

UNESCO

Introduction

The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2005a) ten years ago at its 33rd session on 20 October 2005. For the last two decades, cultural diversity has been one of the key driving forces of UNESCO's work on culture, development, and education. Although stemming from UNESCO's paradigm of approaching culture and cultural diversity within the relatively wide scope of human activities, the 2005 Convention also restructured UNESCO's focus on them — the arts, artistic products, and expressions of heritage are now salient:

The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is a legally-binding international agreement that ensures artists, cultural professionals, practitioners and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods, services and activities, including their own. It was adopted because the international community signalled the urgency for the implementation of international law that would recognise:

- The distinctive nature of cultural goods, services and activities as vehicles of identity, values and meaning;
- That while cultural goods, services and activities have important economic value, they are not mere commodities or consumer goods that can only be regarded as objects of trade. (UNESCO, n.d.)

UNESCO works to create the conditions for dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, based upon respect for commonly shared values. It is through this dialogue that the world can achieve global visions of sustainable development encompassing observance of human rights, mutual respect and the alleviation of poverty, all of which are at the heart of UNESCO'S mission and activities.

The broad goals and concrete objectives of the international community – as set out in the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – underpin all UNESCO'S strategies and activities. Thus UNESCO'S unique competencies in education, the sciences, culture and communication and information contribute towards the realization of those goals.

What is UNESCO?

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in Agenda 2030, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

Our Vision

Political and economic arrangements of governments are not enough to secure the lasting and sincere support of the peoples. Peace must be founded upon dialogue and mutual understanding. Peace must be built upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity.

In this spirit, UNESCO develops educational tools to help people live as global citizens free of hate and intolerance. UNESCO works so that each child and citizen has access to quality education. By promoting cultural heritage and the equal dignity of all cultures, UNESCO strengthens bonds among nations. UNESCO fosters scientific programmes and policies as platforms for development and cooperation. UNESCO stands up for freedom of expression, as a fundamental right and a key condition for democracy and development. Serving as a laboratory of ideas, UNESCO helps countries adopt international standards and manages programmes that foster the free flow of ideas and knowledge sharing.

UNESCO's founding vision was born in response to a world war that was marked by racist and anti-Semitic violence. Seventy years on and many liberation struggles later, UNESCO's mandate is as relevant as ever. Cultural diversity is under attack and new forms of intolerance, rejection of scientific facts and threats to freedom of expression challenge peace and human rights. In response, UNESCO's duty remains to reaffirm the humanist missions of education, science and culture.

Role of UNESCO

- **Advocating** for ESD at the international level
- Providing **support to Member States** in reorienting education
- Implementing and coordinating the **Global Action Programme (GAP)** on ESD
- Supporting **key partners** and projects
- Raising **awareness and visibility**

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Ongoing projects and future developments

- Participation in the World Digital Library project
- Knowledge management initiatives
- Thesaurus compatibility project, with EU and other institutions
- Arabic and Chinese versions of UNESCO thesaurus
- Climate change resource
- Second Life
- Anything else I've forgotten !!

REFERENCES

1. www.google.com
2. www.wikipedia.org
3. www.studymafia.org