



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

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

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

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## General Conference

37th Session, Paris, 2013

# inf

### Information document

37 C/INF.18

4 September 2013

English and French only

## REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON UNESCO ACTIONS PROMOTING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY

### OUTLINE

**Source:** By 179 EX/Decision 42 (Part II), the Executive Board requested the Director-General to present to the General Conference at future sessions a stand-alone report on the actions carried out by the Organization as a contribution to the promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality, describing the progress made and the experience and results obtained in line with the Priority Gender Equality Action Plan 2008-2013 (GEAP I).

**Purpose:** This document provides an assessment of UNESCO actions from mid-2011 to mid-2013 and describes strategic initiatives and key results achieved in promoting women's empowerment and gender equality.

Detailed information is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ohfmk42>

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. Gender equality is a human right, a commonly shared value and a critical and necessary condition for the achievement of all internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
2. Gender equality was designated one of two global priorities of UNESCO in the Medium-Term Strategy 2008-2013. To translate this commitment into concrete actions and to reinforce the Organization's contribution to gender equality in the Member States through all programmes, a "Gender Equality Action Plan: 2008-2013" (GEAP I) was prepared. GEAP I focused on strategic actions by major programme pertaining to women's empowerment and gender equality with corresponding outcomes and performance indicators (181 EX/4 Part 1 Add. 2).
3. By 179 EX/Decision 42 (Part II) in 2008, the Executive Board requested the Director-General to present to the General Conference at future sessions a report on the actions carried out by the Organization as a contribution to the promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality, describing the progress made and the experience and results obtained.
4. This third report covers the period from mid-2011 to mid-2013 and describes strategic initiatives and key results achieved in promoting women's empowerment and gender equality. The report also identifies key challenges and lessons learned before concluding with recommendations for moving forward.

## II. GLOBAL PRIORITY GENDER EQUALITY: KEY ACTIONS AND RESULTS

5. A marked improvement can be observed in the visibility, quality and quantity of UNESCO initiatives supporting gender equality and women's empowerment. Despite the difficult financial situation of the Organization in this reporting period, UNESCO has continued to make a systematic and concerted effort to address this priority through substantive and concrete actions both within the Secretariat and through its initiatives in Member States. Based on the strength of this experience and lessons learned, UNESCO is well-positioned to improve its performance further in addressing Global Priority Gender Equality in the coming years as the priority status of this objective is maintained for the next Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021.
6. Two review exercises to assess the implementation of GEAP I were conducted between November 2012 and March 2013 by the Internal Oversight Service (IOS): the IOS/external consultant review of Global Priority Gender Equality and the International Labour Office's (ILO) Participatory Gender Audit Report. The results of these exercises were presented to the Executive Board at its 191st session. The implementation of the recommendations stemming from the findings of these reviews were incorporated into the drafting of the Priority Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2021 (GEAP II), so that GEAP II is much more closely aligned with C/4 and C/5 documents, which in turn enables clear and consistent implementation and monitoring of actions to promote gender equality, contains clear and realistic targets and plans for implementation, as well as structures and chains of responsibility for achieving the expected results.
7. One of the key Organization-wide activities of this reporting period has been the drafting of the Priority Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2021. The draft GEAP II – to be presented to the Executive Board at its 192nd session – contains information on the strategic actions by programme sectors pertaining to gender equality with corresponding expected results and performance indicators; elaboration of processes for coordination, implementation, monitoring and reporting on action in support of Priority Gender Equality; and institutional mechanisms for the pursuit of gender equality in UNESCO with a focus on capacity development, coordination and accountability. The Plan was developed through wide-ranging consultations and with the involvement of UNESCO staff from Headquarters, field offices and institutes. GEAP II is available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/BSP/GENDER/PDF/GEAPENGLISH.pdf>.

8. During the period from mid-2011 to mid-2013, UNESCO has continued to provide coordination and guidance for the implementation of the Global Priority Gender Equality through policy advice and dialogue; high-level advocacy; capacity development; networking; technical support to gender mainstreamed and gender-specific initiatives planned and implemented especially in the framework of major programmes; and establishing and/or reinforcing partnerships. In these efforts, the Organization continuously draws lessons from its mechanisms and modalities and adopts a range of new initiatives and strategies.

