



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# 2030 perspective

STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION NEWSLETTER  
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## NOTES FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

### Current Progress and the Way Forward

The Strategic Transformation process is advancing from analysis to action. The Working Groups have made significant progress in the initiatives they developed since the start of Pillar 2, aimed at strengthening UNESCO's means of action.

Promoted by the Working Group on Operational Efficiency, a revised Delegation of Authority policy is being implemented. This not only facilitates strategic thinking but also empowers colleagues and allows for quicker decisions. A new mobility policy has been launched and improvements to the performance evaluation management are underway.

For UNESCO's Communication, much progress has been made to develop a new strategy on communications. Additionally, an Internal Communication Board has been set up to improve internal communication.

With regard to Strategic Partnerships, a list of preliminary recommendations for the update of the Comprehensive Partnership Strategy has been developed as a result of close collaboration between the Working Group and the Bureau of Strategic Planning.

The Working Group on UNESCO's Global Presence developed provisional criteria and principles for UNESCO's presence in the world, which will be presented to the upcoming Executive Board.

Pillar 3 of the transformation, aimed at strategic positioning for 2030, is starting soon and will focus on global consultations on strategic thinking.

The Strategic Transformation is on track and I am confident that the changes it is bringing will be seen throughout the Organization.

Xing Qu,  
Deputy Director-General, UNESCO

## UNESCO' first Structured Financing Dialogue – a transformative initiative rooted in UN Reform

Jessica Jeavons  
CHIEF, SECTION FOR MOBILIZING  
GOVERNMENT PARTNER RESOURCES,  
BUREAU FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

On 11 and 12 September 2018, UNESCO held its first Partners' Forum. The Forum is rooted in a reform initiative of the United Nations General Assembly which invites all UN Funds, Programmes and specialized agencies to discuss with a broad range of their partners how to finance the development results in their respective plans. This first Structured Financing Dialogue gives important pointers about how UNESCO can optimize its future engagement with partners to attract resources for its programme.

### HARNESSING UNESCO'S RICH NETWORK OF PARTNERS

The objectives of UNESCO's Partners' Forum were twofold: to create a strong enabling environment to strengthen the resourcing of UNESCO's programme and encourage existing and new partners to support and engage with UNESCO on its programme.

Generously funded by Sweden and mobilizing over 760 participants, the Forum was an exuberant illustration of UNESCO's convening power and attractiveness to partners that shed light on how various partners are working with UNESCO. Most of UNESCO's donors have a clear view on their own portfolio with UNESCO and good knowledge of the areas they are supporting, but they do not necessarily know how other partners are working with UNESCO, nor have the complete picture of UNESCO's programme as a whole. The Partners' Forum contributed to addressing these gaps and highlighted opportunities for evolving multi-stakeholder partnerships.

### TOWARDS OPTIMIZING STRUCTURED FINANCING DIALOGUES

The UNESCO Partners' Forum is highly relevant for the Strategic Transformation because it offers a forward-looking model for engaging existing and potential partners in UNESCO's programme. Careful attention has been given to piloting new guidelines and methodologies that can be used for future events and to obtaining feedback and ideas from all key stakeholders. Staff, Member States and other partners were invited to give their feedback and suggestions for improvement. An on-line survey was launched, and an external study was conducted.

It is therefore important to distill the experience into a set of key lessons learned to be discussed at the upcoming Executive Board, so that together we can optimize Structured Financing Dialogues as a tool for strengthening resource mobilization and building enduring partnerships at UNESCO.

# Concrete actions of the Working Group on Strategic Partnerships

## ● Involving key stakeholders in the update of UNESCO's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy

● **One key focus area of the Working Group on Strategic Partnerships is the update of UNESCO's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy which dates from 2013, and is up for review this year.**

● To ensure the relevance, impact and sustainability of the updated strategy, getting all the key stakeholders engaged from the outset has been a top priority. Hand-in hand with the Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP) which is coordinating the update of the strategy, the Working Group convened a workshop on 18 December 2018 to bring together UNESCO staff from Programme Sectors, Corporate services and UNESCO Field Offices to catalyse some preliminary thoughts on new directions for UNESCO's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy.

### ● **NEW DIRECTIONS FOR UNESCO PARTNERSHIPS**

● Amongst the main conclusions of the workshop were the need to situate the new partnership strategy in the wider context of UN Reform and frame it within the UN definition of Partnership which emphasizes the importance of common purpose, mutual accountability and a willingness to share risks as well as the benefits of Partnership. Priority should be given to partnerships that strengthen the impact and visibility of UNESCO's programme. The workshop also

highlighted the need to include UNESCO partners who are not formally mentioned in the current strategy such as the EU, the International Financial Institutions and Regional Economic Communities and strengthen engagement with key constituencies and networks such as young people, businesses and cities. Better and more assertive communication was considered to be one of the key factors in creating a better enabling environment for partnerships.

### ● **SHIFTING STRATEGIES FOR A MORE OPEN UNESCO**

The update of the Comprehensive Partnership Strategy which is an item on the agenda of the Spring Session of the Executive Board is also a very timely opportunity to capture the ideas of UNESCO Member States. The final strategy which captures both the Director-General's vision for a more modern, open Organization and which has been shaped by the collective brainstorming of its Secretariat and its Member States will be presented to the Fall Session of the Executive Board in October 2019.

actions  
in  
motion

## ● Meaningful Engagement with Youth

● **The Strategic Transformation's evolving engagement with youth is driving the ongoing creation of a network of young staff of UNESCO to prioritize and enhance the role of youth in decision-making processes and harnessing the potential of young staff members in the efforts to successfully be in line with the UN 2030 agenda.**

● For the Working Group on Strategic Partnerships, youth are one of the key constituencies to strengthen engagement with. As such, the Working Group has been dedicated to involving youth as partners, internally and externally, as stipulated in UNESCO's Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021).

### ● **YOUTH INVOLVEMENT AND ITS ADDED VALUE**

● In November of 2018, young staff members met with the Deputy Director-General on how to contribute to the Strategic Transformation, and the meeting served as inspiration for increased engagement of youth and how they can contribute to the Strategic Transformation.

Following discussions with the Transformation Support Unit, it was decided that young UNESCO staff be integrated in the Thematic Working Groups, as it was agreed that their involvement would be characterized by the added value and innovation they bring to all UNESCO processes, programmes and projects.

Additionally, a workshop on Meaningfully Engaging with Youth in UNESCO's Strategic Transformation has been undertaken with senior management and with members of the Thematic Working Groups, with the purpose of enhancing and mainstreaming meaningful youth engagement practices across all UNESCO Strategic Transformation process.

## Recent Progress of the Working Groups of the Strategic Transformation (as of March 2019)



A new **delegation of authority policy** has been approved by the Director-General.



A new **policy on mobility** has been approved by the Director-General and issued and it will be accompanied by planned management training.



**Revamp of talent management systems** currently ongoing.



A thorough analysis of all communication aspects conducted for the review of an **external communication strategy**.



A new **social media policy** together with a **toolkit** is being completed, and will be issued in April 2019.



New **Internal communication Board** has been established.



**Mapping of current UNESCO partners** has been finalized.



**Mapping of global foundations** has been finalized.



**Performance management** for Directors and Heads of Field Offices has been enhanced.



**Provisional principles and criteria for UNESCO's global presence** in the field have been developed.



**Decentralized resource mobilization initiative** launched; recruitment of officers in 5 Field Offices currently ongoing.



**UNESCO's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy** has been reviewed.

### ANNOUNCEMENT .....

Hubert Gijzen, Director of the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa in Harare, has joined, since March 2019, the Steering Committee of the Strategic Transformation as the co-leader of the Working Group on Strategic Partnerships.

## EVOLUTION OF YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN THE STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION WORKING GROUPS

### November 2018

*Deputy Director-General meets with 40 young employees to discuss increasing engagement of youth in the Strategic Transformation.*

### December 2018

*Transformation Support Unit & young staff members discuss methods of youth participation in the Strategic Transformation.*

### January 2019

*Young staff members hold town hall meeting to deliberate the selection mechanism for new youth members of the Working Groups. Additionally, 172 young UNESCO employees express interest in being part of an internal youth network to enhance the role of youth in decision-making processes.*

### January 2019

*18 young staff members expressed interest in being selected for a Working Group & 95 young employees participated in the voting process, electing 8 youth members to participate in the Working Groups.*

### February 2019

*Onboarding meeting held to define roles and responsibilities for the selected young Working Group members into their respective Group.*

### March & April 2019

*Senior managers engage with young UNESCO staff in a series of meetings that seek to evolve the role of youth in the Organization.*

## in video



## SPOTLIGHT

with Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education

*What are the progress and expected results?*

# photo of the month

## “Igniting the spirit of youth“

Young UNESCO staff ‘jumping’ at the opportunity to take part in the Strategic Transformation process.

In January, eight young colleagues were integrated into the Thematic Working Groups amidst an active ongoing effort to increase the participation level of youth in UNESCO’S decision making.



Photo: UNESCO

## Strategic Partnerships in the field

Sara Noshadi

**COORDINATOR  
MOSUL INITIATIVE- CULTURE  
CABINET OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL**

### CONFLICT/POST-CONFLICT ZONES

The strategic partnership of primary importance in a conflict zone is actually the one with the host country which is ultimately responsible for coordinating the international aid and funding coming into the country. A partnership can only be strategic if the host country considers a partnership important enough to contribute to it financially. Such partnership opens the way for cooperation with major donors in terms of fundraising and coordination with other UN agencies in terms of programming.

A successful example is the Afghanistan National Program for Culture and the Creative Economy (NPCE) which was

established in coordination with the government of Afghanistan in 2016, who also provided significant seed funding prior to receiving any donor contributions. National ownership of the NPCE is high. The program is governed by a Steering Committee consisting of five Afghan Cabinet Ministers, UNESCO and donors contributing over 1 million USD per year. Since the establishment of the programme, the Afghan government has contributed 3.25 million USD to all its thematic areas. Italy has contributed 4 million euros to its thematic area related to preservation of built heritage and the EU has contributed 3 million euros to its thematic area related to “the Right to Culture”.

Laurent Ndaywel  
Mbosele

**PROJECT MANAGER, “TRAIN MY  
GENERATION: GABON 5000”,  
UNESCO OFFICE IN LIBREVILLE**

### SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The Train My Generation (TMG) project is the first partnership to be established between UNESCO and a private company based in sub-Saharan Africa. Our editorial team interviewed the TMG project manager.

#### What was important in the design and implementation of the project?

Designing of the project began in 2014. The goal was to address Gabon’s specific need to train young people in information and communications technology (ICT). The programme which was developed has four components, including one leading to the training of young people that could be used directly or indirectly by Airtel, one of Gabon’s main mobile telephone operators.

UNESCO’s involvement has brought a guarantee of conscientiousness and competence to the project, which bolstered its national and international image.

#### What lessons can be learned from the experience?

UNESCO is a link between two other types of partners: the company and the country. Partnership projects must therefore be in the country’s interest and be aligned with its strategy. The same is true for the company and UNESCO. In brief, the project must be aligned with three institutional parties: the country, the company, and UNESCO. The value of each party must be duly acknowledged.

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is a newsletter published by the  
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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.