

## UNESCO's contribution to the UNSG's 2012 report on the implementation of the IPoA for the LDCs and the Mauritius Strategy for SIDS

**Agency: UNESCO**

### **UNESCO's mandate in relation to LDCs and SIDS:**

UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (34 C/4) for 2008-2013 commits the Organization to providing targeted assistance to the LDCs in meeting their development objectives in all of UNESCO's spheres of competence. UNESCO's work in this area is guided by the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA), adopted in Istanbul in May 2011.

At its 186<sup>th</sup> session, UNESCO's Executive Board, adopted 186/Decision 15, which specifically mentions how UNESCO will mainstream and integrate the relevant areas of the IPoA into UNESCO's work (the reference of the document is available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001930/193025e.pdf> - see 186 EX/Decision 15 (pg. 23, para.8).

**Quote of the decision:** After considering the Organization's draft programme and budget for 2012-2013 (36 C/5), UNESCO's Executive Board, stressed "the need to scale up efforts towards reducing inequalities and reaching the marginalized and the most vulnerable communities by further focusing action in favour of the least developed countries (LDCs), guided especially by the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011." Following this decision, all of the relevant priority areas in the Istanbul Programme of Action have been mainstreamed into UNESCO's programme for 2012-2013.

UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (34 C/4) also commits the Organization to providing targeted assistance to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in line with the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy.

UNESCO's SIDS priority is based on three distinct UNESCO General Conference resolutions calling for the continued strengthening and reinforcement of UNESCO's SIDS work, as follows:

- 32<sup>nd</sup> General Conference Resolution 48 (2003): Sustainable development of small island developing States: further implementation and review of the Barbados Programme of Action (Barbados+10)<sup>1</sup>
- 33<sup>rd</sup> General Conference Resolution 3: Programme of action for the sustainable development of small island developing States (SIDS): further implementation<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution adopted on the reports of Commissions I, II, III, IV and V at the 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st plenary meetings, on 15, 16 and 17 October 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution adopted on the reports of Commissions I to V, on 19 and 20 October 2005.

- 35<sup>th</sup> General Conference Resolution 33: UNESCO and Global Action on Climate Change (Section II)<sup>3</sup>, which includes a specific section on the specific vulnerabilities of SIDS related hereto

**Specific Organizational setup dealing with these groups of countries:**

The Bureau of Strategic Planning serves as UNESCO's focal point for promoting and monitoring programme activities pertaining to Least Developed Countries (LDCs). This entails following up on and reporting on the implementation of the IPoA, and coordinating UNESCO's contribution to the interagency task forces that have been set up to substantiate the commitments contained in the IPoA with all of UNESCO's programmes and relevant specialized institutes.

UNESCO has a dedicated Intersectoral Platform on SIDS, which mobilizes UNESCO's house-wide contribution to the implementation of the Mauritius strategy. The Platform pursues an integrated approach to sustainable island living and development, emphasizing interregional linkages and cooperation. Reflecting the priority status assigned to SIDS in UNESCO's current medium-term strategy, the SIDS Platform is geographical in nature, allowing it to interact with other platforms focusing on specific themes such as, for example, on climate change. Significantly, units from across UNESCO's field network contribute to the Platform, through regular teleconferences, correspondence and face-to-face meetings.

The SIDS Platform ensures that UNESCO's interdisciplinary expertise - in natural and social sciences; climate change; education for sustainable development; natural, cultural and intangible heritage; the articulation of scientific and indigenous knowledge; and knowledge management and information for decision-making – is productively used in addressing the multiplicity of challenges facing SIDS.

SIDS Member State delegations to UNESCO meet regularly in the SIDS Committee of Representatives. Currently co-chaired by the Seychelles and Saint Kitts & Nevis, the SIDS Committee serves as a vehicle for information exchange between the SIDS member state delegations. Representatives of the UNESCO Secretariat are regularly invited to meetings of the Committee, in order to provide briefings on UNESCO activities, planning and developments, and to engage in informal information exchange on issues of particular concern to SIDS.