9. Within the framework of its monitoring function, the Division of Gender Equality (ODG/GE) analyses all of the work plans in SISTER in the beginning of each biennium to identify trends and progress in order to provide recommendations for improvement. Effective management by results requires systematic and purposive monitoring and recording. To this end, a framework has been developed in 2012-2013 for building knowledge base on gender equality that aims to: (i) provide a tool for comprehensive *real-time* assessment and recording of UNESCO's gender-specific and, at a later stage, gender mainstreamed projects/initiatives at field level; (ii) serve as a platform for purposive collection of monitoring findings in UNESCO programme areas; (iii) foster exchange on Priority GE among staff at Headquarters, field offices and institutes; (iv) generate policy recommendations in the area of gender equality; (v) develop a culture of results orientation for gender mainstreaming; (vi) strengthen and broaden monitoring capacities of participating staff; (vii) develop a collection of visual recording of testimonials from beneficiaries of UNESCO's GE initiatives at the field level.

10. In February 2013, UNESCO presented its first report against the United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) for implementation of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (CEB/2006/2). A comparative analysis of UNESCO's performance by UN Women notes that UNESCO's mandatory training on gender equality for all staff, including senior management, makes it a leader in the area of capacity development.

11. To enhance organizational capacity, capacity-building activities have been conducted in-house, aimed at strengthening the capacities of over 200 staff members, including 13 senior managers, in this reporting period. The training of 75 Gender Focal Points (GFPs) in November 2011 has already shown concrete results in improving implementation strategies, indicators and expected results visible in many work plans across sectors. Mandatory gender mainstreaming training has now been provided to all programme sectors at Headquarters (the last one provided to SHS staff in 2012), and to numerous field offices, institutes, National Commissions, as well as to staff of other United Nations agencies.

12. To complement UNESCO's in-person and interactive online training programme, "Gender Equality Clinics" were launched in 2012 to offer individual and tailored support to staff in mainstreaming gender equality into their programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities. Results of the clinics have been very positive with improved planning and implementation of activities for gender equality. In addition, the "Gender Equality Seminar Series" has replaced the "UNESCO Forum for Gender Equality" to offer learning opportunities on recent developments linked with gender equality, maximize horizontal exchanges and encourage the participation of field office colleagues.

13. Raising awareness about gender gaps and building support for change through advocacy is an essential element of UNESCO's efforts to further women's empowerment and gender equality. UNESCO has been able to leverage its competence and the strong commitment of the Director-General to engage in policy dialogue and advocacy for gender equality at the highest levels through active contributions to all United Nations and other global, regional and national-level discussions and initiatives. These advocacy efforts have included side events organized on the margins of the annual meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York in 2012 and 2013, various cultural and intellectual events to celebrate International Women's Day (8 March) and to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

(25 November) as well as special, dedicated sessions at other international conferences, including the launch of the World Water Assessment Report 4 in 2012 and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+10 event in February 2013.

14. Partnerships with academic and policy-making networks have continued to be developed, in particular through the establishment and development of regional and international gender equality research and documentation centres as centres of excellence for research and teaching, and as centres for collection and diffusion of documentation and resources through virtual networks and libraries. UNESCO has been collaborating with the Regional Research and Documentation Centre on Women, Gender and Peace-Building for the Great Lakes Region in Kinshasa, the Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Centre in Ramallah, etc. Considerable progress has been achieved for establishing the first regional Centre on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Nairobi, in collaboration with the Government of Kenya and World Health Organization.

15. In this reporting period, UNESCO has continued to engage proactively and effectively with the United Nations system, and in particular with UN Women, culminating in the signing of a Letter of Cooperation by the heads of both agencies in May 2012 to outline the specific areas of synergy. UNESCO participated in the UN Women-led process of developing a United Nations system-wide basic online training course on gender equality for all United Nations staff. In collaboration with UN Women, UNESCO has successfully advocated for the integration of gender equality perspectives into Rio+20, WSIS+10 and the post-2015 reflections and agenda.

