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International Institute for
Educational Planning

60 years
1963 • 2023

50 EXC/REP
10 July 2023

Fiftieth session of the Executive Committee
Videoconference, 22 June 2023, 3 p.m. ECT

Report of the 50th session of the Executive Committee

50 EXC/REP

1. The Executive Committee of IIEP's Governing Board, chaired by Mr José Weinstein, convened on Thursday 22 June 2023, by videoconference.
2. In addition to the Chair, the following attended the 50th session of the Executive Committee:

Executive Committee Members as per 63 GB elections

Mr J. Weinstein, Chair
Ms E. Efosi Wose¹

Ms P. Rose
Ms S. Ruto

Ms E. Vegas

UNESCO Representatives

Ms S. Giannini, ADG/ED
Ms A. Gillet, ED/EO
Ms I. Kharkova, ED/EO/SPM,
Program Specialist

IIEP Staff

Mr M. Benavides, Director
Ms B. Pont, Global Practice Lead
Mr P. Cevallos Estarellas, Head
IIEP Buenos Aires' Office
Mr S. Mizunoya, Head Technical
Cooperation
Ms M. Poisson, Head a.i.
Knowledge Management and
Mobilization
Ms R. Samassekou, Board
Secretary
Ms E. Stirnemann, Executive
Officer

Quorum was reached.

Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable (Document 50 EXC/1)

3. The Agenda was adopted with no amendments.
4. The Chair presented the Director and his curriculum, praised his problem-solving skills and his experience in difficult settings.
5. A short round of presentations followed, for the Members of the Executive Committee and the Director to introduce themselves.
6. The Director expressed his motivation in this new complex and challenging position. He showed appreciation of the talents he identified in the IIEP Staff and of the work environment and atmosphere.

¹ Representative of Mr Jenkins, who was excused

Item 2. Welcoming words from the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education

7. Ms Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education (ADG/ED), welcomed the new Director and lauded his critical thinking and his inclusive leadership style.
8. The ADG/ED presented the Members of the Executive Committee with an overview of a major project to be carried out jointly by UNESCO Headquarters (HQ) and IIEP with funding from the GPE: the implementation of the Climate Smart Education System Initiative under the overall umbrella of the Greening Education Partnership, which is an important outcome of the Transforming Education Summit; the piloting of the project starts in two countries and the ambition is to scale up supported to 18 countries in the coming months.
9. The ADG/ED pursued with the excellent news of the United States of America rejoining UNESCO in the second semester of 2023 after an extraordinary session of the General Conference scheduled 29 and 30 June 2023. New scenarios are to be developed, and the ADG/ED stated these scenarios would include IIEP. She also notified the Executive Committee members of the increase in funding from the Nordics, which will also have a positive impact on IIEP.
10. The ADG/ED commented on the opportunity for IIEP to engage with partners on the occasion of its 60th anniversary celebration and of the symposium that is scheduled during the General Conference in November 2023.
11. The ADG/ED spoke of the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact convened 22 and 23 June 2023 and the session dedicated to Education, around the five pillars which are UNESCO's main strength: i) country level actions to make sure that commitments made in New York at the Transforming Education Summit are now translated in concrete actions; ii) operationalizing the five global initiatives: Greening, Education in Emergencies, Foundational Learning, Equality and Gender Partnership, and Digital Transformation; iii) Youth; iv) the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in September 2023; v) Education Financing, whose roundtable is convened to redesign the second pillar of global cooperation mechanisms for education.
12. The ADG/ED paid a heartfelt tribute to Mr Jordan Naidoo highlighting his generosity in taking leadership of IIEP in challenging circumstances and thanked the Chair for being the cornerstone of IIEP in this new setting after a period of transition.
13. The Chair opened the floor to a short session of questions and answers with the ADG/ED. The ADG/ED was collectively thanked for the accelerated recruitment and prompt arrival of the IIEP Director. Executive Committee Members thanked her for the positive information regarding UNESCO's finances and asked her about the impact these major donors and increases in funding will have on the implementation of the program. She answered that the United States of America will represent 20% of the total regular budget; however regular budget represents less than 20% of the Education Sector's overall budget; the aim is therefore to position the ED Sector around extrabudgetary projects the United States of America will fund. At the request of Executive Committee Members, the ADG/ED offered more information on the Financing Education roundtable, stating it would be short but that the long-term expectation is better consolidated governance of mechanisms to fund education through coordinated action of UNICEF, World Bank, GPE and all other major actors.

