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REPORTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INFORMATION FOR ALL PROGRAMME (IFAP) (2012-2013)

SUMMARY

In accordance with Article 10 of the Statutes of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme, the Director-General shall submit to the General Conference, through the Executive Board, at each of its sessions, a report on the implementation of the Information for All Programme (paragraph 2). For its part, the Council shall submit to the General Conference, at each of its sessions, a report on its activities (paragraph 3).

Document 37 C/REP/16 containing these two reports, which is annexed hereto, is hereby submitted to the Executive Board for its consideration.

Should the examination of these reports by the Executive Board give rise to any comments or recommendations, these will be communicated to the General Conference in the form of an Addendum to the present document.

No decision is proposed.



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Educational, Scientific and
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
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Report

37 C/REP/16
27 August 2013
English and French only

**REPORTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
INFORMATION FOR ALL PROGRAMME (IFAP)
(2012-2013)**

OUTLINE

Source: Article 10 of the Statutes of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme.

Background: In accordance with the above-mentioned article, the Director-General shall submit to the General Conference, through the Executive Board, at each of its sessions, a report on the implementation of the Information for All Programme (paragraph 2) and the Council shall submit through the Executive Board to the General Conference, at each of its sessions, a report on its activities (paragraph 3). The present document includes these two reports.

The Director-General and the IFAP Council note with sadness the passing of Mr Karol Jakubowicz (Poland) on 28 April, 2013. Mr Jakubowicz served as Chairman of the Intergovernmental Information for All Programme from 2008 to 2010.

The Director-General and the IFAP Council acknowledge with gratitude his considerable contribution which enriched the Programme and yielded tangible impacts in Member States.

PART I – REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INFORMATION FOR ALL PROGRAMME

1. The Information for All Programme (IFAP) was established in 2001 to provide a platform for international policy discussions and guidelines for action in the area of access to information and knowledge; for the participation of all in the knowledge societies. In 2012-2013 the Secretariat has continued implementing the Strategic Plan for the Information for All Programme approved by the Executive Board at its 180th session (document 180 EX/15).

2. The Programme continued to successfully implement activities envisaged in the Strategic Plan (2008-2013). The biennium saw an improvement in its visibility, the establishment of six new National IFAP Committees and focal points, an increase in the number of regional and international events organized and in the Secretariat's human resource support to IFAP.

Implementing projects and events in the priority areas of IFAP

3. IFAP's activities benefitted from extrabudgetary support received through the Director-General's Multi-donor Emergency Fund. These resources were instrumental in reinforcing its activities in Africa and the Caribbean and ensuring the implementation and follow-up of declarations and action plans adopted at regional and international events in priority areas. China provided extrabudgetary contributions to the IFAP Special Account, while the Government of the Russian Federation, through its direct financial support, ensured the realization and the holding of various initiatives and international conferences in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

4. Information accessibility and information for development: A 17-country Caribbean study for assessing the state of the art around national usage of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), Open Data and Open Source was launched in December 2012. In the second half of 2013, a series of regional consultation meetings were organized to validate the research findings and support national efforts aimed at implementing the study's recommendations.

5. A capacity-building workshop held in March 2013 (Kingston, Jamaica) enabled policy-makers from 25 Latin American and Caribbean Member States and Territories to implement UNESCO's Guidelines for the development and promotion of Open Access Policy Guidelines and to apply IFAP's "National Information Society Policy: A template" methodology. The event was co-organized with the UNESCO National Commission for Jamaica, the Government of Jamaica, as well as the University of the West Indies.

6. With the Government of Uganda's National Information Technology Authority, the Uganda Technology and Management University and the United Nations University (UNU), UNESCO organized in July 2013 a series of executive trainings on foundations of government information leadership for senior policy-makers from East African Countries. Preparations have been made to carry out similar regional capacity-building activities in the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific as well as in Latin America and the Caribbean.

7. Information preservation: To support national implementation of the declaration and recommendations adopted at UNESCO's international conference, "Memory of the World in the Digital Age: Digitization and Preservation", held in September 2012 in Vancouver (Canada), UNESCO contracted with the International Council of Archives (ICA) to develop a digital preservation curriculum for developing countries. The pilot is being rolled out in Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Liberia, Rwanda and United Republic of Tanzania. The project's international steering committee will support trans-regional knowledge exchange, as well as dissemination and uptake of the curriculum.

8. Information literacy: A series of capacity-building events were organized in conjunction with the African Youth Network for young people and youth leaders in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The training focused on developing skills and competencies to address practical development challenges in such areas as entrepreneurship, youth policy advocacy and health. The first phase saw the development of training materials, capacity-building for 90 youth and the training of 20 trainers of trainers (TOTs). In the second phase the TOTs trained some 300 young men and women.

