

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL  
ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)**

**Support to NEPAD**

**Period of Report: August 2004 to June 2005**

UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (2002-2007) for the Africa region has taken on board NEPAD priorities and objectives and serves as a guide for their implementation. Major activities undertaken in 2004-2005 respond to the recommendations made at the seminar organized by UNESCO in March 2003 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) on the theme "UNESCO-NEPAD: From Vision to Action".

Special sessions on NEPAD were held during a number of recent events in the Africa Region and in Arab States, in order to brief UNESCO's National Commissions on the ongoing process of NEPAD's implementation at the sub-regional level, as well as on the cooperation between UNESCO and the NEPAD Secretariat.

A task force at the senior management level was established to monitor and coordinate UNESCO's activities relating to the 6<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, which will be devoted mostly to education and culture (Khartoum, January 2006).

The Director-General of UNESCO has established two important bodies to increase support for NEPAD: 1) the UNESCO Committee for NEPAD, the third session of which took place at the Headquarters of the World Islamic Call Society (WICS) in Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya from 6 to 7 May 2005. The Committee's consultative role is to monitor the NEPAD-oriented strategies, programmes and activities carried out by UNESCO and to advise the Director-General on support to NEPAD; 2) the Forum of African Regional and Subregional Organizations in Support of Cooperation between UNESCO and NEPAD (FOSRASUN), the inaugural meeting of which took place on 13 September 2004. This Forum has been conceived as a tool of cooperation between the RECs, African Union/NEPAD and UNESCO, meant to facilitate dialogue and the exchange of views and experiences at the regional and sub-regional levels in order to identify the best approaches to promote regional integration through education, sciences and culture.

**Programmatic Response**

Support in the field of Education

UNESCO assisted the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat with the revision and finalization of the NEPAD Initial Plan of Action in the field of education prepared in June 2002, within the framework of the preparations for the Conference of Ministers of Education (COMEDAF II, Algiers, 8-11 April 2004). An AU/NEPAD

Framework of action plan was adopted by the COMEDAF II and will be submitted to the 6<sup>th</sup> AU Summit.

UNESCO is now assisting the Commission with the finalization of the review of the African Decade of Education as recommended by COMEDAF II and with the restructuring of the Commission's Department for Human Resources Sciences and Technology.

The Chairperson of the Africa Union Commission accepted UNESCO's invitation to form part of selected Group of Eminent Personalities to give their opinions on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) launched on 1 March 2005 in New York.

Education for All: In its capacity as the UN lead agency for EFA, UNESCO organized a meeting of EFA coordinators from 13 to 15 June 2005 in order to review the Dakar Plan of Action. A document "Review and prospects" with reliable data was released on that occasion. It will provide the basis for the formulation and adjustment of education policies in Africa.

Preparations are being made for the next biennium (2006-2007) for the implementation of three areas that are relatively neglected compared with other parts of the EFA agenda: the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE); the Teacher Training Initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa; and the Global Initiative on HIV/AIDS and Education (GIHAE). These three initiatives have timelines extending to 2015. For the Teacher Training Initiative, half of UNESCO's teacher education programme for the biennium 2006-07 will serve Sub Saharan Africa.

UNESCO supports a number of projects initiated by NEPAD in priority areas, including higher education, teacher training, distance education and studies on the concept of centres/poles of excellence.

UNESCO in cooperation with Nigeria's National Universities Commission (NUC) and with support from the UN system, organized a two-day roundtable (28-29 September 2004) on NEPAD. Participants identified concrete areas for future collaboration with NEPAD, including science and technology, teaching and research, human resource development, reversal of the brain drain, conflict prevention and development of agriculture.

#### Support in the field of Culture

UNESCO is currently working with the AU Commission to assess Africa's status in the field of culture, with a view to preparing for the cultural Pan African Congress and the meetings of experts and Ministers of culture, to be held in Kenya, Nairobi (November 2005) in preparation for the 6<sup>th</sup> AU Summit which will be devoted to this issue. In this regard, UNESCO is providing assistance to the Commission in reorganizing and restructuring notably its Culture Department within the Commission for Social Affairs.

