

United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Support to AU/NEPAD (Period of July 2010 to June 2011)

Introduction

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

Very positive results were thus achieved or reinforced in the actions implemented. Worth mentioning are:

- the reinforcement of the political support of African member States to the actions developed by UNESCO;
- the continuation of the UNESCO-AUC common advocacy work on themes of importance for development and regional integration (culture for development; peace & security; education for all etc.);
- the continuation of the alignment of UNESCO's sectoral programmes on African member States' and RECs' priorities;
- the reinforcement of the inter-Agencies coordination work on the field.

Institutional cooperation on the continental and regional levels

UNESCO participated and contributed actively in the 11th meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism of UN Agencies working in Africa (RCM), convened by UNECA on 14-15 November 2010 in Addis Ababa, testifying of the efficiency of the inter-Agencies coordination. Within this mechanism, UNESCO coordinates the "Science and Technology" Cluster, as well as the "Education and Human Resources" and the "Culture and Sport" sub-Clusters, under the "Social and Human Development" Cluster.

The alignment on the priorities defined by the AU member States was further continued, with the AU decisions in UNESCO's fields of competence taken into consideration and disseminated. In this regard, UNESCO participated in the 15th and 16th African Union Summits, respectively in Kampala (Uganda), in July 2010 and Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in January 2011. On the margins of the 16th AU Summit, working meetings were organized with 6 of the 8 RECs, to discuss on the possibility to improve and make more efficient the consultation mechanisms between UNESCO and these Organizations.

UNESCO continued its advocacy work with the AU on common important themes for development. In this regard, UNESCO supported the AUC celebrations on "2010 Year of Peace and Security in Africa", to ensure a visibility and impact to this event. UNESCO participated as well to the launching ceremony of the African Women's Decade (2010-2020), on 16 October 2010 in Addis Ababa.

In addition, in order to improve and strengthen the working relationships between UNESCO and the African Union, the UNESCO Office in Addis Ababa was transformed on 1st January 2011 into a Liaison Office with the African Union and with the Economic Commission for Africa.

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

UNESCO launched the RCM Sub-cluster on Education and Human Resources on the 12-13 May 2010 in Addis Ababa. The meeting adopted the terms of reference of the sub-cluster, as well as the 2010 business plan and some recommendations. Among the recommendations were the following: assist in developing an institutional and legal framework for the African Observatory on Education; develop a communication strategy that gives more visibility to the AU and its various initiatives and programs across the continent; increase interactions with Regional Economic Communities.

The Organization provided strategic support to the work of AUC. Particularly, the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA) provided leadership in three of the seven priority areas of the plan of Action as lead agency namely: Teacher development (UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa -IICBA), Revitalization 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 signed a convention with UEMOA on 11 February 2011 for the execution of a 12 millions US\$ project on “Developing ICT and building capacities for the implementation of the “LMD” reform in institutions of higher education in the UEMOA region”. This 3-year project, financed by UEMOA, will be implemented by UNESCO.

UNESCO continued its support to the AU project of Pan-African Universities through a feasibility study. The “Special Account for the development of Higher Education in Africa”, hosted by UNESCO, is operational to receive funds from partners. UNESCO and the AUC are to organize a joint funds mobilization.

In Higher Education development, UNESCO provided technical support in drafting the revision of the Arusha convention and is currently pursuing the legal procedures necessary to establish UNESCO and the African Union as joint depositories of the revised Arusha Convention. With the agreement of AUC, preparations for holding an inter-governmental consultation on 15 April 2011 in Lomé, Togo will begin. The main purpose of this consultation is the adoption, amendment, signature and ratification of the new version of the Arusha Convention by all the States Parties along with the elaboration of the implementation process.

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

UNESCO is leading the work of the Sub-Cluster on Culture and Sport under the Social and Human Development Cluster. During the 11th RCM, UNESCO called for a stimulation of the activities of the sub-cluster. UNESCO seized the opportunity of the 7th World Conference on Education, Sport and Culture (Durban, 5-7 December 2010) to encourage the other UN Agencies to get involve in the sub-cluster.

UNESCO participated as well in the 3rd Summit of CEN-SAD Ministers of Culture (11-13 May 2010, Bangui) and the 3rd meeting of the AU Ministers of Culture (Abuja, October 2010). During this conference, a campaign for the ratification of the Chart of the African Cultural Renaissance was launched.

