

22 Preliminary proposals by the Director-General concerning the Draft Medium-Term Strategy (41 C/4) and Draft Programme and Budget (41 C/5) (210 EX/22 and Corr. (English & French only); 210 EX/22.INF and Corr.; 210 EX/52.II)

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 40 C/Resolutions 102 and 103,
2. Having examined the preliminary proposals by the Director-General concerning the Draft Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2029 (41 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022-2025 (41 C/5) (210 EX/22),
3. Takes note of document 210 EX/22.INF and expresses its appreciation to Member States, notably their National Commissions for UNESCO, UNESCO's international and intergovernmental bodies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their rich and constructive contributions to the consultation process for the preparation of documents 41 C/4 and 41 C/5;
4. Takes note with appreciation of the emphasis of the preliminary proposals on reinforcing UNESCO's commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the other relevant international development agendas, through enhanced and integrated action in the Organization's fields of competence, including to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to building back better;
5. Notes also with appreciation the importance of reinforcing the support to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission as the only UN intergovernmental body specialised in oceans' science that is leading the development and delivery of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, with an aim to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and thus supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
6. Takes note of the efforts underway to align UNESCO with the United Nations reforms process in line with UNGA Resolution A/RES/72/279 on the Repositioning of the United Nations Development System, which called upon the entities of the UN development system to strengthen capacities, resources and skills sets to support national Governments in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and where relevant, build capacities and expertise across United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to promote progress on the Sustainable Development Goals lagging behind, in line with respective mandates and building on comparative advantages, and reducing gaps, overlaps and duplication across entities;
7. Recalls UNGA resolution 75/233 on Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system as a guidance to the UN development system on its operational activities for development in order to support countries in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a coherent and integrated manner;
8. Notes the fact that sustainable development goals do not have a separate goal dedicated for culture; culture is one of the main enablers and drivers for sustainable development and UNESCO is the only UN agency with culture as part of its core mandate;
9. Also notes that, despite the fact that sustainable development goals do not have a separate goal dedicated for science, science is an empowering agent of paramount importance for achieving sustainable development and UNESCO is a UN agency with a comprehensive mandate of science;

10. Requests the Director-General to reflect in the Draft Medium-Term Strategy, the contribution of UNESCO to peace and sustainable development as a reminder of the core missions so that it remains an overarching objective of the Organization;
11. Takes note with appreciation of the proposed strategic vision of the Organization with a view to asserting its global leadership in the areas of its mandate, by focusing on its comparative advantages and added value within the United Nations system;
12. Welcomes the multidisciplinary integrated approach in the formulation of the strategic objectives and the programme of work, while maintaining the focus on the Organization's mandate, fields of competence and expertise;
13. Calls for an effort to systematize and rationalize the intersectoral approach, where appropriate:
 - (a) to ensure that the C/4 document, together with the C/5 document, serves as a guide for Member States and partners, and,
 - (b) to facilitate the establishment of appropriate systemic structures and tools and to respond to the challenge of internal evaluations and audits;
14. Endorses the current mission statement of the Organization for the next eight-year period as stated in the 37 C/4;
15. Considers that the reduction of inequalities plays an essential role in all UNESCO's programmes and should be continued; and takes note of the conclusions concerning the relevance of each of UNESCO's functions at the global, regional and national levels;
16. Amends the proposed function 4 in the 41 C/4 as follows: "Catalyst and motor for international cooperation: strengthening international and regional cooperation in its fields of competence, fostering alliances, intellectual, financial and technical cooperation, knowledge-sharing, mobilizing resources and operational partnerships";
17. Reconfirms Africa and gender equality as global priorities of the Organization, decides to further prioritize Small Island Developing States (SIDS), requests that a unit dedicated to SIDS, as a priority group, be established in the Office of the Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, including the provision of significantly additional human and financial resources at Headquarters and in relevant field offices to reinforce and illustrate UNESCO's Commitment to delivery on its actual and future Action Plan for SIDS and ensure that tracking of expenditure for their implementation is facilitated for the period covered by 41 C/4 in accordance with 209 EX/Decision 5.I.D, and invites the Director-General to study the feasibility and impact of creating a SIDS global priority in the future;
18. Recognizes youth as a priority group for the period covered by the next Medium-Term Strategy and invites the Director-General, in collaboration with Member States and through national commissions for UNESCO and permanent delegations, as well as all other relevant stakeholders, to reinforce support to youth and strengthen their meaningful engagement, also taking into account the recent Executive Board decision on the development of the concept of organizing UNESCO Youth Forums;
19. Requests the Director-General to take into account on her proposals of 41 C/4 and 41 C/5 UNESCO's contribution to the rights and need of indigenous peoples, in line with the UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples (2018), of which the Executive Board took note with satisfaction at its 202nd session (202 EX/9), as well as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