16. **Major Programme I: Education** – Literacy is a priority for the Education Sector. UNESCO, including through the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), continued its support to Member States to strengthen national capacities to plan, manage and scale up gender-sensitive, quality literacy and non-formal policies and programs. UNESCO mobilized 43 countries with critical literacy challenges accounting for almost 85% of the world's 774 million illiterate adults, and 35 of these countries with severe literacy challenges are now working with the support of UNESCO to ensure gender-specific programming. In 2011, UNESCO launched the Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education to promote secondary education of girls and literacy for women. Within this framework, a project supported by Procter & Gamble in Senegal has increased access of girls and women to literacy classes and income-generating activities, while a project was launched in Ethiopia and United Republic of Tanzania to lower drop-out rates of rural girls in secondary schools, with the support of the Packard Foundation.

17. UNESCO has also focused on capacity-building for institutionalizing gender training in teacher training institutes, awareness-raising among policy-makers on gender equality issues in the teacher professional development, and production of training materials for mainstreaming gender in teacher training and practices. Over 15 countries from West and Central Africa benefited from training seminars organized by the International Institute for Capacity-Building in Africa (IICBA), which includes specific modules on gender-sensitive teaching approaches. UNESCO also supported Member States in reviewing and developing gender-sensitive regional policy frameworks and strategies on teacher development, with the contribution from the European Union and the Japanese Funds-In-Trust (JFIT), among others.

18. UNESCO has paid special attention to the inclusion of girls in national technical vocational education and training (TVET) programmes and their transition from school to work, and provided upstream policy advice and capacity-building for mainstreaming gender in TVET policies and practices. Three TVET policy review reports (Cambodia, El Salvador and Lao People's Democratic Republic) were reviewed and validated by national stakeholders, and regional and country thematic studies on gender mainstreaming in TVET were undertaken in United Republic of Tanzania and in Arab Gulf countries.

19. UNESCO supported Member States to mainstream gender in sector-wide education policy and planning, in policy reviews and thematic studies. Three subregional thematic groups were

established in Central Asia, one of which was on gender responsive education. In Ecuador and Colombia, UNESCO supported strengthening of national technical capacities to develop inter-sectoral policies for education with a focus on gender equality.

20. Twenty-one (21) Member States received support for HIV and AIDS education that is gender-sensitive. National capacities were developed through training of trainers workshops, and UNESCO has undertaken relevant work to address school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in Lebanon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, and a number of countries in Asia-Pacific, as a major human rights issue and a factor that is seriously affecting girls' opportunities to education.

21. Gender equality is an important consideration in designing climate change education (CCE) programmes. Gender was mainstreamed in the design and implementation of activities, especially at country level where programs aimed at reaching out to disadvantaged groups, especially girls and women, in order to strengthen their resilience to the negative impacts of climate change.

22. A high-level advocacy event entitled "Stand up for Malala – Girls' Education is a right" was co-organized in December 2012 by UNESCO and the Government of Pakistan as a tribute to Malala Yousafzai and in support for girls' right to education. It brought together some 20 eminent personalities (including the President of Pakistan, French Prime Minister, Minister of State of UAE, former President of Finland, Executive Director of UN Women, religious leaders, United Nations officials, and others) who advocated for girls' right to education. The Malala Fund in support of girls' right to education was established with a contribution of \$10 million from Pakistan.

23. **Major Programme II: Natural Sciences** – Since 2011, UNESCO has prioritized increasing the number of female professionals participating in its hydrological activities through water-related category 1 and 2 centres. At the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, an institutional partnership with the Gender and Water Alliance in capacity development efforts in integrated water resources management in Indonesia was initiated, and capacity development initiatives were undertaken in partnership with the Women for Water Partnership. From 2011 to 2013, UNESCO-IHE enrolled 472 women (37%) in its short courses, 198 women (44%) in its M.Sc. programmes and 49 women (37%) in its Ph.D. programme. The fourth edition of the *World Water Development Report* included a chapter on water and gender equality. Gender mainstreaming is continuing in all World Water Assessment Programme publications and reports. The UNESCO Chair on Water, Gender and Governance in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, was endorsed in 2013, and will enlarge the network of Water and Gender Chairs in the region and worldwide.