Item 3. Strategic Overview and oral report of the Director, including a financial update,
(Document 50 EXC/2)

14. The Director gave a brief overview of his first hundred days, taking stock of the implementation of the program in the second year of the 11th MTS, displaying his refining of IIEP's priorities and offer according to IIEP's added value, and of the financial situation of IIEP at mid-year.
15. One Executive Committee Member suggested to rephrase some of the priorities exposed by the Director, who agreed and explained that this was a draft and that all comments would be taken into account to accommodate best terminology to sharpen IIEP's visibility. The Chair reiterated that the 11th Medium-Term Strategy is at the heart of IIEP's work and invited the Director to link all priorities to it, in order to stabilize the Institute. The priorities are merely a refining of the Strategy, that the Director will continue to work on to accommodate all perspectives and to make IIEP's lines of work noticeable in the wake of UNESCO's priorities, and in partnership with other institutions for better results.
16. Answering one Executive Committee Member on the alignment between UNESCO and IIEP's priorities, the Director listed projects that are carried out jointly with HQ and other UNESCO entities such as the GPE-funded project on Climate Change, or that are directly connected to HQ priorities like the Public Finance Cluster, and the coordination of the competition for work in Côte d'Ivoire under the leadership of the ADG/ED.
17. Regarding the financial scenarios, Executive Committee Members emphasized the vital cooperation with UNESCO HQ, and the Chair insisted on the opportunity for IIEP to appeal to HQ to obtain an increase in its allocation, while several Executive Committee Members appreciated the energy deployed at approaching new funding streams, and assessing the skillset and availability for taking on new extrabudgetary funded projects. One Executive Committee Member advised to strike balance between coordination with HQ and a certain degree of autonomy.
18. Executive Committee Members also collectively questioned the dependency on four major donors, and the advancement in discussions with France – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and AFD. The Director recalled that the news of the United States of America's application to UNESCO had been announced only ten days prior to the Executive Committee and he invited Ms Astrid Gillet, the Chief of the Executive Office of the Education Sector to give more information. Ms Gillet explained that Member States are requesting Zero Real Growth and Zero Nominal Growth scenarios to be prepared for the extraordinary meeting of the General Conference but that overall, with the payment of the United States of America's dues and the contribution to the regular budget, there will be room for negotiation and IIEP will be included in the package proposal.
19. Regarding Human Resources, Executive Committee Members questioned the stagnation of staff, and asked how the Director would address it. The Director is very aware it is a challenge, with limited budget, to motivate professionals who remain on specific positions for extended periods. He explained his plan to analyze the capacity and effort of staff, evaluate the risks and try and mitigate them. The Director is convinced of the commitment of staff and his hypothesis is that he will be able to reorganize the allocation of time and effort to adjust. The Chair was keen to explore staff time availability and prioritization. The Director is confident that, having reinforced the Project Management Office and increasing its legitimacy at the service of staff and managers, he will be able to start measuring levels of commitment and staff availability.
20. One Executive Committee member inquired about the interaction of the innovation task force with other IIEP teams and functions. The Director promptly explained

that this task force would be brought together through the identification of availability of existing staff, through centralization of workplans via the aforementioned Project Management Office. With this task force, the Director is creating a space under his authority, for IIEP experts to discuss further strategic coordination of proposals to donors, participation in the shaping of the global agenda through participation in international conferences, global advocacy. IIEP will need this type of task force to avoid becoming a demand-driven consultancy firm and to sustain its integrated approach across offices and functions for delivering state-of-the art expertise in Education Planning and Management.

21. The Chair requested that a specific point about IIEP's stabilization reserve fund be raised and covered at the 64th session of the Board in December.

**Item 4. Update on IIEP's Global Learning Academy,
(Document 50 EXC/3)**

22. The Global Practice Lead presented Document 50 EXC/3 and her main messages and motivations in the progress of the implementation of the strategy and raised issues for discussion.
23. Executive Committee Members formulated questions regarding the B2C and the B2B models presented, and the Global Practice Lead explained how much a course's success was factor of its topic and of a marketing strategy. Courses are rather expensive for individual participants and the aim is to propose a 2-year catalog so participants can seek donor support to finance their training. IIEP will also approach donors to finance course developments and participants.
24. Executive Committee Members were also quite interested in the alignment of all three offices leading to cost effectiveness. The Global Practice Lead spoke of the unique Moodle platform and the simple templates developed for all staff, and the integration of Artificial Intelligence in IIEP's learning approach, reducing grading time and using the platform for self-graded tests instead. Overall IIEP will not deliver more courses but will rather deliver its existing courses in a more effective and systematized way, online, to reach more participants.
25. Executive Committee Members led by their Chair were eager to know more about the Alumni Network management. The Global Practice Lead explained that the RED platform will be the basis for this network, and it will be embedded in the Global Academy.