(2007), and in particular through its role as lead agency for the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032), proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2019 (A/74/396);

20. Requests the Director-General to take into account in her proposals of 41 C/4 and 41 C/5 UNESCO contribution to the International Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024, with the theme “People of African descent: recognition, justice and development”, proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations by Resolution A/RES/68/237;
21. Amends the proposed strategic objective 1 as follows: “Ensure quality equitable and inclusive education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, in order, inter alia, to reduce inequalities and promote learning and creative societies, particularly in the digital era”;
22. Amends the proposed strategic objective 2 as follows: “Work towards sustainable societies and protecting the environment through the promotion of science, technology, innovation and the natural heritage”;
23. Also endorses the strategic objectives and the associated proposed outcomes for the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4), which will serve as a basis for the formulation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022-2025 (41 C/5); and requests to maintain the same wording of SDG4 “Education 2030” in regards to outcome 1 of Strategic Objective 1;
24. Expresses appreciation to the Director-General for the consultations with Member States in the follow-up to 209 EX/Decision 32 on Global Priority Africa;
25. Invites the Director-General to integrate, into draft documents 41 C/4 and 41 C/5, the guidance provided in 209 EX/Decision 32;
26. Requests the Director-General to take into account the following issues, concerning Global Priority Africa, in the formulation of the draft 41 C/4 and 41 C/5:

Cross-cutting issues

- (i) Pursue capacity development of Member States and an intersectoral approach across all UNESCO’s fields of competence;
- (ii) Allocate adequate and qualified human resources as well as adequate financial resources to the field offices in Africa;
- (iii) Establish a clear budget tracking and coordinated monitoring mechanism for Global Priority Africa;
- (iv) Designate senior-level Priority Africa focal points in each programme sector who will work in close collaboration with the Assistant Director-General for Priority Africa and External Relations (ADG/PAX);
- (v) Establish Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) Performance indicators within the 41 C/5 for the effective monitoring and evaluation of Global Priority Africa;

Education

- (vi) Support the development and implementation of national education policies and plans aligned with SDG 4 - Education 2030 for access to quality, equitable and inclusive education, from early childhood to primary and secondary education, in a perspective of lifelong learning;

- (vii) Set up a mechanism for coordination and sharing of experiences for the five sub-regions of Africa in the implementation of SDG4 – Education 2030, while providing for links between the global level (SDG Education 2030 Steering Committee) and national levels;
- (viii) Promote and support the integration of the educational use of the General History of Africa in African education systems and in the world and ensure the integration of endogenous knowledge and African realities in educational programmes in Africa;
- (ix) Support the development of equitable, responsive and relevant TVET systems; and the improvement of national policies and capacities to increase access to equitable, affordable, quality and relevant higher education;
- (x) Promote multilingualism and promote learning through mother tongue and national languages in African education systems;