### Support in the field of Science and Technology

UNESCO is collaborating with the NEPAD Secretariat and the AU Commission (HRD&T) in the framework of the meeting of Ministers of sciences and technology to be held in September 2005 and the AU summit on the theme of science and technology to be held in Accra in 2007.

UNESCO has recently launched an initiative to strengthen cooperation and promote dialogues between parliamentary science committees, the scientific community and the representatives of civil society.

UNESCO, in collaboration with the relevant development partners, is cooperating towards the implementation of the African Institute of Science and Technology (AIST) and other activities of the Nelson Mandela Institution for Knowledge Building and the Advancement of Science and Technology in Sub-Saharan Africa.

### Support in the field of Natural Sciences/Environment

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, with the support of African countries and relevant UN Agencies, is leading the development of two NEPAD projects aimed at capacity building for sustainable development of coastal and marine environment in Africa, one on “Regional Ocean Observing and Forecasting System for Integrated Management of Ocean and Coastal Environment and Natural Disasters in Africa (ROOFS-AFRICA)”, and the other on “Shoreline Protection through Integrated Coastal Area Management”.

In the biennium 2004-2005, IOC is providing technical and financial support to *Coastal and Marine Unit of the NEPAD Environment Initiative* (COSMAR/NEPAD) with a view to developing an operational communication strategy and information-sharing tools in order for COSMAR to act as a clearing-house mechanism for African countries in need of technical assistance for the preparation and execution of coastal and marine projects.

### Support in the field of Energy

Activities in the area of energy aimed mainly at enhancing capacities to formulate energy policies and planning, and to manage, use and maintain renewable energy systems. In its contribution to the implementation of the African Chapter of the Global Renewable Energy Education and Training (GREET) Programme, UNESCO, in collaboration with ISESCO, organised a regional workshop in September in Senegal, as a contribution to the energy component of the NEPAD initiative.

UNESCO also organised at its headquarters the 13th session of the annual UNESCO summer school for French speaking countries on “*Solar electricity for rural and remote areas*” where fourteen African countries were represented. Two text books on the use and maintenance of solar and wind energy systems have been finalised. To enhance energy policies, a consultation meeting targeting French-speaking countries was organised in collaboration with the Institute of Energy for French speaking countries

(IEPF) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. UNESCO is also engaged in partnership with the CEN-SAD (Communauté des Etats Sahelo-Saharien) and jointly organised the meeting of Ministers of Mines and Energy held in March 2005 in Niger.

### **Cooperation with the RECs**

UNESCO has been cooperating actively with a number of subregional organizations, by developing and carrying out joint priority programmes and projects. Three conferences of Ministers of Education (CEMAC, ECOWAS, Portuguese Speaking Countries), organized in 2004 by UNESCO, focused on education as an efficient tool for regional integration.

The UNESCO/SADC Regional Flagship Programme on “Sustainable Integrated Management and Development of Arid and Semi-Arid Regions of Southern Africa” (SIMDAS) is being implemented through research and postgraduate projects submitted by universities and research centres located in SADC Member States.

The UNESCO Abuja Office is involved in the implementation of a research programme within the context of the Management of Social Transformation Programme (MOST) designed to inform policy regarding regional integration within ECOWAS but with implications for the entire AU and NEPAD.

### **Collaboration with other UN agencies**

In the framework of the regular inter-agency consultations for NEPAD, UNESCO is in charge of the Education sub-cluster.

Experts on human rights education from Africa participated in the expert meeting organized jointly by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) and UNESCO in Geneva from 13 to 15 September 2004. Its objective was to review the Draft Plan of Action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, which focuses on primary and secondary school systems.

The Inter-Agency Peace Education Technical Support Programme developed by UNESCO in conjunction with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is operating in eleven countries in Africa (Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ghana.) UNESCO is upgrading and expanding the programme in order to more suitably respond to the reconstruction phase of these developing and conflict affected countries. Several of these countries have adopted this programme into their formal school curriculum (Uganda, Sierra Leone, Liberia is in preparation).

UNIDO, UNCTAD and WIPO have agreed to undertake interagency action on the reform of the science, engineering and innovation system of Nigeria and participated in the launching of the International Advisory Board for the Reform of the Nigeria Science System which took place at UNESCO Headquarters on the 27th of October, 2004.