



Intersessional negotiation work **24-28 October 2005**

WSIS CIVIL SOCIETY

An informal information note with few comments concerning the WSIS implementation and follow-up at UNESCO

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Version 3

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Important quoted texts are **highlighted**

Concerning the implementation of the WSIS recommendations by UNESCO, It has been brought mostly to the attention of all stakeholders : governments, civil society and business sector, the document entitled “UNESCO and the WSIS” (ref 33C/41).

However, we feel that further information and comments might prove helpfull in order to provide some food for thought in the context of current negotiations concerning the implementation and follow-up of the WSIS.

The document 33C/41 has been discussed during the UNESCO 33rd General Conference on Wednesday 12 October 2005, by the Commission V. According to the draft oral report of the rapporteur of Commission V (17 October 2005), the paragraph 22.6 related to Internet Governance was deleted. Concerning the paragraph 22.8 “*endorsing the Director-General's approach to the implementation of and follow-up to the WSIS outcomes*”, *some countries were not satisfied with this formulation*

feeling that it could imply agreement before the outcomes of the Summit were known. After extensive discussions, the Chair called for a vote, and the original wording in this section of the DR was adopted (57 in favor, 6 against and 5 abstentions). There was also extensive debate about the timing of reporting outcomes, with some feeling that the 34th Session of the General Conference is too far away. Mr Khan agreed that the Tunis Outcomes and the tasks assigned to UNESCO could be reported to the April 2006 session of the Executive Board and that a more comprehensive implementation progress report would be prepared for the next General Conference in 2007.

However for all practical purposes, what really matters concerning the implementation of the WSIS recommendations is what has been adopted in the Budget for the next biennium, and one might be concerned about the efficiency of the Director General approach if there is no dedicated financial resources towards this purpose. Therefore, we feel that what is of utmost importance is the Budget. We hereby refer to the Draft Budget (ref 33C/5) to assess the current implementation of the WSIS recommendations by UNESCO.

The draft budget of UNESCO is organized according to Five Major Programmes that correspond to the various UNESCO administrative divisions.

I Education

II Natural Sciences

III Social and Human Sciences

IV Culture

V Communication and Information.

It is worth to notice that the WSIS is only mentioned within the Major Programme V **Communication and information** (C33/5 p 191). We are also concerned that the WSIS recommendations whose precise language has been the matter of extensive diplomatic negotiations are never quoted as such and no itemized implementation of each recommendation has been contemplated. In the matter of e-science, which falls in the undisputed field of competence of UNESCO, we are extremely concerned that that budget items (eg. see Annex 2) are not reflecting precisely the recommendations of the plan of action.

Main paragraphs of the Draft Budget where the WSIS is mentioned.:

05003. International goals and commitments : Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS 2003 and 2005)

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular MDG 1, MDG 2 and MDG 8, target 18 United Nations Millennium Declaration.

05005. Information, communication and knowledge are at the core of human

progress, endeavour, and well-being. Traditional and new information and communication technologies (ICTs) open new and challenging opportunities to attain higher levels of development for the benefit of people in all parts of the world. However, many people and nations, especially the poorest ones, do not have effective and equitable access to the means for producing, disseminating and using information and, therefore, to development opportunities. The concept of knowledge societies, which UNESCO has been advocating, offers a holistic and comprehensive vision (cutting across all UNESCO's domains) with a clear development-oriented perspective that captures the complexity and dynamism of current changes in the world. Knowledge societies are about capabilities to identify, produce, disseminate and use information to build and apply knowledge for human development. They require an empowering social vision which encompasses plurality, inclusion, solidarity and participation. Based on the principles of freedom of expression, universal access to information and knowledge, promotion of cultural diversity, and equal access to quality education, the concept of knowledge societies is progressively recognized as essential for attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly **in the new framework for international dialogue and cooperation set by the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).**

Programme V.1

05101 Empowering people through access to information and knowledge with special emphasis on freedom of expression

(C33/5 p 194)

Programme objectives. UNESCO will seek to support actions designed to empower people so that they can access and contribute to information and knowledge flows. Actions will be initiated along four main thrusts: (i) promoting freedom of expression; (ii) creating an enabling environment which is conducive to and facilitates universal access to information and knowledge; (iii) developing effective "infrastructures"; and (iv) stimulating the development of and access to diverse content. The actions under the first thrust are geared towards attaining the objectives of promoting freedom of expression and freedom of the press, establishing internationally recognized standards for freedom of expression and freedom of information, developing accountability, ethics and professional standards in journalism as well as enhancing the role of the media in democratic governance. These actions will consolidate some of the expected outcomes of strategic objective 10 in document 31 C/4 Approved, especially (i) progress in the application of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the media; and (ii) extension of the geographical coverage of networks in order to fight more effectively against threats to the security of journalists. The Information for All Programme (IFAP) will provide the policy framework for many of the actions under the second thrust which will be designed

