learning opportunities throughout the life cycle and through multiple pathways (formal education, non-formal and informal learning). It will seek to ensure that education and learning systems are inclusive, rights-based and reflect the diversity of all learners. It will intensify efforts towards achieving gender equality in education by mainstreaming gender in and through education, and gender- specific programming in targeted programme areas.

27. UNESCO will support its Member States to develop sector-wide policies and plans and improve public sector management and governance, and will accompany countries in their education reform, paying particular attention to supporting the reconstruction of education systems in countries affected by conflict and natural disasters.

28. Pursuing a holistic approach, UNESCO will provide technical support for the development of education sub-sectors and their related policies, strategies and programmes, from basic to higher education, including literacy and skills development. UNESCO will deploy its competences and resources strategically to implement targeted programmes which will focus on different sub-sectors in each of the two quadriennia, with the objective of strengthening the building blocks for lifelong learning systems. During the first four years of the strategy, priority will be given to the following three sub-sectors: literacy, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education – which are areas of key interest to Member States, and where UNESCO has a strong comparative advantage. Youth and adult literacy is the foundation for lifelong learning and skills acquisition. UNESCO will promote scaling-up literacy responses, in particular for youth and adults. Building on the achievements of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), UNESCO will support those countries with the largest number of illiterates, among them the E-9 countries. Activities will focus on scaling up national literacy programmes, including learning for twenty-first

century skills and education for global citizenship, and through new delivery modalities, such as ICT-enhanced and mobile learning. Through skills development for the world of work, UNESCO will support TVET policy reviews, knowledge sharing and strategies to facilitate transition from school to the world of work. UNESCO will seek to broaden access to quality higher education as a major vehicle for building inclusive and diverse knowledge societies, by addressing issues such as diversification of provision and quality assurance.

29. UNESCO will respond to the need to improve the quality of education and learning by focusing on the following key areas. It will address the acute shortage of qualified teachers in many countries by supporting teacher professional development through capacity development, especially of teacher-training institutions and dissemination of innovative teaching practices that improve teacher effectiveness. It will expand innovative learning opportunities, particularly through the use of ICTs in education. Finally, it will strengthen its work in areas that are critical to its improving learning such as curriculum, pedagogy and assessment of learning outcomes.

30. Priority and targeted support will be given to those countries or population groups considered most in need or lagging behind in reaching the internationally agreed development goals. Up to 2015, the focus will therefore be on accelerating progress towards the EFA and MDG goals and mobilizing all partners for a "last big push" with targeted support to priority countries, of which two thirds are in Africa. While recognizing the important progress made by many African countries towards the EFA goals over the last decade, UNESCO will continue to devote a significant part of its resources and programmatic action throughout the period 2014-2021 in favor of African Member States to help address the many educational challenges remaining and contribute to socio-economic development. Particular attention will be given to supporting teacher professional development, literacy, vocational skills development and higher education.

Strategic Objective 2

Empowering learners to be creative and responsible global citizens

31. A range of factors continues to deepen vulnerability, induce social breakdown and threaten global peace and stability. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening within and between countries. Equity and inclusion remain central challenges to ensure sustainable development. A large part of the world's population is living in areas affected by conflict and violence. Moreover, natural disasters including those linked to climate change are having a particularly ravaging impact on the poorest.

32. As a path for sustainable change, education can provide a powerful response to help alleviate these challenges. Education has a direct impact on poverty reduction, gender equality, health and environmental sustainability. A fundamental objective of education is to promote and impact values, attitudes and behaviors that empower learners to be proactive contributors to a more just, equal, peaceful and sustainable society.

33. UNESCO, with its interdisciplinary mandate, is uniquely positioned to promote education that empowers learners to understand societal challenges and to develop effective and creative responses to them; contribute to the creation of peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies based on the principles of social justice and respect for human rights, gender equality, diversity and the environment; participate actively in democratic processes, and lead decent lives.

34. This will be achieved by supporting Member States to ensure that learning content, environments, practices and processes foster the acquisition of relevant competencies necessary to tackle local and global challenges, such as critical thinking, creativity, understanding of the ethical dimensions of human development, and active and responsible citizenship.

A much stronger focus will be given to enhancing the role of education in responding to the challenges of the twenty-first century. In particular, UNESCO will intensify its efforts in the following three areas:

– UNESCO will promote peace and human rights education for global citizenship, notably within the framework of the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation, Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; and the resolution by the United Nations General Assembly on Education for Democracy (A/RES/67/18); UNESCO's Interdisciplinary and Intersectoral Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence (36 C/Resolution 66); UNESCO's General Conference resolution (37 C/Resolution 1 (VII)) and other major international instruments;

– UNESCO will continue to promote ESD as an integral element of quality education and of all efforts to achieve sustainable development, and support the integration of ESD in education policies, plans, curricula, pedagogy, and assessment through evidence-based advocacy, technical assistance and monitoring, thus ensuring effective follow-up to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD); and

– UNESCO will promote health education, including HIV and comprehensive sexuality education, which imparts the skills to lead healthy lifestyles, and fosters safe and equitable learning environments that enhance the overall well- being of the learners and are conducive to improved learning achievement.

Strategic Objective 3

Advancing education for all (EFA) and shaping the future international education agenda

35. The next eight years will be a period of opportunity. The development agenda will be at a crossroads in 2015, which will be the occasion to take stock of progress, and to chart out a new agenda and development framework, based on the analysis of emerging needs and challenges; it is a time for renewed commitment. Keeping education high on the global development agenda will be an important task for UNESCO. At the same time, recognizing that EFA is an unfinished agenda, UNESCO remains fully committed to making progress in

collaboration with all stakeholders and partners towards the six EFA goals in a last "big push" before 2015.

36. In the lead-up to the 2015 target year for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All goals, UNESCO will continue to assume its role as the lead coordinating agency for education for all at the global level and seek to expand and strengthen partnerships for education. It will facilitate national assessments of progress towards EFA and support the

identification of policy priorities at country level and as a foundation for establishing the post-2015 education agenda at the regional and global levels. It will critically review the lessons learnt and guide the debate on international education and development agendas beyond 2015. It will seek to ensure that education remains a global priority beyond 2015, as a basic human right and as a prerequisite for peace and equitable and sustainable development.

37. In response to the need for evidence-based policy-making, UNESCO will continue its central role in monitoring progress in education through data collection, analysis and dissemination, also building on the rich experience of UIS and UNESCO's flagship publication, the *EFA Global Monitoring Report*. Furthermore, UNESCO will continue to promote education as a fundamental human right for all learners, supporting Member States to review and update their legal frameworks to reflect the right to quality education for all.