24. UNESCO's local and indigenous knowledge systems programme published *Savoirs des Femmes: médecine traditionnelle et nature – Maurice, Réunion, Rodrigues* detailing the knowledge and practice of traditional healers of the Mascarene Islands, focusing on perinatal care. This led to creation of a subregional network "Supporting Traditional Medicinal Knowledge in the Indian Ocean SIDS" (small island developing States) for traditional medical practitioners. At least 55% of participants were women with deep knowledge of traditional medicines, thus demonstrating the exceptional knowledge held by local women of the uses and value of biodiversity conservation.

25. Since May 2011, the UNESCO-L'Oréal For Women in Science Programme has rewarded ten outstanding women scientists from eight countries for their excellence in the physical and life sciences; 30 international fellowships to young women researchers from 26 countries; two special fellowships "In the footsteps of Marie-Curie"; 20 regional fellowships (sub-Saharan and Arab regions); and 375 national fellowships from more than 50 countries. For Women in Science is an **outstanding collaboration recognized worldwide and noted as truly inspirational to girls and young women with scientific aspirations**. The African Network of Scientific and Technological Institutions in partnership with UNESCO-L'Oréal Corporate Foundation awarded 20 Ph.D. fellowships in sub-Saharan Africa to increase the critical mass of women engineers and scientists in Africa as well as strengthen the research and innovation capacity of women scientists.

26. UNESCO strove to increase women's participation in basic sciences in other ways as well. With partners including the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), it trained 130 women in mathematics and physics in Africa in a variety of events. In ICTP's scientific activities overall, 22% of the participants are women, along with 17% of ICTP's Associates. UNESCO is supporting the National Council for Science and Technology of Kenya to mainstream gender in the national science, technology and innovation (STI) policy in institutions of higher learning and research institutions. Thirty women academics and policy-makers are being trained in all aspects of STI policy. In its efforts to mainstreaming gender into disaster risk reduction-related projects and activities, the Disaster Risk Reduction Unit in cooperation with ODG/GE organized a seminar in February 2013 for UNESCO colleagues in regions and Headquarters.
27. The Man and the Biosphere Programme updated its nomination and periodic review forms for biosphere reserves with a specific section related to gender equality. *Tracking Key Trends in Biodiversity Science and Policy*, published in 2013, includes chapters by the Director of ODG/GE on biodiversity and gender equality. The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) plenary adopted gender as a criterion for the selection of its multidisciplinary expert panel members at the direct suggestion of UNESCO.
28. In 2012 the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) website created a special section on gender equality to promote the study of oceanography by women. The IOC, in partnership with the Rachel Carson Centre of the University of Munich, organized a special event on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson.
29. **Major Programme III: Social and Human Sciences** – At its tenth session in 2011, the members of the Intergovernmental Council (IGC) of the MOST Programme stressed the importance of two priority themes, “social inclusion” as an essential feature of fighting poverty, narrowing inequalities and advancing toward social justice, and “social transformations arising from environmental change”. The social consequences of these global developments affect more women than men. In the area of social inclusion, one of the key activities is the recent programme for the assessment of the level of inclusiveness of public policies which has been designed to enable the assessment of inclusiveness of public policies in an effort to reinforce a culture where citizens, women and men alike, are heard, engaged and included in all matters that affect their lives, and that their rights are respected. The programme is currently pilot-tested in nine countries in Africa, the Arab region, the Latin America and the Caribbean region.
30. In the field of global environmental change, activities to support national adaptation policies that take into consideration the different roles, contributions and skills of women and men, focused on three regions in which distinctive patterns of environmental vulnerability are in evidence: the Caribbean, the Sahel and the Pacific.
31. The MOST Programme has created the Best Practices Database that covers a variety of projects, policies and strategies related to the eradication of poverty and the reduction of social exclusion, such as elimination of violence against women and the promotion of women's empowerment. For example, 4,000 women in India established the Shri Mahila SEWA Sahakari Bank to provide credit at reasonable rates to self-employed women workers.
32. Within the International Coalition of Cities against Racism and its “*Ten-Point Plan of Action*”, some cities tackled the issue of gender inequality and discrimination in numerous instances.
33. In the area of bioethics, research concluded with recommendations that UNESCO support capacity-building for equal and inclusive participation of women in decision-making processes in relation to bioethical issues, and that all research and public health data be disaggregated by sex.
34. UNESCO emphasizes the human face of migration and addresses the implications of the movement of people in its fields of competence. These include social inclusion of migrants in host societies, with particular attention to the role of women and to the balance between their cultural

integration and the respect for cultural diversity. UNESCO is active in the 16-member Global Migration Group (GMG). In a joint statement with GMG, UNESCO specifically addressed the topics of migration and gender equality. UNESCO partnered with UN Women to create the Migration Media Network (MMN), a unique network of journalists committed to producing fact-based, non-stigmatizing material on labor migration. In collaboration with other entities, including UN Women and IOM, UNESCO and UNICEF launched the Internal Migration in India Initiative (IMII) to support the social inclusion of female and male migrants in the economic, social, political and cultural life of the country. The scholarly and professional journal *Diversities*, published by UNESCO, recently issued an article on “Transnational Migration and Changing Gender Relations in Peruvian and Bolivian cities”. Another issue entitled “Female Migration Outcomes: Human Rights Perspectives” will be published in the end of 2013. In China, several gender specific and gender mainstreamed projects aimed at promoting the human rights of migrant women, notably their right to live free of violence, to participate in political processes, and socio-economic rights have been developed.

35. In the area of sports, the fifth International Conference of Sport Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Sport and Physical Education considered for the first time “Access to Sport as a Fundamental Right for All”, especially focusing on women’s and girls’ participation.

36. To enhance the capacity of youth and young women for preventing violence, UNESCO, in collaboration with its partners, is developing an interactive toolkit including infographics, maps, a website and an application that works both online and smart-phone platforms to provide information and increase awareness among the target population on gender-based violence.

37. **Major Programme IV: Culture** – During the GEAP I, the Culture Sector has invested in mainstreaming and scaling up its gender equality activities throughout its programmes in recognition of the importance of gender equality for heritage protection and safeguarding, and the flourishing of the cultural industries. The Sector has worked with United Nations partners, including UN Women and the United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, to promote gender equality in the culture and development agenda.

38. Conventions: Given that all conventions operate within a human rights framework, gender equality has been given important attention in their implementation strategies. For example, the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions has promoted gender equality in its statutory and operational activities. The Quadrennial Periodic Reports, received in 2012, established the first database of parties’ policies and initiatives that promote gender equality. In addition, gender-related activities carried out within the framework of the 2005 Convention have also sought to empower women through the cultural industries. For example, the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) encourages female cultural entrepreneurship: over 20% of the 61 supported projects have been led by women since 2011. The EU/UNESCO Technical Assistance Missions have also successfully supported States in the inclusion of gender equality in national policies for the cultural industries (cf. Malawi). In Azerbaijan, the UNESCO Sheki Project (2011-2015) is supporting women’s income-generating activities through the cultural industries by providing specialized training and technical assistance. Finally, the UNESCO regional office in Havana has continued to invest in the successful programme, “*Camaras de la Diversidad*”, which trains women in audio-visual production.

39. In recognition of women’s roles in cultural heritage conservation, the 1972 World Heritage Convention Secretariat has worked closely with a range of women’s professional and specialized networks. Select examples are showcased in the 2012 Report, “*Benefits beyond borders*”. In 2011, UNESCO helped to construct an eco-friendly dyeing factory in Bamako at a World Heritage site, which trains and provides employment to 200 women. In respect to the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage, the Secretariat has invested in developing specialized training materials that have been used at national workshops with key stakeholders.

40. As part of the MDG-F Culture in Development initiative, UNESCO led 18 joint programmes with United Nations partner agencies, including UN Women. All programmes had a strong gender

equality dimension, such as the inclusion of gender equality in national cultural policies (Ecuador) and female cultural entrepreneurship (Cambodia and China).

41. Knowledge management: The sector has scaled up its analysis of programme impact on gender equality, including data sex-disaggregation. The first cultural indicators addressing the relationship with gender equality and sustainable development were developed as part of the UNESCO Culture for Development Indicator Suite. A key initiative launched in 2013 is the *Report on Gender Equality and Culture*, which will produce the first global assessment of the roles of women and men in the cultural sector, bringing together research, statistics and best practices.

