



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

**Address by Mr Frank la Rue,
Assistant Director-General in charge of Communication and
Information of UNESCO
on the occasion of the 61st IPDC Bureau Meeting**

UNESCO, 21 March 2017

Chairperson of the IPDC Council,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Director-General, I am honored to address you on this occasion of the 61th Session of the IPDC Bureau meeting. I want to make a few remarks as to how the IPDC Secretariat has performed since the last Bureau meeting. I will do this by sharing some information on three things: (i) IPDC project support; (ii) special initiatives on knowledge-driven media development, journalism education, media development indicators and safety of journalists; and (iii) how the IPDC integrates within the larger vision of the CI Sector.

Taking IPDC's project support as a starting-point, I wish to report that the programme's activities have continued to play a key role in the CI Sector, allowing media development interventions in more than 40 countries. This cannot be underlined enough. Even though IPDC allocations are relatively small, they provide the strategic seed-funding that allows UNESCO field offices to maintain a sustainable line of action in the media development field at the local level. This is particularly needed in countries that are not priorities for bilateral donors. The range of project proposals received shows how integral to the entire CI Sector the IPDC is. At the initial round, we received over 200 expressions of interest in IPDC funding. After the second round, we got in over 120 applications which, after further screening, came down to 114, with an asking amount of about US\$3,000,000. The 114 projects validated for your consideration during this meeting cover a wide range of themes – all of which are central to the CI Sector as a whole. These include:

- Community radio (23 projects)

- Gender in media (21 projects)
- Data collection and reporting for SDG 16.10 (2 projects)
- Hate speech in media (6 projects)
- ICTs/digital innovation training for journalists (7 projects)
- Investigative journalism training (9 projects)
- Journalism curricula review/improvement in formal schools of journalism (4 projects)
- Journalists safety protection (16 projects)
- Legislative and Policy reform on Press freedom law (7 projects)
- Legislative and Policy reform on Right to Information (3 projects)
- Media research (6 projects)
- Training for climate change/environmental reporting (9 projects)
- Training for elections reporting (1 project)

All these projects respond to very real needs in our national, regional and international media landscapes. They do require higher levels of funding than the IPDC currently has. Even as interest in project submissions has surged, it has not been matched by the availability of funds. What this means is that this year we can only support projects to a possible tune of just over US\$700,000. The financing gap means there is large unexploited potential media environment in which the power of information and communication to help realise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be compromised even at this early stage of implementation within nation-states.

I know the IPDC Chairperson has stepped up her fundraising efforts, along with the Secretariat, but only governments, with your persuasion, can make things happen.

The second component of IPDC work concerns special initiatives, which are included in a special report. However, in brief, I want to emphasise the following points:

1. With respect to the Knowledge-Driven Media Development initiative, IPDC's role has been enhanced through rising to the challenge of the global reporting obligations placed on UN agencies for the Sustainable Development Goals. As such, the IPDC is lifting the banner of UNESCO as a custodian and contributing agency by reporting on the two UNESCO-backed indicators agreed by the UN Statistical Commission. They cover public access to information and the safety of journalists. These indicators will be presented, along with all the others, to the UN General Assembly later this year, but global

reporting on their progress has already commenced within the UN System.

2. As regards the Global Initiative for Excellence in Journalism Education, the IPDC has partnered with Pancasila University of Indonesia and the Orbicom Secretariat in Montreal to host this year's annual conference of UNESCO Chairholders in communication who are members of the Orbicom network. The conference will be held from 4 to 7 May in Jakarta, Indonesia, alongside the World Press Freedom Day event. More importantly, the conference is being co-organized by the newly established UNESCO Chair on Communication and Sustainable Development at Pancasila University, who will contribute towards a more scholarly reflection on, including undertaking research into, the role of media and communication in the achievement of the 17 SDGs.
3. In connection with Media Development Indicators (MDIs), the IPDC has now covered almost 40 countries. Since 2014, studies have been completed or are almost completed for Bolivia, Brazil, Curaçao, the Dominican Republic, Libya (partial assessment), Jordan, Madagascar, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Palestine, South Sudan, Swaziland and Uruguay, with some reports generating policy dialogues in Jordan, Mongolia and Curaçao.
4. As for the Journalists Safety Indicators (JSIs), I can report that, since 2014, five JSI assessments have been completed in Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Nepal, and Pakistan, in cooperation with local research institutions. Assessments are ongoing in Afghanistan, Iraq, and South Sudan, in addition to a regional study covering Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