38. Moreover, UNESCO will continue to serve as a laboratory of ideas and innovations in education, and to steer international debates on critical issues and emerging challenges for education and facilitate the global policy dialogue among its Member States. UNESCO will inspire new ways of conceptualizing education and learning, their contribution to societal development, and modalities for international cooperation in the area. In so doing, it will create an international impetus for scaling up political attention and resources allocation to education and learning; integrating a foresight dimension

into education policy development and planning; and building on evidence through the monitoring of education development and trends at the global, regional and national levels.

39. Building on its convening power and advocacy role, UNESCO will work to ensure multilateral support to education at the global, regional and national levels, by strengthening coordination and cooperation among key stakeholders and partners. In the changing context of global development cooperation, UNESCO will further strengthen South-South and North-South-South cooperation as key implementation modalities, and expand cooperation with other important partners within and beyond the United Nations system, UNESCO will seek to forge equal partnerships between countries, in particular by strengthening technical cooperation between developing countries and attracting funding from new and emerging donors. It will also continue to cooperate with Member States, civil society, and the academic world and will further promote public- private partnerships in education.

40. UNESCO with its worldwide networks and global reach is well placed to enhance international and regional cooperation and knowledge-sharing among all its Member States. Going forward, UNESCO will give increased attention to ensuring the universal relevance of its education programme. It will seek to mobilize all Member States, including all relevant stakeholders, to engage in cooperation on major global challenges and issues.

Strategic Objective 4

Strengthening science, technology and innovation systems and policies – nationally, regionally and globally

41. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20) has confirmed the pivotal importance of science, technology and innovation (STI) for poverty eradication and sustainable development in all its dimensions – economic, social and environmental. STI can be the "game changer" of the socio-economic situation of developing countries and economies in transition. The sciences underpin all technological innovation and engineering solutions needed to address challenges such as green growth and employment, environmental degradation and restoration, climate change adaptation, existing and emerging diseases, natural disasters and energy needs.

42. Investment in knowledge systems, including research and development (R&D), has expanded globally, including in many developing countries. The distribution of R&D efforts between North and South has changed with the emergence of new actors in the global economy,

creating a more competitive global environment. However, disparities in scientific capacity and STI development levels within and between countries remain significant. Insufficient government commitments for STI, including financing, technology and capacity, poorly designed national STI policies and lack of adequate organizational capacities to implement policies; lack of quality STI statistics and indicators; unequal participation of women and man in scientific fields; lack of consistent life cycle thinking and long-term perspective in STI frameworks and policies; a disconnect between policy-makers, scientists and society in generating, sharing and utilizing scientific knowledge, are some of the factors causing these disparities.

43. Improving the policy environment, redesigning infrastructure and enterprise development, investing in higher education in science and engineering are some

of the key areas identified for policy action needed to achieve the MDGs.

44. As the United Nations organization with an explicit mandate in the sciences, UNESCO will continue to support Member States' efforts to reform and upgrade national STI systems and governance. UNESCO will provide technical support on strengthening STI ecosystems and the science-policy-society interface, to bridge the gap between STI knowledge and policy, and to catalyze Member States' investment in STI. UNESCO's support on building effective STI ecosystems will take into account country-specific contexts and will be founded on several key pillars, including: robust national STI policies as holistic frameworks and integral parts of national development policies and plans, strategically linked to education policy, macroeconomic and industrial policies, as well as to other sectoral policies; adequate institutional and human capacity for science, research and innovation and; popular participation, understanding and support for science. A specific focus will be put on the development of national, regional and grass-roots innovation capacities to spur green transformations, encourage creativity, and enhance opportunities for youth-led applied innovation, technopreneurship and the employability of young graduates. All UNESCO's efforts in the sciences will incorporate a strong focus on enhancing the participation of women and girls and on promoting gender equality in STI.

45. The Organization will continue to build the capacity of Member States to monitor and evaluate performance through STI statistics and indicators. To complement efforts in promoting evidence-based STI policy-making, the Organization will also promote scientific and technological foresight systems.

46. UNESCO will further strengthen its efforts to assist Member States in institutional capacity-building for science and engineering and the transformation of higher education systems to more trans-disciplinary approaches so as to integrate the challenges of sustainable development into the research and educational agenda. The Organization also recognizes a responsibility to focus on increasing opportunities to participate in the scientific enterprise, particularly for the marginalized. The Organization will continue to accord priority to the particular needs of SIDS by contributing to the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS. UNESCO will also continue supporting the rights of indigenous peoples and recognizing the value of their knowledge systems. The development and implementation of a UNESCO-wide policy on engagement with indigenous peoples will be pursued. The Organization will promote global science advocacy campaigns, such as the International Year of Crystallography (2014) and the International Year of Light (2015) and will contribute to the UNEnergy initiative "Sustainable Energy for All".

47. UNESCO will continue to strengthen its participation in global partnerships to bridge the science-policy interface and to lead inter-agency efforts to reinforce consideration of indigenous knowledge systems in the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. At the global level, UNESCO will continue to lead global assessments and reports of the state of relations between policy, science and society, in areas including the status of investment in STI in all regions of the world.

48. UNESCO, by hosting the Secretariat for the United Nations Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board, will also play a key role in providing advice to the Secretary-General, and to the United Nations system, on strategies for more effectively targeting collective efforts in the natural and social and human sciences, technology, engineering and innovation to the challenges of sustainable development.

Strategic Objective 5

Promoting international scientific cooperation on critical challenges to sustainable development

49. Greater knowledge-sharing is critical to induce the transformative changes needed to address the complex and inter-related challenges of sustainable development. UNESCO will promote international scientific cooperation and integrated scientific approaches to support Member States in effectively managing natural resources, reducing knowledge divides within and among countries, and building bridges for dialogue and peace.

50. Sustainability issues are at the centre of the international debate as current and foreseeable patterns of human activity are fundamentally altering Earth systems, testing the biophysical limits of our planet. This is having profound impacts on the Earth's freshwater resources, on the ocean, atmosphere and climate, and on terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity.

51. Building on its experience in leading intergovernmental and international science programmes and bodies and on their global observation capacities, UNESCO will contribute to shaping the research agenda of global and regional scientific cooperation, based on the Rio+20 outcome document *"The Future We Want" and the post-2015 development agenda.*

52. UNESCO will put into practice integrated approaches to science and engineering for sustainable development, called "sustainability science". These integrated, "problem-solving" approaches draw on the full range of scientific, traditional and indigenous knowledge in a trans-disciplinary way to identify, understand and address economic, environmental, ethical and societal challenges.