around setting standards, raising awareness and monitoring progress to achieve universal access to information and knowledge. **The objectives include promoting the formulation of integrated information and communication strategies and policies in Member States that conform with the Principles and the Action Plan adopted at the WSIS.** Special consideration will be given to fostering international debate on the ethical implications of emerging knowledge societies and assisting in the development of information and management tools. Special consideration will be given to fostering international debate on the ethical implications of emerging knowledge societies and assisting in the development of information and management tools. Other objectives will be to enhance the development of "infostructures", such as libraries and archives, especially at the community level; stimulate the production of and access to diverse content; and preserve the documentary heritage, both in digital and traditional formats. It is envisaged that these actions will lead to an increase in the amount of publicly available information and encourage multilingualism, especially in cyberspace. They will also aim at reinforcing the contributions by the media to intercultural dialogue in the larger context of the Organization's efforts to promote a dialogue among cultures and civilizations as well as peoples. These actions will equally help attain the expected outcomes of strategic objectives in document 31 C/4 Approved, in particular (i) improved cultural and linguistic diversity through a more diverse offer in the Internet and other digital products (strategic objective 11); (ii) broader participation in world networks as a result of training and institutional support; and (iii) greater participation in regional networks and improvement in their technical capacity.

0511. Strategic approaches. UNESCO has a unique mandate to act as the lead agency in promoting freedom of expression and universal access to information and knowledge. The Organization is well suited to serve as a resource facility and a think-tank for pertinent questions related to the complex development of knowledge societies. **One main objective will be to ensure that the concrete implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action is accompanied by a continued reflection on the conditions in which knowledge societies can develop.** The focus will be on creating an enabling environment to achieve freedom of expression and universal access. These goals are strongly interrelated. The freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media reflects the fundamental human right upon which the goal of universal access is predicated. Freedom of expression and the free flow of ideas by word and image are critical to achieve universal access and fully exploit its potential in developing prosperity and knowledge....

The approach also entails fostering standards for editorial independence of public service broadcasting institutions. **Another important element of the strategy will be**

the implementation of the outcomes of the two phases of the WSIS (Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005). Action will be targeted to the needs of developing countries, especially the least developed countries and countries in transition. Special attention will be paid to the gender dimensions and to the needs of young people. Consultations and consensus-building on important "infoethics" issues will be pursued, as will be monitoring and analysing developments in knowledge societies, in collaboration with national authorities, civil society organizations and the private sector

0512 *Fostering community access and diversity of content*

Strategic approaches. Dealing with two main thrusts of the principal priority area, namely developing effective "infostructures" such as libraries, archives, community learning centres, and other providers of information services and stimulating the development of, and access to, diverse content the actions are designed to operationalize the concept of knowledge societies and to contribute to the implementation of the WSIS Action Plan. They are equally intended to address the digital divide and develop strategies for universal access. In developing "infostructures", UNESCO will concentrate on building human and institutional capacities as well as strengthening community access and participation in knowledge societies. With regard to building human and institutional capacities, the strategy aims at providing training, integrating media literacy issues into curricula of communication training institutions and assisting them to offer on-line and off-line training opportunities. ...

Flagship project: Community media as a catalyst for development and social change ...The CMC modality was highlighted as a UNESCO flagship activity at WSIS I, held in December 2003 in Geneva...

05201 *Promoting communication development and ICTs for education, science and culture*

Programme objectives. The following two main objectives will be pursued: (i) supporting the development of communication media, including in conflict and post-conflict areas as well as in post-disaster situations; and (ii) advancing the use of ICTs for education, science and culture. Under the first objective, the Organization will continue its efforts to foster communication development in Member States, principally through its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Priority will be given to least developed countries, Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) as well as countries in transition. In areas of emergency and conflict, building on its experience in South-East Europe, the Great Lakes region in Africa, the Middle East, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan, UNESCO will contribute to peace-building and reconciliation processes by providing assistance to