9. With the Government of Saint Lucia's National ICT Office, its National Commission for UNESCO, and the Commonwealth of Learning, UNESCO organized in July 2013 a regional media and information literacy capacity-building event for Eastern Caribbean educators and policy-makers. The event also launched a UNESCO-IFAP-UIS study on Information literacy indicators.

10. Increasing global awareness of information ethics: By working with diverse stakeholders the Programme contributed to raising awareness, supporting research and developing tools for policy-makers. In concert with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) expert panels on emerging Info-ethics challenges were organized in Nairobi, Kenya (September 2011) and Baku, Azerbaijan (November 2012) at the sixth and seventh Internet Governance Forums (IGF) respectively. In May 2012, with the secretariat of the World Commission on the Ethics of Science, Technology and Knowledge (COMEST) and the Internet Society (ISOC), an expert panel "Cyber and Information ethics: Fostering and enabling freedom on the Internet", was organized in Geneva at the WSIS Forum. At the First WSIS+10 Review the IFAP and COMEST Secretariats presented a global study entitled "Current and emerging ethical and societal challenges of the information society" to assess the WSIS C10 (ethical dimensions of the information society) Action Line and provide inputs for shaping its future orientations.

11. The document "UNESCO and the ethical dimensions of the information society", adopted by the Executive Board at its 190th session was the result of an extensive consultation process with Member States and other international and regional stakeholders. The document provides orientations for guiding UNESCO's activities in: (a) building multi-stakeholder partnerships to raise awareness and strengthen actions; (b) contributing to the international debate on the ethical dimensions of information; (c) supporting research; and (d) strengthening national capacity-building efforts.

Improving visibility and supporting fundraising for IFAP

12. The UNESCO IFAP website and the IFAP Observatory are constantly updated. Improvements have been made to the Observatory's online user interfaces and search tools to enhance the site's user-friendliness. A blog on information society topics was launched and additional efforts taken to enhance the distribution of the quarterly electronic newsletter and other resources. Some 1,800 new subscribers have accessed the Observatory's services within six months of implementing these changes.

13. The IFAP Secretariat commissioned the design of a new IFAP logo and elaborated guidelines for its use in all IFAP-related publications, events and resources. The logo and guidelines were approved by the IFAP Council.

14. To increase IFAP's visibility and improve its impacts for fundraising, the Secretariat has regularly disseminated information on IFAP and some of its activities are featured in UNESCO's 2013 report. The Secretariat continues to identify, in cooperation with field offices, IFAP labeled projects that can be presented to donor countries and institutions for possible funding and to support the development of project proposals.

Fostering National IFAP Committees and reinforcing regional cooperation

15. The Secretariat continues to encourage participation – both physical and virtual – in international and regional IFAP events. Field offices have increased their outreach and support to existing and newly established IFAP structures.

16. New National IFAP Committees or National Focal Points have been or are being established in Bolivia, Grenada, Iran, Mongolia, Uruguay, and Trinidad and Tobago. Efforts are under way in Argentina and Paraguay to reinforce their national IFAP-related bodies.

Organizing statutory meetings of the IFAP Council and its Bureau

17. During the present biennium, one session of the Council (April 2012) and two meetings of the Bureau (April 2012 and February 2013) took place.

18. NGO partners have been informed of IFAP's activities by inviting them to the Council and Bureau meetings as observers and collaboration with them to develop projects and activities aligned with the decisions of the Council and Bureau.

Cooperating with the IFAP Council and Bureau

19. Some examples of this collaboration include the Moscow conference on “Media and Information Literacy for Knowledge Societies” and various information literacy and information for development activities, organized in the Caribbean, the First Free and Open Source Software Conference (FOSS-C) held in Muscat (Oman), and the upcoming Information Ethics Conference to be held in Riga (Latvia), in October 2013. The IFAP Special Account has provided seed funding to support projects initiated by the Secretariat such as the development and testing of the global media and information literacy indicators.

Remarks by the Director-General on the implementation of IFAP

20. Some US\$ 220,000 was made available from the Emergency Fund to reinforce Communication and Information activities coinciding with IFAP priority areas in Africa and the Caribbean, to ensure follow-up of the declarations and action plans and to give effect to the decisions of the Executive Board. These include, by way of example, the Open Access Policy Guidelines (187 EX/Decision 10), the implementation of UNESCO and the Ethical Dimensions of the Information Society (190 EX/Decision 5, Part III), and the First Regional IFAP Conference for the Caribbean “Building Caribbean Knowledge Societies”, held in Saint George's, Grenada, in June 2011, among others.

