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PRINCIPLES, CONDITIONS AND RULES FOR MANAGING AND EVALUATING ACTIVITIES FUNDED UNDER THE PARTICIPATION PROGRAMME AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

OUTLINE

Source: 191 EX/28 Part I (Recommendation No. 13).

Background: In his audit of the Participation Programme and Emergency Assistance, the External Auditor recommended that the Organization enshrine in statutes, through a General Conference resolution, the principles, policy lines, conditions and basic rules for managing and evaluating activities funded under the Participation Programme, with only the Programme's major appropriation priorities being set out in the biennial C/5 resolution.

Purpose: This document contains the general conditions and rules for managing and evaluating activities funded under the Participation Programme, for adoption by the General Conference.

Decision required: paragraph 19.

Job: 201701134

I. Participation Programme: Principles and conditions

A. Principles

1. The Participation Programme is one of the means employed by the Organization to achieve its objectives, through participation in activities carried out by Member States or Associate Members, or by territories, organizations or institutions, in its fields of competence. This participation is designed to strengthen the partnership between UNESCO and its Member States and make that partnership more effective through a sharing of contributions.

2. Under the Participation Programme, priority will be given to proposals submitted by least developed countries (LDCs), developing countries, post-conflict and post-disaster countries, small-island developing States (SIDS), countries in transition and middle-income countries.

3. Member States with high annual GDP per capita as established by the World Bank are invited to refrain from submitting requests.

4. Requests shall be submitted online by the Member States through the National Commissions for UNESCO or, where there is no National Commission, through a designated government channel.

5. The projects or action plans submitted by the beneficiaries under the Participation Programme must relate to the priorities of the Organization, in particular to the major programmes, interdisciplinary projects, and activities to benefit Africa, youth and gender equality, as well as activities of the National Commissions for UNESCO with a specific reference to the paragraph of the C/5 document corresponding to the activity. It is understood that no financing will be provided for supplies and equipment which are not directly linked to operational works within the framework of these projects or for the recurrent costs of the beneficiary organizations.

6. Each Member State may submit seven requests or projects, which must be numbered in an indicative order of priority from one to seven. Requests or projects from national non-governmental organizations will be included in the quota submitted by each Member State.

7. The indicative order of priority laid down by the Member State may only be changed by the Secretariat following consultation with the National Commission itself based on the evaluations of the programme sectors. Member States must include at least one gender-equality project among their first four priorities.

8. Non-governmental organizations in an official partnership with UNESCO may submit up to two requests under the Participation Programme for projects with subregional, regional or interregional impact, provided that their request is supported by at least the Member State where the project is to be implemented and another Member State concerned by the request. In the absence of supporting letters, no such requests may be considered.

9. Submissions:

(a) requests should be submitted by the following deadlines: the last working day of February of the first year of the biennium for Africa, small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs), and the last working day of August of the first year of the biennium for all other eligible countries, except for requests for emergency assistance, which may be submitted at any time in the biennium;

(b) requests should, wherever possible, be submitted online, with a view to moving to exclusively online submissions in due course.

10. Following submission of requests online using the electronic form, acknowledgement of receipt is automatic. The Secretariat shall inform Member States of the response by the Director-General to the requests as soon as possible.

11. *Beneficiaries*. Assistance under the Participation Programme may be accorded to:

(a) Member States or Associate Members, upon request through their National Commissions or, where there is no National Commission, through a designated government channel, to promote activities of a national character. For activities of a subregional or interregional character, requests are submitted by the National Commissions of the Member States or Associate Members on whose territory they are to take place; these requests must be supported by at least two other National Commissions of participating Member States or Associate Members. For activities of a regional character, requests are limited to two per region and must be submitted by one Member State or a group of Member States. Such requests must be supported by at least three Member States (or Associate Members) concerned, and will not come within the quota of seven requests submitted by each Member State; they will be evaluated and screened by the Secretariat in accordance with the procedure established for the processing of requests submitted under the Participation Programme;

(b) a non-self-governing or trust territory, upon the request of the National Commission of the Member State responsible for the conduct of the territory's external relations;

(c) non-governmental organizations in an official partnership with UNESCO.

