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## **Ninth session**

### **Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme**

30-31 May 2016

UNESCO House, Paris (Fontenoy Building, Room XI)

9.30 a.m. -12.30 p.m. and 2.30 p.m.-5.30 p.m.

#### **Item 10 of the provisional agenda**

#### **SUMMARY**

##### **Strengthening the Network of IFAP National Committees**

National IFAP Committees have a critical role to play in supporting national ownership of IFAP, adapting IFAP resources to their national contexts as well as in helping to direct the attention of IFAP's global network to emerging trends. However, National IFAP Committees can only play this role if they have adequate capacity – technical knowledge, financial resources and sufficient human power. The First Meeting of IFAP National Commission held in Moscow, in November 2009 served to support the strengthening of National IFAP structures by sharing experiences.

The focus of the 2030 SDGs on national outcomes further underscores the importance of strong national IFAP structures if the programme is to effectively leverage its potential for contributing to this important international action plan. The organization of a Second Meeting of IFAP National Commission offers the potential for again strengthening National IFAP Committees and the Programme's ability to support national responses to the SDGs.

## **Overview of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of IFAP National Committees**

The first meeting of National IFAP Committees was held in Moscow from 7–8 December 2009. The event was jointly organized by the UNESCO Secretariat, the Russian National IFAP Committee and its working body – the Interregional Library Cooperation Centre – with the support of the Russian National Commission for UNESCO and the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation.

The meeting was attended by chairs and representatives from 17 national IFAP committees (Austria, Chile, China, Cuba, France, Germany, Israel, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Lithuania, Moldova, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Russia, Slovakia and Thailand). The event provided an opportunity for these National Committees to present their ongoing activities and to showcase the diversity of national actors and initiatives undertaken in the framework of implementing IFAP.

These open exchanges served to identify new ways forward, for instance, strategies for advancing the use and implementation of the IFAP Template for National Information Society Policy in national frameworks, prospects for new synergies and enhanced multilateral collaborations. They also served to reveal that despite having major differences in their organizational and administrative structures, as well as differing national economic and political circumstances, the IFAP National Committees shared a number of common challenges including:

- Obtaining sufficient funding resources to develop and implement projects, conduct studies and to remunerate the experts involved in their preparation,
- Obtaining funding and space to support even basic administrative and other functions associated with their operations,
- Supporting capacity-building needs of national policy makers on emerging issues,
- Communicating IFAP's achievements.

As a result, it was agreed that the Guidelines for the establishment and operation of IFAP National Committees, would be updated to take account of these lessons. The first meeting of IFAP National Committees thus provided an important opportunity for collective reflection, an opportunity for trans-regional learning and a renewal of commitments to IFAP's goals.

## **Positioning the IFAP Network to contribute to the 2030 Development Agenda**

IFAP's six strategic priorities represent an important contribution to achieving the 17 goals, 169 targets and the broader vision of sustainable actions for people, planet and prosperity articulated in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Sustainable development begins and must be grounded in the local understanding and reality. To effectively leverage its potential, IFAP's structures at the national level must play a key role in supporting adaptation and localization of global and regional practices to address their needs. Furthermore, they need to be able to identify emerging trends and support exchange and reflection on their potential impacts by drawing on expertise within IFAP's global networks.

Following the First meeting of National IFAP Committees, efforts to establish or strengthen new National IFAP Committees or Focal Point have been undertaken in Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Gabon, Grenada, Iran, Mongolia, Paraguay, San Salvador, South Africa, The Dominican Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay and Zambia.

In response to a call issued to Member States in 2013 on behalf of the IFAP Council, national experts from 20 Member States have been nominated to the IFAP Working Groups. Consistent efforts have also been undertaken to ensure the involvement of National IFAP Committees in regional and international events that are organized in the framework of IFAP as well as UNESCO activities in the IFAP priorities. Strengthened partnerships between IFAP and a variety of institutions active in this space have extended IFAP's reach and impact.

IFAP through its activities and partnerships has supported the development and dissemination of various policy resources such as declarations and proceedings from its conferences, research studies, guidelines and recommendations submitted to and endorsed by UNESCO's Governing Bodies. These outputs, informed by regional and international exchanges, represent rich and varied sources for supporting national actions across IFAP's six strategic priorities. To be effective, these policy resources must be adapted to national and local contexts and supported by strong national ownership. National IFAP Committees are expected to play an important supportive role in these processes.

The foregoing indications of interest in IFAP and the increasing number of realizations being created by the Programme are positive signs. However, there is considerable variation in the capacity of National IFAP Committees and their ability to be self-sustaining. This in turn has implications for their ability to implement the IFAP mandate and contribute to the SDGs which seek to ensure concrete improvements on the ground and points to the need to reinforce these structures.

A Second Meeting of IFAP National Committees could provide an opportunity to develop plans for reviving and strengthening its network and contributing towards shaping an overall IFAP plan for responding to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

## **ANNEX**

### **An outline proposal for International / Regional meeting(s) of IFAP National Committees and/or IFAP Network Members**

Title: International / Regional Consultation Meeting of National IFAP Committees

**Event Date:** to be determined

**Location:** (To be determined based on the expressed interest of Member States in hosting the event)

**Budget:** to be elaborated

#### **Background**

The Information for All Programme (IFAP) is an intergovernmental programme of UNESCO established in 2001 to provide a platform for international policy discussions and guidelines for action in the area of access to information and knowledge and to support the participation of all in the knowledge societies. IFAP's programme focuses on 6 strategic priority areas: (i) Information for development; (ii) Information literacy; (iii) Information preservation; (iv) Information ethics, (v) Information accessibility and (vi) Multilingualism in cyberspace. These 6 areas are an important area of contribution to UNESCO's programme of work and other international action plans such as the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Plan of Action and Declaration of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). IFAP represents a credible and important response to the challenges of digital divide and attaining the objectives of internationally adopted human development goals.

To orient its work, IFAP has established a structure to support its actions at the international, regional and national level as well as to ensure good coherence and synergy between its policy support role, the practical needs of nations and the exchange of best practices. This structure consists of:

- a) An intergovernmental Council of 26 Member States elected by UNESCO's General Conference;
- b) A Bureau of 8 Member States elected by the Council to formulate and implement in concert with the UNESCO Secretariat and Working Groups concrete responses in the strategic priority areas to support IFAP's policy and strategic objectives;
- c) National IFAP Committees whose role is to provide the national level implementation, promote the exchange of practices, support research and also assist in the signal of existing or emerging information society issues to which IFAP's and UNESCO's work and network can contribute;

- d) Working Groups in each of the six IFAP Priority areas composed of national experts nominated by Member States and/or identified by the Bureau who support the development of policy resources or actions and provide advice in each of the priority areas;
- e) IFAP Secretariat provided by the Knowledge Societies Division in UNESCO's Communication and Information Sector who supports the organization of the Statutory Meetings, supports the Bureau in implementing its actions and in developing synergies between actions conducted by Member States and IFAP-related activities of UNESCO; and
- f) A variety of partners from the intergovernmental Sector (e.g. United Nations Special Operating Unit on Policy-driven Electronic Governance UNU-EGOV, the Council of Europe COE), Governmental Agencies and institutes (e.g. the African Center of Excellence in Information Ethics in South Africa, the Presidential Agency for Electronic Government information and Knowledge Society AGESIC in Uruguay), professional bodies (e.g. International Federation of Library Associations IFLA, Internet Society ISOC) who through various forms of in-kind and indirect support contribute to the implementation of IFAP's global mandate.

### **Event Overview**

The Regional Consultation Meeting of National IFAP Committees will provide an important forum to bring together IFAP Network members to reinvigorate, review and build their capacity and promote and exchange approaches around the ongoing implementation of IFAP's activities and their contribution to the international development agenda. In particular, the event will seek to:

- Conduct a progress review of the implementation of the recommendations of the First Consultation Meeting of National IFAP Committees (held 7-8 December 2009 in Moscow, Russian Federation)
- Identify unique, value-added contributions that IFAP could bring to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in each of its six specialized areas and develop a targeted, time-bound, results-oriented action framework for coordinating and monitoring IFAP's contribution to the SDG goals and targets.
- Seek to better understand knowledge society needs and trends in each region, identify new and emerging challenges and opportunities so as to better focus IFAP's regional and national interventions,
- Reflect on IFAP's challenges and achievements since the First Consultation Meeting of National IFAP Committees, and in particular, share the results of the major IFAP events undertaken from 2008 to 2016 and the policy resources developed in order to support their dissemination and application,
- Exchange best practices that could support the effectiveness and sustainability of National IFAP Committees.

### **Some Key Stages in the Preparation of this Event**

- Decision by the 9<sup>th</sup> IFAP Council to endorse the holding of this event
- Identification of Host country
- Elaboration of Meeting Agenda, Concept note and working documents
- Elaboration of Meeting budget and fund-raising plan
- Event logistics and visibility
- Dissemination and implementation of event outcomes

## IFAP National Committes

1	Argentina	Latin America and the Caribbean
2	Belgium	Europe and North America
3	Botswana	Europe and North America
4	Brazil	Latin America and the Caribbean
5	Canada	Europe and North America
6	Chile	Latin America and the Caribbean
7	China	Asia and the Pacific
8	Colombia	Latin America and the Caribbean
9	Congo (Democratic Republic of)	Africa
10	Cote d'Ivoire	Africa
11	Croatia	Europe and North America
12	Cuba	Latin America and the Caribbean
13	Czech Reublic	Europe and North America
14	Democratif People's Republic of Korea	Asia and the Pacific
15	Denmark	Europe and North America
16	Egypt	Arab States
17	France	Europe and North America
18	Gabon	Africa
19	Georgia	Europe and North America
20	Germany	Europe and North America
21	Ghana	Africa
22	Hungary	Europe and North America
23	Indonesia	Asia and the Pacific
24	Iran	Asia and the Pacific
25	Israel	Europe and North America
26	Italy	Europe and North America
27	Jamaica	Latin America and the Caribbean
28	Japan	Asia and the Pacific
29	Jordan	Arab States
30	Lithuania	Europe and North America
31	Madagascar	Africa
32	Mali	Africa
33	Malta	Europe and North America

34	Mauritania	Africa
35	Mongolia	Asia and the Pacific
36	Netherlands	Europe and North America
37	Nicaragua	Africa
38	Niger	Africa
39	Nigeria	Africa
40	Norway	Europe and North America
41	Pacific	Asia and the Pacific
42	Pakistan	Asia and the Pacific
43	Philippines	Asia and the Pacific
44	Poland	Europe and North America
45	Portugal	Europe and North America
46	Republic of Korea	Asia and the Pacific
47	Republic of Mauritius	Africa
48	Russian Federation	Europe and North America
49	Saudi Arabia	Africa
50	Serbia and Montenegro	Europe and North America
51	Slovakia	Europe and North America
52	South Africa	Africa
53	Spain	Europe and North America
54	Sri Lanka	Africa
55	Swaziland	Africa
56	Thailand	Asia and the Pacific
57	Togo	Africa
58	Tunisia	Arab States
59	Turkey	Asia and the Pacific
60	Ukraine	Europe and North America
61	Uzbekistan	Europe and North America