53. Freshwater remains a critical element of security, sustainability, inclusion and peace, with its vital importance increasing due to, among other factors, demographic growth, urbanization and climate change. UNESCO will respond to the needs of Member States by strengthening the governance and management of the world's limited freshwater resources within the framework of the Strategy "Water Security: Responses to Local, Regional and Global Challenges (2014-2021)". UNESCO will continue to build institutional and human capacities of Member States in the various fields of freshwater resources management. The Organization will make available updated knowledge for policy guidance on freshwater resources.

54. The work in relation to ocean and coasts will continue to be a flagship area for UNESCO and will include interdisciplinary initiatives for science, education, culture and communication. UNESCO will further promote international collaboration to generate strong scientific understanding and systematic observations of the changing world climate and ocean ecosystems. This will ensure that information is actionable to address a wide variety of social and environmental challenges, including climate change and variability, marine biodiversity, tsunami and other ocean-related hazards, and the sustainability of ocean ecosystem services. Scientific information about the status of the ocean will underpin global governance for a healthy ocean, and global, regional and national management of ocean risks and opportunities. UNESCO will endeavor to strengthen its leading role within the United Nations system in ocean science, services and observations, to respond within its mandate to requirements of various United Nations ocean-related conventions, as well as resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly.

55. The Organization will endeavor to strengthen the role and potential of the UNESCO-designated biosphere reserves and other UNESCO-affiliated sites, along with their associated networks, as pilot sites for research on mitigation and adaptation to climate change, green economies and as sites for collaboration with other international innovative environmental initiatives. They will further serve to build scientific knowledge and identify best practices for natural resource use and ecosystem management, restoration and rehabilitation, as well as geosciences, and to strengthen the interface between science, policy and society at local, national, regional and global levels.

56. UNESCO will promote scientific collaboration, especially South-South and North-South-South triangular cooperation, as a catalyst for dialogue and co-production of scientific knowledge, in synergy with local and indigenous knowledge brokers, and for science diplomacy. The Organization will further promote joint management of transboundary areas and resources, including transboundary surface and groundwater resources and transboundary biosphere reserves, as a means for sharing knowledge and best practices, building peace and promoting dialogue among nations.

57. The Rio+20 Outcome document underscores the notion of growing uncertainties and risks in the development process. UNESCO will promote international collaboration on the assessment and monitoring of global changes and natural hazards, including droughts and floods and geohazards, as well as tsunamis; the generation and sharing of scientific knowledge leading to the understanding of natural hazards; the reduction of disaster risks through supporting the establishment of early warning systems and coping mechanisms for potential disasters through education, the sciences and the promotion of social resilience.

Strategic Objective 6

Supporting inclusive social development, fostering intercultural dialogue for the rapprochement of cultures and promoting ethical principles

58. All countries today are undergoing profound social transformations. The need and the demand for social cohesion and intercultural dialogue have never been so urgent than today. Issues facing all societies include ethical implications of scientific progress and technology, demographic pressure, accelerated urbanization, increasing calls for social justice and cohesion, the role of young people as agents of change, new forms of communication and citizens' participation in consolidating democracy. With a view to contributing to the post-2015 development agenda, UNESCO will seek to develop a future-oriented understanding of the dynamics at work, based on the approach of sustainability science, to assist countries in the design and review of inclusive evidence-based public policies. At stake is the management of social transformations to support the universal values of peace, justice, non-discrimination and human rights. Strengthening UNESCO's role in promoting the social dimension of sustainable development will help to harness new opportunities for inclusive social progress in education, the sciences, culture, communication and information.

59. Building on its longstanding experience, UNESCO will strengthen the links between research, practice and policy-making. Member States will be supported in developing and implementing policies to accompany social transformations, in particular through human and institutional capacity-building.

60. UNESCO will foster "mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other's lives" through inter-cultural dialogue. This is especially vital at a time when societies face new forms of inequality, discrimination, exclusion, violence, radicalization, extremism and bigotry, compounded by local tensions and conflicts. UNESCO's action will be guided by the Interdisciplinary and Intersectoral Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence, as well as the Action Plan (194 EX/10) of the International Decade for Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022). Engagement of international and national partners will be essential.

61. Efforts will be deployed to further mainstream human rights principles and standards across the work of the Organization. Promoting respect, tolerance and mutual understanding requires education for all, sharing the benefits of scientific knowledge, resilient cultures, and accessible communication and information networks.

62. UNESCO will use foresight and anticipation to fulfill its function as a global laboratory of ideas by mapping out current and future needs, and to design innovative proposals for the development of public policies.

63. UNESCO will also continue to provide global leadership in promoting international standards for ethics pertaining to science and technology. The ethical, legal, environmental and societal dimensions of science and technology to sustain human life and life support systems are central to UNESCO's holistic science mandate, as it strives to reach out to the most vulnerable segments of society and to contribute to sustainable development, social justice and peace through human rights-based approaches. In the field of bioethics, UNESCO will further identify and address the ethical issues that scientific advances and their applications may pose to the integrity of individuals and their rights or wellbeing. Fair access for all to scientific knowledge and developments, as well as integrity and responsibility in the research agenda will be promoted in order to support the emergence of scientifically informed, just and equitable societies.

64. Young women and men are vital actors of, and partners for, innovative initiatives in response to global challenges. Their energy, creativity and critical spirit in identifying solutions and building bridges and networks have been demonstrated in several regions. It is now time to improve investment in research, policies and programmes to create enabling conditions for youth, including the most vulnerable and marginalized and especially young women, to prosper, exercise rights and engage as responsible citizens and social actors. UNESCO will leverage its multidisciplinary expertise to enable young women and men to engage in their societies and harness their full potential as agents and subjects of social and economic transformations. As envisaged in UNESCO's Operational Strategy on Youth, the Organization's approach will be operationalized through three complementary, transversal and interlinked axes: (a) policy formulation and review with the participation of youth, (b) capacity development for the transition to adulthood, (c) civic engagement, democratic participation and social innovation.

