



Africa: Sources and Resources for a Culture of Peace

The UNESCO action in favor of a culture of peace in Africa is placed in the context of the implementation of the "Intersectoral and Interdisciplinary Program of Action for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence"¹ as well as in the Mid-Term Strategy (2014 -2021) of UNESCO, which has identified "building peace by building inclusive, peaceful and resilient societies" as one of two main areas of action for Africa. As such, the Operational Strategy for priority Africa integrates the development of Flagship programmes for the next four years, with the first one entitled "Promoting a culture of peace and non-violence" (see page 13).

This action also aims to contributing to the implementation of programmes on regional integration, peace, security and democracy established in the African Union Commission Strategic Plan². It also aims at the implementation of the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance³, the "Make Peace Happen" Campaign launched by the African Union in 2010, and its 2063 Agenda for the Development of Africa⁴.

The overall objective of this action for Africa is to rely on sources of inspiration⁵ and the potential of cultural, natural and human resources of the continent and to identify concrete proposals of action for building a sustainable peace, which is the cornerstone of endogenous development and Pan-Africanism. The "**Action Plan for a Culture of Peace in Africa**" adopted in Luanda (Angola), in March 2013, provides the framework: the objectives, the general recommendations and the proposals for action⁶ (see page 14).

Culture of Peace Context

The culture of peace concept was first elaborated at a global scale in Africa by UNESCO during the International Congress on "Peace in the Minds of Men", held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire in 1989.

According to the definition adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, a **Culture of Peace consists "of values, attitudes and behaviors that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavor to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society"**⁷.

In Africa, the concept of a culture of peace delineates the integration of values, belief systems and forms of spirituality, endogenous knowledge and technologies, traditions and forms of cultural and artistic expression that contribute to the respect of human rights, cultural diversity, solidarity and the rejection of violence with a view to the construction of democratic societies.

¹ UNESCO Programme and Budget 2012-2013

² AUC Strategic Plan 2014-2017

³ "...cultural diversity and African unity are a factor of balance, a force for African economic development, conflict resolution, and a way to reduce inequality and injustice in the service of national integration." Charter for African Cultural Renaissance, African Union, January 24, 2006

⁴ <http://agenda2063.au.int/>

⁵ To paraphrase Joseph Ki-Zerbo in "About Culture"- Foundation for the History and Endogenous Development of Africa: "Culture is not only a resource but a source, that is to say, an energy self-generated. Our cultures are sources of creation, dignity, innovation."

⁶ See more at : www.unesco.org/africa4peace

⁷ UNGA Resolution 52/13 of 1998



In the tradition of Pan-Africanism

Since Pan-Africanism drew its inspiration from the struggle for human rights and against the slave trade, colonization and apartheid, the promotion of a Culture of Peace requires the embracement of shared values and an African citizenship committed with reconciliation and peaceful resolution of conflicts. Relying on Wole Soyinka's words, "There is a deep lesson for the world in the black races' capacity to forgive, one which, I often think, has much to do with ethical precepts which spring from their world view and authentic religions..."⁸.

Rooted in the history of African and Diaspora thought, the search for a Culture of Peace is endogenous to the continent⁹. African intellectuals have not adopted a posture of withdrawal or confrontation with the world, but rather called for a sense of identity and openness to other peoples and cultures. Africa and Africans, as Leopold Sédar Senghor, pointed out, have forged the concept of "refounding of universal civilization" as being the result of a dialogue between cultures and civilizations.

However, the promotion of the concept of a Culture of Peace relies heavily on the intrinsic bond between people and their environment. In the case of Africa, this connection is very strong and profoundly imbued with cultural meaning. The relationship between individuals and the rich biodiversity or shared management of water resources in the African continent are also some of the essential pillars in the struggle for the eradication of poverty and the promotion of a culture of peace. Wangari Maathai underlines this aspect by pointing out that "In time, the tree also became a symbol for peace and conflict resolution, especially during ethnic conflicts in Kenya when the Green Belt Movement used peace trees to reconcile disputing communities (...). Using trees as a symbol of peace is in keeping with a widespread African tradition. For example, the elders of the Kikuyu carried a stick from the *thigi* tree that, when placed between two disputing sides, caused them to stop fighting and seek reconciliation"¹⁰.

Sources and Resources

To (re)discover the originality of Africa, to examine the roots and to understand its cultural essence and the key factors of resilience, implies a return to the source, to the origins. It also means to contemplate Africa's resources, evaluate their wealth and identify the levels for action. Looking through this lens, we can consider the entire continent as both a source and a resource for a culture of peace, and at the same time, the culture of peace in turn as a source and a resource for Africa.

If we examine African sources for a culture of peace, do we not find that the cradle of humanity holds the viable and sustainable solutions for living together? Do we not find that the cultural, natural, and human sources and resources are original and potentially conducive to cultivating peace? Do we not discover that Africa is an asset for the peace of all mankind?

However, African sources and resources do stand in isolation but are affected by a global culture, which is becoming more and more individualistic and materialistic. African values are under constant threat of being marginalized while African resources are often the source of war and conflict.

