

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)

Support to AU/NEPAD (July 2009 to June 2010)

Introduction

During this period UNESCO supported the African Union Commission (AUC), the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Member States in the implementation of its programme in UNESCO's fields of competence. Activities include the implementation of the Plan of Action of the 2nd Decade for Education, and UNESCO's contribution to the implementation of the AU/NEPAD Consolidated Action Plan for Science and Technology. Important advocacy was carried out internally and externally to promote continental integration implementing regional initiatives and the key domains of competence of UNESCO, namely education, sciences, culture and communication to reach these endeavors.

Institutional Cooperation on the Continental and Regional Levels

UNESCO participated in the 10th meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism of UN Agencies working in Africa (RCM), convened by UNECA on 4-6 November 2009 in Addis Ababa. Within this coordination mechanism, UNESCO coordinates the "Science and Technology" cluster, the "Human Resource" sub-cluster which includes the sub-clusters on "Education" and "Culture and Sport".

The Science and Technology cluster meeting took place in Geneva on 4 September 2009, with members of the AMCOST Bureau, the NEPAD Secretariat, and the representatives of UNECA, UNEP, ONUDI, UNCTAD, UNU-MERIT in attendance. UNESCO participated in the 14th African Union Summit in Addis Ababa in January 2010. The special theme of the Summit was "Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development".

Two cooperation agreements were signed with African sub-regional organizations: with the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) on 26 May 2009 at UNESCO Headquarters and with the West African Economic and Monetary Union (CEMAC) on 21 October 2009. In addition to the joint planning meetings regularly organized with SADC, a joint AUC-UNESCO-SADC technical meeting of ministers of culture, tourism and sport was organized on 30-31 July 2009 in Zimbabwe, in preparation to the FIFA World Cup 2010.

UNESCO's support to AU/NEPAD in the field of education

On 23-25 February 2010, UNESCO co-organized with the AU the 9th meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All (EFA) in Addis Ababa, on the themes: "Impact of the Financial and Economic Crisis on Education" and "Marginalization and Inclusion in Education". The organization provided strategic support to the work of AUC in the implementation of the Plan of Action (POA) of the Second Decade of Education, ensuring that it contributes to the

achievement of the vision of the AU in complementarily with the global role of UNESCO. The UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa – BREDA provides leadership in three of the seven priority areas of the POA as lead agency namely: *Teacher development* (UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa -IICBA), *Revitalisation of TVET* (with the UNESCO International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training - UNEVOC), *Curriculum development related issues of teachers learning materials* (with the UNESCO IBE- International Bureau of Education).

UNESCO also works collaboratively with priority lead agencies in four other areas: *Setting up of the observatory for the monitoring of the implementation of the Plan of Action* (the UNESCO Institute for Statistics UIS /BREDA with IPED); *Gender and culture* (BREDA in collaboration with the Forum for African Women Educationalists - FAWE); *Higher education* (BREDA); *Education Management Information Systems* (UIS/BREDA with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa -ADEA). UNESCO has enabled the RECs to assume the role of coordinating the POA at the sub-regional levels. A Distance Education Pilot Programme for primary and secondary teachers, using ICTs for HIV/AIDS prevention in the CEMAC region was approved for an amount of 1,227,224 USD. This two-year project should enable distance education in 287 primary and secondary schools in six of the CEMAC countries.

Within its core mission to promote education as a fundamental right, to improve the quality of education and to stimulate experimentation, innovation and policy dialogue, UNESCO coordinates global actions and efforts in a number of areas of UN priority, notably the pursuit of the EFA goals and the focus on three key responsibilities – the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), and the area of education and HIV& AIDS, including EDUCAIDS, UNAIDS, the Global Initiative on HIV & AIDS, and Education. These three initiatives have deadlines extending to 2015.

In November 2009, UNESCO signed an agreement with the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) for a two-year, 3.5 million USD programme to support EDUCAIDS in 17 countries in East and Southern Africa. A Regional Programme Coordinator and ten National Programme Officers (NPOs) are being recruited to implement the UNESCO-OFID programme. In December 2009, UNESCO published the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education: An evidence-informed approach for schools, teachers and health educators in partnership with UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO.

Support in the field of culture: “Contributing to Regional Integration and African Renaissance”

UNESCO is leading the work of the new Sub-Cluster on Culture and Sport under the Cluster Social and Human Development and presented the terms of reference and work plans to the 10th RCM meeting (November 2009). UNESCO has continued to assist the AUC, the RECs and Member States in the implementation of the important set of instruments adopted at the Khartoum Summit which recognize culture as a driven force for development and as a guarantee of its sustainability. A project “promoting African Languages” (5,000,000 USD) is under elaboration, as a support to the Language Plan of Action. The second phase of the Scientific Committee for the Pedagogical use of the General History of Africa launched in March 2009

through the organization of an expert meeting on the implementation of the project and review of the first session.