65. Sport for all is one of the most powerful vehicles to deliver messages about human rights, social development, peace values, and the rapprochement among peoples. Sport is also a tool for development and community-building. It fosters public health and cohesion, and is a means of increasing social capital, especially among young people. Physical education and sport offer a framework for action, for promoting the health of individuals and their communities, for social inclusion and cohesion, for sustainable development and ethical practices. Within its ethical mandate, UNESCO will support Member States with regard to the national, legal and institutional frameworks needed to uphold sport integrity, including through the International Convention

against Doping in Sport. The Organization will work to provide policy advice and reinforce institutional capacities to support Members States in the formulation of inclusive policy and delivery in these areas.

Strategic Objective 7

Protecting, promoting and transmitting heritage

66. In the coming years, UNESCO will generate initiatives and mobilize energies, ideas and commitments to forge a new understanding of peace and sustainable development through culture. At the multilateral level, the Organization will capitalize on recent achievements in promoting culture as a driver and enabler of peace and sustainable development, as a human-centered approach to development, yielding sustainable, inclusive and equitable outcomes, can only be achieved with a strong culture component. Heritage, understood in its entirety – natural and cultural, tangible and intangible – constitutes assets inherited from the past that we wish to transmit to future generations because of their social value and the way in which they embody identity and belonging. These assets shall be used for promoting social stability peace-building, recovery from crisis situations, and development strategies.

67. UNESCO will harness the power of heritage as a positive and unifying force that can help prevent conflicts and facilitate peace-building as well as recovery and reconciliation. Heritage is inextricably linked to the most pressing challenges facing humanity: climate change and natural disasters, loss of biodiversity, safe water, conflicts, unequal access to food, education and health, migration, urbanization, social marginalization and economic inequalities.

68. UNESCO's normative framework provides a unique global platform for international cooperation and dialogue. It establishes a holistic cultural governance system within a human rights-based approach, building on shared values, mutual commitments respecting cultural diversity, the free flow of ideas and collective responsibility. The implementation of the Organization's cultural conventions, recommendations, declarations and its intergovernmental programmes engages States in dialogue and cooperation at the international level, thereby facilitating inclusive governance, sharing knowledge and best practices at the policy level.

69. This cooperation platform is conducive to leveraging the contribution of cultural and natural resources to sustainable development through the promotion, protection and safeguarding of heritage – with particular emphasis on immovable heritage (1972 and 1954 Conventions), moveable cultural property (1954 and 1970 Conventions), underwater cultural heritage (2001 Convention) and intangible cultural heritage (2003 Convention). The Organization's action will strengthen national capacities to better conserve, safeguard, manage and promote heritage at the professional and institutional levels and within communities. It will also promote the educational potential of heritage, in particular by strengthening traditional knowledge and integrating heritage into formal and non-formal education. Moreover, it will include providing assistance in the context of the heritage Conventions, enhanced through the recently created monitoring mechanisms under the 1970 Convention, which have demonstrated UNESCO's enduring relevance in working to protect and prevent the pillage and illicit trafficking of cultural property that violates the expression of a community's cultural identity.

70. Recent years have also been marked by an increasing trend to target culture in conflict. Conflicts arising within and between states involve cultural matters and target cultural differences in order to divide societies. The culture programme will engage to develop strategies and tools which will aim to (i) strengthen the protection of cultural heritage and cultural expressions in crisis and conflict situations and (ii) prevent the instrumentalization of culture to exacerbate differences and tensions.

71. Action will focus on the factual analysis and collection of data on the destruction of and damage to cultural heritage and cultural expressions, including the looting of cultural objects in crisis and conflict situations, and develop short-term emergency measures in response, based on UNESCO's long-lasting experience in this field (e.g. Iraq, Libya, Haiti, Mali). This effort will be part of a global strategy to fight impunity for cultural heritage destruction and to build on the power of culture for resilience, social inclusion, national reconciliation, and peace-building. UNESCO's support for traditional systems of environmental protection and resource management will enhance the sustainability of fragile land and marine ecosystems and preservation of biodiversity, while preventing competition and conflict over access to natural and cultural resources, including water. It will also strengthen disaster risk management strategies that fully respect and build on traditional knowledge and community participation.

72. In advancing dialogue, "learning to live together" and inclusiveness, UNESCO will promote the role of shared or cross-border cultural heritage and initiatives to build bridges among nations and communities. Efforts will be undertaken to offer new perspectives on disseminating and teaching knowledge of history, particularly in the context of the International Decade for People of African

Descent (2015-2024). UNESCO will further develop its work to promote intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace as a contribution to the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures, and will also promote

the role of museums as educational institutions and platforms for youth civic engagement that stimulate dialogue and cultural exchange and help reconcile history and memory.

Strategic Objective 8

Fostering creativity and the diversity of cultural expressions

73. As a multifaceted human resource that involved processes, environments, persons and products, creativity can inspire positive, transformative change for future generations. In the coming years, UNESCO will highlight the role of cultural and creative industries in poverty alleviation through job creation and income generation, and providing further evidence of the link between culture and sustainable development in the post-2015 development agenda. Capacity-building will be pursued at all levels for the development of a dynamic cultural and creative sector, in particular by encouraging creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, supporting the development of cultural institutions and cultural industries, providing technical and vocational training for culture professionals and increasing employment opportunities in the cultural and creative sector for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and development.

74. Economic inequalities, social exclusion, and unsustainable use of assets and conflicts over scarce resources are among the major challenges in our globalized world. Creativity, embracing cultural expression and the transformative power of innovation in knowledge societies, contributes to finding imaginative and better development outcomes. Tapping into creative assets can effectively contribute to making globalization a more positive force for all the world's peoples, now and in the future. Creativity is thus essential to promoting peace and sustainable development.

75. Intangible cultural heritage is continually created and recreated. The 2003 Convention's potential as a powerful tool to improve the social and cultural well-being of communities and to mobilize innovative and culturally appropriate responses to the various challenges of sustainable development will be fully explored. Emphasis will be given to empowering marginalized and vulnerable communities and individuals, in particular indigenous communities, women and youth, to participate fully in cultural life through the continued creativity that is a defining characteristic of intangible cultural heritage, and to make cultural choices according to their own preferences and aspirations.

76. The creative economy has become a new development paradigm. It relies on the transformation of creativity as raw material into assets, often operating on a small scale

and offering new employment opportunities and forms of revenue at the local level, thus contributing to more balanced and inclusive economic growth. UNESCO will support the emergence of dynamic cultural and creative industries and markets, in particular by means of activities relating to the 2005 Convention. In so doing, it will encourage investments in the artistic and creative potential of individuals and institutions in developing countries, securing access and the full participation of all, in particular small- and medium-sized cultural enterprises and creators from the South. This will involve supporting the development of policy frameworks as well as technical and infrastructural capacities.