"African humanism (Ubuntu) is a priceless treasure (...). It may be a good and service—the most precious gift that Africa has to offer the world—a gift which can be converted into capital."¹¹ The social and human

⁸ Wole Soyinka, Nobel Prize in Literature Lecture – Stockholm, 1986.

⁹ The «Culture of Peace» concept was first elaborated at global level by UNESCO during the International Congress on «Peace in the Minds of Men», held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire in 1989.

¹⁰ Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Lecture – Oslo, 2004.

¹¹ "Our identity is already beyond the market, in a post-economic sphere. We have the serenity to face the challenge of a Continental Union capable of validly projecting Africa in the world. African Humanism (Ubuntu) is a priceless treasure that justifies the influx of rich and poor foreigners, exhausted by the existential heat wave affecting the North. It may be a good and service—the most precious gift that Africa has to offer the world—a gift which can be converted into capital. Joseph Ki-Zerbo. "About Culture", Foundation for History and Endogenous Development in Africa,-Ouagadougou-2010, p.105.



capital of Africa is particularly significant when one considers that approximately 65% of Africa's population is under 35 and more than 35% of the population is between the ages 15 and 35, the definition of youth according to the African Union.

The youth is the main human resource of Africa and also its greatest challenge in terms of employment, with about 10 million young women and men who enter each year into the labor market. It is also the youth who must be encouraged and supported to make the choice to transition from a culture of violence and war to a culture of peace. The Charter of the African Youth recognizes the central role of youth in promoting peace and non-violence¹².

Forum's three Pillars

The cultural, natural and human resources of Africa are three essential components to creating an inclusive and holistic approach to the culture of peace, notably:

- the **cultural sources and resources**: including the revisiting of the strength and wisdom of languages, traditions and history by analyzing traditional and modern methods of conflict resolution and violence prevention; examining the role of education—not just that which takes place in schools, but one that plays out in families and villages—to build peaceful citizens that are driven by ethical values and mutual respect; enhancing creativity and cultural inventiveness, that is able to open new horizons and spaces for dialogue, develop new economic sectors and serve as an engine for development.
- the **natural sources and resources** that are found across the continent, without being constrained by political borders, now represent challenges and potential sources of conflict and crisis. Whether rivers or oceans, forests or minerals, soil or sub-soil, the preservation and rational exploitation of these natural resources are the key to sustainable development. In particular, we seek to identify the strengths and virtues of cooperation and diplomacy so that relevant stakeholders such as governments, local communities and the private sector can effectively manage and share resources, respecting and utilizing modern and indigenous knowledge. The Earth which is the source –along with the natural resources that are its fruits - provides an opportunity to develop new economic sectors, “green and blue economies”, allowing the preservation of biodiversity and the wellbeing of the seas and oceans. The links between education and employability are also to be highlighted. It is evident today that the quality of education, particularly technical and vocational training of youth, is a major resource for peace and development on the continent.
- the **human sources and resources** with a particular focus on youth, through civic education, community service, political action, as well as leadership and gender equality. If it is certain that armed conflicts has a devastating impact on children and young people, their involvement in the construction and consolidation of peace is an essential factor that must be considered since the youth have the potential to act as agents of social, economic and political change. The commitment to peace based on values, proves to be a powerful spring for resilience. It is also important to consider the role of renowned personalities and their influence on the youth. Whether artists or athletes, icons shaped by the media, these personalities can become transnational role-models for many young people. Traditional leaders who embody African humanism and its values of peace can serve as models for those young people. The processes that forge and transmit these values, such as a conversation among friends, in a social network or under the village tree, community radios, TV networks or the Internet, requests a specific attention.

¹² “Strengthening the capacity of youth and youth organizations in peacebuilding, conflict prevention and conflict resolution through the promotion of intercultural education, civic education, tolerance, human rights, democracy, mutual respect for cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, and the importance of dialogue, cooperation, responsibility, solidarity and international cooperation” African Youth Charter, 2006.



Actions of UNESCO in favor of the Culture of Peace in Africa (2012-2013)

As part of the programme and budget for 2012-2013, UNESCO is committed to the implementation of an "Interdisciplinary and Intersectoral Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence". In order to implement the Programme of Action and to meet the needs of African countries, especially those made vulnerable by crises and conflicts, UNESCO sets up:

- **Forums of Reflection on a sub-regional and regional basis**
- **A Network of foundations and research institutions for the promotion of a Culture of Peace in Africa**
- **« Make Peace Happen » Campaigns to raise public awareness**

As well as specific activities and projects in the following areas:

- **Promotion of peace and non-violence through education**
- **Scientific cooperation to foster the dissemination of a culture of peace**
- **Empowering young women and men's participation in building more democratic and inclusive societies**
- **Fostering dialogue and building peace through heritage, dialogue and creativity**
- **Media and information literacy for peace and non-violence**

Forum of Reflection: "A Culture of Peace in West Africa: Essential for economic development and social cohesion", Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (4-5 June 2012)¹³

The first of these Fora: « A Culture of Peace in West Africa: Essential for economic development and social cohesion » took place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (4-5 June 2012) and was organized in partnership with the Center for Prospective and Strategic Studies (CEPS) and the Ivorian Government. The forum benefited from the participation of representatives of the National Commissions for UNESCO from the fifteen West African countries, academics, media professional, youth, representatives of specialized institutions and of non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

Speakers and moderators of this forum have issued a set of principles and proposals for action, which were discussed in other forums about the culture of peace in Africa and considered by the Director General and the Governing bodies of UNESCO at the time of the formulation of the new programme and the Medium-Term Strategy for 2014/2021.