**Total amount of budget allocated to LDCs in 2010/2011:**

UNESCO dedicated approximately USD 20,979,589 in Regular Programme resources and approximately USD 105,575,249 in Extrabudgetary resources to the 48 LDCs in 2010-2011.

**Specific programs and measures tailored to support LDCs in 2010 and 2011:**

Below is a brief synopsis of the main activities that UNESCO implemented in favor of the LDCs in 2010 and 2011. For a more detailed report with country specific examples and quantitative and qualitative data, please see our report "UNESCO - Building Human Capacities in the Least Developed Countries to Promote Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development" - <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001915/191597e.pdf>., published in 2011.

More information is also available on our dedicated LDC website at: <http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php>

<sup>3</sup> Resolution adopted on the report of the SC Commission at the 16th plenary meeting, on 22 November 2009.

*Promoting quality education for all in the LDCs*

During 2010-2011, UNESCO focused on those LDCs most in need, and at the greatest risk of not achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals by 2015. These 20<sup>4</sup> target LDC priority countries received budgetary allocations of \$25 million, from regular and extrabudgetary funding sources, for the 2010-2011 biennium for four priority areas: Literacy, Teachers, Skills for World of Work, and Education Sector-Wide Policy and Planning.

*Building capacities in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for sustainable development and poverty eradication*

UNESCO supported 24 LDCs in formulating and implementing national science, technology and innovation policies and in building related capacities, applying S&T indicators and statistics through the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) for evidence policy making, and monitoring policy implementation.

*Supporting the sustainable management of freshwater, ocean and terrestrial resources, including renewable sources of energy, as well as disaster preparedness and mitigation*

UNESCO also supported the management of an access to, safe drinking water in the LDCs, namely by providing education and, training and capacity building in the sustainable management of freshwater resources through its International Hydrological Programme (IHP), including the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education in Delft, the Netherlands and the numerous centers and institutes and under the auspices of UNESCO that focus on regional water issues.

Capacity development of renewable energy strategies and policies was also supported UNESCO's Global Renewable Energy Education and Training (GREET) Programme. Through this programme, the Organization trained some 400 decision/policy makers from 15 LDCs in renewable energies.

The Organization also supported the LDCs in post-conflict and post-disaster situations by supporting education in emergencies' and reconstruction, building capacities in natural disaster risk reduction, protecting culture and world heritage in emergency situations, supporting independent media in conflict and post-conflict situations and mainstreaming gender in reconstruction and peace-building efforts. In the context of post-disaster situations, UNESCO supported the full integration of disaster prevention into recovery and reconstruction efforts, notably by working to expand early warning systems.

*Promoting mitigation and adaptation to climate change, notably through enhanced education and public awareness*

UNESCO also provided capacity building support to the LDCs in strengthening their climate change knowledge base for science, assessment and early warning; developing and testing climate change adaptation models in UNESCO Biosphere Reserves; raising awareness about climate change through the media; and providing policy and planning advice to Ministers of

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<sup>4</sup> Bangladesh, Chad, Timor-Leste, Togo, Yemen, Angola, Burundi, Guinea, Lesotho, Mali, PDR Lao, Rwanda, Afghanistan, Haiti, Madagascar, Malawi, Cambodia, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Mauritania

Education, and education curriculum planners on how to integrate climate change education into national education policy and planning in regions that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

*Promoting culture as a powerful engine for economic growth to generate income and stimulate employment*

UNESCO provided capacity building support to the LDCs on how to enhance to the economic and social potential of the culture sector through cultural preservation, entrepreneurship and marketing. Through the MDG-F Culture and Development Fund Thematic Fund led by UNESCO, 18 UN inter-agency programmes were implemented which demonstrate the contribution of culture to development at the country level. An example is the Creative Industries Support Programme in Cambodia, through which 500 artists and crafts people were trained, of which 90% were from minority groups, in the crafts industry and in the management of commercial enterprises.

