

UNESCO Committee

Overview

Introduction

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) that embodies peace, progress, and a vision that stems from its de facto motto, “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” Headquartered in Paris, France, UNESCO has been one of the preeminent organizations in education, science, and culture since its inception and has grown from a small initial set of core focuses to one of the most diverse UN bodies. UNESCO is currently undergoing a period of reform and change and is working diligently to adapt to an increasingly complex, rapidly changing global environment in order to maintain its role as a leader in international development.

History

UNESCO’s main predecessors, the International Committee of Intellectual Cooperation and the International Bureau of Education, were narrowly focused intellectual organizations established in the 1920s. The devastation of World War II motivated the international community to create a stronger institution that had the capacity to help rebuild the schools, libraries, and museums that were destroyed during the conflict. To create the framework for such a body, representatives of European governments met for the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education in 1942 and drafted a proposal that would lead to the UN Conference for the Establishment of an Educational and Cultural Organization in 1945. Forty-four States attended the conference and agreed to create “an organization that would embody a genuine culture of peace.” The resulting agreement, the *Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO Constitution), entered into force in 1946 and established UNESCO.

Since then, UNESCO has grown, adapted, and realized a number of successes, all in pursuit of its core purpose, “to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, and culture.” Education has always been the primary focus of the organization, and its efforts were a major part of the 26% improvement in global literacy between 1946 and 2006. UNESCO has historically provided support for the education of refugees and the promotion of natural and social sciences, but much of the organization’s work is in the international transfer of educational and cultural materials. For instance, UNESCO launched the Basic Learning Materials Initiative in 1993, a program that incorporates multiple stakeholders, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and donor states to help developing countries gain access to textbooks and other critical teaching tools.

UNESCO’s most visible work has been in the promotion and protection of natural and cultural heritage, especially since the adoption of the 1972 *World Heritage Convention*, an agreement that standardized the protection of certain sites and created the widely-recognized World Heritage List. Much of the critical work of UNESCO is defined by similar standards-setting agreements; UNESCO has long been tasked with their creation and promotion, often in conjunction with other UN entities. UNESCO is responsible for facilitating the creation of such agreements as the 1952 *Universal Copyright Convention*, the 1960 *Convention against Discrimination in Education*, the 1989 *Convention on Technical and Vocational Education*, the 1997 *Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights*, and the 2005 *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, in addition to several regional arrangements.

Mandate

As a specialized agency in the UN, UNESCO is an autonomous body that coordinates its work through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). UNESCO’s interactions within the UN system are defined by an agreement between the two organizations that ensures UN representation at UNESCO meetings, allows UNESCO to send representatives to relevant meetings of the UN General Assembly and ECOSOC, and requires UNESCO to implement UN recommendations. The agreement also compels UNESCO to report to ECOSOC with information regarding its activities and prior to entering into any new inter-agency agreements. The responsibilities and purposes of UNESCO are defined by the *UNESCO Constitution* and include collaboration with Member States and other organizations to increase the flow of ideas and promote international agreements, the advancement and spread of education and culture, and the maintenance and diffusion of knowledge. As an institution, UNESCO aligns its priorities with Internationally Agreed Development Goals, but focuses on Africa and gender equality and also has

several specific overarching objectives based on its mandate. All of UNESCO's actions are based on its mission, which is "to contribute to the building of a culture of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication, and information."

Governance, Structure, and Membership

Membership in UNESCO is automatically granted to all UN Member States, and non-members may be admitted if approval is granted by two of UNESCO's principal organs, except in the case of territories whose international relations are handled by another state, which may only be admitted as Associate Members. The *UNESCO Constitution* defines UNESCO's organs, which include the General Conference, an Executive Board, and a Secretariat. The General Conference includes all 195 Member States and 9 Associate Members and acts as the main decision-making body for the agency. The General Conference meets every two years to establish a budget and program of work and generally operates based on simple majority voting, although a two-thirds majority is required for the approval of conventions. From the General Conference, 58 states are elected in a geographically equitable manner to serve four-year terms on the Executive Board, which sets the organization's agendas and provides leadership. The Secretariat provides all necessary administrative support for UNESCO and is headed by a Director-General who is nominated by the Executive Board and approved by the General Conference.

Article VII of the *UNESCO Constitution* calls on its members to work to establish national commissions. These country-level bodies are an important part of the organization's structure as they help to carry out its program of work and allow for coordination with national governments, the civil society, and other actors. Often, these entities are engaged both nationally and regionally and are responsible for hosting numerous programs. Prominent among these commissions are the Korean National Commission, which has hosted the annual Asian Youth Forum since 2007, and the German National Commission, which heads the International Volunteer Program.

Functions and Powers

As an organization, UNESCO has an incredibly wide reach, in part due to its national commissions, and it has over 2,000 employees in its 65 field offices and institutes. Its size and relatively large budget have allowed UNESCO to conduct activities related to its mission in nearly every Member State. While most states recognize the positive global influence of UNESCO, an Independent External Evaluation conducted in 2010 identified numerous opportunities and recommended that UNESCO work to narrow its focus and improve efficiency. This is particularly true of its field offices, which are meant to develop and execute strategies and partnerships closer to the local level, but were highlighted in the report as being "over-extended, often under-resourced, and poorly staffed."

UNESCO's main programming documents, the Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021 and the Approved Programme and Budget for 2014-2017 define the scope of the organization's activities for the foreseeable future. Any actions taken by UNESCO must align with the nine strategic objectives outlined in the Medium-Term Strategy, which were determined through analysis of the organization's most recent quadrennial review and include methods by which UNESCO can "address today's multifaceted challenges." Several of UNESCO's near-term actions have already been authorized in the Approved Programme and Budget, which aligns with the organization's strategic objectives and establishes main lines of action (MLAs) for its entire program of work. Any new initiatives would need to align with these MLAs, as they would otherwise require special budgetary consideration, and current programs already operate within them. For example, UNESCO's Teacher Training Initiative for sub-Saharan Africa operates within the first education MLA, which calls for UNESCO to support Member States in developing "education systems to foster high-quality and inclusive lifelong learning for all." Similarly, the International Programme for the Development of Communication helps promote media in developing countries through capacity development and technology transfer under the first communication and information MLA."

Conclusion

The destruction of World War II inspired the international community to establish the UN but also highlighted the importance of education and international collaboration. As the principle educational agency of the UN, UNESCO's activities are essential in the protection and promotion of science and culture and within the global development agenda. Given the nature of UNESCO's focus areas, it is important for the body to have a much longer-term outlook than many other international organizations and it is equally important for representatives to work collaboratively. Consensus-based agreements in UNESCO help to increase the effectiveness of their global initiatives and the subject matter with which UNESCO deals inherently lends itself to widespread international agreement.

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (1945). *UNESCO Constitution*. Retrieved 8 June 2015 from: portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=15244&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

The Constitution of UNESCO is its founding document and defines the purposes, functions, membership, and operations of the organization. Understanding this constitution will give delegates a thorough understanding of the capacity of UNESCO to act and the premise upon which it was founded. It also established the organs of UNESCO, dictates their capabilities, and defines UNESCO's relations with the United Nations, Member States, and other organizations and specialized agencies.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2014). *Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2021*. Retrieved 25 May 2015 from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002278/227860e.pdf>

The Medium-Term Strategy is a comprehensive overview of the principles, mission, functions, priorities, and objectives of UNESCO and constitutes one of the main programming documents of the organization. Included are notes on the changes in the external environment that have focused UNESCO's efforts and the principles upon which the strategy is based. This document, while relatively short, is incredibly information dense and will give delegates a clear understanding of the mandate and undertakings of UNESCO.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2014). *Programme and Budget 2014-2017*. Retrieved 8 June 2015 from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002266/226695e.pdf>

This detailed and technical report outlines UNESCO's direction for the next several years and includes shifts in direction and budgeting based on seven specific objectives and the 2010 Independent External Evaluation of UNESCO. Not only is the entire UNESCO budget detailed herein, but there are also descriptions of the scope of major programs and program-related services. While delegates should not read the report in its entirety, it is useful to consult to ensure that actions being taken are in line with UNESCO's program of work and fiscal constraints.

I. World Heritage Sites: Balancing Tourism and Preservation

“A concerted effort to preserve our heritage is a vital link to our cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, and economic legacies – all of the things that quite literally make us who we are.”⁴⁵

- How can Member States promote economic development and growth in the tourism industry while ensuring that their cultural and natural heritage is preserved?
- What gaps in international frameworks and partnerships exist that, if filled, would strengthen the international world heritage regime?
- Is it possible for Member States or UNESCO to leverage the private sector or the civil society to maximize the benefits from tourism and preserve World Heritage Sites?

Introduction

Among the purposes and functions of UNESCO established by the *UNESCO Constitution* are maintaining and diffusing of knowledge and giving “fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture.” The preservation of global cultural and natural heritage sites for future generations directly aligns with those purposes. Unfortunately, many states struggle to preserve sites while meeting their economic needs and developmental goals, sometimes due to lack of capacity or expertise. While UNESCO and the greater international community have implemented a number of initiatives to promote responsible tourism, including as part of the proposed post-2015 development agenda, many challenges remain in balancing economic growth and preservation.

International and Regional Frameworks

Sustainable Development and Tourism

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has long been engaged in the crafting of international frameworks on tourism, although most of its early work, including the *Manila Declaration on World Tourism*, focuses on the right to leisure, the protection of tourists, and the economic benefits of the tourism industry. The modern context for sustainability and preservation began to form in 1987 when a UN commission published *Our Common Future* and defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Two years later, the *Hague Declaration on World Tourism* was adopted and not only recognized that tourists should be educated on how to preserve natural and cultural heritage, but that measures should be taken to develop alternative forms of tourism that protect heritage. The international outlook on sustainability and related topics continued to rapidly develop in the lead-up to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, which allowed for the drafting of several new frameworks on sustainability. Among these documents was *Agenda 21*, a voluntary framework that includes guidelines for incorporating preservation into public and private decision-making. The UNWTO used *Agenda 21* as the basis for a 1996 action plan on sustainable tourism and travel and went on to establish the *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*, a set of ten principles which states, in part, that tourism resources are the common heritage of mankind and that tourism policies should promote increased access to sites and ensure their upkeep.

The World Heritage Framework

The *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (1972), also known as the *World Heritage Convention*, defines the entirety of the modern world heritage regime and is unique in its focus on the need to preserve natural and cultural sites. The *World Heritage Convention* requires States Parties to protect World Heritage Sites in their territory and established the basic principles by which a site can be considered cultural or natural heritage. Cultural heritage sites can include monuments, groups of buildings, and other sites that include “works of man or the combined works of nature and man,” whereas natural heritage sites are identified by geological, physiographical, biological, or other features that cause them to be of outstanding aesthetic or scientific value. There are 779 cultural sites, including such sites as Machu Picchu in Peru and the Great Wall in China, 197 natural sites, including the Great Barrier Reef in Australia and Victoria Falls on the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe, and an additional 31 mixed sites that constitute both cultural and natural heritage. The framework established by the *World Heritage Convention* has been updated with various operational guidelines, but the adoption of the 2002 *Budapest Declaration on World Heritage* focused heritage preservation efforts on the ‘four Cs’: strengthening the Credibility of the World Heritage List, ensuring Conservation of World Heritage sites, and increasing Capacity-building and Communication. A ‘fifth C’ was added in 2007 to incorporate the role of Communities in protecting heritage sites. While UNESCO often partners with the UNWTO and tourism industry stakeholders, little has been accomplished in terms of establishing a formalized framework between those actors and the World Heritage Center outside of a UNESCO-led proposal drafted in 2001. The most significant step in jointly

addressing the related issues of world heritage and tourism occurred in February of 2015 when UNESCO and the UNWTO hosted the first ever World Conference on Tourism and Culture in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

In addition to its own operations, UNESCO oversees a number of ‘Category 2’ institutions that are funded and operated by Member States and provides research, training, capacity building, or other support for World Heritage Sites. Most of these centers, including the Nordic World Heritage Foundation and the World Heritage Institute for Training and Research in Asia and the Pacific, provide support for countries that host World Heritage Sites in their region. Some regions, such as the European Union, have implemented entire heritage labeling systems that are meant to complement the UNESCO World Heritage List and improve their capacity to identify and preserve important sites. Additionally, the international community is positioning itself to more effectively address threats to the environment and World Heritage, as evidenced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) proposed in the *Report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970)*. The goals, which are likely to be incorporated in some form into the post-2015 development agenda in September 2015, include targets to “strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage” and “develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.” The proposed SDGs have already come under criticism, however, as no holistic agreement has been reached on financial, technical, and logistical means of implementation, including for the targets related to the preservation of heritage. With 17 proposed goals and numerous targets, developing effective means of implementation will be critical for the SDGs to be successful.

Role of the International System

The World Heritage Committee, a subsidiary of UNESCO, is the main international body tasked with protection of World Heritage Sites, a task complicated by the *World Heritage Convention* identifying their protection as strictly a domestic matter. Nevertheless, UNESCO has developed several concrete tools to help with their preservation, including the World Heritage Fund, a financing mechanism that provides training and support for host-countries and also offers emergency assistance. UNESCO’s work is not limited to financing, however, and they have established several capacity-building programs that are directly involved in the protection of specific sites. The World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, which works with tourist destinations in implementing management techniques and plans to safeguard important sites is a key tool in helping UNESCO achieve its protective mission. UNESCO also has direct partnerships with some Member States – its agreement with France calls for cooperation in the protection of “monumental, urban and natural heritage,” and has allowed for over 100 joint projects to be carried out globally. There are also arrangements that allow regional bodies to assist in the preservation of sites and promotion of tourism, with the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) of the African Union (AU) being a notable example. Not only does the AWHF work with UNESCO and AU members to identify and prepare sites for inscription on the World Heritage List, but it also provides sustainable tourism training for site managers. UNESCO also benefits from cooperation with a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the International Council on Monuments and Sites, both of which are advisory bodies that can be called on for research, reporting, and other technical support.

Independently of UNESCO, the UNWTO offers policy support and guidance at the request of Member States and also launched the Sustainable Tourism Programme in November of 2014 under the auspices of the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns. The UNWTO is also working within the International Task Force on Sustainable Tourism Development with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs to develop innovative sustainable tourism projects. UNEP, the lead program on environmental issues in the UN system, also has a team dedicated to tourism and partners with tourists and the tourism industry to promote preservation of the natural environment.

Tourism and Site Management

Increasing levels of tourism at World Heritage Sites can strain local resources and facilities and the resulting rapid economic development can quickly damage sites. In China, increasing tourism and economic activity has caused concern that some of its most famous sites may degrade over time, and although the government has raised entrance fees on many attractions, it seems to have had little effect. Germany’s Dresden Elbe Valley cultural site was stricken from the World Heritage List in 2009 after a four-lane bridge was built through the site. However, more tourism does not necessarily have a negative impact, and can actually help with site preservation and maintenance if proper management mechanisms are in place at the national and local level. Tourism revenues can be used for preservation, which is often needed in developing countries that may otherwise lack necessary financial resources, and such efforts often align with national development goals as they provide employment and training. Some of the most effective site management techniques begin with national policy and extend to engagement with the private sector, civil society, and communities near sites.

The Private Sector

In its 2011 report on *Tourism: Investing in energy and resource efficiency*, UNEP indicated that the private sector, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), are at the core of long-term preservation. The report went on to outline how governments can create a setting that enables firms to help with preservation by providing project planning assistance and ensuring that impact assessments are not overly costly or complex. This is especially true when engaging with the SMEs that are prevalent in tourism, as many lack the capacity to establish corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies or conduct 'triple bottom line' reporting, an accounting technique that incorporates environmental impacts alongside traditional metrics. Some World Heritage Site management authorities, such as Parks Australia, have developed joint initiatives with businesses to plan infrastructure and operations in protected areas, allowing both sides to benefit from shared expertise and resources. Although it has no authority to dictate the actions of the private sector, the UN has also worked to promote CSR in multinational corporations by establishing the Global Compact, a voluntary CSR mechanism meant to protect human rights and the environment. There are early indications that balancing tourism and preservation will become easier as global demand for traditional tourism is leveling out and the responsible and sustainable tourism industries are growing rapidly.

The Local Community and Civil Society

The *World Heritage Convention* identified the importance of local communities in the preservation of sites and even indicated that activities in traditional societies may "be consistent with the outstanding universal value of the area where they are ecologically sustainable." It can be difficult to ensure the lifestyles of local populations are not negatively affected, and even more difficult to actively engage them in the management and preservation of sites. During a development project in Nepal, a 'participatory management' technique that organized youth into action groups and built connections between those groups and members of the private sector and government was used to great effect. This type of ground-up approach is promising, but many efforts have failed to effectively balance the local and developmental needs. UNESCO is increasingly looking to engage with existing NGOs and civil society organizations, which are often responsible for carrying out local preservation and protection initiatives, in order to strengthen their role in the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*. A network, dubbed the "World Heritage Watch," has been proposed and UNESCO is beginning to increase levels of engagement starting with an "NGO Forum on World Heritage" during the 2015 meeting of the World Heritage Committee.

Conclusion

Balancing tourism and preservation at World Heritage Sites in many ways requires the balancing of conflicting interests; governments promote development, the private sector seeks profit, and local populations want to protect their livelihoods, lifestyles, and heritage. The allure of short-term economic benefit from the exploitation of natural and cultural heritage is omnipresent but can quickly threaten the preservation of sites for future generations. While UNESCO cannot impose rules on Member States, it has an important role to play in supporting and encouraging them to take the steps necessary to both benefit from and be good stewards of the common heritage of mankind.

Annotated Bibliography

Borges, M. A., G. Carbone, R. Bushell, & T. Jaeger. (2011). *Sustainable tourism and natural World Heritage: Priorities for action*. Retrieved from: https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/sustainable_tourism_and_natural_world_heritage_report.pdf

Published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature in collaboration with a multitude of experts, this publication is principally a study of the tourism impact on select World Heritage Sites and describes both the positive and negative impacts of tourism on those sites. The fourth and fifth sections of this report could prove very valuable in helping delegates to understand the actions that can be taken to attain sustainable tourism and protect World Heritage Sites. The final two appendices provide both the Proposed Principles for Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Properties as developed by the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme and a list of useful guiding questions.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2005). *Basic Texts of the 1972 World Heritage Convention*. Retrieve from: <http://whc.unesco.org/document/101839>

This is a collection of the most important international agreements regarding World Heritage and the rules governing their protection by relevant international organizations and Member States. It is critical that delegates have an understanding of the definitions and responsibilities established by the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, also known as the World Heritage Convention, as it is the basis for the UNESCO World Heritage Site regime. The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention are

also useful for gaining an in-depth understanding of what governments must do to fully implement the convention and several recommendations related to site management and preservation.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2012). *UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme: Action Plan 2013 – 2015*. Retrieved from: <http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-669-6.pdf>

UNESCO's World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme is its primary initiative for addressing the needs of Member States in the balancing tourism and preservation at World Heritage Sites. This action plan outlines everything that the program seeks to accomplish, with some level of detail, and has specific performance indicators for each category. Delegates can use this document to gain a better understanding of some of the concrete work being done by UNESCO on this topic, but may also be able to identify areas of opportunity.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2011). *Tourism: Investing in energy and resource efficiency* [Report]. Retrieved from: http://unep.org/resourceefficiency/Portals/24147/scp/business/tourism/greeneconomy_tourism.pdf

UNEP and the UNWTO examine the process of investing in sustainable tourism, its economic viability, challenges, and opportunities. The report, which is part of the 'Towards a green economy' series, challenges traditional viewpoints on development via tourism and makes a strong case for why 'business as usual' is not the best option for Member States. Delegates should pay particular attention to the section on overcoming barriers, as this is likely where the bulk of the work in promoting sustainable tourism would need to take place.

Zacharias, D. (2008). *The UNESCO Regime for the Protection of World Heritage as Prototype of an Autonomy-Gaining International Institution*. Retrieved from: https://www.germanlawjournal.com/pdfs/Vol09No11/PDF_Vol_09_No_11_1833-1864_Articles_Zacharias.pdf

In this special issue of the German Law Journal on Public Authority and International Institutions, Diana Zacharias examines the legal status of the UNESCO World Heritage regime and the challenges it faces in terms of legitimacy and implementation. In carefully reading this document, delegates can not only gain an excellent understanding of the structure of UNESCO, but also the means by which UNESCO interacts with Member States and the rest of the international community. A number of opportunities are pointed out throughout the document, which delegates may find useful for finding innovative but realistic ideas.

II. Education and Science for Agriculture in Africa

- How can UNESCO strengthen its framework in order to be more effective in its role in agriculture?
- What should educational programs be teaching when it comes to agriculture in Africa? When should this education start and what specific issues should be highlighted?
- How can African states work with UNESCO and other entities to increase access to technology? What infrastructure problems need to be addressed in order for agriculture in Africa to be profitable and sustainable?

Introduction

The promotion of education and science in Africa is a key part of UNESCO's current priorities and programming, including the ability of educational and scientific programming to improve agricultural output on the continent. UNESCO approaches the topic of agriculture under the "Three Terms and One Goal" umbrella. These terms include the definition of sustainable development, "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Education for sustainable development integrates key elements of sustainable development into teaching and learning. The third term, the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, is a means to highlight and implement strategies in sustainable development and education. These terms integrate the importance of sustainability and sustainable consumption, education and technology in the pursuit of protection of the environment. The growing populations of African states and the difficulties imposed on farmers by climate change increase the importance of UNESCO's work on this issue.

International and Regional Framework

There are various frameworks that create the bedrock for the work of UNESCO on this issue. A major framework is the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC), established at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Article 6 in the UNFCCC discusses "education, training and public awareness" of the effects of climate change. The UNFCCC details the importance of technology transfers, and the necessity of clean and accessible technology sharing, especially in developing countries. The *Convention on Biological Diversity* (1992) takes into account the importance of agricultural diversity in combating climate change, and in sustainable practices. Article 1 of the Convention states "the objectives of this Convention, to be pursued in accordance with its relevant provisions, are the conservation of biological diversity. The sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies."

More recent collaborations have focused more on sustainable practices, education, and technology. UNESCO is in the early stages of adapting new policies in addressing agriculture issues. This need is made more present with the development of the post-2015 development agenda, and UNESCO is using the most recent proposed language for the SDGs to be a guide in creating a framework for integrating sustainable agriculture practices into its own programs. *A Framework for Action on Agriculture* was produced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. This framework details key issues in agricultural production and how it affects issues such as water quality, poverty, and energy. Currently, issues such as poverty and land degradation lead to a patchwork of agricultural practices in many states. Reducing issues such as poverty and land degradation requires a more centralized approach to agriculture, including more national involvement in standardizing practices such as the approval of earth-friendly pesticides and water use limits. Two important documents when it comes to agricultural practices, especially when discussing ethnic and religious minorities, are the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003) and *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2008). Both documents mean to discern the specific importance culture and heritage can play in sustainable agriculture. The *Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* specifies the "knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe," while Article 25 of the *Declaration Rights of Indigenous Peoples* specifies the importance of the connection between the indigenous population and the land in which they live and work.

Role of the International System

UNESCO's work on this issue is extensive, including partnering with UNEP to create the UNEP/UNESCO YouthXchange Initiative. Established in 2001, this program creates literature and activities designed in captivating youth into involvement in issues such as sustainable development and consumption. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) also plays a role in agricultural issues in Africa, including its report *The Framework Programme on Climate Change and Adaptation* (2011), which discusses the effects of climate change on agriculture and how adverse farming practices can extrapolate these effects.

The UN declared 2014 as the International Year of Agriculture and the International Year of Family Farming, and the FAO released a report entitled *Towards Stronger Family Farms*. This report dissects the regional issues family farmers around the world encounter, including how sub-Saharan Africa contains some of the most vulnerable family farmers in the world. African states are inconsistent in developing policies that secure resource rights and implementation of sustainable practices. A 2014 report of the UN Climate Summit outlines its goals in addressing agriculture: “The Alliance will help governments, farmers, scientists, businesses, and civil society, as well as regional unions and international organizations, to adjust agricultural, forestry and fisheries practices, food systems and social policies so that they better take account of the efficient use of natural resources.” The 10th meeting of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme focused on the need for stronger implementation practices and the importance of science, technology and innovation (STI) stating “the agricultural STI in Africa must be underpinned by a strong education and entrepreneurial skills development programme especially supporting youth and women for expanded employment opportunities in the agri-food sector because the improvement of learning and technical knowledge is a key factor for agricultural contribution to economic development.”

Education, Business and Sustainable Development

As African states continue to develop, there is a shift in priorities related to agriculture production. A delegation from the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) recently traveled to China with the intention of strengthening ties, stating a desire “to move away from subsistence farming and move towards conducting farming as a business. This will require collaboration with various key actors such as the private sector and bilateral partners; on several fronts including knowledge exchange and sharing and capacity strengthening.” This new agenda in Africa, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, signifies the need for wide spread education and sustainable development practices. There is an acknowledged conflict with the pursuit of agricultural business in Africa and the need for sustainable practices in the region. The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) acknowledges for many businesses, the technical and at times ambiguous nature of sustainability frameworks leads to the decision to prioritize profits over integrating sustainable practices. UNESCO partners very close with the African Union (AU) and NEPAD when it comes to attentiveness with agriculture. UNESCO’s major work with the AU and NEPAD consist of giving these organizations access to UNESCO resources, including field workers and facilities to conduct studies and work. One example of this partnership is the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the African Union and the UNESCO International Institute. The MOU is designated to help achieve the goals of the second decade of education designated by the AU and to strengthening cooperation in education on the Continent.” UNESCO is committed to allowing the country or region to be the facilitator of any policy that happens in the region. UNESCO values itself as ‘as one’ with its partners. The African Union is focused on finding funding for the infrastructure including a recent meeting with the World Bank to strengthen their partnership with relation to agriculture.

Technology and Infrastructure

While there is a greater focus on technology as an aspect of development and agriculture, there is still a large divide when it comes to use of technology in Africa. Many states in Africa suffer from inadequate infrastructure which impedes the implementation of technologies. This impediment means the technology is unable to produce long-term results. The International Livestock Research Institute details the attempts by governments to bring technology to rural agriculture areas, especially to women in these rural areas. One system of bringing technology to rural areas is the agricultural and extension advisory service (EAS). This system partners small-scale farmers with organizations and NGOs that best serve their particular needs. However, the EAS is expensive, and operates in a top-down approach where the best means for delivering technology, including proper training and access to databases and learning materials, are high-cost. Merging the lack of a strong technology structure with agriculture initiatives can prove to be difficult. UNESCO allows states to decide what is best for them nationally, regionally, and locally, and UNESCO serves as a partner to facilitate the program’s goals. Many of UNESCO’s technology programs are flagship programs meant to help create a strong infrastructure for government and civil society to function at its highest capacity. There have been strides in reducing this technology gap, especially in the ways information and communication technologies can improve the life cycle of agricultural goods and services. A growing use of technology and agriculture in Africa is mobile technology. Cell phones are widely available on the continent and are being used increasingly to track weather patterns, and migration routes. Mobile technology has become a cheap and easy way for farmers to gather and store information vital to their business. The success of mobile phone in agriculture is due in part to the ability to gain access to the technology in most countries in Africa, providing a model for the spread of other technology on the continent.

Conclusion

UNESCO is moving further into partnering with other UN bodies and civil society in promoting the necessity of

education and science when it comes to the sustainable future of agriculture on the continent. UNESCO has only been recently focusing more on agriculture; this is due to an increased focus on the post-2015 development agenda and the proposed SDGs' connection to many of UNESCO's programs. This relatively new addressing of agriculture means UNESCO is relying heavily on its partners, including the African Union to create a framework for sustained progress on agriculture. The struggle many African nations are still resolving between their technology needs and the best way to implement these programs is seeing mixed results. There have been strides in creating greater education backgrounds for large and small-scale farming in relation to sustainable farming, proper techniques based on region and crop, and for rural farmers in sustaining their land. However, these developments are not being seen on large scale due to the heavy expense it put on governments or the lack of proper infrastructure to sustain these programs. UNESCO is taking the initial steps in creating a strong framework for agriculture in Africa through its partnerships and its continued dedication to education and technological advances.

Annotated Bibliography

eTransform Africa. (2012). *The Transformational Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Africa* [Report]. Retrieved from: http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/The_Transformational_Use_of_Information_and_Communication_Technologies_in_Africa.pdf

This report spends significant time dealing various ways technology can help in the strengthening of infrastructure, business, and social prosperity in Africa. It breaks down, topic by topic, the largest problems within that topic area and how to begin to tackle these problems. One section deals specifically with agriculture, mobile phones, and education. This will be a good resource for delegates to have expansive breakdowns of what problems African is facing, what is functionally happening within these problems, and possible solutions.

The New Partnership for African Development. (2012). NEPAD Agency and China ministry of agriculture vow to strengthen technical cooperation on agriculture [Website]. Retrieved from: <http://www.nepad.org/foodsecurity/news/3670/nepad-agency-and-china-ministry-agriculture-vow-strengthen-technical-cooperat>

This article is an example of the growing number of states in Africa looking to create a substantial agricultural business. Many states are moving away from promoting small scale farming for local sustainability for larger-scale farming that will draw in investors into the industry in Africa. This article give delegates an idea of how many governments in Africa see the agricultural sector and its potential globally.

United Nations. (1992). *Convention on Biological Diversity*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf>

This outline of the importance of biological diversity covers the importance of biological diversity beyond preservation of natural habitats. When discussing agricultural erosion, a major issues is the non-diversification of crops and goods. This non-diversification included agricultural farming with non-native crops or crops that require a large amount of water or erode fertile top-soil. This loss of fertile topsoil is increasing desertification in Africa. Delegates can read this document and begin to understand how biological diversity is important to agriculture and preserving fertile land.

United Nations. (1992). *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. Retrieved from: http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/background_publications_htmlpdf/application/pdf/conveng.pdf

This convention is the first major framework that addresses the adverse effects of climate change. While this particular convention is focused on climate change a major theme with education and scientific progress as it pertains to agriculture is sustainable development and reduction of climate change. This convention is also one of the first major pieces of work that address the importance of technology transfer and technology sharing. Delegates should use the UNFCC as a basis for understanding agriculture recommendation as it pertains to maintaining biodiversity, social and economic prosperity.

World Summit on Sustainable Development. (2002). *A Framework for Action on Agriculture* [Report]. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/jsummit/html/documents/summit_docs/wehab_papers/wehab_agriculture.pdf

This "framework" addresses the largest themes connected to agriculture including "agriculture and health, agriculture and water, and agriculture and the Millennium Development Goals." This document gives in-depth analysis to how agriculture practices are adapting or not adapting to climate change. A major issue this document discusses is technology and civil matters. For delegates it will give them not only a look at the technical aspects of agriculture, but civil issues such as health endemics such as HIV/AIDS and conflict and its effect on agriculture production.