Pan-African Forum: "Sources and resources for a culture of peace", Luanda, Angola (26-28 March 2013)

This Pan-African Forum¹⁴, jointly organized by UNESCO, the African Union and the Angolan Government, brought together high-level personalities, as well as experts and representatives of international and

¹³ Report of the Abidjan Forum :

http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/AFR/images/ReportForumofreflectiononCultureofPeaceinWestAfricaFINAL_01.pdf



regional organizations, States members, NGOs, private sector and civil society from 43 African countries and other participants comes from other countries outside Africa, and served as a framework for:

- The designing of an **Action Plan for the Culture of Peace in Africa** based on the three themes that shaped the Forum's schedule, namely natural and cultural sources and resources, as well as the African youth (see page 14);
- The launch of a **Pan-African Movement for a culture of peace in Africa** by encouraging the birth of mobilization and awareness campaigns at the national level in favor of a culture of peace, in support of the **"Make Peace Happen"** campaign initiated by the African Union in 2010;
- The launch of a wide **multi-stakeholder partnership** for the implementation of the Action Plan through a coordinated action at the national, sub regional and regional levels. Some State representatives at the Forum and partners have made concrete commitments to a Culture of Peace. These include governmental and intergovernmental partners such as the ministries of culture, youth and sports, science and technology, education five African countries, representatives of the African Development Bank, the Monetary Union of West African States, the Mano River Union, the Gulf of Guinea Commission and Agencies of the United Nations. Also representatives of foundations, private sector organizations and civil society in total thirty personalities made a commitment to take part in this movement under the auspices of UNESCO and the African Union.

Establishment of a "Network of Foundations and Research Institutions for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace in Africa", Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (20-21 September 2013)

The meeting, organized by the UNESCO, the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Foundation for Peace Research and the African Union, coincided with the observance of the International Day of Peace (21st September). The meeting was part of a follow-up to the Pan-African Forum held in Luanda (Angola). Representatives of 26 foundations and African peace research institutes, located in more than 20 African countries, decided the establishment of a "Network of Foundations and Research Institutions for the promotion of a culture of peace in Africa" which objectives are to:

- Coordinate respective actions in order to ensure a common understanding and community of practices in pooling our resources in the implementation of our actions;
- Strengthen the visibility of the organizations and their activities among citizens and institutions at national and international level;
- Contribute to the implementation of the Luanda Action Plan by the elaboration and implementation of joint programs;
- Endeavor to implement the AU 2063 Agenda and the UNESCO Intersectoral Programme on Culture of Peace;
- Expand the network to African and non-African organizations with similar objectives.

The following are among the presentations made during the meeting: **a research-action program on endogenous mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa** (University of Peace / Africa and UNESCO Chair for a Culture of Peace / University of Cocody, Abidjan); **the implementation of a web platform for the creation of a community of practices among members of the network** (UNESCO Chairs for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Development, Florence University, Italy) and **the launch of an initiative for African youth and the culture of peace** (Omar Bongo Ondimba Foundation).

¹⁴ <http://www.unesco.org/africa4peace>



Education. In **South Sudan**, which is rising from a prolonged conflict with its institutions and public infrastructures to be rebuilt, inter-communal crisis prevails, affecting a population of 8.2 million with an illiteracy rate of 85 per cent. Here, the aim of UNESCO is to develop a contextualized functional literacy framework and increase the capacity of relevant bodies within the Ministry of General Education and Instruction. Specific programmes on emergency education teaching are also being undertaken. UNESCO is leading, among others, a pilot reinsertion training initiative for 500 former combatants as part of the country's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Forest Whitaker is engaged in the work of UNESCO in South Sudan, in partnership with his **PeaceEarth Foundation**, with a view to establishing a network of young people skilled and engaged in conflict mediation and peacebuilding.

The Support to the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** for Peace and Development Project (PADEP) is providing a collaborative framework in which UNESCO and its partners, ECOWAS and the African Development Bank, develop **educational tools for the promotion of human rights education, citizenship and culture of peace, democracy and regional integration in the formal education system of 15 member States**. Specific reference tools, guides and manuals have been produced and capacity-building workshops and training delivered for teachers and educators. UNESCO is particularly active in Côte d'Ivoire, where reconciliation and the reconstruction of the education system are real challenges. UNESCO is developing training materials for use at the primary and secondary education levels, including specific tools for teacher training institutions to enhance education for human rights and citizenship for peace.

