

Inputs by UN system for the 2014 SG report on the implementation of the IPoA

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| <p>Organization: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)</p> |
| <p>Decision made by the respective governing body on the mainstreaming and integration of the IPoA into the work programme: At its 186th session, UNESCO's Executive Board, adopted 186/Decision 15, which specifically mentions how UNESCO will mainstream and integrate the relevant areas of the IPoA into UNESCO's work (the reference of the document is available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001930/193025e.pdf - see 186 EX/Decision 15 (pg. 23, para.8).</p> |
| <p>Month and year of the decision: May 2011</p> |
| <p>Reference number of document: 186 EX/Decision 15.</p> |
| <p>Quote of the decision: After considering the Organization's programme and budget for 2012-2013 (36 C/5), the Executive Board of UNESCO stressed "the need to scale up efforts towards reducing inequalities and reaching the marginalized and the most vulnerable communities by further focusing action in favour of the least developed countries (LDCs), guided especially by the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011".</p> <p>The LDCs are also a priority group in UNESCO's new medium term strategy 2014-2021 (37 C/4), which notes that "specific focus will be given to the LDCs in line with the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, which includes among its priority areas: education and training, water and sanitation, science technology and innovation, climate change and environmental sustainability, disaster risk reduction, the development of ICT infrastructure and internet access, gender equality and empowerment of women as well as youth development." UNESCO's specific action covering these areas is contained in UNESCO's Programme and Budget for 2014-2017 (37 C/5).</p> |
| <p>Total amount and percentage of budget allocated to LDCs in 2011/2012 - 2012/2013:</p> <p>For the current programme and budget biennium (36 C/5), covering 2012-2013 period, UNESCO committed approximately USD 21, 5 millions (13, 8%) of Regular Programme activity budget and approximately USD 100, 1 millions (24%) of Extrabudgetary resources targeted the LDCs.</p> <p>UNESCO dedicated approximately USD 20,979,589 in Regular Programme resources and approximately USD 105,575,249 in Extrabudgetary resources to the 48 LDCs in 2010-2011.</p> |
| <p>Name of LDC Focal Point and organizational unit:</p> <p>Clare Stark, Strategic Planning Specialist, Office of the Assistant Director-General for Strategic Planning, Bureau of Strategic Planning, UNESCO</p> |
| <p>Main activities in favor of LDCs in 2012 and 2013:</p> <p>Promoting quality education, training and skills development in the LDCs</p> <p>During the biennium, UNESCO underscored the central role of teachers in improving education access, quality, equity and efficiency, and provided support to 24 LDCs in the field of teachers. Work in this area</p> |

was aligned to the new Teachers Strategy and the Initiative for sub-Saharan African countries. A number of capacity development activities focused on curriculum design and implementation, teacher management and the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) for teacher education were implemented at the country level including through extrabudgetary support such as the Capacity Development for Education for All (CapEFA) programme and funds-in-trust from the People's Republic of China. Similarly, the implementation capability of the International Institute for Capacity-Building in Africa (IICBA) was strengthened with additional human and financial resources.

Significant progress has also been made in the implementation of the three core areas of UNESCO's TVET strategy, which focus on three core areas, namely policy reviews and capacity development, normative work including setting international standards, monitoring and indicator development and knowledge sharing. Assistance was provided in the development of evidence-based TVET policies through policy advice and national reviews in 15 LDCs, in particular through the implementation of extra-budgetary projects. To increase UNESCO's outreach, the UNEVOC network has been revamped and a new model of operations to improve information sharing, including through on-line services, virtual discussions and e-platforms, has been developed, including for the benefit of LDCs.

UNESCO supported the development of 36 national action plans in literacy, with 9 LDCs having finalized their Literacy Acceleration Programme documents with the support of UNESCO. Two major events held at UNESCO Headquarters - the High-Level Round Table in September 2012 and the Colloquium on Literacies for the 21st century - helped raise the profile of and commitment of countries to literacy. The evaluation of the United Nations Literacy Decade provided another opportunity to take stock of the progress made and to identify the unmet challenges. The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) has been an important implementation partner in literacy efforts.