Natural Sciences and the IOC

- (xi) Promote the importance of collecting, storing and analyzing data for the formulation and planning of strategic science, technology and innovation (STI) policies, as a prerequisite for the teaching of basic science;
- (xii) Strengthen teacher training and support Member States ensure that teachers have the tools for quality education for all in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) with emphasis to girls, as well as strengthening of the support for the policy of African States in terms of training in STEM;
- (xiii) Support African potential in terms of innovation through appropriate measures in order to achieve real African poles of excellence, including by promoting partnerships for the benefit of African countries with the aim of establishing interconnections between development science and socio-economic development. The proactive pursuit of the support to African engagement in the fields of Open Science and Artificial Intelligence is likely to increase the potential of African innovation;
- (xiv) Give the required importance to the theme of Water in Africa as a connecting element of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through strategies targeting in particular the substantial increase of hydrological specialists in Africa, the improvement of the knowledge base for informed water decisions in Africa, the increase and enhancement of capacity of national committees of the Intergovernmental Hydrological Program (IHP) in Africa, as well as the promotion of Water as catalyst for cooperation and peace;
- (xv) Develop capacity of African Members States for conservation, restoration and sustainable use of ecosystems and biodiversity through continuous support for African public policies and resources aimed at increasing the contribution of biosphere reserves and geoparks in the implementation of AU 2063 Agenda;
- (xvi) Seize the opportunity of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) to further develop African capacities for the conservation, protection, management and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources;

Social and Human Sciences

- (xvii) Support Member States mobilize the creativity, energy and innovation of Africa's youth as the driving force behind the continent's transformation;
- (xviii) Foster social inclusion, equitable societies and management of social transformations including the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (xix) Support the uptake and pedagogical use of the General History of Africa through greater intersectoral and interdisciplinary collaboration;
- (xx) Promote bioethics and ethics of science and technology, including the ethics of artificial intelligence;
- (xxi) Promote a culture of peace and mutual understanding including through quality physical education and sports;

Culture

- (xxii) Strengthen Member States' capacities on the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property through programs that focus on institutional, legal, operational and awareness-raising aspects;
- (xxiii) Strengthen Member States' capacities on the preparation and submission of UNESCO Standards Forms for Requests of Return and Restitution within the ICPRCP;
- (xxiv) Strengthen Member States' capacities on the preparation and submission of nomination files for the inscription of sites on the World Heritage List, and for conservation, including on Heritage Impact Assessments;
- (xxv) Support African States in the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention in response to the growing need to ensure heritage conservation while promoting sustainable development;
- (xxvi) Mapping of UNESCO's engagement of African experts in the implementation of the cultural conventions, with the purpose of identifying expertise gaps in the key domains and developing capacity-building programmes; as well as enabling sharing experiences between African countries;

Communication and Information

- (xxvii) Address the structural causes of digital inequalities by contributing to the development of the digital environment in Member-States to catalyze the digital transformation of Africa through the capacity-development in internet framework and governance;
- (xxviii) Develop ICT-based capacities and innovative tools for entrepreneurship and sustainable development to give rise to highly skilled people as producers and consumers, especially women and girls, persons with disabilities and populations in rural areas;
- (xxix) Foster open solutions such as Open Educational Resources and Open Science;
- (xxx) Foster inclusive and peaceful knowledge societies through the promotion of freedom of expression, the safety of journalists and media development, including responsible reporting, the fight against misinformation and disinformation, as well as media and information literacy;