The project "**Education to citizenship and culture of peace**" in the 10 countries of the **Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)** is based on the work of two regional workshops. An intersectorial regional workshop (culture, science and education) entitled "Peace and Sustainable Development" incorporating aspects of education for sustainable development and climate change as well as culture, peace and citizenship was held in Yaoundé (Cameroon) from 15 to 19 April 2013 and allowed the validation of consultants' studies and the elaboration of a draft roadmap by country in order to bridge the identified gaps. A second regional workshop was held in Yaoundé (Cameroon) from 29 to 31 August 2013 to develop reference documents for the integration of education for peace and sustainable development in school curricula of ECCAS countries. This workshop also refined the analysis of the state of the curricular response to the question in the ECCAS countries. For the effective and efficient realization of the related curricula, using the example of ECOWAS, a project document was developed with harmonized orientations on **education to human rights, culture of peace, citizenship, democracy, regional integration and sustainable development in schools with the support of UNESCO**.

The "**Slave Route Project**" and "**Transatlantic slave trade**" education projects have continued to address discrimination in textbooks and other learning materials. In the framework of the Slave Route Project, and at the launch of the International Decade for People of African Descent, UNESCO organized a series of meetings and events to highlight the significant contribution of peoples of African descent to the construction and development of modern societies, and provided new directions in teaching and learning about the slave trade and slavery, their legacies (racism, discrimination and exclusion) and the challenges of reconciliation and learning to live together in post-slavery societies. In this context, the publication *The Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: New Directions in Teaching and Learning* was launched at the 190th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO.

In order to assist member States in the revision and adaptation of curricula, school textbooks and other learning materials to counter cultural, religious and gender-based stereotypes, a toolkit reflecting the values of respect for diversity, gender equality, global understanding and dialogue has been published. **A workshop to test the toolkit was organized in Rabat** from 6 to 9 May 2013, an exercise that involved representatives from several Arab States actually engaged in the process of revising their curricula. The project is supported by the Government of Saudi Arabia within the framework of the Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue.



Scientific cooperation to foster the dissemination of a culture of peace

Following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, UNESCO has been playing a significant role in several strategic domains identified in the outcome document of the Conference, entitled “The future we want” (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex), including the ocean, fresh water and science, technology and innovation for development. The UNESCO water family, headed by the international Hydrological Programme, is leading on behalf of UN-Water the celebrations in 2013 of the **International Year of Water Cooperation**, which was launched at UNESCO headquarters and is aimed at convincing the food, water and energy sectors to work together, rather than in silos, so as to create a more comprehensive and integrated approach to water management.

The culture of peace has also been advanced through UNESCO global efforts to map transboundary aquifers and bring countries that share them to plan jointly for future-oriented water resources management. The “**From potential conflict to cooperation potential**” project of UNESCO, aimed at fostering peace, cooperation and development related to the management of transboundary (both surface and aquifer) water resources, currently focuses on South-East Europe and the Middle East. In addition, the activities undertaken by UNESCO in the field of fresh water have contributed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, owing to their positive impact on environmental sustainability through the formulation of targets and indicators on fresh water.

As healthy ecosystems are a factor of peace, UNESCO continues its efforts to better understand and sustainably manage biodiversity, in particular through the Man and the Biosphere Programme and its transboundary biosphere reserves, collaborating with the International Hydrological Programme in cases involving fresh water. Within its **project on transboundary resources in Africa and case study on Lake Chad** initiated in November 2012, UNESCO developed a policy brief, which was launched at the end of June 2013 and disseminated as an advocacy tool for the preservation of Lake Chad. Also in June, a capacity-building workshop for the countries of the Lake Chad Basin was held, and in July discussions started on the development of a transboundary management framework for the Lake Chad Basin.

Empowering young women and men’s participation in building more democratic and inclusive societies

Promoting a culture of peace and non-violence in countries in transition is central to the interdisciplinary project of UNESCO on strengthening the empowerment of young women and men and their engagement, particularly in democratic processes, in order to promote intercultural dialogue and social inclusion. Initiatives are undertaken at the global, regional and national levels to promote the participation and empowerment of young women and men as agents of positive change within their communities. In this context, and as a follow-up to the road map for democracy and renewal in the Arab World developed in 2011, UNESCO supports member States of the region in their transition to democracy. UNESCO is using the framework of schools and participatory/active learning methods for the dissemination of democratic values through innovative tools, with special emphasis on the evaluation and planning of citizenship education, including the adoption of a human rights-based approach. **In Tunisia, UNESCO supports the implementation of a national strategy for the creation of 24 citizenship and human rights clubs**, with a view to reforming and generalizing civic education in primary and secondary schools. United Nations agencies in the country are mobilized around a dedicated task force and participate in this project. **In Egypt, a gender-sensitive manual on democracy** is currently being developed in collaboration with the Ministry of State for Youth, the Ministry of Higher Education and other stakeholders. An adaptation of a manual originally produced in Tunisia in 2011, it will be widely used in formal and non-formal education.

