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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme
Fifth Session
2-4 April 2008

UNESCO House, Paris, Room II (Fontenoy Building)

Final Report

This document is also available at
<http://www.unesco.org/webworld/ifap>

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Introduction

1. The fifth session of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme (IFAP) was held at UNESCO House, Paris, from 2 to 4 April 2008.

The 26 Member States of the Council were represented: Austria , Brazil, Canada, China, Congo (The Republic of), Côte d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, France , Germany, Grenada, Hungary, Indonesia, Israel, Jamaica, Kenya , Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Nigeria, Libya, Poland, Sudan, Tanzania (United Republic of), Thailand , Venezuela, Viet Nam,

2. The following international non-governmental organizations were represented:

Action Youth, The Coordinating Council for Audiovisual Archive Associations (CCAAA) , The International Association for Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA), The International Council on Archives (ICA), The International Council on Museums, The International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP), The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), The Internet Society, The Russian Federation Research Committee, The Sudanese Association for Youth Development, The World Youth Bank, The Asian Coordination Bureau (South Asian Coordination Office), and The Yanadi Education Society

3. The following Member States of UNESCO, who are not members of the Intergovernmental Council, were also represented at the meeting, as observers: Burundi, Cyprus, Denmark, El Salvador, Guatemala, The Holy See, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Myanmar, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, Zambia

4. The list of participants is at <http://www.unesco.org/webworld/ifap>

Item 1 **Opening of the Meeting**

5. The Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Koichiro Matsuura, welcomed the members of the Intergovernmental Council, the observers and the representatives of the intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations to the Fifth Session of the Council (The text of the Opening Remarks by the Director-General is at <http://www.unesco.org/webworld/ifap>).

6. He stated that IFAP was at a turning point and encouraged focus on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2008-2013, to guide UNESCO in defining new strategic priorities and orientations. He stated that in October 2007, at the 34th session of the General Conference, UNESCO's Member States adopted five overarching objectives for the Organization's Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013, including the objective of "building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication". The approval of this objective signalled the clear recognition by the General Conference of the strong links between the creation, access, preservation and sharing of information and knowledge, and the building of peace, eradication of poverty, and sustainable development.

7. The Director General expressed his deep and personal gratitude to the outgoing Chair of the Council, Mr Laurence Zwimpfer for his leadership, dedication and exemplary contribution, first as Rapporteur, and then as Chair of the Council. He also thanked the outgoing Rapporteur Mr Daniel Malbert, and other members of the Bureau and of the Council who had greatly contributed to the development of IFAP.

Item 2 Election of the Bureau of the Council

8. The Council elected the Bureau comprising the following members:

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Chairperson | Mr. Karol Jakubowicz | Poland |
| Members: | Mr. Dietrich Schüller | Austria |
| | Mr. Emir José Suaiden | Brazil |
| | Mr. Heshman Makhoul | Egypt |
| | Mr. Laszlo Z. Karvalics | Hungary |
| | Mr. Linus Ikpaahindi | Nigeria |
| | Mr. Kavi Chongkittavorn | Thailand |
| Rapporteur: | Ms Fay Durrant | Jamaica |

9. The Chair congratulated the newly elected Bureau and thanked the Members of the outgoing Bureau for their contribution to the development of IFAP. He thanked the outgoing Bureau for its work which has resulted in tangible outputs, and made particular mention of the work of Ms Fay Durrant who had led the working group which produced the study Towards Information Literacy Indicators. The Chair recalled the Executive Board decision of 2000 on creating the Information for All Programme where IFAP was called “a key participant in the fulfillment of UNESCO’s mandate to contribute to ‘education for all’, to the ‘free exchange of ideas and knowledge’ and to ‘increase the means of communication between ... peoples.’” He also noted that IFAP needed a new focus, best described as “Information Policy to Ensure Information for All”. In pursuing this goal, IFAP should both draw on the results of WSIS and contribute to their development (also by being involved in WSIS follow-up activities) and translation into specific policies to be implemented at the international and national levels.

Item 3 Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

10. The Provisional Agenda (see Annex I) was approved without amendments:

Item 4 Reports on the activities of the Information for All Programme

Item 4 (a) Report of the Director-General

11. The report of the Director General gave the background to the establishment of the Information for All Programme, and identified projects which have been supported in

the three priority areas of IFAP, promotional activities, including several publications, and the production of policy guidelines aimed at policy makers. The report covered the Secretariat's efforts to foster the creation of new IFAP National Committees and to strengthen existing ones, as well as support provided to facilitate the IFAP evaluation and initiation of the strategic planning process, the organization of meetings of the Council and Bureau, and other areas of cooperation with the IFAP Bureau.