21. The report on the review of the implementation of the IFAP Strategic Plan (2008-2013) presented to the Executive Board at its 191st session revealed that 71% out of 52 Member States respondents positively evaluated IFAP and its results. In addition, it offered proposals to consolidate and strengthen the gains made by the Programme. The Executive Board (191 EX/Decision 41) called on Member States to “strengthen their participation and contribution to IFAP”. The Director-General therefore invites Member States to increase their extrabudgetary contributions and also urges Bureau and Council members to more actively and effectively engage in fund-raising activities to increase the number of realizations under this Programme.

PART II – REPORT OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL FOR THE INFORMATION FOR ALL PROGRAMME ON ITS ACTIVITIES

Activities of the Council and its Bureau

22. During the biennium, the Council and Bureau identified and analysed challenges to building knowledge societies and undertook numerous targeted activities within each of its priority areas. As part of its response, various regional and international events were organized that brought together diverse stakeholders from over 120 countries in the five UNESCO regions. These activities have supported capacity building, international partnership and exchange and contributed to the development and application of national and international policies. This report highlights only those IFAP events and projects that are of an international character and implemented with extrabudgetary funding. Due to space constraints the numerous national and regional events undertaken cannot be presented here.

Helping Member States develop and implement national information policies and knowledge strategies

23. IFAP is collaborating closely with IFLA, the UNESCO Secretariat, the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in the Information Literacy priority area. The international conference on “Media and Information Literacy for Knowledge Societies” (Moscow, 18-24 June 2012) was a significant, tangible outcome of this partnership made possible with the financial and technical support of the Government of the Russian Federation. The event drew international media and information literacy experts from 40 countries and produced a Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy which details relevant challenges and provides recommendations for stakeholders. The conference fostered international collaboration, catalyzed new partnerships, activities and the development of new resources. Other conference outcomes included, by way of example, the European Conference on Information Literacy (ECIL) held in Istanbul in October 2013 and organized by Croatian and Turkish universities that participated in the Moscow conference; a Media and Information Literacy Catalogue elaborated by the Modern Poland Foundation for different ages and educational levels as the basis for a new curricula and conference proceedings authored by experts from 40 countries have also been translated into various languages.

24. The IFLA Media and Information Literacy Recommendations, developed at IFAP’s initiative and with its participation, were approved by the IFAP Council. The IFLA President thanked IFAP for its important contribution to this joint action.

25. Multilingualism in cyberspace has emerged as an important cross-cutting theme in IFAP’s work and a *de facto* sixth priority area. This is grounded in the recognition that preserving languages, ensuring their presence in cyberspace and bridging the language gap is essential for bridging the information and knowledge divide. Efforts in these areas are being implemented in cooperation with the World Network for Linguistic Diversity (MAAYA), presided by Mr Adama Samassekou of Mali. IFAP has established an international working group on multilingualism in cyberspace, and recently published Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Cyberspace, a collection of analytical papers addressing pressing contemporary issues in this field by authors from some 30 countries. IFAP was also active in implementing two major MAAYA projects – the third International Symposium on Multilingualism in Cyberspace (Paris, 18-20 November 2012) and the analytical collection “NetLang: Towards Multilingual Cyberspace”, published by C&F editions of France, in English and French. Several preparatory activities took place during that period for the third International Conference on “Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Cyberspace” that will be convened in Yakutsk, Russian Federation, next year.

26. An International Conference on Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society was held in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, Russian Federation (8-12 September 2013) with the financial and technical support of the Russian Federation's Ministry of Culture, the Federal Agency for Print and Mass Communications, National Commission for UNESCO and the Sakhalin Regional Government. The event brought together experts from almost 50 countries to explore and understand the trends and character of socio-cultural changes being mediated by the Internet and use of ICTs. The sharing of experiences and research findings provided useful insights for public policy and stakeholders.

27. As a member of the organizing and scientific committee of UNESCO's "The Memory of the World in the Digital Age: Digitization and Preservation" conference (Vancouver, Canada, 26-28 September 2012), IFAP played an active role in its preparation. The IFAP International Conference on "Preservation of Digital Information in Information Society" (Moscow, 4-6 October 2011) which launched the year-long preparations that culminated in Vancouver attracted experts from over 30 countries. The proceedings from the Moscow conference have been published.

28. Oman's First Free and Open Source Software Conference (FOSSC-Oman' 2013) was held in Muscat in February 2013. The event which was jointly organized by the Communication and Information Research Centre (CIRC) and the Information Technology Authority (ITA) attracted both international and regional experts and provided a platform to present IFAP's work and recommendations in its information access priority. As a follow-up to this conference, additional training events in other Arab States and the establishment of a regional FOSS centre are being undertaken.

IFAP Council contribution to the preparation of the draft Programme and Budget 2014-2017

29. IFAP has been actively engaged throughout the biennium in the implementation of the Regular Programme and the discussions on the future of UNESCO. IFAP Council Members in cooperation with the Working Groups on IFAP Priority Areas, have explored how the various emerging trans-disciplinary, global challenges in IFAP's priority areas could be best incorporated and addressed in the Draft Medium-term Strategy (document 37 C/4) and Draft Programme and Budget (document 37 C/5) including through input at some regional consultations and to the Director-General's questionnaire.