In Africa, where the aspirations of young women and men in many countries are challenged by political instability, as well as, in some cases, economic and social crises sometimes compounded by chronic conflicts, UNESCO implemented its strategy on African youth to mobilize youth groups around the theme of citizenship and non-violence, with an emphasis on violence prevention throughout election processes. **In Burundi**, community networks have been mobilized, leaders trained and the general population



sensitized through information and communications technology and advocacy campaigns, notably in view of the upcoming presidential elections in 2015. Training courses in civic engagement, democracy, participation and good governance, including the fight against corruption, were organized in October 2012 in cooperation with Réseau des jeunes en action pour la paix et le développement. In parallel, some 60 young Burundian men and women originating from 10 different communities were trained in social entrepreneurship in cooperation with other United Nations agencies. **In Liberia and Sierra Leone**, where presidential and parliamentary elections were held in late 2012, a number of activities were undertaken, including through social media and participatory training workshops on peace education and social inclusion, so as to promote reconciliation and violence prevention, in particular before, during and after the elections. As a follow-up to the capacity-building sessions initiated by youth organizations with support from UNESCO in 2012, these initiatives also contributed to fostering positive youth participation in electoral processes.

Many concrete initiatives were also undertaken in the field in this regard. In Africa UNESCO is providing, in collaboration with United Nations agencies and country teams, policy advice and technical assistance to support national Governments in reviewing or developing integrated and inclusive public policies on youth, with the participation of youth and concerned stakeholders (**Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Zambia**). UNESCO is also contributing to the development of representative and inclusive national youth structures, including in **Ghana**, where UNESCO supports the creation of a national youth parliament, through the organization on 27 and 28 February 2013 of a workshop in Accra to reflect on how young Ghanaians can become more active in politics. **In Egypt**, field research to collect the opinions of youth on their situation was conducted between 2012 and 2013 in order to open a policy dialogue between policymakers and youth following the Arab Spring.

In addition, a project to **Strengthen capacities for youth-led social entrepreneurship and promote the culture of peace in Africa** was implemented around the work of two regional Centers and UNESCO category II Institutes: the Guidance, Counseling and Youth Development Center for Africa (GCYDCA) in **Malawi**, which aims at training and developing expertise in guidance, counseling and youth development with relevant skills and content for the African region; and the African Union International Centre for Girls' and Women's education in Africa (CIEFFA) in **Burkina Faso**, which seeks to promote girls' and women's education with a view to their full participation in the eradication of poverty and the edification of a peaceful world for sustainable human development. The project, already underway, involves several steps:

- A mapping/needs assessment of existing training materials for youth on social entrepreneurship and different aspects relating to the promotion of a culture of peace in Africa, including those developed by UNESCO, GCYDCA, AU/CIEFFA and other organizations.
- The design of specific project modules on youth social entrepreneurship development and culture of peace with a view to consolidating existing expertise and addressing specific training gaps.
- The testing and piloting of modules in Malawi, through the GCYDCA, and in Burkina Faso, through the AU/CIEFFA. Training delivery includes the elaboration of a follow-up project proposal by the young trainees.
- The evaluation, upon completion of the pilot projects in Malawi and Burkina Faso, to assess the effectiveness of the modules, as well as the impact of the training on the beneficiaries.

UNESCO and the Centre for Prospective and Strategic Studies (CEPS), put in place **an International Fellowship “Springboard” for youth-led social entrepreneurship and the culture of peace in Africa**. The objective is to enable beneficiaries (aged between 21 and 35 years) to value their business plans and communicate around it, to reward the entrepreneurial initiatives along the lines of social cohesion and culture of peace, and to receive a human and financial support to amplify their efforts. The underlying goal is to build a generation of committed and responsible actors in Africa. The fellowship consists of a US\$ 20,000 grant, a one-year consulting accompaniment in human resources, legal, exports, accounting, marketing, communication, *etc.*, and a media coverage in the framework of the Award event.



Fostering dialogue and building peace through heritage, dialogue and creativity

In order to promote heritage and cultural creativity as powerful and unique tools for sustainable development, in particular with respect to economic success, social cohesion and mutual understanding, UNESCO has continued to harness its comprehensive normative framework in the field of culture. **Transboundary nominations, in the context of the 1972 World Heritage Convention**, and multinational inscriptions, in the context of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, have been supported by UNESCO as tools to promote regional integration and dialogue through international cooperation in the fields of heritage conservation and safeguarding.

UNESCO also pursued its initiatives aimed at strengthening the protection of culture in times of conflict. It has worked with the international community to prevent the destruction of or damage to cultural heritage and the trafficking of cultural property, stressing that cultural heritage and the values that it enshrines are a unifying force for reconciliation and peacebuilding. Such was the case in **Mali**, where UNESCO took action to help safeguard cultural heritage and cultural expressions, which suffered repeated attacks during the recent conflict. This entailed the distribution to military personnel of information on important sites to be protected during military operations prior to the military intervention in January 2013. The importance of cultural heritage to Malian identity, to restoring national unity and to laying the ground for future reconciliation was underlined during the Day of Solidarity with Mali, organized by UNESCO at its headquarters on 18 February 2013. Following the adoption of Security Council resolution 2100, by which the Council established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali with support for cultural preservation as one of the seven points defining its mandate, UNESCO has continued to work with United Nations partners to integrate the safeguarding of cultural heritage in peacekeeping operations and recovery efforts. In parallel, it has cooperated closely with the International Criminal Court in its ongoing investigation into the deliberate destruction of Malian cultural heritage and persecution based on cultural specificities.

With a view to enhancing mutual understanding between peoples, UNESCO continued the promotion, dissemination, translation into additional languages and pedagogic use of its General and Regional Histories, which highlight the contributions of the different cultures and civilizations to the general progress of humanity and the constant role of intercultural dialogue throughout human history. Pedagogical materials for primary, secondary and higher education have been developed by UNESCO on the basis of the **General History of Africa** with a view to improving history education in Africa and in other parts of the world.

In the same context of the pedagogical use of the General History of Africa, an e-Learning teaching tool on the role of women in African History was designed to expand and disseminate knowledge of the role of women in African history to counter prejudices and stereotypes. It also enables the development of ICT tools for knowledge acquisition and sharing that encourage the general education and ICT capacity of young women in the region, and promotes the use of ICTs and mobile learning to underline the links between education, technology and sustainable development. This e-Learning tool also offers an example of the use of how history, memory and dialogue of women can be used to promote peace, reconciliation and regional integration.

Media and information literacy for peace and non-violence

In order to mobilize the potential of communication and information to facilitate mutual understanding, respect for cultural diversity and peace, UNESCO has continued to advocate for the use of the media and information and communications technologies as instruments of peace and dialogue.

As community radio plays a key role in many aspects of the daily life of local communities, UNESCO has continued to help them develop their own programmes and organize debates on matters relevant to them in a language that they can understand, as in **South Africa**, where young people were trained to utilize



community radio with a view to promoting social inclusion, creating platforms for dialogue and building societies where peace is a reality for all.

UNESCO continued to promote the positive role that traditional and new media can have in making the culture of peace a tangible reality in **Uganda**, where the organization developed, on the basis of consultations with media professionals and existing material, a toolkit for media reporting on peace and reconciliation, including through print and radio. The toolkit also promotes the use of information and communications technology in peace education and giving a voice to women and students in Northern Uganda to promote a culture of peace and tolerance. The toolkit is being used for the training and mentoring of reporters, editors and citizen journalists in Uganda. In addition, in **South Sudan** activities started in 9 communities of Eastern and Central Equatoria, where 144 young people are trained in participatory video and community based media facilitators to gather and share the life stories of their peers and elders. The activities include training to children and young people (CYP) on using video for collecting stories, and weekly video session with the CYP groups on video production.

With a view to helping people navigate the constantly growing flow of information from a wide variety of sources, including the Internet, community radio stations and television, UNESCO has maintained its efforts in the field of media and information literacy, in particular in the Arab region and in sub-Saharan Africa, where a project was developed to help young people learn how to use media, including the Internet, and increase their knowledge and understanding of other cultures, notably through the inclusion in the material of an online course on media and information literacy and intercultural dialogue. In addition, an international conference was held from 26 to 28 June 2013 in **Nigeria** on the theme “Promoting media and information literacy as a means to promote cultural diversity”.

To address the challenging post-conflict situation in the **Mano River Union States of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire**, a project “**Educating young girls for peace in the Mano River Region**” was launched in 2012. UNESCO’s main partner is the Mano River Women’s Peace Network (MARWOPNET), established in 2001 to support full and equal participation of women within the democratic process, particularly in the decision-making structures related to peace and development through gender-sensitive programs and policies. The project aims at engaging young girls (12-24 years) in Peace Education programmes through radio, testimonies of young girls and how they rebuild their lives, causes of violent conflicts, conflict prevention methods and the role of women in the preservation of peace; at supporting functional literacy programmes for young girls, building first on modules that already exist for adult functional literacy, while engaging young out-of-school girls through participation in clubs and other organized activities; and, finally, to train journalists on women peace radios and in radio production skill in order to strengthen MARWOPNET’s continuous work for peacebuilding. This program shows significant progress:

- in **Côte d’Ivoire** where 600 girls from different communities on the Western Border with Liberia benefit from peace and restoration of social cohesion trainings leading to a deeper engagement in the peace process and the restoration of social cohesion;
- in **Liberia**, where the partnership with the Women in Peace Building Network (WANEP) addresses the low skills and competencies of rural young women in 5 communities, and enables them to share their entrepreneurial experiences on community radios, in relation with the way they sustain their families and ended violence towards them; and
- in **Sierra Leone**, where the partnership with the Mano River Women Peace Network (MARWOPNET) aims at capacity-building for full operationalization of the MARWOPNET radio stations in several counties.