**Item 5. Presentation of IIEP's retooled approach to technical support,
(Document 50 EXC/4)**

26. The Head of Technical cooperation presented the retooled approach to technical support, and the challenges such a team faces in the current financial situation.
27. Executive Committee Members advised to prioritize and rationalize technical support priorities as the team is already stretched, with appropriate fitting between the needs of Technical Cooperation and the priorities advertised by the Director, and alignment and coordination of the strategy across three offices to achieve economy of scale.
28. One Executive Committee Member also inquired how IIEP could rescale to the context of reality of resources.
29. Overall, the Head of Technical Cooperation stated that the Education sector analyses and plans are core tools for many countries. He is trying to provide career development opportunities for more junior staff to achieve a mass of specialists who are able to deliver ESAs and ESPs and they could then focus on a more refined topic within the overarching priorities. To date, there is no defined method for middle-tier and public finance management, and the Head of Technical Cooperation welcomes feedback to define the approaches.

Item 6. Update on the celebrations of anniversaries: IIEP's 60 years and IIEP Buenos Aires' 25 years,
(Document 50 EXC/5)

30. The Head a.i. of Knowledge Management and Mobilization and the Head of IIEP Buenos Aires took turns to present the document covering all activities developed and planned for the celebrations of IIEP's 60 years and IIEP Buenos Aires' 25 years.
31. The Chair thanked the Board Members who accepted the invitation to speak in the Symposium on 8 and 9 November 2023 during the General Conference.
32. Ms Astrid Gillet, Chief, ED/EO will confirm the possibility of a side event and will follow-up with CAB. ED/EO is a strong supporter and will remind the ADG/ED to support this event at the level of the Director-General.

Item 7. Draft agenda of the 64th session of the Governing Board,
(Document 50 EXC/6)

33. The Draft agenda of the 64th session of the Governing Board will be sent by email to Executive Board Members for comments.

Item 8. Tribute to IIEP Director a.i., Jordan Naidoo

34. Mr Naidoo could not join the meeting for his tribute, but the Chair and all Members of the Executive Committee paid a considerate and respectful tribute to his engagement and generosity, in leading IIEP awaiting the appointment of a new Director.

Item 9. Other matters – Resolutions,
(Document 50 EXC/RES)

35. The Executive Committee adopted the following resolutions, which presented in document 50 EXC/RES.
36. Resolution 507 was adopted with amendments as follows:

Resolution 507

The Executive Committee,

Having examined document 50 EXC/2,

Having heard the oral report and strategic overview of the Director,

Thanks IIEP Management for the updates, particularly on finances and resource mobilization, and appreciates the common effort placed in unified fundraising with UNESCO Headquarters and UNESCO entities,

Acknowledges that the current forecasts are in conformity with Resolution 579 adopted by the 60th session of the Governing Board on the financial sustainability of IIEP, Resolution 498 adopted by the 47th session of the Executive Committee, and Resolution 502 adopted by the 48th session of the Executive Committee,

Also **requests** that the Director prepare, for presentation to the Governing Board at its 64th session, an update on the finances, core funding and sustainability of the Institute, (i) updates on the revised budget scenarios of the 42/C5 prepared in view of the return of the USA as a UNESCO Member State, (ii) updates regarding discussions with potential donors such as the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and AFD,

Further requests the Director to continue to prepare and present for approval by the Board annual budgets that meet requirements on operational reserves through the

medium term,

Recalling Resolution 503 of the 49th session of the Executive Committee, **further welcomes** accelerated efforts by IIEP Management to generate new core funders and project income opportunities.

37. Resolution 508 was adopted with no amendments.

Resolution 508

The Executive Committee,

Having examined documents 50 EXC/3, 50 EXC/4, and 50 EXC/5,

Thanks IIEP Management for the update on IIEP's Global Learning Academy, **appreciates** the integration of the Board's recommendations as requested in Resolution 610 of the 63rd session of the Board, and agrees with its implementation phases,

Thanks IIEP Management for the update on IIEP's retooled approach to technical support, and encourages further efforts towards the integration of all three IIEP Offices,

Welcomes the plan for the celebration of IIEP's 60th anniversary and IIEP Buenos Aires's 25th anniversary, and **invites** the Director to keep the Board apprised of the developments foreseen during the General Conference,

Requests that the Director continue the implementation of IIEP's 11th Medium-Term Strategy and report to the Governing Board at its 64th session.

38. Resolution 509 was adopted with no amendments.

Resolution 509

The Executive Committee,

Pays tribute to Jordan Naidoo for his directorship of IIEP,

Expresses its deep appreciation to Jordan Naidoo for his dedication and commitment to UNESCO's overall purpose in the area of Education,

Particularly, **thanks** him sincerely for having pursued the interests of the Institute and its mission,

Wishes Jordan Naidoo every success in his future endeavours.

39. The Chair thanked all EXC Members, the ADG/ED and her representatives as well as the Director and his staff.

40. The Board ended at 18:05.