UNESCO supported some 19 LDCs and regional organizations in sector-wide education policy, planning and management. In Myanmar, UNESCO is playing a key role in supporting the country's Comprehensive Education Sector Review and also supporting the reform of sub-sectors such as TVET, teachers and higher education. The review is now in its finalization stage. The Sector also supports national capacity development in implementing Education Management Information Systems (EMIS). Among other activities, UNESCO supported countries of the Southern African Development Community in developing the capacities of their training institutions to analyse the EMIS situation and improve assessment tools and methodologies. The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) has worked closely with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to revise its Guidelines for Education Plan Preparation and Plan Appraisal and at country level, it is supporting the GPE-funded sector diagnosis and developing national education accounts which allow for a full mapping of financial flows in the education system in selected countries in Africa and Asia.

Supporting LDCs in mitigating and adapting to climate change

UNESCO provided targeted support to the LDCs through its dedicated climate change initiative and action plan, which focuses on strengthening the climate change knowledge base for science, assessment, monitoring and early warning and on promoting the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, notably through enhanced education and public awareness. Examples of some of these activities are listed below.

UNESCO and WMO brought together UNESCO stakeholders from biosphere reserves and World Heritage Sites, including from the LDCs, to discuss climate change resilience and adaptation measures at the regional level and to interact with the meteorological community on the provision and use of climate

services, as part of the process of developing a Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). The first regional Forum event was held in conjunction with a GFCS workshop on Climate Services at the National Level for the Caribbean, Trinidad & Tobago, 29-31 May, 2013. Workshops were also organized on Indigenous and scientific knowledge for weather forecasting as a basis for climate change adaptation in sub-Saharan Africa, and on the use of traditional calendars for informing climate change policies.

Through its Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development (CCESD) programme, UNESCO facilitated the educational response of LDCs to the challenges that climate change poses to exposed and vulnerable communities. UNESCO organized regional Experts' Meetings on Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development in Africa, SIDS and Asia and Pacific (up-coming). It has also coordinated five national capacity development programmes in pilot countries and started new country programs in the LDCs. These national CCESD programmes target policy makers, curriculum developers and teacher education institutions. Specific capacity development activities on integrating DRR into education plans and school programs also support LDCs to effectively mainstream DRR into their education system. UNESCO also partnered with the Sandwatch Foundation and Rhodes University to create a course entitled "Climate Change Education Inside and Outside the Classroom". Training workshops based on this course were successfully organized with secondary teachers, teacher educators, government officials and community educators from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all over Africa, including 17 African LDC countries.

UNESCO also strengthened climate change mitigation and adaptation in LDCs located in the Sahel and West Africa through action oriented-research in collaboration with regional and national research networks on the social dimensions of climate change, which also contributed to enhancing public awareness on climate change issues. Public awareness about the risks posed by climate change to the Himalayan ecosystem, and the ways in which some of these challenges might be mitigated was also promoted through national media training workshops organized in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka for journalists to report in a more accurate and informed way on climate change related issues.

A Regional Center for Climate Change and Decision Making to provide training programs for managers and leaders from the public and private sectors on comprehensive decision-making related to climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean was also established in Montevideo.

The Organization also contributed to enhancing resilience to global change, particularly climate change, in major mountain regions of Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America through improved understanding of vulnerabilities, opportunities and potentials for adaptation, and through the development of adaptation strategies and policies based on scientific evidence-based knowledge.

Promoting gender equality and empowerment of women

UNESCO provided support to the LDCs in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women through the implementation of its "Gender Equality Action Plan: 2008-2013," which focused on strategic actions implemented by all of UNESCO's major programmes in education, the sciences, culture and communication and information.

In the area of education, particular emphasis was given to six thematic areas (literacy programmes for girls and women, development of gender sensitive teacher policies; expanding equal access to secondary education and ensuring retention of girls and boys; special attention to inclusion of girls in national TVET programs, capacity development to prepare rights-based education sector plans and policies that are gender sensitive.) UNESCO's Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education was

catalytic in mobilizing significant extra-budgetary resources for the implementation of large scale projects at country level to tackle bottlenecks for girls' education such as literacy and secondary education. One example is the crowdsourcing girls' education project, funded by the Packard Foundation, which addresses school drop-outs and retention of secondary school girls in Ethiopia and Tanzania. Within the framework of the Partnership and following the high-level advocacy event "Stand-up for Malala - Girls' Education is a right", UNESCO received a contribution from the Government of Pakistan's for \$10 million to UNESCO's Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education to ensure the implementation of concrete interventions in favour of girls' education. The Partnership has also resulted in additional commitments of support from Member States and private institutions to promote girls' education and gender equality in education.

