

UNESCO's contribution to global challenges

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As a specialized agency of the UN system, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) contributes to the building of peace, the alleviation of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information.

In fulfilling its mission, UNESCO carries out for the international community five established functions:

- i) laboratory of ideas, including foresight;
- ii) standard-setter;
- iii) clearing house;
- iv) capacity-builder in Member States in UNESCO's fields of competence;
- v) catalyst for international cooperation.

The UNESCO Medium Term Strategy for 2008-13, which sets out the strategic objectives and expected outcomes for the Organization's work during this period, is focused on according priority to Africa and to gender equality.

Within the Medium Term Strategy, five programme-driven overarching objectives for the entire Organization define areas where UNESCO has a unique profile and comparative advantage in the multilateral field:

- Attaining quality Education for All;
- Mobilizing scientific knowledge and science policy for sustainable development;
- Addressing emerging ethical challenges;
- Promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue;
- Building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication.

Specific targeted action is envisaged for youth, the least developed countries (LDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS). UNESCO will further respond to the needs of the disadvantaged and excluded groups, as well as the most vulnerable segments of society, including indigenous populations.

As recently stated by Irina Bokova, UNESCO's Director General, UNESCO should have in the future, "a leading role to play in building a global human community", (laying the foundations for a lasting universal human community,) drawing on the fundamental values of humanity and on the resources of the mind as the stakes of the Organization's "new humanism approach."



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on Innovative Ways to Improve the Culture of Living

The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture for Europe, established in Venice in 198... originally only for Science, has now the mandate to foster regional cooperation, contribute to capacity building and to provide specialized expertise with special emphasis on the South East Europe and the Mediterranean.

The activities elaborated and implemented by the UNESCO Venice Office in SEE are aimed at:

- Enhancing peace and stability by supporting the process of self-sustainability and the promotion of cross border cooperation in science and culture
- Sharing responsibility by promoting corporate governance and participation
- Preparing for the future regional challenges through innovation, knowledge and capacity building
- Contribute to UN Reform with expertise and impact oriented actions