12. *Forms of assistance*. The applicant chooses the form of assistance, and may request either:

(a) a financial contribution; or

(b) implementation by UNESCO at Headquarters or in the field. In both cases, assistance may take the following forms:

(i) the services of specialists and consultants, not including staff costs and administrative support;

(ii) fellowships and study grants;

(iii) publications, periodicals and documentation;

(iv) equipment, material, supplies (for operational programme purposes in accordance with the list of benchmarks annexed to the Participation Programme circular letter of the Director-General sent at the beginning of each biennial budget cycle);

(v) conferences, meetings, seminars and training courses; translation and interpretation services, participants' travel costs, the services of consultants, and other services deemed necessary by all concerned (not including those of UNESCO staff members).

13. *Total amount of assistance*. Whichever of the above forms of assistance is requested, the total value of the assistance provided for each request shall not be in excess of $26,000 for a national project or activity, $28,000 for a subregional or interregional project or activity, and $38,000 for a regional project or activity. The financial provision made by the applicant must be sufficient to implement the activity satisfactorily. The activity must be executed and all funds disbursed in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Organization. The expenditures must be made according to the distribution of the budget as approved by the Director-General and communicated to Member States in the letter of approval.

14. *Approval of requests*. When deciding upon a request, the Director-General shall take into account:

(a) the total amount approved by the General Conference for the Participation Programme;

(b) the assessment of the request made by the relevant sector(s);

(c) the recommendation of the Intersectoral Committee on the Participation Programme chaired by the Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Public Information (ADG/ERI) and responsible for screening the Participation Programme requests, which are to be in conformity with the well-established criteria, procedures and priorities;

(d) the contribution that such participation can effectively make to the attainment of Member States' objectives in UNESCO's fields of competence, and within the framework of the major priorities of the Medium-Term Strategy (C/4) and the Programme and Budget (C/5) approved by the General Conference, with which participation must be closely linked;

(e) the need to establish an equitable balance in the distribution of funds, by giving priority to Africa, least developed countries (LDCs), gender equality and youth as well as developing countries and countries in transition and small island developing States (SIDS), which need to be mainstreamed throughout all programmes. In this regard, an appropriate selection criterion such as annual GDP per capita, established by the World Bank and/or the scale of assessment of Member States' contributions to UNESCO, is to be considered by the Secretariat since, in general, the funds requested by Member States by far exceed those available. In addition, the Secretariat will establish the relevant financial ceilings, to be communicated to Member States, based on their status as LDCs, SIDS, developing countries or middle-income countries. Member States with high annual GDP per capita, as established by the World Bank, are invited to refrain from submitting requests;

(f) the need to ensure that funding for each project approved is, as far as possible, allocated no later than 30 days before the date set for the start of the implementation of the project concerned, and in accordance with the conditions laid down in paragraph 15(a).

15. Implementation:

(a) the Participation Programme will be implemented within the biennial programme of the Organization, of which it forms an integral part. The implementation of the activities set out in a request is the responsibility of the Member State or other applicant. The request must show specific scheduled commencement and termination dates for the implementation of projects, cost estimates (in United States dollars) and promised or expected funding from the Member States or private institutions;

(b) the results of the Participation Programme will be made known with a view to the planning and implementation of the Organization's future activities. The activity reports and sexennial reports, submitted after the completion of each project by Member States, will be used by the Secretariat to evaluate the Participation Programme's impact and results in Member States and its consistency with the objectives and priorities set by UNESCO. An evaluation by the Secretariat may also be undertaken while the project is being carried out; the list of beneficiaries submitting reports late will be transmitted to the governing bodies;

(c) the use of UNESCO's name and logo for the activities approved under the Participation Programme, in accordance with the directives approved by the governing bodies, will give this programme a higher profile when it is carried out at the national, subregional,

regional or interregional levels, and the beneficiaries will report on the results recorded in this way.

B. Conditions

16. Assistance under the Participation Programme will be provided only if the applicant, when sending in the written requests to the Director-General, accepts the following conditions. The applicant shall:

(a) assume full financial and administrative responsibility for implementing the plans and programmes for which participation is provided; in the case of a financial contribution, submit to the Director-General, at the close of the project, an itemized statement accounting for the activities executed (financial report in United States dollars) and certifying that the funds allocated have been used for the implementation of the project, and return to UNESCO any balance not used for project purposes. This financial report must be submitted by the last working day of March following the end of each biennium at the latest. It is understood that no new financial contribution will be paid until the applicant has submitted all the requisite financial reports or returned the contributions paid out. The financial reports shall be signed by the competent authority and certified by the Secretary-General of the National Commission. Also, given the need for proper accountability, all the additional supporting documents necessary shall be kept by the applicant for a period of five years after the end of the biennium concerned and provided to UNESCO or the auditor upon written request;