Establishment of multi-stakeholder Working Groups to deal with the five IFAP priorities

30. At its seventh session, the IFAP Council requested the Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information to invite Member States to nominate national experts to the IFAP Working Groups. Some 18 Member States (Bulgaria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Hungary, Iran, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Madagascar, Pakistan, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Thailand, Ukraine and Venezuela) responded to the request for nominations. Following its examination the Bureau endorsed and appointed the nominated experts to the respective Working Groups.

IFAP's contribution to the international information society debate and to the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines

31. IFAP has been consistently participating in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and other global and regional events to raise awareness, share good practices and encourage cooperation in its priority areas, particularly information ethics. During the first WSIS+10 Review held at UNESCO Headquarters in February 2013, IFAP organized a one-day Special Event "Information and Knowledge for All, Emerging Trends and Challenges". The event provided a platform for the IFAP Bureau and Council, world-renowned scientists, key policy-makers and other thought leaders to explore public policy responses to emerging challenges and opportunities in the IFAP priority areas.

An updated global study inspired by the seminal IFAP report, “Ethical implication of new technologies: A survey”, provided a basis for guiding future work in the WSIS C10 Action Line.

32. The eighth Ordinary Session of COMEST held in Bratislava on 28 and 29 May 2013 and the two-day COMEST conference on “Emerging Ethical Issues in Science and Technology” held immediately afterwards, provided additional opportunities for the two intergovernmental bodies to align and advance their global activities in this area.

33. In concert with the Latvian Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Environment, the UNESCO National Commission of Latvia and the IFAP Secretariat, IFAP organized in October 2013 in Riga, a global expert meeting on new disparities in the development of knowledge societies, respect for freedom of expression on the Internet, and the creation of a fair and multicultural information society. In addition to stimulating debate and raising awareness around key issues, IFAP’s work is also helping to shape the post-2015 international development agenda.

34. Two special events were held within the framework of the “Crimea” Conference (Ukraine), Eastern Europe’s largest forum for information and library specialists: a seminar on Information Society and the World Information Infrastructure (2012), and UNESCO Information for All Programme Day (2013). Both events addressed current issues and provided a platform for debate in IFAP’s strategic areas. They also provided an opportunity to share relevant IFAP reports.

35. In addition to the events organized by IFAP, the Programme has also contributed to the international debate by presenting keynote speeches and reports, as well as participating in expert panels at events organized by other global stakeholders which have attracted hundreds of international participants. Illustrative examples of forums where IFAP was invited as an expert contributor include the World Library and Information Congress, held in Helsinki in August 2012 and the international congress “National Library as a Cultural Phenomenon” held in Minsk (Belarus) in September 2012. Such collaborations have served to build partnerships, disseminate IFAP’s work and enhance its visibility.

Improving the efficiency of the IFAP and its Council

36. The review of the implementation of the IFAP Strategic Plan (2008-2013) undertaken with the support of the IFAP Secretariat and UNESCO’s Internal Oversight Services (IOS) underscored the importance of all IFAP priority areas to the creation of inclusive knowledge societies and underscored the Programme’s key role in supporting international, interdisciplinary cooperation in its priority areas. The majority of Member States (37 out of 52) positively evaluated the Programme and its results for UNESCO.

37. Member States also provided guidance on steps that could be taken to further strengthen the programme and enhance its ability to attract funding. These proposals made during IFAP Review process included improving its communication strategy, in particular its outreach to youth and other stakeholders outside the intergovernmental setting, and building the capacity of national IFAP structures.

Remarks by the IFAP Intergovernmental Council on the implementation of IFAP

38. Throughout the 2012 to 2013 period, the relevance of IFAP’s work and its capacity for providing holistic approaches to the complex, contemporary, societal challenges of the use and application of ICT has enabled it to attract the interest and participation of leading international experts. It has also received greater visibility as a result of its various interdisciplinary initiatives to address the crucial global task of building knowledge societies. Programme implementation has also shown that each

IFAP priority is complex, with strong interdependencies linking all the priorities. A comprehensive and synergetic interdisciplinary approach is necessary to achieve tangible results, both conceptually and practically, particularly at the policy level. Closely coordinated efforts delivered through a single programme can therefore play a significant role in enabling UNESCO to elaborate knowledge society policy.

39. According to the majority of the Council Members, IFAP is an extremely ambitious and unique programme that is vital to UNESCO. The current financial and human resource constraints facing the programme must however be overcome if IFAP is to reach its full potential and effectively deliver on its mandate.