Since 2011, UNESCO has prioritized increasing the number of female professionals participating in its hydrological activities through water-related category 1 and 2 centres. From 2011 to 2013, UNESCO-IHE enrolled 472 women (37%) in its short courses, 198 women (44%) in its M.Sc. programmes and 49 women (37%) in its Ph.D. programme. Since May 2011, the UNESCO-L'Oréal For Women in Science Programme has rewarded ten outstanding women scientists from eight countries for their excellence in the physical and life sciences; 30 international fellowships to young women researchers from 26 countries; two special fellowships "In the footsteps of Marie-Curie"; 20 regional fellowships (sub-Saharan and Arab regions); and 375 national fellowships from more than 50 countries. The African Network of Scientific and Technological Institutions in partnership with UNESCO-L'Oréal Corporate Foundation awarded 20 Ph.D. fellowships in sub-Saharan Africa to increase the critical mass of women engineers and scientists in Africa as well as strengthen the research and innovation capacity of women scientists. UNESCO strove to increase women's participation in basic sciences in other ways as well. With partners including the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), it trained 130 women in mathematics and physics in Africa in a variety of events.

During the GEAP I, UNESCO invested in mainstreaming and scaling up its gender equality activities throughout its culture programmes in LDCs in recognition of the importance of gender equality for heritage protection and safeguarding, and the flourishing of the cultural industries. The Organization has worked with United Nations partners, including UN Women and the United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, to promote gender equality in the culture and development agenda.

UNESCO continued to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the LDCs through enhanced freedom of expression and access to information and knowledge. Besides mainstreaming a gender equality approach throughout all programmatic phases, particular activities sought to foster gender-balanced media content, enhance the status of women working in the media, and facilitate access to repositories that contain gender-related information.

Building capacities in Science, Technology and Innovation for sustainable development and poverty eradication

UNESCO, in partnership with the African Development Bank and the African Union Commission, provided a forum for Ministers of Education, Science and Technology and Finance to deliberate on effective and efficient use of science technology and innovation for human capital development, youth employment, sustainable development and inclusive growth. As a follow-up of the recommendations of the Forum, capacity building workshops for better governance in national STI policies were conducted for key STI stakeholders in more than 10 African LDC's countries. UNESCO provided policy advice in developing strategies for promoting industry-academia linkages, particularly by supporting the development of science park and technology business incubators. The Organization also provided

capacity building on the skills and tools needed to meet the dynamic needs of the private sector and enhance entrepreneurship among youth.

UNESCO actively supported the Inter-Agency Task Force on the establishment of the Technology Bank for LDCs, coordinated by UN-OHRLS, in the context of the IPoA and has contributed to the review of the existing mechanisms of technology transfer and technological innovations in LDCs within the context of the Organization's areas of competency in science.

In building capacities in renewable energy in LDCs, UNESCO continued its support towards strengthening the local knowledge base and promotion of sustainable energy access. Three regional summer schools were organised in Africa and South East Asia. They benefited respectively to twenty four African countries and twelve Asian countries. Concurrently, thirty fellowships were granted to representatives from LDCs for one month training on renewable energy technologies and their applications. In addressing global sustainability and climate change, UNESCO is furthering its activities in LDCs by promoting use of renewable energy technologies in UNESCO Sites and building capacities on sustainable energy applications and governance and definition of related energy policies. To serve as a field observatory for local development a project involving the installation of solar powered systems in public facilities was implemented in Malawi. Partnership with leading governmental and intergovernmental institutions was successfully mobilised for renewable energy applications in addressing sustainable development purposes in LDCs.

A new Capacity Development Strategy was formulated in consultation with LDCs and SIDS to strengthen national institutions, individual skills and knowledge, and national science-policy frameworks in the short and long term. A workshop was organized in New York from 14-17 May 2013 in collaboration with the UN-OHRLS and UN-DOALOS to obtain their views and priorities for the draft CD strategy. Additional workshops are planned with countries and donors to validate the strategy for partnerships and funding.