77. Increasingly artists demand better social and economic conditions and unhindered mobility. UNESCO will promote the status of artists, including from a gender equality perspective, their individual mobility and preferential treatment for creative works from the global South. It will continue its efforts to support artists through fellowships and grants for young creators and re-invigorate the global debate and action necessary to improve the social and economic conditions for their work.

78. In pursuit of the Seoul Agenda and Development Goals for Arts Education to enhance the creative and innovative capacity of societies, priority will go to scaling up efforts and removing barriers that limit access to and participation in cultural life, capacities for cultural and creative expressions and the availability of diversified ranges of cultural goods and services. These are fundamental for the building of socially inclusive, creative and knowledge-based societies and enhancement of the overall quality of life.

79. Rapid and unprecedented urbanization around the world is putting pressure on the availability and use of resources, resulting in overburdened urban environments and generating new security issues that are unsustainable in the long run. Placing creativity at the heart of urban renewal and planning can lead to more livable, safer and productive cities offering better quality of life. UNESCO acts to support shared urban public spaces where creativity fosters social engagement, inclusion and security. UNESCO's action will focus on supporting the model of "creative cities" and in particular the revitalized Creative Cities Network as laboratories for

sustainable development and poverty alleviation, places

where imagination, inspiration and innovation are openly and freely exchanged.

Strategic Objective 9

Promoting freedom of expression, media development and access to information and knowledge

80. By harnessing the power of knowledge through free communication and information, UNESCO seeks to facilitate the development of knowledge societies that are equitable, inclusive, open and participatory. They embrace values which are stated in its Constitution, and based on the following four key principles:

   ◗ Freedom of expression which applies to traditional, contemporary and new forms of media, including the Internet;

   ◗ Access to quality education for all;

   ◗ Respect for cultural and linguistic diversity;

   ◗ Universal access to information and knowledge, especially in the public domain.

81. UNESCO will continue to play a leading role globally in the promotion of freedom of expression, press freedom, media development, and universal access to information and knowledge, for building inclusive knowledge societies.

82. The concept of knowledge societies, as defined by UNESCO and embraced by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), has taken on a central role in discussions on pathways to sustainable development. Technological evolution has created unprecedented conditions for the production, exchange and use of information. Enabled by an increased access to and use of new technologies, the free flow of information and ideas, strengthens democratic governance, the promotion of all human rights, more inclusive, participatory and responsive political and social processes, as well as a culture of peace and dialogue.

83. The free flow of information necessitates the promotion of the right to freedom of expression, including its corollaries of press freedom and freedom of information in accordance with all relevant human rights treaties. The creation of knowledge-based societies is linked to enhanced democratic governance. Strong efforts are needed to promote media development across all platforms, which includes support for media institutions and capacity-building for those producing journalism. This shall enable robust, dynamic, responsive and participatory media, in which men and women, particularly in post-conflict and post-disaster (PCPD) countries and countries in transition, can engage with

and contribute to the information needed for decision-making. UNESCO will continue to support efforts by its Member States – especially in Africa, LDCs and SIDS – in building vibrant media landscape.

84. As media pluralism is a key pillar in strengthening democratic governance and facilitating the free flow of information, UNESCO will continue to be proactive in addressing the lack of community media and fully-fledged public service media in many countries, the limited diversity in ownership and the lack of women's representation in media staffing and management. These endeavors will be supported by initiatives to increase the media and information literacy competencies of citizens.

85. The democratic potential of independent media system also rests upon effective self-regulation and adherence to professional standards of journalism, both offline and online. Strong journalism organizations, and up-to-date and impactful journalism education programmes are important components of independence, as is the economic sustainability of media. There is a need to promote media sustainability by enhancing the role of knowledge-driven media development. UNESCO's expertise in these various dimensions of media independence will contribute to the multi-faceted underpinning of press freedom.

86. International efforts to promote a free media must be complemented by actions to enhance the safety of journalists. Threats against journalists, whether they be physical, cyber or financial, strike at the heart of press freedom. Recognizing the relevance of this issue, the United Nations adopted the UNESCO-developed United Nations Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. It provides an overarching framework for the United Nations system to work together with all stakeholders, including the national authorities, and the various national and international organizations, as well civil society and the media, to improve the safety of journalists and combat impunity concerning attacks against them. UNESCO is entrusted with the overall coordination of United Nations efforts for the Plan and to promote its implementation by many stakeholders, both within and outside the United Nations framework.

87. ICTs have also become essential elements contributing to internationally agreed development goals. Countries and citizens continue to benefit from ICTs which amplify transformation opportunities. ICT platforms enable

higher quality educational opportunities for students and teachers, including those living in remote parts of the world. ICTs provide young researchers with unfettered and open access to scientific research; and offer unprecedented opportunities for improving the delivery of education and enhancing the competencies of teachers. Ultimately ICTs may empower all citizens, women and men including those living with disabilities with the tools to leverage knowledge.

88. Issues including freedom of expression, ethical dimensions of the information society, multilingualism in cyberspace, and transforming digital divides into digital inclusions remain unresolved. UNESCO will therefore support various stakeholders, including Member States, to strengthen efforts to find common ground on these issues.

89. In its efforts to support the building of knowledge societies, UNESCO adopts a strategic approach to fostering universal access to information by assisting Member States to tap into opportunities coming from the ever-increasing use of ICTs, information and data flows and to address related challenges. To this end, UNESCO will continue to facilitate the debate on the political, ethical and societal challenges of sustainable and inclusive knowledge societies. Specifically, UNESCO will seek to stimulate universality in content, technology, and processes, based on open technological standards and open licenses allowing for the free and legal sharing or crowdsourcing of information for effective collaboration and sustainable innovation at local, national and international levels.

90. However, the potential of ICT can materialize only if all citizens have the necessary skills to integrate ICT into their lives. For this reason, UNESCO will ensure that learning is at the core of knowledge societies: on the one hand, ICTs are tools for Member States to reach large numbers of learners of all ages; on the other, all citizens, and especially young women and men, need to be assisted to comprehend technology allowing them to unleash their creative participation for sustainable development.

91. The Internet is playing a major role in this endeavor, UNESCO will also encourage multilingualism and respect for cultural diversity in cyberspace.

92. Inclusivity and equitability are at the heart of UNESCO's mandate. The Organization will continue to promote international cooperation and partnerships for "building an information society for all". It will also continue contributing to high-level policy discussions rendering guidance to Member States in the area of access to knowledge for coping with the rapid development of information and communications technologies and their applications. UNESCO will further provide technical assistance and advice on societal, democratic and cultural dimensions of knowledge societies.