*Supporting communication and information for development*

UNESCO provided support to the LDCs in developing free, pluralistic and independent media, training journalists and media professionals and fostering ICT applications for enhancing quality and impact of teaching and learning processes. Through its International Programme for the Development of Communication, the Organization has channeled over USD 100 million to some 1,500 media development projects in 140 countries, with particular emphasis on the LDCs.

**Specific programmes and measures planned for 2012-2013 to support the implementation of the IPoA for the LDCs, including with UN system organizations, include:**

UNESCO is committed to supporting the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in its Programme and Budget for 2012-2013.

It has actively participated in the meetings that have been held to develop the Istanbul Road Map for the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action from 2011 to the Mid-Term review, so as to substantiate the commitments contained in the IPoA, including the 6<sup>th</sup> Interagency meeting held in Geneva in November 2011 This includes:

- the inter-agency task force that is working to undertake a joint gap and capacity analysis, with the aim of establishing a Technology Bank and Science, Technology and Innovation supporting mechanism, dedicated to the least developed countries;
- the inter-agency working group that is developing indicators for the monitoring, follow up and review of the IPoA (UNESCO's Institute for Statistics has proposed a number of indicators for the monitoring, follow-up and review and implementation of the following IPoA areas: Education and Training, Youth Development and Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, and STI).
- The LDC working group on crisis mitigation and resilience building.

The Organization will focus its efforts on implementing the following priority areas of action specified in the IPoA: education and training, youth development, water and sanitation, gender equality and empowerment of women, climate change and environmental sustainability and disaster risk reduction in 2012-2013.

During the 2012-2013 biennium, the Organization will target an estimated 38 LDCs in the following key areas: Literacy; Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET); Teachers; and Education Sector-Wide Planning, to support learners, in particular women, to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to develop professional careers and to enter the world of work. It will also step up its efforts to reduce female drop-out rates in the transition from primary to secondary education and to support women's literacy programmes in Africa and Asia through its recently launched Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education.

It will also support the LDCs in the review, formulation and implementation of STI policies for sustainable development and poverty eradication. It will strengthen higher education as well as human and institutional capacity-building in science, engineering, and the sustainable management of freshwater resources, our oceans, and the ecosystem services they provide through its vast scientific networks and international science programmes -- the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the International Hydrological Programme, the Man and the Biosphere Programme, the International Basic Sciences Programme, and the International Geosciences Programme. Special emphasis will be put on encouraging young people, particularly young girls, to go into scientific disciplines, and supporting young scientists, especially female scientists.

The Organization will also support the LDCs in the design and implementation of sustainable policies and approaches for the prevention and reduction of the impacts of natural hazards, and the mitigation of the impacts of and adaptation to climate change and variability, paying particular attention to integrating a gender perspective and to youth. For LDCs in post-conflict and post-disaster situations, UNESCO will work to rehabilitate education systems, provide advice and expertise in conflict resolution pertaining to natural resources management, protect damaged cultural and natural heritage, promote the development of institutional and human capacities for the development of free, independent and pluralistic media and strengthening the safety of media professionals and in providing access to humanitarian information in all sectors in crisis situations.

It will also promote communication and information for development, notably by assisting the LDCs in strengthening their communication capacities by developing independent and pluralistic media and improving media access to ICTs, in particular through the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), and with a special focus on youth and women. Moreover, UNESCO will also continue to work with ITU to spur broadband growth in the LDCs by defining strategies for accelerating broadband rollout worldwide and examining applications that could see broadband networks improve the delivery of a huge range of social services, from healthcare to education, environmental management, safety and much more.

UNESCO will also support youth development, namely by promoting youth-led social entrepreneurship in Africa, supporting youth led community projects. Sport, culture and non-formal education will also be leveraged as key entry points to support youth in political and social processes.