Promoting environmental sustainability and disaster risk reduction

In the area of disaster risk reduction, UNESCO supported LDCs through capacity building to address flood issues, prepare national flood programmes, and to promote exploration of groundwater resources for emergency situations to combat droughts in the Horn of Africa. Capacity building support was also provided to the LDCs in assessing their groundwater resources, improving their water resources management and identifying transboundary aquifers.

UNESCO, through its IOC Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), and in partnership with the Global Ocean Forum, started conducting a global and regional assessment of capacity development needs in the field of marine scientific research and ocean observation, especially in LDCs and SIDS, so as to formulate and implement a global strategy to address these needs through partnership with countries, donors, UN Agencies, global financial institutions and the private sector.

UNESCO-IOC also established a Sub Commission for Africa and the Adjacent Island States (IOCAFRICA) in May 2012 to promote regional and international cooperation for the understanding and management of the African ocean and coastal ecosystems. This sub-commission developed a Strategic Plan for 2014-2021 focusing on: (i) increasing the understanding of ocean and coastal processes around Africa, and how they impact on environment and resource; (ii) Increasing the technical capacity for monitoring and early warning for coastal and oceanic hazards; (iii) improving understanding of how the African Oceans and Coastal Areas will be impacted by changing climates; and (iv) enhancing capacities of experts and institutions in Africa for research and management of the coastal and marine resources. The

Commission is currently working to implement the plan.

In the Pacific, the UNESCO-IOC has been working with LDCs in the region to develop National Tsunami Response Plans, using a common format and structure to streamline such plans across the region in collaboration with SOPAC.

In the Caribbean, the IOC/UNESCO Sub-Commission for the Caribbean (IOCARIBE) implemented a project with UNDP and UNEP to demonstrate approaches for nutrient and sediment reduction at selected pilot study areas in the wider Caribbean.

To reinforce the transmission of local knowledge and to improve healthcare to marginalized communities in LDCs and SIDS, UNESCO supported meetings of traditional medicine practitioners in Comoros and Madagascar. In these meetings, tradipractitioners came together to develop good practice and ethical guidelines and to suggest improvements to policy and research on traditional medicine. The transmission of indigenous knowledge was also reinforced through a series of workshops in Marovo Lagoon, Solomon Islands, to train teachers to use and further develop a wiki-based educational resource with over 1,200 unique entries on Marovo knowledge and language relating to their reef and rainforest environments.

Promoting culture as a powerful engine for sustainable economic growth to generate income and stimulate employment¹

LDCs were a particular focus of UNESCO's work in strengthening national capacities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage as a key component of viable sustainable development strategies. A global capacity-building strategy provided tailored 18- to 36-month long projects addressing the core concepts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: revision of policies and legislation, development of inventory methods and systems, and enhancing practical skills in developing safeguarding plans or submitting nominations to the Convention's Lists, always involving the widest possible participation of the communities, groups or individuals whose heritage is concerned. In 2012 and 2013, 16 LDCs benefitted from such projects: 9 in Africa, 6 in Asia and 1 in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In 2012-2013, the main activities in favor of LDCs implemented by the Secretariat of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions were the International Fund for Cultural Diversity, the UNESCO-EU Technical Assistance Project 'Strengthening the system of governance for culture in developing countries' and the Capacity-Building Programme in Africa.

Under the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD), a total of US\$ 677,000 was allocated to implement projects that contribute to the emergence of a dynamic cultural sector and development of cultural industries in the following LDCs: Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Haiti, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

Under the UNESCO/EU funded project 'Strengthening the system of governance for culture in developing countries', a total of US\$ 500,000 was allocated to technical assistance missions and follow-

¹ Although culture and development is not specifically mentioned in the Istanbul Programme of Action, UNESCO has been providing targeted support to the LDCs in this area.

up activities in the following LDCs: Burkina Faso, Cambodia, DRC, Haiti, Malawi and Niger. The goal of the technical assistance missions was to support countries in their efforts to establish legal / institutional frameworks for the development of national culture sectors and to introduce policies that address the role of culture in social and economic development, particularly through cultural industries.