Item 4 (b) Report of the Chairperson of the Council on the Activities of the IFAP Bureau (2006-2007)

12. The Immediate Past Chair of the Council presented the report on the activities of the Bureau for the period since the last meeting of the Council. The report focussed on the Evaluation of IFAP and indicated that in response to the comments by the evaluators, the Bureau had moved to identify more clearly IFAP's specific mandate and its focus as presented in the Strategic Plan. The activities of the Council and Bureau included the meetings of the Council once every two years and meetings of the Bureau every six months. Several thematic debates were held one of which was jointly mounted with the Intergovernmental Council for the Development of Communication (IPDC), and another with the Bibliotheque Nationale de France. The other debates were held with the members of the Bureau, and observers representing Member States and international non-governmental organizations.

13. The Immediate Past Chair reported that the two Working Groups which were established by the Bureau have produced results as follows:

- The publication "Towards information literacy indicators" which resulted from the deliberations of the Working Group on Measurement for Knowledge Societies and
- the development of an online platform for Member States to share success stories about the use of information for development.

14. The report also indicated that efforts had been made to increase communications between the Council, the Bureau and IFAP National Committees. This has resulted in increased interaction although there was still room for improvement.

15. Member States thanked the Immediate Past Chair for his report and his work on the IFAP programme. In the discussions which followed Member States made suggestions for increasing the visibility of IFAP and for improving the interaction between the Bureau and the Member States of UNESCO. Suggestions included the use of a number of channels for reaching Council Members and representatives of Member States, and the provision of communications in all the official languages.

16. The Council adopted the following decision:

The Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme,

2. Having examined the report of the Chairperson of the IFAP Council contained in document IFAP-2008/COUNCIL.V/3;

3. Expresses appreciation to the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme for its significant contribution to the programme during 2006 and 2007, and especially the preparation of a new Strategic Plan;
4. Notes with satisfaction the achievements of the Working Groups on Measurement for Knowledge Societies and Good Practices on Using Information for Development, as well as the organization of the thematic debates in IFAP priority areas;
5. Requests the Director-General to continue strengthening the capacity in Member States to promote Information for All goals, including in National Commissions and by supporting the development of IFAP National Committees and other national or regional groups.
6. Requests the Bureau to continue publishing regular bulletins on IFAP activities.

Item 5 IFAP Strategic Plan 2008-2013

18. The previous Chairperson presented the Draft Strategic Plan for IFAP 2008- 2013, which had benefited from input by various stakeholders. The overarching mission of the draft Plan was stated in the Plan as: *“to help Member States to develop and implement national information policies and knowledge strategies in a world increasingly driven by digital technologies”*
19. The Strategic Plan was elaborated in the context of the increasingly digital environment and Programme Priorities were presented as follows:

| Priority | Areas of focus |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Information for Development | Empowering people through making relevant and useful information produced by governments accessible to all. |
| Information Literacy | Building capabilities in assessing, accessing, critiquing, using and creating information and participation in the “e-world” |
| Information Preservation | Supporting the preservation of documentary heritage, the development of preservation standards and management tools, and strengthening the capacity of librarians and archivists to respond to the challenges of preservation. |
| Information Ethics | Ensuring equity of access to information and communication technologies, between countries and between urban and rural communities. |
| Information Accessibility | Promoting multilingualism in cyberspace, as well as the use of ICTs for equitable access to information, including for people with disabilities. |

20. Eleven expected outcomes were presented in relation to the Overarching Goal the IFAP Priorities, the UNESCO Core Functions, the alignment with C.4 and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Action Lines, and potential multistakeholder cooperation.

21. The Plan further identified three IFAP Mainstreaming Phases with all programme activities being fully integrated into the Regular Programme by 2013, and in concluding the presentation of the Plan the Immediate Past Chair requested the meeting to comment on the following points presented in the Strategic Plan:

- The Overarching Mission for the six year period
- The five IFAP priorities:
- The proposed multi-stakeholder approach
- Suggestions for Engagement of Member States
- Possible sources of funding support
- Means of increasing the Visibility of IFAP
- Ways in which IFAP can function to facilitate the achievement of the IFAP priorities

22. In the discussion which followed, it was suggested that: IFAP should be less isolated from other activities within and outside UNESCO; including those of the National Commissions and the National IFAP Committees. It was agreed that the recommendation in the Strategic Plan that “the formal intergovernmental meetings of the Council and Bureau be progressively eliminated” and the idea of “mainstreaming” as understood in the Discussion Draft should be removed from the next version of Strategic Plan.

23. The meeting considered that there were some areas of the Draft Strategic Plan which required expansion and explanation. These areas included the functioning of the proposed Observatory on National Information Policies and the funding sources to match the activities outlined in the Plan.

The Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme adopted the following decision:

The Intergovernmental Council of the Information for All Programme,

1. Having examined the summary version of the draft IFAP Strategic Plan contained in document IFAP-2008/COUNCIL.V/4 as well as the complete Discussion Draft version 17;
2. Expresses appreciation to the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme, and all the stakeholders who have contributed to the preparation of this Strategic Plan for IFAP for the period 2008 – 2013;
3. Confirms the Council’s commitment to the global goal of Information for All;
4. Stresses that the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) should constitute the framework for the strategic orientations and operations of the Information for All Programme, including its multistakeholder approach;

5. Recognizes the strong potential of the proposed Strategic Plan to contribute to the international information society debate and implementation of WSIS Action Lines, particularly the six Action Lines which UNESCO has been entrusted with facilitating;
6. Also recognizes the significant contribution that the proposed Strategic Plan can make to attaining the objectives of the Medium Term Strategy 2008 – 2013 (34 C/4);
7. Resolves to make its contribution to the preparation of the draft Programme and Budget 2010-2011 (35 C/5) in the framework of the Director-General's consultations;
8. Supports the proposed overarching objective for IFAP for the period 2008 – 2013 "to help Member States develop and implement national information policies and knowledge strategies in a world increasingly using information and communication technologies (ICT)";
9. Endorses information for development, information literacy, information preservation, information ethics and information accessibility as the five specific IFAP priorities;
10. Requests the Bureau to establish multistakeholder Working Groups to deal with the five IFAP priorities, based on terms of reference and modalities of operation developed together with the Secretariat and approved by the Council in an online consultation;
11. Emphasizes the need to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of IFAP and its Council, as well as for closer cooperation with the Secretariat in planning and implementing UNESCO's Regular Programme;
12. Calls on the Member States and other stakeholders to contribute extra-budgetary funds to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of IFAP and its Council, and requests its Members to facilitate together with the Secretariat the fund-raising process;
13. Requests the Bureau to revise the draft plan, based on the results of the 5th Session of the Council and an online consultation, and agrees to adopt it in an online consultation in a six-month time;
14. Requests the Bureau to report to the Council annually on the implementation of the strategic plan;
15. Resolves to consider the future modalities of its operation at the 6th Session in Paris in 2010;
16. Invites the Executive Board at its 179th Session to take note of the results of the 5th session of the IFAP Council and the draft strategic plan that will be revised in a six-month time and then submitted to the Executive Board for endorsement.

Item 6 Thematic Debate “IFAP’s role in the global information space”

24. The Immediate Past Chair of the Council moderated the Thematic Debate which was expected to aid in helping to shape the work of IFAP. The purpose of the thematic debate was to discuss the role of governments in creating equitable access to information in the post-WSIS multistakeholder environment, as well as the strategies to build national information policies. The panelists from civil society and the private sector provided their perspectives on future technology, new skills and capacity required, and trends in content creation.

The debate was expected to respond to questions such as: What models have worked well in

creating equitable access to information? What is the role of Governments? What is the trigger for governments to prioritize “information” in the same way that many prioritize “education”?

25. **Janis Karklins**, The Permanent Representative for Latvia to UNESCO and former President of the WSIS Preparatory Committee for the Tunis Phase, introduced the debate, focusing on the rapidly evolving role of the Internet, the advances in broadband, greater accessibility, super broadband (with equal upload and download speeds), WIFI/WIMax and 3G mobile.

26. He also noted that the real challenge facing the international community was how to maintain momentum in this new multistakeholder environment, which relied on collaboration and where no-one had a leadership role.

27. **Dr Peter Lor**, Secretary-General, of IFLA, referred to the four pillars of information – the information infrastructure, the content (culture and language), mediation, and the conventional physical infrastructure. He said that the focus of UNESCO is clearly on the “content” and “mediation” pillars, and indicated that the foundations for the pillars were the principles of freedom, fairness, inclusivity and social justice.

28. **Mr Marcelo D’Elia Branco**, Director, Campus Party Brazil 2008 referred to the present environment as the “post-Internet era”. He said that social networking (web 2.0) had resulted in a revolution in the way that people relate to each other, so that while academics created the Internet, innovation and creativity now lay in the hands of the users themselves. He also noted that there was a need for diligence to ensure that digital rights do not become more onerous and restrictive in the Information Age than they were in the industrial age. Governments have a duty to protect their citizens’ rights to privacy, their rights to use their own languages and promote democracy. He encouraged governments to embrace the Internet by viewing it as an exciting new tool for promoting democracy and participation, rather than something to be controlled.

29. **Ms Geeta Malhotra**, Director-Projects and Strategic Alliance, Digital Empowerment Foundation, New Delhi drew attention to the challenges facing developing countries, where the cost of the Internet is still far beyond the reach of poor communities. She said that The Digital Divide was real and the solutions were not evident.