42. The sector has been active in combating violence against women through culture, such as using films and theatre for awareness-raising, research on how culturally-sensitive tools to combat gender-based violence, and mobilizing leading artists to speak about this issue.

43. Finally, within the Intersectoral Platform on HIV and AIDS, UNESCO has been supporting culturally appropriate and human-rights based policies to combat this pandemic. In addition to research, UNESCO has also been conducting national workshops with key stakeholders: in December 2012, a workshop was held in Nigeria to promote the involvement of youth and NGOs in HIV and AIDs awareness-raising campaigns. As part of UNESCO's gender equality activities on museums, the study, "Reproducing Gender in Viet Nam's Museums", investigated how gender roles and differences are represented and reproduced in museums, gender differences in visitor perceptions, and in the professional opportunities and conditions they are able to access.

44. **Major Programme V: Communication and Information** – UNESCO continued to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through enhanced freedom of expression, access to information and knowledge, and encouraging balanced representation in all of the sector's spheres, specifically in media. Besides mainstreaming a gender equality approach throughout all programmatic phases, particular activities sought to foster gender-balanced media content, enhance the status of women working in the media, and facilitate access to repositories that contain gender-related information.

45. A critical achievement was the finalization of the Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media (GSIM), which is now being piloted in 25 media organizations. Complementing the GSIM, is the *Global Report on the Status of the Women in the News Media*, another groundbreaking effort to promote the voice of women. Another major achievement was the start of first phase implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity in South Sudan, Iraq, Pakistan and Nepal. The plan's implementation strategy foresees the development of common initiatives and projects to combat violence against women journalists. In 2013, the main event to celebrate World Press Freedom Day was held in Costa Rica, under the theme "Safe to Speak: Securing Freedom of Expression in All Media". One of the parallel sessions focused on the issue of the safety of women journalists. Imprisoned Ethiopian female journalist, Reeyot Alemu, was awarded the 2013 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

46. UNESCO and its partners continue to annually launch the Women Make the News initiative on the occasion of International Women's Day (8 March). In 2012, the initiative focused on rural women's access to media and information. In December 2013, UNESCO and partner institutions will convene a "Global Forum on Media and Gender" in Bangkok to build on existing efforts to advocate for gender balance in media and lay the foundation for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender. Over 20 UNESCO field offices globally have implemented communication and information activities to promote gender equality, including those funded by the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Many of these offices are located in Africa.

47. The Open Education Resources (OER) Platform Project targeted female lecturers and learners to elevate their role as content producers. In small island developing States (SIDS), focus was placed on ensuring equal or very high numbers of female teachers being trained and female students receiving access to laptops of OLPC (One Laptop per Child) initiative. The OER



Declaration, the major outcome of the 2012 World OER Congress in Paris, recommends to Member States a gender equity perspective in promoting and using OER to widen access to education. Considering the under-representation of women in technologies, UNESCO launched the Gender in Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) community which has attracted more than 657 experts and groups working in the field. In Central Asia and Pakistan, FOSS instruments were developed in order to encourage girls and boys to share ideas for sustainable development.

48. During the 2013 World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+10 Review Event, a special session “Reviewing gender equality and women’s empowerment in the knowledge society” was organized in collaboration with ODG/GE. The Final Statement asserted the importance of empowering women through ICT and fully integrating gender equality perspectives in WSIS related strategies and implementation. Gender-balanced participation at the International Conference on Digital Preservation and Digitization (Vancouver, 26-28 September 2012) and formulation of policies and strategies as stated in UNESCO/UBC Vancouver Declaration of the Conference was also ensured. It is also expected that women will be part of the efforts for preservation of collective memory and knowledge in libraries and archives.

49. **UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)** – UIS statistics are disaggregated according to sex, to the extent possible, and gender-based indicators are systematically calculated based on the results of the Institute’s international data collections in the fields of education, science and technology, culture, and communication. For the UIS, monitoring gender equality is a major priority, as demonstrated, for example, by the “*World Atlas on Gender Equality in Education*” (published by UIS/ED) and the related eAtlas. To celebrate International Women’s Day 2013, the UIS launched a data tool/game entitled “*Mind the Gap – Gender & Education*”, which is designed to reach broader audiences, especially students and teachers. Users create their own personas as they explore the different education trajectories of girls and boys in about 200 countries raising awareness about gender gaps.

50. The UIS works closely with national statisticians to improve the quality of their data at the national and international levels through training workshops. Issues related to gender equality are specifically integrated into the development of new classifications and frameworks, such as the *Framework for Cultural Statistics*. However, it is important to recognize the substantial increase in resources required to introduce new data collections (indicators) and related standards. The UIS also provides data, analysis and technical support concerning the production and use of sex-disaggregated data and indicators to a wide range of organizations, such as the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Gender Statistics of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the Task Group on Gender of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, MDGs, UNGEI, etc.

51. **Intersectoral Platforms (ISPs) contributing to promote gender equality**<sup>1</sup> – Technical support was provided by ODG/GE for the revision and evaluation of initiatives under all six intersectoral platforms, including the discussions for the elaboration of UNESCO policy on engaging with indigenous peoples.

52. To promote a culture of peace and non-violence, UNESCO supports programmes related to women’s democratic participation, gender sensitive teaching and learning, intercultural sensitivity and solidarity in order to fight intolerance, discrimination and violence, among others.

53. Within the ISP on climate change mitigation and adaptation, gender equality dimensions have been addressed in relation to: teacher education on climate change education for sustainable development; raising community awareness; media interventions for public awareness, etc.

54. Under the ISP on HIV and AIDS, UNESCO has supported, among others, the development of culturally appropriate policies and responses that are gender-responsive, human-rights based

---

<sup>1</sup> For more details on the ISP for the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence and other intersectoral initiatives implemented by programme sectors and field offices, please see the online Annex (<http://tinyurl.com/ohfmk42>).

and built on a thorough analysis of the cultural and social specificities of the communities concerned.

55. UNESCO has also worked to promote gender equality in the area of disaster risk mitigation, peace building and political transitions within countries in post-conflict and post-disaster (PCPD) situations.

56. UNESCO has promoted sustainable development of SIDS through a project “Supporting Traditional Medicinal Knowledge in the Indian Ocean SIDS” which has demonstrated the exceptional knowledge held by local women of the uses and conservation of biodiversity.

57. The ISP on Priority Africa has supported several projects to promote gender equality. For example, a project “Drought Monitoring at the Country Level ... in Africa” has contributed to develop gender-responsive approaches to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

58. **Collaboration with the Member States of UNESCO** – As a complement to UNESCO’s regular activities, the Participation Programme has been a vital tool for the implementation of Global Priority Gender Equality in UNESCO’s Member States. As a member of the Intersectoral Participation Programme (PP) Committee, ODG/GE has evaluated a number of requests submitted by National Commissions and NGOs and ensured that gender equality issues are mainstreamed throughout the design and implementation of the projects. From May 2011 to April 2013, UNESCO supported 64 gender-specific or gender mainstreamed projects (US \$1,258,670). To further reinforce this trend, the Executive Board decided that “Member States must include at least one gender-equality project among their first four priorities” (191 EX/Decisions – page 30, para. 7). A detailed list of projects supported by the Participation Programme from May 2011 to April 2013 is presented in the Annex which is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ohfmk42>

59. Fellowships are an effective modality for UNESCO to enhance the human resources and capacity-building of Member States, especially developing countries. The 28th session of the General Conference requested “the Director-General to regard the National Commission as the official channel in Member States for the submission of fellowship applications”. More women than men benefitted from the Fellowship Programmes, with 230 fellowships awarded to women (\$2,982,687) against 213 fellowships awarded to men (\$3,529,312) from May 2011 to April 2013.

### **III. EVOLUTION OF GENDER PARITY IN THE SECRETARIAT (BETWEEN JUNE 2011 AND MAY 2013)<sup>2</sup>**

60. In compliance with the Action Plan for Gender Parity (2008-2015), particular attention has been given to the achievement of gender parity within the Secretariat. Since 2011, overall gender parity has been achieved, with women representing 55-56% of the total staff. UNESCO has now achieved gender parity at ADG level (five out of 11 ADGs are women). For D-level positions, women held 32% of the posts in May 2013 compared to 27% in June 2011. Women represent a constant majority of GS staff (62-63%).