In Mali, a project aims at **empowering youth in the post conflict situation of the country for reconciliation, peace and development through an increased access to, and use of, new information and communication technologies (ICT)**. The objective is to enable marginalized young people from Mali, to have access to, and knowledge of using ICT, to reach out beyond the confines of their physical isolation and separation, to actively engage with their counterparts in a collaborative quest for consolidating tolerance and peace, respect for each other, as well as for promoting intercultural dialogue through setting-up of specific information schemes for young people’s intercultural and interethnic interaction. As such, three specific activities will be implemented. First, the establishment of



offline and online discussion groups on peace, human rights, cultural diversity and universal values; second, the organization of training workshops in promoting conflict prevention and non-violent conflict resolution for young people, the use of ICT should improve their awareness about implications for young people's future and risks provoked by violent behavior and promote the respect for tolerance, cultural diversity and peaceful co-existence; and third, the training of young people on how to engage in on-and off-line collaborative project work as well as in conflict resolution (breaking stereotypes, coping with prejudice, inter-ethnic dialogue, tolerance skills etc.). The success of the project will greatly depend on the number of young empowered through training ICT for peace and development, the impact on efforts to improve the existing cooperation among young leaders from deprived zones, and the number of successful collaborative projects for, with and by youth designed and implemented along the above activities and priorities.



The culture of peace in the Operational Strategy for Priority Africa (2014 - 2021)

In order to respond to the challenges of development in Africa, as defined by Africans themselves, and reaffirmed by the African continental and regional organizations, UNESCO has developed an Operational Strategy for priority Africa¹⁶, covering short and medium term (4-8 years) and offers a prospective vision for the continent. Six Flagship programmes have been developed through a consultation process with regional organizations and Member States in 2012, in order to implement this strategy in the next four years. They revolve around two main areas of action for Africa:

- **building peace by building inclusive, peaceful and resilient societies;**
- **building institutional capacities for sustainable development and poverty eradication**

The first of the 6 Flagships programmes arising is entitled:

Promoting a culture of peace and non-violence

The expected results of this flagship programme, which include the involvement of all major programmes of UNESCO, are:

- Education to peace, citizenship, democracy and human rights is integrated into formal and non-formal teaching and learning systems and reinforce mutual understanding and social cohesion.
- General History of Africa is introduced and taught from primary to university levels and knowledge on Africa, the slave trade and slavery and on the cultural interactions generated, as well as the contribution and knowledge of Africa and its Diaspora to modern societies improved through heritage and contemporary creativity as transformative tools to enhance dialogue and peace.
- Elements of the intangible heritage are used to highlight the cultural practices of Africa and its diaspora promoting reconciliation, social cohesion and peace.
- Cross-border cooperation frameworks, providing for agreed and appropriate management tools, are established for the main hydrological basins in Africa and for the sustainable use of ecosystems shared by States. Special attention will be paid to establish joint initiatives among indigenous and scientific knowledge holders to co-produce knowledge to meet the challenges of global climate change.
- UNESCO-supported community radios transformed into spaces promoting intercultural and intergenerational dialogue and social cohesion. Young Africans' awareness raised in furtherance of dialogue and peace by the social media and mobile phone networks.
- The empowerment, civic engagement and democratic participation of young African women and men are promoted through inclusive youth policies and youth-led work on a culture of peace.

In addition, as part of **Coordination and monitoring of action for Africa** activities, another expected result will reinforce this Flagship programme:

- Regional organizations, Member States and civil society in Africa are mobilized for a Culture of Peace and join the “Make Peace Happen” campaign of the African Union.

¹⁶ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002224/222485e.pdf>



Action Plan for a Culture of Peace in Africa “Make Peace Happen”

This draft Action Plan targets all the components of African society: political leaders, national and regional institutions, civil society, community movements, youth and women’s movements, traditional and religious leaders, the business community and leaders of the private sector, among others, in order for all the stakeholders to take ownership of it and take inspiration from it in the designing and implementation of programmes and short-, medium- and long-term activities. The main axis of action and domains are¹⁷:

1. CULTURAL SOURCES AND RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN AFRICA

Objectives:

- 1.1. Value the contribution of African culture for dialogue and reconciliation
- 1.2. Strengthening links between Education and Culture to build educational curricula and effective training to promote the culture of peace in Africa
- 1.3. Develop the economy of culture, provider of employment for youth in the vision of sustainable development of the continent

2. THE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR THE PREVENTION OF CONFLICTS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

- 2.1. Promoting scientific cooperation and diplomacy for sharing trans-boundary resources
- 2.2. Strengthen the role of cosmogonies, traditional and indigenous knowledge for sustainable development
- 2.3. Developing green and blue economies, providers of employment for all and especially for youth.

3. YOUNG PEOPLE, ACTORS OF CHANGE FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

- 3.1. Promoting the involvement and the inclusion of youth in society
- 3.2. Developing the use of ICT and media, and valuing promising models for African youth
- 3.3. Valuing women’s role in African society as the custodian of values and promoting gender equality among youth

4. ACTIONS FOR CREATING A CONTINENTAL MOVEMENT UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE AFRICAN UNION AND UNESCO

Objectives:

- 4.1: Creating a continental and sustainable movement for peace, capable of mobilizing African States, the private sector, artists, African leaders, international organizations and actors of regional development as well as NGOs and grassroots organizations
- 4.2 Strengthening the AU “Make peace happen” campaign for raising public awareness – and in particular youth – about the role each can play to build and consolidate peace and non-violence in everyday life

¹⁷ The integral text of the Action Plan is available online at : <http://www.unesco.org/africa4peace>



Background

UNESCO'S FRAMEWORK OF ACTION FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE IN AFRICA

The «Culture of Peace» concept was first elaborated at global level by UNESCO during the International Congress on « Peace in the Minds of Men», held in **Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire in 1989**.