Finally, under the Capacity-Building Programme in Africa, a total of US\$ 150,000 was allocated to identify and train key actors and stakeholders in the field of cultural and creative industries from 17 African LDCs. These professionals were trained through regional workshops with the aim of build national technical and institutional capacities to boost the production, promotion, distribution and enjoyment of cultural expressions in Africa. In addition to the training, an online information sharing tool “The 2005 Convention in Africa” was launched in 2012.

A number of awareness-raising meetings on the importance of the underwater cultural heritage and its potentials as a catalyst for economic, touristic and cultural development were held all over the world. Many LDCs such as Cambodia, Samoa, Yemen, Haiti, the United Republic of Tanzania or Solomon Islands participated in these meetings and adopted their recommendations. UNESCO has contributed through these meetings to the exchange of experiences and to fostering the international cooperation in the protection and social benefiting of the underwater cultural heritage.

Funding for World Heritage Site conservation projects, as well as financing for experts to participate in the World Heritage Committee sessions, which results in hands-on capacity building and the creation of effective networks, was provided to a number of LDCs.

Supporting communication and information for development

UNESCO contributed to the capacity development of community media organizations in the LDCs. Journalists were also trained on election reporting and media ethics. Sensitization of media professionals on media development issues took place in celebrating international days such as World Radio Day (13 February 2013), World Press Freedom Day (3 May 2013) and the International Day of Disaster Risk Reduction (13 October 2013). UNESCO facilitated the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity through the development of country action plans to address the most pressing issues related to the safety of journalists. Information professionals were also brought together to discuss the importance of archives in the development process. Internet governance issues were addressed in a number of LDCs, including through a study on Women and Cybercrime. Finally the impact of ICTs in the fields of education, science and culture were also enhanced through the promotion of ICT Teacher training materials to be released as Open Education Resources (OERS), the development of an online Open-Source Map and the development of an online wiki platform on ICTs in local languages. UNESCO also contributed towards the mainstreaming of gender in media, in supporting national NGOs and community media organizations to better integrate gender issues into content production.

Supporting youth development

With regard to youth, in the framework of the African Youth Strategy, a number of African Member States engaged in reviewing or developing their policies affecting youth. UNESCO contributed to building capacities for youth civic engagement, leadership, social entrepreneurship and innovation in Burundi, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Zambia. In Central America, three new initiatives on violence prevention based on the Open Schools-Open Spaces programmes were. In the Caribbean, seven new initiatives of the Youth Path project, which builds capacities of youth in employability skills were completed. In the

Arab States, action focused on the development of policies affecting youth; and on democracy building and youth civic engagement. In the Asia-Pacific region, support was provided for the development of new national youth policies, and for the review of national youth policy and the promotion of civic engagement by youth. Through the UNESCO and UNICEF initiative “My World My SIDS”, young people from SIDS, including LDCs from the AIMS, Caribbean and Pacific, worked with UN agencies, regional institutions and NGOs to be part of the process for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing states (SIDS) scheduled to be held in Apia in September 2014.

Global Priority Africa

UNESCO also provided targeted support to those LDCs located in Africa, as Africa is a global priority for all of UNESCO’s major programmes. Highlights of major actions include: (i) assistance for science-policy design and development; (ii) the implementation of the African Union Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology; (iii) the implementation of the recommendations adopted at the conference on science, technology and innovation (STI); (iv) the promotion of Africa’s cultural and natural heritage and development of expertise, (v) sustainable management of the environment, biodiversity and natural resources, (vi) socio-professional integration of young Africans and their participation in the preservation of peace and in development.

Specific support provided to LDCs in support of their graduation and smooth transition in 2012 and 2013:

See activities mentioned in the section above

New activities planned for supporting the implementation of the IPoA:

During UNESCO’s 2014-2017 quadrennial programme and budget cycle, the Organization will support the implementation of the IPoA by assisting LDCs in **developing education systems that provide quality lifelong learning for all learners, at all levels and in all settings of education**. Priority will be given to the following five thematic areas: developing effective policies and sector-wide plans; maintaining a holistic approach to education while giving priority to three sub-sectors -- literacy, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education; addressing the acute shortage of qualified teachers as a key strategy to improve the quality of education; improving learning processes and monitoring of learning outcomes at various levels to provide more evidence about how learning takes place and its implications for pedagogy and curricula; and promoting information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education to improve access to knowledge, facilitate its dissemination and ensure more effective learning;

UNESCO will also support the LDCs in advocating for education as a key development priority in the education-related development agenda post 2015, as also reflected in the Istanbul Programme of Action. The Organization will work with the LDCs, in coordination with EFA partners, in a last ‘big push’ to accelerate progress towards EFA and facilitate equal partnerships and technical cooperation between developing countries and new donors; and continue efforts to build a broad coalition of partners for education to share knowledge and experiences among diverse stakeholders in education.