### **IV. LESSONS LEARNED AND KEY CHALLENGES**

61. During this reporting period, several positive trends have emerged from UNESCO’s efforts to promote gender equality. Among those, the most significant are: (i) strong and continuous support from senior management, and especially from the Director-General, has put gender equality at the top of the agenda in all UNESCO domains. This support has translated into more and quality action at the field level as well as high-level advocacy in different fora, making UNESCO very visible and credible in the area of gender equality in the United Nations system and beyond; (ii) a key positive trend has been UNESCO’s ability to remain relevant in the United Nations system-

<sup>2</sup> Detailed statistics on the evolution of gender parity by category and grade for this period can be found in the online Annex at <http://tinyurl.com/ohfmk42>

wide intellectual and analytical processes even in the absence of project funds. UNESCO has been playing a key role at the global, regional and country levels in supporting development of gender equality related objectives and action points in every global agenda item area from post-2015, education, ICTs, media, climate change, to science, technology, innovation and culture; (iii) diversifying partnerships – reaching out to non-traditional partners, in particular the private sector and foundations, has proven to be a worthwhile effort with funds raised especially for gender-specific projects in Member States such as the promotion of girls education and women's literacy; (iv) harnessing new technologies has proven fruitful in providing access to girls and women to new opportunities in almost all UNESCO domains; (v) networks with research institutions, universities, civil society organizations and policy-makers have been very useful to enhance evidence base for policy reviews and building good practices for new modalities of project implementation; (vi) the most disadvantaged groups of girls/women – rural women, women members of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities – represent important target groups for the highest returns on investment; (vii) gender mainstreaming is still the most useful methodology for promoting gender equality when complemented with gender-specific programming to address significant gender gaps. The critical element in this area is to ensure that there is a solid and common understanding of what gender equality means in each UNESCO domain and how this understanding can be operationalized into concrete action; (viii) when staff capacity is enhanced and requisite competence and capacity levels are improved, efforts to promote gender equality produce better quality results as evidenced by impact of the training of the GFP network on the quality of work plans in the 2012-2013 biennium. The fact that most of the work plans could not be implemented due to the unexpected financial difficulties of the Organization in the current biennium should take away from the progress demonstrated.

62. UNESCO, along with other United Nations agencies and Member States, is facing the challenge of financial constraints. Evidence from the last few decades demonstrates that during periods of economic difficulties, interest and investment in efforts to promote gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights suffer the first and the most from cut-backs. This situation presents the greatest challenge for UNESCO to continue the work it has jump-started in the last medium-term by designating gender equality one of two global priorities of the Organization. In the current global political, economic, social and cultural environment, gender equality efforts need more support and investments if the global challenges are to be addressed efficiently and effectively. There is ample scientific evidence that countries that operate within contexts with higher levels of gender equality perform much better in terms of economic development, social cohesion and cultural understanding and dialogue. As the agency with education, culture, the sciences and communication/information as its mandate, UNESCO has the responsibility and the obligation to continue to step up its efforts to promote gender equality in all its domains through strengthened capacity and competence.

## **V. MOVING FORWARD**

63. Visible progress has been achieved in implementing Global Priority Gender Equality through strengthening the capacity of the Secretariat to work towards gender equality, through advocacy and policy dialogue engaged in at all levels and through evidence-based research. Building on the gains achieved and the momentum created, UNESCO is well positioned to further strengthen its efforts in the next medium-term period of 2014 to 2021. More specifically, UNESCO will continue its efforts through the implementation of the second Gender Equality Action Plan of 2014-2021 which has put in place several mechanisms to build on the gains and to address the gaps. Key among the measures to address the gaps under GEAP II are:

- Strengthened responsibility and accountability structures for the implementation of GEAP II;
- A “gender marker” in SISTER to track financial allocation to the implementation of UNESCO's Global Priority Gender Equality;

- Aligning GEAP II results and indicators closely with those of C5s;
- Development of a second phase of capacity development programme for all UNESCO staff;
- Strengthening real-time monitoring and assessment of gender equality initiatives by ODG/GE and building a knowledge base for good practices.

Printed on recycled paper