93. Knowledge must not only be harnessed for economic and social development but must also be stored and protected for generations to come. Documentary heritage and repositories of rich knowledge are at risk of being lost forever due to natural disasters, wear and tear, and inadequate storage facilities. Thus, UNESCO will continue to strengthen the preservation of documentary heritage, in particular in digitized and digitally born formats.

UNESCO's response to post-conflict and post-disaster situations (PCPD)

94 UNESCO's response to crisis situations and countries in transition is a necessary part of the continuum of operational activities linking peace to sustainable development. Conflicts and natural disasters remain the single largest impediment to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, in some cases reversing years of progress and investments. Successful national transitions from conflict to peace and sustainable development remain an elusive goal, with half of all post-conflict countries lapsing back into conflict within 10 years. Man-made and natural disasters have grown both in frequency and intensity as a result of climate change, and feed directly into a vicious cycle of conflict and violence.

95. UNESCO will be committed to making effective and essential contributions to United Nations post-crisis coordination mechanisms, joint needs assessments, multi-donor and other post-crisis and pooled funding modalities and inter-agency coordination bodies at global and United Nations Country Team levels.

96. To address challenges facing countries afflicted by conflict, UNESCO will focus on building sustainable peace, breaking the cycle of violence, and reducing the risk of relapse into conflict. UNESCO with its own operational experience will support the Secretary-General's 2010 seven-point Action Plan on Women's Participation in Peace-Building, which has put gender equality and empowerment high on the peace-building agenda. UNESCO action will need to be fast,

as the immediate post-crisis period offers a window of opportunity to provide basic services, strengthen national ownership and offer capacity-building from the outset. UNESCO's strategic approach to peace-building will be fully integrated with recovery efforts in all its fields of competence. This will also allow the establishment of stronger links with United Nations peace-building mechanisms and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes.

97. Specifically, UNESCO will advocate for a sector-wide approach to the rehabilitation of education systems following a crisis, that gives equal attention to access and quality issues and avoid gaps in response affecting specific sub-sectors. In addition, it will give special attention and support to peace education and psycho-social rehabilitation, as well as to critical areas for recovery and longer-term development, such as TVET and life skills, for demobilized ex-combatants, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, secondary education, as well as higher education, including teachers' education and training.

98. When cultural and documentary heritage is deliberately targeted, UNESCO will advocate for its safeguarding during and in the aftermath of conflict. It will coordinate international efforts for emergency response for cultural heritage protection and support the positive role culture can play in peace-building. UNESCO also will support the safety of journalists and restoration of media freedom and independence in crisis settings, and provide information to help save lives and restore dignity in the aftermath of a disaster or conflict.

99. UNESCO will maintain a major focus on disaster risk reduction (DRR), as the most cost-effective means to mitigate the effects of disasters and save lives, heritage and infrastructure. Emerging areas of DRR competence for UNESCO include the remote sensing of emergency groundwater resources in drought-affected countries; national floods forecasting and water resource management; DRR education including through radio and other media; as well as the global expansion of Tsunami Early Warning Systems. UNESCO's disaster-response strategy will focus on access: including access to fresh water, to education, to disaster risk reduction information, to hazard assessments, and to capacity-building for multi-hazard disaster early warning systems and resource management.

VIII. Leading for effectiveness and managing for results

100. In 2014-2021, the Organization will continue to enhance the institutional approaches, tools and mechanisms necessary to improve its overall outputs and results delivery with fewer but more sharply articulated expected results, greater outreach that leads to more discernible and traceable impact of its actions to the benefit of Member States. It will strengthen its proximity to the actual needs and priorities of Member States, including the National Commissions, its ability to deliver results effectively, its capacity to learn from successes and failures, its ability to communicate and report in a strategic manner, its resource mobilization ability, and the entire range of its strategic partnerships, including with civil society and the private sector. In doing so, UNESCO will build on the recommendations of the 2010 Independent External Evaluation and its follow-up, and further consolidate the progress made in the past two biennia in terms of management, effectiveness, efficiency and value for money.

The five strategic directions of the Independent External Evaluation:

◗ Increasing UNESCO's focus

◗ Positioning UNESCO closer to the field

◗ Strengthening participation in the United Nations

◗ Strengthening governance

◗ Developing a partnership strategy

1. Improving the relevance, coherence and focus of UNESCO's programmes

101. Increasing programmatic focus is one of the major challenges and a key driver for change. In order to improve its results and impact on the ground and maintain its relevance to Member States, the Organization will continue its efforts to concentrate programmatic efforts around fewer, more well-defined areas and with a foresight dimension. These will be areas where UNESCO possesses comparative strengths and advantages vis-à-vis other partners where it has an established track record, or where it has a clear added value and can effectively collaborates with others to meet the needs of Member States, with adequate human and financial capacities to deliver. UNESCO will also improve the coherence of its work across the entire UNESCO family of international centers and programmes. Faithful to its mandate and to its functions, UNESCO will in particular:

◗ Remain focused on its core functions, concentrating in particular on upstream policy-related work, normative actions and related capacity development;

◗ Develop an overall strategic coherence of all of the parts of the UNESCO family to deliver a common programme – whether involving Headquarters, field offices, category 1 and category 2 institutes and centres, or intergovernmental programmes;

◗ Further develop evidence-based and result-oriented monitoring and reporting; underscore the intervention's logic from results to longer-term impact; strive to inform on achievements viewed from the perspectives of key stakeholders and in particular direct beneficiaries;

◗ Introduce a systematic review and conduct an evaluation of the programme cycle with the objective of strengthening programme delivery;

◗ Reduce the fragmentation of programmes, building on synergies and cooperation, avoiding redundancies and marginal endeavours, and concentrating all efforts for attaining expected results and greater impact;

◗ Ensure that, at the regional and country levels, appropriate flexibility and delegation of authority exists to mobilize the full potential of UNESCO's programmes and resources so as to respond effectively to complex regional and national needs and priorities.

2. Developing a results culture

102. Developing a results culture is fundamental to building the Organization's credibility and accountability vis-à-vis its Member States, partners and investors. UNESCO will work to institutionalize a results-delivery culture throughout its activities, by improving results-based management, monitoring, evaluation and results reporting. This will include a number of measures to be taken in the coming period:

◗ The progressive refinement of results-based budgeting(RBB) as an integral part of results-based management (RBM) covering all of the Organization's activities, and showing clearly the causal links between inputs, budgets, outputs, expected results and outcomes.