Beyond these broad strokes of the IPDC's special initiatives with respect to the 2030 Agenda, journalism education, media development indicators and journalistic safety, the programme has participated in wider CI-sectoral activities, demonstrating how it reinforces the work carried on throughout the sector. To give a few examples:

1. IPDC's Special Initiative on the Safety of Journalists and its Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism have continued to play a key role in the Sector's overall action to promote the safety of journalists.
2. As I mentioned earlier, the largest portion of project proposals submitted to IPDC this year are on support to community radio, gender in the media, preventing hate speech, conducting media research, promoting the safety of journalists and climate change reporting, to mention a few. This is a clear testimony of how the IPDC fits into the overall framework of the CI Sector, reinforcing actions undertaken in various areas, including fostering free media, community radio, training of media professionals, supporting media legislative and policy reforms, etc.

3. The CI Sector as a whole continues to promote the Internet Universality concept. As part of that initiative, fundraising efforts have been underway to develop Internet indicators, which we hope to present for endorsement at the 2018 IPDC Council. So far, this has been supported by Sweden and the Internet Society. The development of such indicators involves a global consultation process that has already begun, and it will dovetail with work in the Knowledge Societies Division. The indicators build upon work started by both sectoral divisions on fostering inclusive Knowledge Societies through access to information and knowledge, freedom of expression, privacy, and ethics on a global internet.
4. Within the UNESCO Integrated Framework for Action on preventing violent extremism, IPDC contributed to formulating the media development component of a UNESCO intersectoral project which is now being funded by Canada. Furthermore, IPDC supported expert meetings on the role of independent media in preventing violent extremism in June 2016 in Paris, followed by a conference on the same topic in Montreal in October 2016 organized in collaboration with the government of Quebec (Canada), and where the IPDC Chair spoke.
5. The IPDC is supporting the UNESCO international conference themed "Journalism under fire. Challenges of our time" which will be held on 23 March, to which you are all kindly invited as stakeholders. The IPDC made a financial contribution to this conference, partly to increase the visibility and stature of its work as an intergovernmental programme supportive of the larger CI Sector's vision of free, independent and pluralistic media in times of immense strain and amidst the rise of populist politics worldwide. The involvement ensures IPDC's concerns will be integrated into debate around current issues, and it could point to valuable follow-up in terms of IPDC projects which in turn will reinforce the work of the entire sector.
6. The IPDC Talks, which were launched very successfully last year, in association with IFAP, provide an opportunity not only to observe the Universal Access to Information Day but also to reflect on how access to information enables development and therefore contributes to the achievement of SDGs.

Against this background, I am pleased that, by combining project and normative work, the programme continues to complement activities carried out by the Sector and UNESCO as a whole. I hope that, given this array of achievements – both within the IPDC Secretariat itself and the sector at large – we can all appreciate that the IPDC affords us an opportunity to marshal resources towards making a difference in the way media support the overall process of Sustainable Development.

This insight will become clearer, and our actions more honed, by the forthcoming Evaluation of IPDC as agreed by the IPDC Council, and funding for which has generously come from Finland, with a top-up agreed by the Bureau. UNESCO Internal Oversight Services which manage all such Evaluations at the Organisation have launched the procurement process, with a view to the results being included in their general reporting on Evaluations for the October meeting of the Executive Board. The inception report of the Evaluation, as well as the final outcomes of the Evaluation, will naturally be shared with Bureau members and the rest of the Council, as soon as they become available.

Against a background of strong momentum, I would like to register UNESCO's thanks to the following countries and partners for support rendered for various IPDC activities: Andorra, Bangladesh, Canada; Denmark, Finland, Ghana, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the European Union and the Netherlands. It is my hope that, given what I have reported, more of our Member States will consider financial support for the Programme either through the Special Account (both earmarked or non-earmarked contributions) or the Funds-In-Trust (FIT) modalities.

On behalf of the Director General, I would like to wish you success during this IPDC Bureau. Thank you for your attention!