Publications

- Guide to Parliamentary Practice (English, French, Spanish, Arabic)
- The proceedings of the UNESCO/UIP Joint Meeting (English, French)
- Brochure "UNESCO and Cities – partners" (English, French)
- Manual for UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (English, French – under preparation)
- International Directory of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (English, French)

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The Section for UNESCO Clubs and New Partnerships, in the Sector for External Relations and Cooperation, contributes to developing, supporting and strengthening a whole range of partnerships, alliances and other mechanisms for cooperation that enhance the impact and profile of UNESCO’s programmes. These partnerships are set in two contexts – that of the United Nations system, and that of the specific policy framework established by UNESCO’s governing bodies. Moreover, the Millennium Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2000 emphasize the need to develop global partnerships for development. In setting up a high-level group (chaired by F. H. Cardoso) in February 2003 to assess cooperation between the United Nations and civil society, the United Nations Secretary-General gave new impetus to that objective. For this reason, a report was drawn up underlining the importance of NGOs and elected representatives’ involvement in the UN process. This trend in the United Nations system as a whole has been reflected for several years now in UNESCO’s programmes. The Organization’s Medium-Term Strategy (2002-2007), for instance, spells out the importance of “cooperation through partnerships, alliances and other linkages”, in particular with UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations, parliamentarians and Local Authorities.
Sector for External Relations and Cooperation
Section for UNESCO Clubs and New Partnerships

UNESCO PARTNERS

PARLIAMENTS
UNESCO CLUBS
CITIES
PARLIAMENTARIANS

The Programme for Parliamentarians, initiated on 1984, aims to ensure that UNESCO’s values and objectives are reflected in national policy-making and legislation. UNESCO aims to reinforce its interaction with parliamentarians and other national elected representatives, and thus, with the decision-makers who define sustainable development policies and approaches and allocate the requisite resources.

Parliamentarians play a key role in contributing to the promotion of peace and development in UNESCO’s fields of competence. Entrusted with responsibility for making and applying their nation’s political and legislative decisions, they relay the concerns of those who have mandated them and can adopt appropriate measures by way of response. They are in the best possible position to make citizens aware of UNESCO’s mission, to have a direct impact on the preparation of legislation and the adoption of national budgets and to ensure that the Organization’s programmes are reflected in reality.

UNESCO’s partnership policy enables the Organization to mobilize a powerful network of national and regional legislators who, meeting at times within regional or international forums, are receptive to its ideals and wish to ensure that its Programme objectives are reflected in national legislation.

UNESCO also brings to Parliamentarians an expertise in many key field of legislation.

Levels of cooperation

UNESCO has set up mechanisms to ensure continuous dialogue and collaboration with the parliamentarians of all Member States at international, regional and national levels.

At international level, a cooperation agreement was concluded with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in 1997. In this agreement IPU commits its members – 141 national parliaments and 7 Associate Members – to work for peace and security, cooperation among nations and universal respect for justice, human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the goals and principles proclaimed in UNESCO’s Constitution.

At regional level, cooperation agreements have been concluded between UNESCO and regional parliamentary associations: the Parlamento Latinoamericano (Parlatino-1994) and the Parliamentary Assembly of Francophonie (APF-2005). Relations have also been established on an ad hoc basis with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, the African Parliamentary Union (APU), the Arab Inter-parliamentary Union (AIPU), and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). Regional forums have been set up around specific UNESCO programmes notably Education for all, Culture and Sciences.

In order to institutionalize interaction at national level, UNESCO and IPU have initiated a new mechanism of cooperation by the designation of Parliamentary Focal Points for UNESCO in national parliaments in 2003. The role of this institutional network is to establish a permanent link between the activities of the Parliaments of Member States and those of National Commissions for UNESCO at the national level. It will make it possible to establish links amongst the executive, the legislature and civil society and so facilitate UNESCO’s support for the formulation of national policy.
THE UNESCO CLUBS MOVEMENT

Since the first UNESCO Club was founded in Japan, in 1947, UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations have been very valuable partners for the Organization. They are formed of people of all ages, from every kind of social and professional background and origin who share a commitment to UNESCO’s ideals and work as volunteers to implement them at grass roots level. There are currently about 4,000 UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations in nearly 100 countries.

Their initiatives foster the dissemination of UNESCO’s principles and objectives and publicize the values represented by the Organization in local communities. These Clubs take up a position on global problems with local repercussions and thus contribute to the process of reflection on social priorities. This movement attests to the ever-increasing role of civil society throughout the world and the influence that citizens can exert on socio-economic decision-makers. The 4,000 or so Clubs, spread over 100 countries, have three main functions: training, information and action.

