



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# 2030 perspective

STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION NEWSLETTER  
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## EDITO

### Let's Keep up a Constructive Dialogue!

UNESCO's Strategic Transformation kicked off in great shape during autumn 2018. Active interaction between the Secretariat and Member States took place during meetings of the Preparatory Group in June and September and the dialogue continued constructively at the Executive Board in October. The information session for Member States scheduled for 22 November will pursue its efforts to reach common objectives. In addition, we met with the two Staff Associations and a group of young colleagues. We have also introduced the process to several field offices.

This issue is dedicated to UNESCO's communication. This addresses a key objective of the Strategic Transformation, namely -repositioning UNESCO to effectively communicate with one voice and in an efficient manner.

We have interviewed the President of the General Conference and two Member States Representatives to learn more about their points of view. We also gave the floor to our colleagues, the co-leaders of the thematic Working Group on Communication, to talk about the expected results and the work-in-progress of the group. Our colleagues in the field in Hanoi, Kathmandu and Bamako shared their experiences and challenges to communicate UNESCO's actions to populations living in specific contexts.

The Strategic Transformation is our collective project. Let's keep up a constructive dialogue!

Support Unit  
for the Transformation

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## Transformation is our common challenge



H. Exc. Mrs Zohour Alaoui  
PRESIDENT OF THE 39th SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

### *What are your expectations for this Strategic Transformation?*

UNESCO's Strategic Transformation is necessary, to ensure that the Organization maintains its position in the international arena, in a more visible way. UNESCO has to adjust to today's realities, and at the same time be able to anticipate and respond to the world's challenges. UNESCO's role as a laboratory of ideas is therefore more relevant than ever.

I would say that the Organization has an overriding obligation to respond to the needs and expectations of countries and peoples. We must strengthen the links between these expectations and needs, and the work that we do at UNESCO.

I expect UNESCO to be more effective, more responsive to the realities in the field, and more proactive, not only in its operational activities but also in terms of foresight and anticipation. An organization that works with its Member States to solve the major educational, cultural and scientific issues of the 21st century is an organization that has an obligation to be relevant and efficient. This is precisely what I expect from the outcome of the Strategic Transformation.

### *What advice and suggestions do you have to ensure the success of this process?*

Transformation is a common challenge. I am fully confident in the sense of responsibility shared by the Member States and the Secretariat.

This being said, I believe it is important to underline that Transformation is a collective effort that must be coordinated with a clear methodology of work, with a view to ensuring that such a

process is conducted in a spirit of transparent and constructive dialogue between the Member States and the Secretariat. Synergy is key because the scope of the challenges is huge. As you know, the four thematic Working Groups are expected to share the progress of their work with Member States during an information meeting on 22 November 2018. This is a first step towards stronger synergy and coordination.

My message lies in three words: Trust, Dialogue and Commitment. Let us therefore maintain a constructive dialogue, strengthen UNESCO's position in the international landscape and have the audacity for change.

*“Transformation is a common challenge. I am fully confident in the sense of responsibility shared by the Member States and the Secretariat.”*

# Questions to Member States



H. Exc. Mr Pekka Puustinen  
**AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT DELEGATE  
OF FINLAND TO UNESCO**

## *How UNESCO could best reposition itself in the United Nations Development System?*

In my view, the Strategic Transformation process, at its best, enables UNESCO to regain its key position in the United Nations Development System. It is very useful to look at UNESCO's past and analyze why and how it was positioned the way it was, and also have a serious look into changing trends.

UNESCO is not a 'pure' aid agency in the same way as some UN Development Programmes and Funds are, but it plays a key role in its mandated areas. The Transformation process aims, among other things, at restoring trust and confidence of donor Governments and thus, in the longer run, at strengthening also the resource base of this beautiful Organization.

I take it as a good sign that UNESCO has taken very seriously its contribution and commitment to the newly established UN Resident Coordinator System. We simply need to be onboard, visible and delivering.

Reposition also necessitates focusing the scarce human and financial resources, opening up the Organization, and actively seeking for more partnerships, preferably through out of box thinking. We can also learn a lot by having a critical look at other UN organizations and analyzing the changes they have made.



H. Exc. Mr Ali Suleyman Mohammed  
**AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT DELEGATE  
OF ETHIOPIA TO UNESCO**

## *What can UNESCO do to improve communications on achievements?*

Communication's main role should be raising awareness of the goals and ideas not only within UNESCO but also among all stake holders:

- A digital strategy to leverage the potential of social media is important: all publications and multimedia content must be produced to fit online environments first, making print the by-product. Influencers should be engaged to communicate on UNESCO's activities, by traditional means as 'celebrity' Ambassadors but also through bloggers, alternative media, etc.
- Technical information should be proactively translated into digestible formats with emphasis on multilingual multimedia content.
- UNESCO should strategically use its vast network to circulate timely information and visibility materials on the sidelines of meetings. While investing on innovative communication, traditional media like TV and Print media, still matters: Pitching stories and major events should still be circulated through this network.
- Last but not least, UNESCO's website should be revamped to be a user-friendly experience that amplifies the Organization's messages.