UNESCO and the African Union continued their common advocacy work on important themes in favor of regional integration. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, M. Jean Ping, was invited to participate in the round-table “Culture for Development”, organized by the Director-General of UNESCO on the margins of the MDG Summit (New York, 20-22 September 2010). The round-table succeeded in convincing the international community to address culture as an integral part of development and attested of the Director-General’s wish to see the African continent involved in this development process.

UNESCO established in June 2010 in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, the Regional Centre for the Living Arts in Africa (CREAF) as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO.

MDG Achievement Fund Joint Programmes in Africa on Culture and Development: in this vein, UNESCO is leading 4 joint programmes in Africa. With a budget share of 14,8 million USD to be implemented by UNESCO in 4 countries in the next three years (Ethiopia, Mozambique, Namibia and Senegal), these community-based joint programmes aim at developing cultural tourism, promoting cultural industries, fostering intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, as well as culturally-sensitive national policies.

With the signing of an Implementation Partnership Agreement with the International Council of African Museums (AFRICOM) in November 2010, UNESCO offers support to the professional museum network in Africa through reinforced communications, awareness-raising and networking.

Support in the field of Communication and Information

Collaboration with other UN agencies in support of AU/NEPAD

UNESCO field offices have collaborated with UN Country Teams (UNCTs) in the formation of journalistic networks to facilitate quality reporting on issues relating to sustainable development. Recent examples include journalistic networks set up in Lesotho as a result of the collaboration between the UNCT and the Windhoek Cluster Office in that country. UNESCO is set to enhance such inter-agency collaboration by working closely with UNCTs and the UNESCO-designated Potential Centres of Excellence and Reference in Journalism Education, to influence African Member States, through the AUC, to include journalism education within the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs).

Financial support

Financial support has been indirectly provided to enhance journalism education in Africa as follows:

In a bid to adapt the UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education, 12 Centres of Excellence and 8 Potential Centres of Reference received a sum of US\$ 362,000 to: (i) purchase equipment and textbooks; (ii) organize three training-of-trainers workshops on online journalism, multimedia journalism and media for social change; and (iii) attend the 2nd World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) in Grahamstown, South Africa, during which time UNESCO

organized a consultative meeting with the 20 centres and other representatives from the African Union Commission (AUC).

In 2010, the 54th Bureau of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) allocated US\$ 683,000 to 33 projects in 26 African countries to: (i) promote freedom of expression (8 projects); strengthen institutional capacities in journalism education and media professionals (10 projects); and develop community media (15 projects).

In 2011, 48 projects have been submitted for approval at the 55th Session of the IPDC Bureau (March 2011).

Institutional Support

In July 2009, UNESCO signed a special agreement with the AUC focused on the tripartite objective of (i) providing support for the development of regional science and technology networks for journalism students and media professionals, (ii) improving the range and scale of journalism training in reporting science and technology, and (iii) developing a centre of excellence in journalism training in science and technology.

Advocacy work

In the area of science communication, UNESCO is in dialogue with the AUC's scientific, technical and research directorate to advocate for the adoption of principles of science communication by journalism educators and media professionals in Africa. Concrete activities included UNESCO's invitation to the AUC to take part in the consultative meeting held in support of all the 20 Potential Centres of Excellence and Reference in Journalism Education in Africa. The meeting, held on 8 July 2010 in Grahamstown, South Africa, affirmed the need for the highest level of political commitment to the prioritization of journalism education as both an academic and applied discipline, capable of being offered as such at tertiary level.

In the area of media and sustainable development, UNESCO has continued to widely disseminate the media resource and toolkit entitled *Media as Partners in Education for Sustainable Development* and successfully engaged the participation of more than 40 media professionals in regional capacity building activities implemented by Bamako, Dakar and Windhoek cluster offices covering 5 countries in total.

Advocacy and awareness-raising

UNESCO continues to mobilize its institutional partners (Ambassadors, NGOs, Associated Schools, Chairs, etc.), and particularly the National Commissions for UNESCO in African Member States, which are in a key position to help Africans to internalize the principles and objectives of the African Union and NEPAD, since they cooperate with the governmental and other structures responsible for the implementation of NEPAD in the various areas of competence of UNESCO.

Under the Participation Programme, UNESCO has approved, in January 2011, 17 requests for the Africa region, for a total amount of 258.000 US\$, aimed at building capacities of African National Commissions in the fields of equipment, training and publication.

Since July 2010, a total of 72 fellowships were awarded from Africa region, duly endorsed by the respective National Commissions. Among these beneficiaries, 32% are women and 68% are men. The total value of these fellowships is estimated at US \$1,225,363.