Contributing to the implementation of Africa's Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology

UNESCO has launched the African Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Initiative (ASTIPI) to build capacities in policy review/reformulation and provide advice to African countries lacking a national policy. To date, twenty Member States have made formal requests through their governments to UNESCO to assist them carry out national science policy reviews or formulation during the period 2008-2010.

One of the main obstacles to S&T education in Africa is the lack of science teachers. The challenge of training large numbers of science teachers has been addressed through the installation of four operational centres of the AVC at the University of Abomé Kalavi (July 2008), University Sheik Anta Diop (November 2008), University of Cape Verde and University of Abidjan (May 2009). Science education is promoted through a series of activities: (i) the Global Microscience Experiments Project promotes education in the basic sciences through the use of kits to enable primary and secondary-school pupils to conduct practical experiments in chemistry, biology and physics. To date, introductory workshops for science teachers have been organized in 40 countries in Africa; (ii) The new UNESCO Teaching Resource Kit for Dryland Countries intended for secondary-school teachers and their pupils affected by desertification, has been published in four languages and distributed to the coordinators of the UNESCO Associated Schools Programme.

The Department for Human Resources, Science and Technology of the African Union Commission launched the African Cluster for Science and Technology to improve pan-African coordination and thereby avoid duplication and waste of resources. UNESCO, as the convener of the UN S&T Cluster in support of AU/NEPAD, in cooperation with the AUC/HRST, organized the Fifth Meeting of the cluster in Geneva on 4 September 2009.

Support to the Action Plan of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD

The regional project "Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zones of West Africa" is a component of the NEPAD Plan on Environment. The regional activities to be implemented through the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) in 2009-2010 total 660,000 USD, with national components of 250,000 USD per country per year. In 2010 several activities are currently underway, including: a training course on Coastal Vulnerability Mapping and development of coastal vulnerability/inundation maps at sites in each country; a training course on Integrated Coastal Area Management in a climate change context, and the establishment of a regional network of experts in coastal erosion/adaptation. The AUC, with support of UNESCO/IOC, highlighted the increasing costs attributed to climate change impacts on the coastal zones of Africa – presented and discussed during consecutive AMCEN meetings in both Nairobi and Addis in preparation for COP15. The UNESCO/IOC led Global Ocean Observing System in Africa (GOOS-AFRICA) organized a Pan-African Workshop on "Decision-Making Support for Coastal Zone Management, Water Resources and Climate

Change in Africa.” The workshop was held in Cotonou, Benin from 15 to 17 February, 2010, and concluded with a high-level Governance and Policy Forum for top level officials.

Support in the Field of Social and Human Sciences

A Policy Dialogue between the Greater Horn Horizon Forum and the business community of the region took place on 7 November 2009, in Djibouti, concluding on the need for further interaction between the intellectuals and the business community. A high-level round table on "Somalia - Perspectives of getting out of the crisis and building the State: the role of the regional and international organizations" was organized by the GHHF and UNESCO on 8 November 2009. ECOWAS, UEMOA, ECOBANK, the Republic of Cape Verde and UNESCO have proposed the establishment of the West Africa Institute (WAI), with the objective of advancing knowledge on West African regional integration and providing decision-makers with policy options conducive to development, peace and the protection of human rights in the region. UNESCO has been identifying synergies with the AUC in discussing the 10-year draft action plan for youth development and empowerment that the Commission is currently preparing.

Support in the field of Communication and Information

On 8 July 2009, a Special Agreement on the African Journalism Training on Science and Technology was signed between UNESCO and the AUC, Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology. Thirteen journalists and journalism educators from 9 countries took part in a workshop on “Reporting about Climate Change”, organized by UNESCO in the World Conference of Science Journalists (29 June-3 July 2009, London, UK). More than 10 African countries expressed an interest to pilot UNESCO’s model media and information literacy curriculum for teacher education during a capacity building workshop that involved 20 participants representing 15 teacher training institutions from 4 Southern African countries. UNESCO distributed among African journalism schools several publications on Community Multimedia Centers, TV trainers and producers, gender equality in journalism, broadcast regulation, and information literacy curriculum for teacher education.

Advocacy and Raising Awareness

A “Partnership Programme with Africa for the Capacity-Building of African National Commissions for UNESCO” was launched in 2008-2009 biennials in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO and funded by the German government. Two training seminars were co-organized in Tunisia (June 2009) and Egypt (December 2009) by UNESCO with ISESCO for the Arab National Commissions, from which 6 North African National Commissions benefited. UNESCO consults regularly with the African National Commissions on the preparation of its bi-annual Draft Programme and Budget (C/5) in order to better reflect the African needs and priorities in its action. The next Regional Consultation on the preparation of the draft programme and budget for 2012-2013 and the Regional Quadrennial Conference of African National Commissions will take place in Kampala, Uganda (June 2010), at which all 53 National Commissions from the whole continent are expected to be present.