As a follow-up to this Congress, numerous resolutions, made by the Executive Board and the General Conference of UNESCO as well as by the United Nations General Assembly, enabled the establishment of a framework for action and many experiences of setting up programs for a Culture of peace at the national and international levels, throughout the 1990s. UNESCO's work led to the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the «**Declaration and Program of Action for a Culture of Peace** » (A/53/243) in 1999 and in celebrating the « International Year for the Culture of Peace» in 2000. This International Year was followed by the « **International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)** ».

Through its Resolution 52/13 of 1998, the United Nations General Assembly considers that a culture of peace consists «*of values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society*».

The Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace subsequently adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its Resolution 53/243 of 1999 focuses on eight action areas:

- **fostering a culture of peace through education**
- **promoting sustainable economic and social development**
- **promoting respect for all human rights**
- **ensuring equality between women and men**
- **fostering democratic participation**
- **advancing understanding, tolerance and solidarity**
- **supporting participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge**
- **promoting international peace and security**

In the framework of UNESCO Programme and Budget for the biennium 2012-2013, UNESCO committed to implement an «**Intersectoral and Interdisciplinary Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence**». "Building peace by building inclusive, peaceful and resilient societies" is one of two main areas of action for Africa of the **UNESCO Mid-Term Strategy (2014 -2021)**. In this context the **Operational Strategy for priority Africa** integrates the development of a Flagship programme entitled "**Promoting a culture of peace and non-violence**".

The "**Action Plan for a Culture of Peace in Africa**" adopted in Luanda (Angola), in **March 2013**, provides the framework: the objectives, the general recommendations and the proposals for action in favor of a Culture of Peace in Africa.

In its resolution 67/104, the General Assembly noted the pioneering role and the efforts of UNESCO to promote dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, as well as activities related to culture of peace, when it invited UNESCO to act as the lead United Nations agency for the **International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022)**.



Background

AFRICAN UNION'S STRATEGIC PLAN TO BUILD PEACE, SECURITY AND DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA¹⁸

The vision of the African Union is that of “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena”. In order to fully translate into concrete actions this vision, the Africa Union Commission which is the institution with the mandate to “drive the African integration and development process in close collaboration with member States, the regional economic communities and African citizens” has identified four strategic pillars:

- **Peace and Security**
- **Integration, Development and Cooperation**
- **Shared Values**
- **Institution and Capacity Building**

These pillars are the strategic focus around which the Commission implements programmes and actions which correspond to the major and current challenges facing the African Continent.

The African Peace and Security architecture (APSA) and the Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) framework are concrete tools for responding to the current and future security challenges and threats in the continent.

Shared values (solidarity, harmony, reconciliation and communalism) are also central to the AUC efforts directed at securing peace in Africa. The shared values framework encompasses areas such as governance, democracy, human rights, civil society participation, gender and culture and the celebration of the International Year of shared values (2012) including its Plan of action adopted by the DPA and AUC's partners are meant to strengthen Africa's contribution to global peace and democracy.

AUC programmes are linked to the building of high quality human capital in particular through the support of educational systems that are all inclusive and provide the necessary skills for building peaceful and stable societies.

On a continental level, the African Union has also launched a series of political initiatives and programmes aiming at achieving peace and sustainable development, e.g.:

- **International Campaign “Make Peace Happen” including the celebration of the International Day of Peace (21 September) and Peace building education initiative in Fragile States.**
- **African Charter for Youth and Plan of Action for Youth Decade (2009-2018)**
- **Year of Shared Values Plan of action (2012)**
- **African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance**
- **Africa Women's Decade (2010-2020)**
- **Panafrican University (with reference to education for peace and democracy)**
- **Conflict Prevention Policy Framework**
- **African Solidarity Initiative**
- **2063 Agenda for the Development of Africa**

¹⁸ AUC Strategic Plan 2014-2017



***« Since wars begin in the mind of men, it is in the mind of men
That the defences of peace must be constructed. »***

UNESCO Constitution

***“Any human life is a life.
It is true that a life appears with the existence before another but a life is not older,
More sizeable than another life,
Just as a life is not better than another one.”***

Manden Charter

Kourukan Fougan (13th Century)

***“Peace is reverence for life.
Peace is the most precious possession of humanity.
Peace is more than the end of armed conflicts.
Peace is a mode of behavior.”***

Yamoussoukro Declaration (1989)

“I am because you are.”

Ubuntu Proverb

“In the forest, when the branches quarrel, the roots embrace.”

African Proverb