A broad range of initiatives

The activities carried out by the Clubs are varied and depend, above all, on the age and the interests of their members and also on the financial resources and means of action available.

The Clubs’ action involves:

- The dissemination of general principles such as those set out in the Preamble and the Constitution of UNESCO, the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- Participation in the celebration of international days and years proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations and the General Conference of UNESCO;
- The promotion of literacy activities, the preservation and presentation of the cultural heritage;
- The organization of study camps for young people;
- Education for the prevention of AIDS;
- The publication of newsletters and information documents;
- The translation into national and local languages of the basic texts and documents of UNESCO and the United Nations.

Relations between UNESCO and UNESCO Clubs

UNESCO promotes the UNESCO Clubs Movement in its Member States. It encourages the creation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations, and supports and monitors their activities- in close cooperation with the National Commissions for UNESCO.

Although UNESCO’s name appears in the titles of those Clubs, Centres, and Associations and their federations, they are independent of the Organization. They are financially and legally autonomous, and thus responsible for their own operation, and development of their activities in their own ways. To secure external financing, many of them turn to other international organizations, the National Commissions for UNESCO, ministerial departments, local communities, private companies, foundations and individuals.

UNESCO provides intellectual, financial, and/or material assistance for their specific activities that it considers particularly relevant, in close coordination with National Commissions for UNESCO in respective Member States. UNESCO also helps to strengthen the impact of their activities by fostering cooperation with the programme sectors, field offices and the Organization’s main networks, such as the Associated Schools Network.

World Federation World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA)

The World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations was formed in 1981, federating national coordinating bodies of the UNESCO Clubs Movement, such as national federations, to represent and promote the UNESCO Clubs movement throughout the world. As an international non-governmental organization, it has “formal associate relations” with UNESCO.
In a context of universal urbanization, UNESCO is providing local authorities with the fruits of decades of study, research and experience in the field.

Each of its spheres of competence is reflected in the concerns of the cities’ decision-makers, who are sometimes confronted with critical situations in education, culture, the natural sciences or the social sciences and communication. Preserving historic centres without evicting their inhabitants, communicating, managing inadequate water resources, winning people over to sustainable development are all problems of local policy to be solved after consultation, with the overriding need to preserve resources for future generations ever borne in mind.

UNESCO seeks to develop new forms of partnership, with local governments in order to strengthen the political commitment for the priorities and the initiatives of the Organization. It encourages cooperation with municipalities, cities, local authorities and associations of cities, all of which increasingly play an important role in sustainable development of communities.

Thus, UNESCO supports the action of cities and local authorities in the political, social, economic and cultural fields. This joint action extends to the natural and human sciences, culture and the heritage, communication and information, and education.

The role of impartial mediator, that UNESCO plays, is to bring cities together and also connect them with other partners through sponsoring, twinning and networking operations.

**Institutional cooperation**

A Memorandum of Understanding was concluded with UN Habitat in March 2005. The Memorandum commits the United Nations agencies to develop common approaches on the role of cities in the reduction of urban poverty, and provides a framework for the elaboration of new instruments and strategies in the field of urban development and social and environmental sustainability.

At **international level**, a cooperation agreement between UNESCO and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the largest world organization made up of cities and national associations of local authorities, was adopted. In this agreement, UCLG - more than 1,000 cities in 100 countries - works to promote peace, democracy and citizenship, democratic urban governance and decentralization, cooperation among cities and solidarity and contributes to sustainable development and the enhancement of the status of cultural diversity in urban settings, in accordance with the goals of UNESCO.

Cooperation agreements have been concluded between UNESCO and certain associations of cities notably with the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC), International Associations of Educating Cities (IAEC) and the Union of major Portuguese speaking cities world wide (UCCLA).

**Ideas, projects, lines of inquiry**

Well administrated, cities can bring about change, social progress, and cultural diversity.

The pilot projects conducted under UNESCO’s auspices, what goes to make a city, in particular its architecture, legislation, environment, housing, public space, skills. Most of these projects involve partnerships based on decentralized cooperation between a number of towns. A city’s heritage cannot be considered independent from the social fabric that ensures its vitality. Thus, UNESCO encourages legal and social protection, education and the improvement of housing through the management of the patrimony. UNESCO’s actions to rehabilitate their heritage, to keep the inhabitants in their homes, while coping with economic strains and pressures of tourism, help to fight poverty.

Lastly, questions relating to urban ecology, to management of catastrophes and the management of water in the city become significantly more important within the framework of UNESCO’s partnership with local authorities.