(b) undertake to provide on a compulsory basis, together with the financial report mentioned in subparagraph (a) above, a detailed activity report on the results of the projects financed and their usefulness for the Member State or States and UNESCO; in addition, a sexennial report on the impact of the Participation Programme shall be prepared by each beneficiary on a cycle aligned with the Medium-Term Strategy (C/4);

(c) pay, where participation is accorded in the form of study grants, the cost of the grant holders' passports, visas, medical examinations and salaries while they are abroad, if they are in receipt of a salary; help them to find suitable employment when they return to their countries of origin in accordance with national regulations;

(d) maintain and insure against all risks any property supplied by UNESCO, from the time of its arrival at the point of delivery;

(e) undertake to cover UNESCO against any claim or liability resulting from the activities provided for in this resolution, except where it is agreed by UNESCO and the National Commission of the Member State concerned that such claim or liability arises from gross negligence or wilful misconduct;

(f) grant to UNESCO, with regard to activities to be carried out in connection with the Participation Programme, the privileges and immunities set out in the 1947 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies.

C. Emergency assistance

17. Criteria for according emergency assistance by UNESCO:

(a) Emergency assistance may be accorded by UNESCO when:

(i) there are insurmountable circumstances nationwide (earthquakes, storms, cyclones, hurricanes, tornadoes, typhoons, landslides, volcanic eruptions, fires, droughts, floods or wars, etc.), which have catastrophic consequences for the

Member State in the fields of education, science, culture or communication and which it cannot overcome on its own;

(ii) multilateral emergency assistance efforts are being undertaken by the international community or the United Nations system;

(iii) the Member State requests UNESCO to provide emergency assistance, in accordance with (i) and (ii) above, in the fields of its competence, through its National Commission or an established government channel;

(iv) the Member State is prepared to accept the Organization's recommendations in the light of the present criteria;

(b) UNESCO emergency assistance should be restricted to the Organization's fields of competence and should only begin once the threat to life has been overcome and the physical priorities have been met (food, clothing, shelter and medical assistance); it shall also take account of the policy followed in support of countries in post-conflict and post-disaster situations;

(c) UNESCO emergency assistance should be concentrated on:

(i) assessing the situation and the basic requirements;

(ii) providing expertise and formulating recommendations on resolving the situation in its fields of competence;

(iii) helping to identify outside funding sources and extrabudgetary funds;

(iv) the urgent needs as identified by the Member States in the case of emergency assistance in cash or kind;

(d) no administrative support or personnel costs shall be financed through emergency assistance;

(e) the total budget for any emergency assistance project shall not exceed $50,000; it may be supplemented by extrabudgetary funds identified for this purpose or other sources of funding;

(f) emergency assistance shall not be provided if the Member State's request may be met within the ordinary Participation Programme;

(g) emergency assistance shall be provided in coordination with other United Nations agencies.

18. Procedures to be followed when providing emergency assistance:

(a) faced with an emergency situation, a Member State, through its National Commission or the designated government channel, will identify, as appropriate, its needs and the type of assistance it requires from UNESCO, within UNESCO's fields of competence; the form for the submission of requests may be used for this type of request; a provisional budget as well as pro forma invoices in case of equipment should be provided;

(b) the Director-General shall then inform the Member State, through the National Commission or established channel, of his or her decision;

(c) when appropriate, and in agreement with the Member State, a technical assessment mission will be sent to appraise the situation and report to the Director-General;

(d) the Secretariat shall report to the Member State on the assistance and the amounts it envisages providing and the follow-up, if any, which could be considered; the total value of the assistance provided shall not be in excess of $50,000;

(e) in the case of goods or services to be supplied by UNESCO, there shall be no international competitive bidding if the situation requires urgent action;

(f) an evaluation report and a financial report shall be submitted by the Member State after completion of the project.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

19. In the light of the foregoing, the General Conference may wish to adopt the following resolution:

The General Conference,

Having examined document 39 C/51,

Referring to the recommendation of the External Auditor "enshrine in statutes, through a General Conference resolution, the principles, policy lines, conditions and basic rules for managing and evaluating activities funded under the Participation Programme with only the Programme's major appropriation priorities being set out in the biennial C/5 resolution";

1. *Decides* to approve the principles and conditions of the Participation Programme and emergency assistance as submitted in document 39 C/51.