

## **SHS sectoral strategy for cooperation with category 2 centers**

### **Background**

1. In the framework of document 36 C/5, the Sector of Social and Human Sciences adopted a transversal approach to programming, focusing on four programme priority areas: bioethics, social inclusion, social dimensions of global environmental change and Youth.

2. SHS has currently 5 category 2 centers under its responsibility. The Centres are seen as key partners for the implementation of the programme in the field of social and human sciences in line with Member states expressed needs. Currently, their areas of work are diverse though complementary to the delivery of the Sector's programme. Areas covered are sport, democracy and humanities, regional integration and human rights.

### **Overall objectives**

3. Further to the guidelines adopted by the General Conference (35 C/Resolution 103) and the call for a rationalization of cooperation with centres along strategic lines, the Sector has initiated discussions with the category 2 centres under its responsibility to involve them as key partners in the implementation of the youth programme. In so doing, particular attention would be paid to the role of youth in driving science and policy nexus for sustainable development.

4. The objective of such a sectoral strategy is twofold: (1) to maximize synergies between category 2 centres affiliated to the Sector; (2) to ensure focused contributions to the implementation of UNESCO's activities and objectives in the areas of priority.

### **Programme Focus**

5. With a view to achieving greater programme alignment between MP III and the category 2 centres affiliated to it, the institutes and centres would address their thematic and geographic priorities within their mandates with a focus on youth. The aim would be to ensure complementarity, in addressing youth issues and implementing the youth programme, in particular in Africa

6. The work on youth development and civic engagement will be addressed in a transversal way involving the category 2 centres and will not be limited to the social and human sciences sector. This would allow the application of a comprehensive approach to youth work, building on the Organization's interdisciplinary approach to engaging with youth in a constructive dialogue and collaboration for development and peace. Category 2 centers beyond those under SHS mandate will be encouraged to include youth in their programmatic orientations and networking around youth issues would be promoted.

7. Though international in scope, the location of the centres in Africa, Latin America and Arab region will enable addressing the regional priorities on youth such the implementation of the UNESCO Strategy on African Youth, in Africa, violence prevention affecting youth in LAC, and democratic participation of youth in the Arab region. The centres will thus contribute to the delivery of the overall programme on youth relying on networking among themselves, exchanges of successful experiences and lessons learned.

### **Proposals for new centres**

8. The Sector will also ensure that all proposals for new Centres fully comply with the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy and do align with the priorities of the Sector as defined in the sectoral strategy before considering a feasibility study. The Sector will also cooperate closely with Member States to ensure that criteria for establishing new Centres – including alignment with Sectoral priorities, adequate and sustainable funding, strong national and regional support - are fully met before final endorsement of the proposal.

### **Future cooperation**

9. As part of its strategy, efforts will be made to enhance programme alignment of the centres through improved consultation, in particular at the time of the centre workplan elaboration with concrete delivery agreed with the Sector. Regular information-sharing on programme developments and a more systematic involvement of field offices so as to improve effectiveness and delivery capacity at the national and regional level would also be enhanced. Furthermore, key strategic documents should be shared and Centre Directors would be included in relevant mailing lists.

10. The Sector will endeavour to mobilize the centres as resources to assist in implementing youth programme at the national and regional levels. This will imply monitoring their activities and consulting with them on their programmes so as to develop synergies and complementarities regionally. Furthermore, the Sector will encourage centres to report in SISTER where a specific template for each centre would be created.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

11. Overall established centres will be subject to careful monitoring and evaluation to ensure that they remain relevant and provide added value to UNESCO's programme delivery as per programme planning (C/5), also with a view to ensuring a continuous and constructive collaboration around UNESCO's priorities. Should this no longer be the case, the Sector will enter into discussions with the centre to ensure proper alignment or termination of the cooperation.

### **Networking**

12. Cooperation with and among category 2 centers is essential to ensure a comprehensive implementation of the youth programme. It is essential to ensure

wide networking, encouraging collaboration and joint activities among Centres, between Centres and the Sector, and between Centres and other key partners UNESCO (e.g. ASPnet UNESCO Chairs, universities and research institutes);

13. To ensure quality contribution from centers, a review of the centres will be undertaken before the expiry date and will constitute a precondition for renewal. This will serve as a basis along the regular reporting that centers will make to assess the alignment of the centers with the priorities of the sector as defined in the sectoral strategy.

### **Visibility**

14. To give visibility to the centers and the contribution to UNESCO's programme, a link could be made on the SHS portal to the category 2 centres portal where available or information posted on the sector's website.

### **Challenges**

15. Category 2 Centres are key partners at country and regional level and can contribute significantly to the implementation of the programmes. However the cooperation with centers entails costs including staff time for the Secretariat which should be revised to the minimum.

### **Sustaining engagement**

16. Given the autonomous nature of Category 2 Centres, there is a limit to their legal obligations to comply with UNESCO's requests and to UNESCO's ability to influence their activities. UNESCO's representative participation in the Governing Board should be a precondition for the holding of the Board meeting. Regular reporting should be put in place to ensure that activities are in line with the Sector's strategy.