27. Requests the Secretariat to strengthen existing partnerships and initiate new ones in order to support the implementation of Global Priority Africa at all levels, particularly in the area of UNESCO's Programme Sectors and Gender, and to highlight the real impact of the actions undertaken within the framework of these partnerships during their monitoring and evaluation;
28. Awaits the results of the evaluation of the Operational Strategy for Priority Africa (2014-2021) by the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) which should also inform the formulation of the draft 41 C/4 and 41 C/5;
29. Requests the Director-General to take into account the following crosscutting issues in the formulation in the draft 41C/4 and 41C/5:
 - (i) Reinforcing UNESCO's role and actions in South-South and Trilateral Cooperation, as well as international cooperation in all formats, as a means to implement the Organization's strategic objectives, with special attention to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its multidimensional conception of development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for Financing Sustainable Development;
 - (ii) Also reinforcing UNESCO actions in partnership with all relevant stakeholders regarding international cooperation for the implementation of the Organization's strategic objectives, with special attention to the commitments restated in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for Financing Sustainable Development, including the commitment by developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of ODA/GNI;
30. Calls upon UNESCO to strengthen its substantive contribution to the fight against all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance including incitement to racial hatred and racial hate crimes, taking into account Resolution 40 C/39 and the Global Call Against Racism adopted at the 210th session of the Executive Board;
31. Invites the Director-General to take concrete actions to strengthen the coherence of the dialogue between cultures, and takes note of the importance of UNESCO's programmes including the Silk Road Programme, the Slave Route Project, the General History of Africa, the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures, the International Decade for People of African Descent, the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, the Interreligious and interfaith Dialogue, the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005), the Convention of the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), specifically transnational nominations, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), specifically transnational nominations, the Memory of the World Programme, specifically transnational nominations, UNITWIN-Network-UNESCO Anniversaries and the MOST Programme, among others, as spaces for the implementation of specific initiatives supporting the contribution of culture for sustainable development;
32. Requests the Director-General to integrate, into draft documents 41 C/4 and 41 C/5, a specific reference to the paramount importance of the field network to implement the mandate of the Organization and, in particular the 41 C/4 and 41 C/5, in accordance with the specific characteristics and needs of each region and sub-region and with UNESCO's global priorities and priority groups;
33. Also requests the Director-General to include an institutional overview of stakeholders (beneficiaries and implementation partners) and a list of existing and planned partnerships for each of the proposed outcomes in the succinct Draft Medium-Term Strategy (41 C/4) and for each of the proposed Expected Results in the Draft Programme and Budget (41 C/5);

34. Further requests the Director-General to include in the Draft Medium-Term Strategy provisions on how best to involve National Commissions and institutional networks of civil society in the effective planning and implementation of programmes;
35. Invites the Director-General to consult Member States and their National Commissions between the 210th and 211th sessions of the Executive Board on the preparation of her proposals concerning draft documents 41 C/4 and 41 C/5;
36. Requests the Director-General to reinforce UNESCO's capacity to guide and improve the implementation of its normative instruments including by collecting, developing and analyzing benchmark data and statistics, elaborating indicators, guidance and practical tools, and setting up, as appropriate, support mechanisms;
37. Notes with appreciation the importance of strengthening the support to the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme, taking into account its unique role in the UN System as an intergovernmental science programme focused on the mobilization of scientists, specialists in social and human sciences to support Member States on policy responses, including to the pandemic and in the post COVID-19 era;
38. Affirms the importance of Futures Literacy as a vital skill for supporting responses to global challenges and requests the Director-General to ensure the continuation of Futures Literacy in document C/5, from an intersectoral perspective;
39. Also emphasizes the importance of Media Information Literacy as a critical skill and requests the Director-General to strengthen its role in the planning of the C/5 from an intersectoral perspective;
40. Requests the Director-General to submit a report as an information document at its 212th session on the review of the new structure of the Communication and Information Sector in line with the Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (39 C/5), taking into account the debates held at its 210th session;
41. Takes note of the changes envisaged to the presentation and techniques to be applied in the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022-2025 (41 C/5), and invites the Director-General to make proposals for their implementation in the presentation of document 41 C/5, taking into account the discussions held at its 210th session;
42. Also requests the Director-General to prepare the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022-2025 (41 C/5), taking into account the discussions held at its 210th session, and to submit them to it for consideration at its 211th session;
43. Decides to establish the drafting group on documents 41 C/6 and 41 C/11 with the same terms of reference that the informal group created at the 210th session for the discussion on C/4 and C/5, with a view to draft the recommendations of the Executive Board on the draft 41 C/4 and draft 41 C/5 and to be presented at the next session of the General Conference;
44. Invites the Director-General to present a 41 C/5 document that is outcome-oriented and includes both qualitative and quantitative targets.