independent media so as to enable them to gather and disseminate non-partisan information. The objectives are threefold: support the establishment of media facilities; encourage media initiatives which contribute to peacebuilding; and assist in the rebuilding and development of independent and pluralistic media landscapes in post-conflict areas as well as in post-disaster situations. The actions are designed to reinforce the expected outcomes of an increase in the number of (i) development projects on communication capacities (strategic objective 12 in document 31 C/4 Approved); and (ii) independent newspapers and radio or television stations, both public and private, in countries in transition as well as in conflict or post-conflict zones (strategic objective 10). With regard to advancing the use of ICTs in education, science and culture, the Organization will seek to enhance learning opportunities through access to diversified contents and delivery systems as well as strengthening capacities for scientific research, information-sharing and cultural exchanges. As the "lead sector" for the cross-cutting theme on ICTs, the Communication and Information Sector will reinforce synergies between its own programmes and the cross-cutting projects related to this theme. **Actions will focus on using ICTs to contribute to achieving the EFA goals and the WSIS Action Plan by expanding access to education and learning, broadening access to scientific information and increasing capacities for information-sharing and exchanges.** In this way, the actions will also strengthen the achievement of the expected outcome of more diversified applications of ICTs for training purposes, especially in distance education and scientific and cultural cooperation (strategic objective 12 in document 31 C/4 Approved).

05401 Cooperation with extrabudgetary funding sources

Under Major Programme V, UNESCO will continue its cooperation with multilateral and bilateral institutions and donors in the public and private sectors and other stakeholders. The Organization will intensify its efforts to collaborate with the international donor community to generate funds for actions designed to enhance the role of communication and information in development as well as in building open and inclusive societies. The Organization will seek to achieve a greater integration of efforts among the donor community and multilateral development institutions through coordinated or joint programme approaches. In particular, efforts will be made to improve synergies with the UN ICT Task Force, the Global Knowledge Partnership, UNDP, ITU, the World Bank and other stakeholders **in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS, 2003 and 2005).** The Organization's own intergovernmental and international programmes, the International Programme for Development of Communication (IPDC) and Information for All Programme (IFAP), will be particularly important in the efforts to mobilize funds and strengthen international cooperation. In the principal priority area, "empowering people through access to information and knowledge with special

emphasis of freedom of expression", partnerships will be sought with organizations and initiatives belonging to the United Nations system such as the UNDP, ITU, UN ICT Task Force and other IGOs. Civil society organizations, including professional NGOs, will continue to be essential partners for building alliances around knowledge society issues. Partnerships with the private sector, particularly the IT industry, will be consolidated and widened, especially in areas of shared social and economic development objectives and where the IT industry can provide innovative solutions for establishing knowledge networks. With regard to the promotion of freedom of expression and media independence and pluralism, including in conflict areas and post-disaster situations where UNESCO has gained considerable experience over the past years, extrabudgetary funding will be sought from a range of international, national, and private sources, including those bilateral national donors (such as Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Norway, Sweden, United States) that have already contributed substantially to the Organization's activities in this area. Cooperation will also be sought or reinforced with the joint United Nations and World Bank Trust Funds, OCHA, OHCHR, the European Union, the Council of Europe, OSCE, foundations and the private sector. Existing partnership arrangements with national, regional and international NGOs as well as with main professional organizations will continue and be further developed....

Annex 1 :

Budget : Major Programme V Communication and information

I. Personnel \$19 052 100

II. Activities:

V.1 Empowering people through access to information and knowledge with special emphasis on freedom of expression

V.1.1 Creating an enabling environment for the promotion of freedom of expression and universal access \$3 989 600

V.1.2 Fostering community access and diversity of content \$6 480 500

V.2 Promoting communication development and ICTs for education, science and culture

V.2.1 Fostering media development \$2 382 500

V.2 Promoting communication development and ICTs for education, science and culture

V.2.1 Fostering media development \$2 382 500

V.2.2 Advancing the use of ICTs in education, science and culture \$1 045 700

Projects relating to cross-cutting themes \$1 500 000

Total, Major Programme V \$34 450 400

V.3

Annex 2

33 C Budget item with our proposed modifications (for illustrative purpose only, since this budget item has been adopted) to ensure a minimal, although not satisfactory agreement with the precise recommendations of the WSIS Geneva plan of action.

V.2.2 Advancing the use of ICTs in education, science and culture

Main line of action 2.

Broadening access to scientific and technological information through media and ICTs

05222 (page 211)

Regular budget \$260,300

Extrabudgetary \$557,000

Total, Activities: \$817,300

Expected results at the end of the biennium

Access to scientific information sources such as **preprints**, publications, journals, **archives**, and open education resources (OER) increased.

Performance indicators:

agreements established with publishers on worldwide **Open** access to scientific information;

development of open-access **ressources** ~~networks supported and scope of their membership~~ **and a network of open-access ressources.**

online and off-line quality **freely available re**sources available to scientists in developing countries.

ICT-based networking and knowledge-sharing among scientists strengthened **through innovative strategies**

Performance indicators:

online networks set up involving science communities;

provision and use of free/open source software by scientists.

Science journalism promoted through support to media training institutions.

Performance indicators:

training courses in science journalism;

production and use of model curricula for science journalism in training institutions;

media programmes/productions on science.

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