## FIRST ACTIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON UNESCO'S COMMUNICATION



Revamp field offices websites



Enhance communication through Social Media



Make "UNESCO World Heritage" as a trademark and launch a licensing program



Review UNESCO's communication strategy

# Communicating results – a perspective from the field

● Michael Croft, **HEAD OF OFFICE, UNESCO OFFICE IN HANOI**

**Feedback from the recent Partners' Forum (September 2018) confirms the effective communication of results remains a crucial imperative and challenge for UNESCO. While the Working Group on Communication will recommend a number of remedial actions of the Strategic Transformation, what can field offices do now to best communicate results and position themselves to take advantage of coming changes?**

First of all, it's good to be honest about the challenge. At present, UNESCO does not deploy Communication Officers, so only offices having significant project portfolios are likely to create this position. Most make do with dedicated focal points who already have other responsibilities. So to communicate results, offices like Hanoi must leverage what is at hand, and use it efficiently.

## EVERYONE NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND THE BIG PICTURE

An office has to communicate around its country strategy. Its objectives are the primary focus for communications, providing the narrative and key messaging about UNESCO's programme. Without this link, even good results can appear disjointed, giving the impression of an organization that works in a random manner, especially when we consider the diversity of what we do. This is why it is important that the elaboration of the country strategy is a collective action involving all colleagues, so that everyone understands the big picture of what is being done and why. This enables the delivery of a consistent message to other UN agencies, Government, civil society and donors, and with consistency comes the credibility needed to mobilize resources.

## THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA

However, to communicate past the capital requires online platforms. While websites are good repositories of information, they are passive and do not attract an audience. For this social media is needed, which to apply depends on the context. In the case of

Viet Nam, this is Facebook (Vietnamese are in the top 10 users globally). Easy to use, it provides handy built-in analytics on who your viewers are. It doesn't demand complex content, photos with a sentence or two suffice, and it allows the sharing of material from other offices and Headquarters to ensure a high level of activity.

## ANIMATED VIDEOS AS A TOOL

What works best? Hanoi Office has found short, animated videos to be most effective. Cheap and easy to produce, they have multiple uses, working equally well to provide interesting content online or during the opening of functions or events. We are trying to have one for each area of significant focus, and have even come up with one for our country strategy.

## TAKING PART ON UN COMMUNICATIONS TEAMS

Finally, participation in the UN Communications Team in-country provides another useful platform for communicating results. As well, the Communications Team is the locus of agency expertise in the country and often the best place to pick up tips and best practice; most of my own relevant knowledge comes from previous experience chairing UN Communications Teams in Somalia and Libya, and the contacts from the other agencies still come in handy.

Ultimately, these actions require similar replication at the organizational level. But in leveraging what is at hand and working as a team, field offices can demonstrate the essence of the approach required.

*in figures*

81%

*of colleagues\* confirmed that they are able to clearly explain what UNESCO does.*

58%

*believe that they are kept informed of what is happening in UNESCO.*

only 52%

*of respondents are positive about their willingness to openly express their ideas and opinions.*

only 38%

*of respondents believe that information is shared openly and honestly with UNESCO.*

\* Overall, 1,966 (65% of UNESCO staff) respondents participated in the UNESCO Global Staff Survey 2018.

*in video*



## SPOTLIGHT

with Ernesto Ottone Ramirez and Moez Chakchouk

*What are the progress and expected results?*

# photo of the month

“Working as one”:  
Directors and Heads  
of fields engaged  
in a constructive  
discussion on Strategic  
Transformation, at  
Headquarters, on  
14 September 2018.



Photo: UNESCO

## What are Communication Challenges in Field Offices ?

### field offices

●  
Hervé Huot-Marchand  
**HEAD OF OFFICE  
UNESCO OFFICE IN BAMAKO**

●  
Christian Manhart  
**HEAD OF OFFICE  
UNESCO OFFICE IN  
KATHMANDU**

**2030**  
perspective

is a newsletter published by the  
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Contact:  
[Strategic-Transformation@unesco.org](mailto:Strategic-Transformation@unesco.org)

The views and opinions expressed in this article  
are those of the author and do not necessarily  
reflect the official policy or position of UNESCO.

#### BAMAKO

The challenges of communication in conflict and post-conflict countries, such as Mali, are linked to the very specific nature of this situation, characterized primarily by a state governance made difficult and complex by several demanding actors. This leads to decentralized governance that may even prove almost non-existent in some regions where insecurity is still high and difficult to overcome, because of asymmetric conflicts and multifaceted challenges. Communication also faces challenges related to the various past or continuing

violations of human rights and civil liberties in all their forms (physical, social, economic and cultural).

To address such communication challenges, UNESCO Office in Bamako acts in coordination with other United Nations agencies as well as with MINUSMA, within the framework of the United Nations Communications Group (UNCG), defining a coordinated communication strategy, organizing awareness raising, and advocacy activities around debates, radio broadcasts that are beneficial to both the Government and the communities.

#### KATHMANDU

One of the communication challenges we face in Nepal is the fact that the country has exactly 123 official languages, mainly due to the large number of different ethnicities. The UNESCO Office in Kathmandu has two education field coordinators based in the Far West and the Southern Terai regions, who both originate from there and are able to work in Nepali and the respective local languages, Maithili and Dodehi. Many of our local publications and community radio programs, for example on

comprehensive sexuality education, are disseminated in those and other local languages. This ensures that we reach many communities difficult to access.

Since 2014, we publish all texts on our website not only in English but also in Nepali, and this has increased our visibility all over the country considerably. We count on the UNESCO transformation process to also provide our office with the multilingual web platform, allowing us to publicize in more languages.