30. The open debate which followed sought to address the issues of increasing the visibility and reducing the isolation of IFAP. The important role of governments in the development and updating of national information policies and strategies was recognized as well as the need for development of networked societies, increased accessibility, through greater

connectivity and lower costs, development of local content, mediation, and interactive training programmes for information literacy.

Item 7 Suggested framework for measuring information literacy

31. The representative of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics presented the document Towards Information Literacy Indicators which had been produced through collaboration between IFAP, the Information Society Division, the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and in consultation with several experts.

32. The Council adopted the following decision:

The Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme,

1. Having examined document IFAP-2008/COUNCIL.V/5;
2. Welcomes the publication of the study “Towards Information Literacy Indicators”;
3. Supports the suggested framework for measuring information literacy;
4. Recommends that CI Sector and UIS continue to collaborate with National Statistical Institutes, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and national experts in the field of information literacy to:
 - a. Review the list of indicators suggested in the publication “Towards Information Literacy Indicators”;
 - b. Compile existing data where available for the indicators listed; and
 - c. Develop proposals for an international study on information literacy.

Item 8 Free and Open Source Software

33. The Director of the Information Society Division explained the context of the development of Free and Open Source Software and UNESCO’s role in supporting specific packages including CDS/ISIS for Information Retrieval, IDAMS for Data Mining and Statistical Analysis, and the Greenstone Digital Library Software. In the ensuing discussion delegates recognized the important role which free and open source software can play in enabling access to information.

The Council adopted the following decision:

- The Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All,
1. Having examined document IFAP-2008/COUNCIL.V/6;
 2. Fully endorses the positions taken by the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) recognizing the possibilities offered by different software models, including proprietary, open-source and free software, in order to increase competition,

access by users, diversity of choice, and to enable all users to develop solutions which best meet their requirements;

3. Reiterates the position of the Medium-Term Strategy 2008-2013 that the development and use of open, interoperable, non-discriminatory standards for information handling and access are important elements in the building of effective infrastructures and economic development;
4. Welcomes the principles of freedom and openness, as well as the community approach underpinning the development of Free and Open Source Software;
5. Recognizes the significant role that Free and Open Source Software can make to operationalize the concept of Knowledge Societies and to attain the Millennium Development Goals;
6. Also recognizes that the ultimate software choices should be based upon the ability to achieve the best long term and long-term and return on financial and intellectual investments;
7. Supports the proposed statement for UNESCO to promote well-documented Free and Open Source Software solutions including training in their use;
8. Requests the Director-General to support the promotion and training in the use of Free and Open Source Software solutions in all Member States.

Item 9 Multicultural Library Manifesto

34. The IFLA representative presented an introduction to the Multicultural Library Manifesto which recognized that “cultural and linguistic diversity was the common heritage of humankind and should be cherished and preserved for the benefit of all.”¹ It also recommended that “libraries of all types should reflect, support and promote cultural and linguistic diversity at the international, national, and local levels, and thus work for cross-cultural dialogue and active citizenship.’

35. While recognizing the value of the Manifesto, the meeting suggested that IFLA be requested to modify some sections of the text in keeping with the requirements of UNESCO.

The Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All,

1. Having examined document IFAP-2008/COUNCIL.V/7, particularly the IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto;
2. Welcomes the spirit and the objectives of the IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto;
3. Endorses the IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto as revised by IFLA in April 2008 at the request of IFAP Council;
4. Recommends that the IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto as revised in April 2008 be submitted to the 35th session of General Conference for consideration.

Item 10 Miscellaneous

36. No points were raised under this item.

Item 11 Adoption of the Recommendations

37. The Rapporteur presented a summary of the matters discussed and the decisions as adopted by the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme on the relevant items of the agenda. The decisions adopted are contained in the relevant paragraphs of the present report.

Item 12 Closure of the meeting

38. The Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, Mr Abdul Waheed Khan, addressed the Council during its closing session. He recognized the role of the new Chair in advancing the work of the Council and congratulated him on his management of the discussions.

39. The Chair thanked all members for their contribution, as well as the Secretariat, the Rapporteur and the Interpreters for their support.

40. The Chair declared the Session closed on 4 April 2008 at 12.30 p.m.

Annex I - Agenda

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

**Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme
(Fifth Session)**

UNESCO House, Paris, Room II (Fontenoy Building)

2 - 4 April 2008

1. Opening of the meeting by the Director-General or his representative
2. Elections of the Bureau of the Council (Chairperson, other officers)
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Reports on the activities of the Information for All Programme
 - a) Report of the Director-General
 - b) Report of the Chairperson of the Council
5. IFAP Strategic Plan 2008-2013
6. Thematic Debate "IFAP's role in the global information space"
7. Suggested framework for measuring information literacy
8. Free and Open Source Software
9. Multicultural Library Manifesto
10. Miscellaneous
11. Adoption of the recommendations
12. Closure of the meeting

ⁱ ibid