The Organization will also promote gender equality and the empowerment of women through concrete action in all of its programmes, which is described in more detail in the Organization's practical and results-based Priority Gender Equality Action Plan for 2008-2013. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/themes/gender-equality/features/unesco-priority-gender-equality-action-plan-2008-2013/>

While culture and development is not specifically mentioned in the IPoA, although it is a vehicle for economic development and growth and for jobs in the LDCs, and the UNGA recognized this in the resolution it adopted in 2010 (A/RES/65/1), UNESCO will continue to promote

sustainable tourism, as well as culture and creative industries as strategic outlets for income generation and poverty eradication in the LDCs.

**Total amount of budget allocated to SIDS in 2010/2011:**

For SIDS, UNESCO dedicated approximately USD 19,078,357 in Regular Programme resources and approximately USD 62,196,783 in Extrabudgetary Resources.

**Specific programs and measures tailored to support SIDS in 2010 and 2011:**

The following paragraphs detail only selected examples of UNESCO activities with particular emphasis on SIDS – not a comprehensive list. For a more detailed overview of recent SIDS-related activities, please see UNESCO document 184 EX/INF.10 (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001875/187576e.pdf>) , or our dedicated SIDS website that presents UNESCO action for SIDS on the basis of the Mauritius Strategy chapters at [www.unesco.org/en/sids](http://www.unesco.org/en/sids). Every two years, UNESCO publishes a booklet in English, French and Spanish in order to highlight key activities of the SIDS Platform). The latest booklet was published in September 2009 under the title *Islands in a Sea of Change*, summarizing UNESCO's actions in SIDS during the 2008-2009 biennium (see <http://www.unesco.org/csi/B10/SIDSbroch2009.pdf>)

The Section for Small Islands and Indigenous Knowledge undertakes a number of programmes specifically addressing SIDS, including in cooperation with other UN bodies. These include:

1. Climate Frontlines - an interagency platform on indigenous knowledge and climate change implemented by UNESCO through the Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) programme, in partnership with Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) and the Office of the High Commission on Human Rights (OHCHR) and with financial support from the Government of Denmark. Climate Frontlines seeks to strengthen voices of indigenous peoples, Small Island and local communities in global climate change debates. For more information, see [www.climatefrontlines.org](http://www.climatefrontlines.org).
2. Sandwatch – a global SIDS-focused climate change education and coastal monitoring programme implemented in partnership with the non-profit Sandwatch Foundation, Sandwatch is currently active in more than 50 countries including over 25 SIDS (see [www.sandwatch.org](http://www.sandwatch.org) for more information). Financial support is provided by the government of Denmark.
3. Youth Visioning for Island Living - a capacity building initiative that aims to empower young people in small islands to make a difference. Through Youth Visioning, enthusiastic and dedicated young people have worked on many projects particularly on the issue of HIV/AIDS and human rights, as well as on other social, cultural and environmental issues. For more information, see [www.youthvisioning.org](http://www.youthvisioning.org).

Several UNESCO programmes have in recent years established distinct SIDS subprogrammes, providing an enhanced focus and more targeted delivery of activities to SIDS Member States. Such programmes include a dedicated SIDS World Heritage programme and corresponding webpage (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/42/>) as well as a dedicated SIDS portal on the Intangible Cultural Heritage programme website (<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00193&categ=2008>). SIDS have also been the focus of UNESCO's recent activities in support of climate change education. Among these, UNESCO hosted an international experts' seminar in Paris in July 2009 with financial support

from the government of Denmark. See [http://www.unesco.org/science/doc/cc/CC\\_seminar\\_report\\_071209.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/science/doc/cc/CC_seminar_report_071209.pdf) for more information.

**Activities to support SIDS during the 2012-2013 biennium focus on:**

- Reinforcing the resilience of communities in SIDS, with particular reference to climate change adaptation and natural disaster preparedness, through evidence-based policies, education and capacity development and the mobilization of civil society
- Supporting the efforts of SIDS towards sustainable development through the safeguarding and reinforcement of island cultural and natural heritage, including local and indigenous knowledge and practices
- Building capacities in SIDS for the development implementation of policies and practices that reinforce educational, economic, and livelihood opportunities for island youth, both women and men, with a particular focus on education for sustainable development; technical and vocational education and training; science, technology and innovation; media and information, and cultural industries.