◗ A greater accountability for results by all units and staff concerned, including in performance assessment;

– Providing training to UNESCO staff to impart the necessary skills and understanding for the development and use of a meaningful results framework;

– Developing proposals for measuring the results and impact of UNESCO's normative work and making them more widely known to internal and external stakeholders, including through the development of more effective approaches capturing and communicating UNESCO's priorities, key strategies and results achieved;

◗ The development of systematic programme monitoring based on transparent criteria for establishing new programmes and maintaining existing ones;

◗ The application of sunset clauses coupled with a systematic approach to programme review and evaluation providing at the end of each quadrennium proposals on the continuation, reorientation, reinforcement, exit strategies or termination of programmes and activities, as well as their expected results based on clear evaluation criteria;

◗ Increasing delegation of authority to the field in order to accelerate programme delivery, while maintaining a robust internal control environment;

◗ The proactive anticipation and management of risks and opportunities along with the development of appropriate strategic plans as critical factors for the attainment of results;

◗ Moving towards compliance with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) within the United Nations system.

The crucial role of evaluation

Evaluation is the key mechanism for capturing effects of interventions at the expected results level and therefore central to improving results-reporting and a sine qua non condition for better results-based management. UNESCO's evaluation function plays a critical role in enabling the Organization to meet its mandate by providing credible and evidence-based information that feeds into various decision-making processes. The evaluation function is critical to turning UNESCO into a learning organization. During the period of the Medium-Term Strategy, the overarching purpose will be to strengthen UNESCO's evaluation and results-based management culture through targeted evaluation activities and advisory services and enhanced quality, type and coverage of evaluations throughout UNESCO in support of improved organizational learning, programme improvement and accountability. These include the improvement of self-evaluation practices of regular and extrabudgetary programmes, better quality assurance of external evaluations and the introduction of impact evaluation to better understand what works for whom under what circumstances.

3. Working closer to the field

103. The relevance and depth of UNESCO's action depends to a large degree on its Field-level experience and expertise. In order to be closer to its Member States, and to respond better to their needs and priorities, UNESCO will develop during the 2014-2021 period a strong operational culture and enhanced management of Field operations:

◗ Ensure the effective rotation of staff between duty stations at and away from Headquarters, and the decentralization of a greater proportion of Professional staff to the field;

◗ Pursue the comprehensive reform of the field network initiated in the past biennia;

◗ Ensure that appropriate flexibility and delegation of authority exists at regional and national levels to allow UNESCO to mobilize the full potential of its programmes and resources so as to respond to national needs and priorities;

◗ Contribute to deliverables of the common United Nations system of operational activities, including in the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and other United Nations system-wide mechanisms whenever possible;

◗ Effectively coordinate post-conflict and post-disaster action;

◗ Prepare UNESCO Country Programme Documents (UCPD) for all countries where UNESCO has substantive involvement to ensure proper programme management, to facilitate engagement with UNESCO stakeholders and partners, to communicate better on results, facilitate integration with United Nations common country programming, and to enhance visibility.

◗ Introduce new information and communication tools to ensure a better communication between Headquarters and field offices;

◗ Improve and better integrate management of field operations across all components of UNESCO's Secretariat, including category 1 institutes, intergovernmental programmes and conventions, reducing overlaps and building on synergies.

4. Strengthening UNESCO's participation in the United Nations system

104. UNESCO cannot work in isolation. It must continue to work actively within the framework of the United Nations system at the global, regional and national levels, to render its action as relevant as possible to the realization of internationally agreed development goals, such as the MDGs and the future post-2015 development goals, as well as of regional and national priorities and needs. The Organization will aim at creating synergies, joining forces and creating coherence with the efforts of the United Nations system at large and will seek to ensure that its leadership roles in its domains are recognized and effectively exercised. Joint and coordinated action will enhance the United Nations system's capacity to be "fit for purpose", in response to the expectations Member States have expressed through the 2012 QCPR and other mandates, and to deliver and address effectively the complex challenges of our time, based on the values and principles of the United Nations Charter, UNESCO's Constitution and the United Nations system's unique legitimacy. During the 2014-2021 period, UNESCO will:

◗ Ensure an effective leadership and coordination role in the Organization's core priority areas within the United Nations system and its intergovernmental bodies, and contribute to relevant initiatives of the United Nations Secretary-General or assuming lead roles conferred to UNESCO by the United Nations General Assembly;

◗ Establish concrete partnerships and collaborative efforts with other United Nations agencies on issues of joint interest, at the global, regional and national levels;

◗ Systematically work with other United Nations organizations in a system-wide effort to maximize the strength and the delivery capacity of the United Nations system at large and to make the entire range of expertise residing in the United Nations system available to Member States in a coordinated manner. This includes ensuring greater coherence of UNESCO's work with that of the United Nations system, creating synergies arising from collaboration based on a clear distribution of tasks building on technical expertise and comparative advantages, cooperating directly with other United Nations organizations in substantive areas, and contributing to the development priorities of Member States within United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) at country level, guided by the principles of "Delivering as One", whenever possible;

◗ Ensure effective contributions to UNDAF and other country-level United Nations processes, building on UNESCO's strong involvement in global coordination of United Nations reform efforts, operational activities and policy development, within the United Nations Development Group (UNDG at global level, the Regional UNDG Teams and as part of United Nations Country Teams, guided whenever possible by the achievements and experiences of the "Delivering as One" modality at the request of Member States and the related "Standard Operating Procedures";

◗ Increase staff expertise through rotation of staff within the United Nations system and contribution to the United Nations Resident Coordinators system at large.

5. Implementing a comprehensive partnership strategy

105. UNESCO will pursue a proactive strategic approach in working with other public and private partners, networks and constituencies, guided by the Organization's partnership strategy approved in 2013 by the Executive Board. Partnering with a broad range of entities providing diverse expertise, advice and support has become one of UNESCO's hallmarks in many areas of its work. UNESCO will also explore, with the support of Governments, cooperation possibilities with municipalities and provincial authorities. In the upcoming medium-term period, efforts will be intensified to leverage partners. The comprehensive policy (and its individual strategies for a range of partners) provides the framework for UNESCO to work more collaboratively and cooperatively with partners. It would be further developed by including other key multilateral stakeholders and partners which are crucial for meeting global challenges and improving good governance, such as the European Union and regional development banks. In recognition of the importance of multilateralism, aid effectiveness and the growing demand for international cooperation in UNESCO's fields of competence, UNESCO will foster alliances, partnerships and cooperation at the international, regional and country levels with manifold partners. The will also help enhance overall visibility and impact.

106. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as platforms for strong civil engagement, are more than ever crucial partners of an intergovernmental organization such as UNESCO which needs to act globally while at the same time linking the global to the local. UNESCO will promote a genuine culture of partnership with NGOs, renew and revitalize the network of NGOs as its official partners. New efficient, visible and action-oriented partnerships will be sought, with a special attention on organizations from regions not adequately represented, namely Africa, and on youth NGOs.

6. Cooperation with National Commissions for UNESCO

107. National Commissions for UNESCO, as national entities established by Member States' governments, according to the UNESCO's Constitution (Article VII) and the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO serve as important bodies for liaison, advice, information and programme implementation. Through their natural link to government agencies and direct contact with intellectual communities and civil society networks, they contribute to the pursuit of UNESCO's objectives, the delivery of programmes, the development of partnerships and the visibility of action at national, subregional and regional levels. Their crucial role and unique value will be strengthened throughout the medium-term period.

7. Mobilization of extrabudgetary resources

108. The relevance and effectiveness of the Organization, especially in the field, is strongly related to the level of extrabudgetary funding, especially in periods of financial constraints. Existing resource mobilization strategies for Member States, multilateral sources and private sector partners, tightly linked to UNESCO priorities and capacities to deliver, will be intensified as will be public-private partnerships. The sharpened fund mobilization strategy, adopted by the General Conference at its 37th session, and the targeted fundraising plan for Africa are examples in point. To ensure the sustainability of efforts in particular country settings or contexts, it is essential that all extrabudgetary funds complement regular programme priorities and contribute to meeting expected results. UNESCO will apply a coherent cost-recovery policy for all extrabudgetary contributions, aligned to the extent possible with agreed approaches by the United Nations system.

8. Implementing an effective human resources management

109. The greatest resource of UNESCO is a motivated, dedicated staff of the highest competence and integrity, representing equitable geographical distribution and gender balance, empowered to achieve the Organization's missions and strategic objectives through a commitment to managing for results. Inadequate staffing capacity in UNESCO field offices presents a major challenge to effective programme delivery and maintaining relevance vis-à-vis Member State governments and United Nations partners. The Human Resource Management Strategy and Action Plan for 2011-2016 will be updated at an early stage in the medium-term period.

110. The difficult global financial environment has brought greater attention to the need for UNESCO to modernize its human capacity, ensuring greater flexibility, in particular given the added challenge of mobilizing substantial levels of extrabudgetary funds. The management of human resources will need to continue to adapt its mechanisms, Regulations and Rules, towards a more flexible approach, considering its programme delivery needs as well as possible fluctuations of the funds mobilized through multi- and bilateral donors. This challenge, at the same time, will take into account the need for integration and harmonization of policies common to the United Nations framework and the values of the international civil service.

111. Another challenge is to ensure that staff skills and competencies continue to be of the highest standards in order to support UNESCO's delivery capacity and competitive edge in a multilateral environment. To successfully achieve its mission, UNESCO requires a skilled, motivated and dedicated workforce. The Organization will strive to attract and retain the best experts and professionals, support them in learning and development, and deploy and manage staff in the most cost-effective manner so as to contribute to the strategic objectives of the Organization.

9. Knowledge management (KM) and information and communication technologies (ICTs)

112. Technologies constitute the backbone of any modern organization. UNESCO's fields of competence being particularly knowledge- and information-rich, the importance of KM and ICTs for the Organization cannot be overestimated. It is therefore essential for UNESCO to endow itself with innovative tools and best practices in this area, so as to maximize its efficiency and effectiveness, extend its outreach, enhance the impact and visibility of its programmes, and play fully its role as a reliable partner within the concerted United Nations action. For 2014-2021, UNESCO will increase its efficiency and effectiveness through the full use of ICTs, the implementation of effective knowledge management and the fostering of a knowledge-sharing culture, thus turning UNESCO into a true learning organization. This will be accomplished through:

◗ An integration of programme support applications and data structures;

◗ The provision of a single seamless information infrastructure linking Headquarters and field units, an optimization of the integration of core corporate systems, complementing them with a comprehensive workflow layer and offering to users a single point of entry;

◗ Embedding knowledge management in programme execution with a variety of collaborative tools and techniques, facilitating sharing of available knowledge and expertise;

◗ An improved KM & ICT function within UNESCO through increased involvement of the user community, enhanced ICT service delivery and performance, better security, architecture and standards, project portfolio management and business process improvement;

◗ Mitigation of risks to infrastructural and logistic business continuity resulting from deepening under-budgeting of facilities management, safety and security arrangements and thinning out of staffing and continuous dispersion of resource.

10. Visibility and public information

113. Public information provides a springboard for making UNESCO's mission and objectives known to a wider audience and mobilizing partners to attain them. These public and private partners are, in turn, vital in projecting UNESCO's image and publicizing its action to the general public.

114. The Organization must have efficient instruments for the production and dissemination of information. Whether in the form of publications or media materials (in print and broadcast media), on its integrated web platform or relating to the organization of events, these products must comply with professional standards and contain high-quality content. By integrating and enhancing other, more common, information media (publications, video productions and so forth), the UNESCO Internet portal is developing into a multimedia work tool and a platform on which knowledge produced by the Organization can be organized and made available to the public. It also provides a base for UNESCO's increasingly important work in social communication, which will be further strengthened.

115. The multilingualism of information products (press releases, Web features, publications and audiovisual productions) will also be strengthened, in part with the cooperation of field offices. Mobilization and outreach will be extended increasingly to the larger "UNESCO family", such as National Commissions and institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO. The public information and outreach programmes will also support the work of UNESCO in all countries engaged in United Nations common country programming exercises.

116. UNESCO will develop a Comprehensive Communication Strategy designed to increase its visibility to its various stakeholders, enhance strategic partnerships and support resource mobilization.

11. Towards smart, green practices

117. UNESCO will foster a culture change from paper to electronic medium. To underpin this objective, and resources permitting:

◗ All meeting and conference rooms will be equipped with the IT equipment necessary to permit paper-smart meetings;

◗ Standard communication portals will be developed for access to data from knowledge and information management systems;

◗ Methods of production will be modified, reducing in-house printing capacity to a critical minimum and instead providing support geared primarily towards e-communication and e-distribution;

◗ On-site stock management will be centralized and contained, with all distribution services of the Secretariat being centralized.