Support will also be provided to the LDCs in strengthening their **science, technology and innovation systems and policies**. International scientific cooperation will be promoted to address the critical challenges to sustainable development that LDCs are facing, namely through promoting the generation and sharing of knowledge in relation to natural resources, and capacity building through international

scientific collaboration for protecting and sustainably managing the ocean and coasts, terrestrial ecosystems, biodiversity, freshwater security and the management of the Earth's geological resources. The promotion of disaster risk reduction related to natural hazards will be pursued in particular through building capacity in early warning systems and assessments for tsunamis and other ocean-related hazards, floods and landslides to reduce risks and enhance preparedness and resilience.

Although not mentioned in the Istanbul Programme of Action, UNESCO will support the LDCs in advocating for culture as an enabler and driver of sustainable development, with a view to integrating culture into the Post-2015 Development Agenda. In this regard, targeted support will also be provided to the LDCs in developing dynamic cultural and creative industries, particularly mechanisms that foster local production of cultural goods and services, the development of local markets and access to platforms for their distribution/exchange worldwide to highlight the role of cultural and creative industries in poverty alleviation through job creation and income creation.

UNESCO will continue to support LDCs in utilizing **communication and information for development** in the 2014-2014 budget and programme cycle by promoting freedom of expression, press freedom, media development and universal access to information and knowledge.

Support will also be provided to the LDCs in the areas of **youth development**, in line with UNESCO's Operational Strategy on Youth for 2014-2021, namely by:

- Providing upstream policy advice and capacity development for the formulation or review of transversal and inclusive public policies on youth
- Fostering youth civic engagement and supporting youth-led or youth-focused initiatives enabling democratic participation, social innovation and community building
- Supporting the UN Secretary-General's five-year Action Agenda and the World Programme of Action for Youth.

Support will also be provided to those **LDCs located in Africa**, through UNESCO's new 2014-2021 operational strategy for Africa, which was prepared through wide consultations with a number of internal and external partners, including the African Union Commission (AUC), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), African specialized institutions and Africa's development partners. It reflects the African Union's vision, identifies current and emerging challenges that must be taken up on the continent and sets strategic objectives within the purview of the Organization's overarching objectives and the major fields of action for Africa during the period covered by UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy.

Support will be provided to the LDCs in promoting **gender equality and the empowerment of women** through the implementation of UNESCO's Priority Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2021 (GEAP II), which describes the actions UNESCO will take in all its fields of competence between 2014 and 2021 to contribute fully and actively to the pursuit of women's empowerment and gender equality efforts in its Member States.

Analysis of progress of LDCs in the priority areas of the IPoA relevant to the work of the organization

Progress across the LDCs in the priority areas of the IPoA relevant to UNESCO's work, namely education and training, water and sanitation, science technology and innovation, climate change and environmental sustainability, disaster risk reduction, the development of ICT infrastructure and internet access, gender equality and empowerment of women, and youth development has been uneven.

To accelerate progress in these areas, the IPoA should be better aligned with national development

strategies, and UNCTs should align their activities with the goals and targets of the IPoA. The practical investments and resources needed to advance the IPoA goals and translate them into short and medium-term plans with budget frameworks also need to be identified. In addition, appropriate monitoring frameworks need to be developed to adequately measure progress in achieving the IPoA goals.

While national ownership and leadership is critical to achieving the goals and objectives of the IPoA, more concerted international attention and action is also needed to fill the gaps in resource mobilization and to support policy coherence and institution building for the LDCs.

It also important to align the goals and objectives contained in the IPoA with the post-2015 development agenda, which is currently being negotiated in New York.

Other remarks: