IFAP STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

1. Executive Summary

The Information for All Programme (IFAP) was established by UNESCO 2001 to provide a framework for international co-operation and partnerships in "building information and knowledge societies for all".

This Strategic Plan covering the period 2017-2021, addresses this and new emerging challenges by presenting a five-year vision for the Information for All Programme and suggests ways for IFAP to concentrate further its efforts in progressing towards achieving sustainable development goals (SDG) for the benefit of the UNESCO Member States. Building on its intergovernmental strength, IFAP will continue supporting Member States to foster knowledge societies for sustainable development and peace.

To achieve this objective in the five-year period, IFAP will assist Member States to integrate quality UNESCO policy development resources into their national information policies, strategies and legislation, raise awareness and promote all relevant standard setting instruments among Member States. Furthermore, it will adopt a strong SDG orientation in its work in line with the WSIS + 10 outcomes. IFAP will enhance cooperation with all stakeholders and benefit from their contribution. It will develop new collaborations with its multistakeholder partners, including governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, research institutes, other international organizations and the private sector. IFAP will also initiate projects and activities in compliance with emerging societal issues and trends, as well as with the needs of Member States, related to knowledge societies and the use and advances of ICTs.

2. Background: Why a new Strategic Plan for IFAP?

This IFAP Strategic Plan was initiated with the recommendations from:

- Recommendation by the Ninth session of the Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme (May 2016). The IFAP Council also recommended that IFAP synergize with 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the WSIS+10 review outcomes and the revised medium-term strategy of UNESCO.
- Recommendation by the External audit of the CI Sector (2016)

Recommendation 1 of Ninth session of Intergovernmental Council for the Information for All Programme, May 2016

"Continue the efforts and initiatives undertaken in view of implementing the objectives of IFAP with a view to *updating its strategic plan in line with the C/4 and C/5 to reflect changes within IFAP, as well as contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the WSIS + 10 Agendas.* This effort will be conducted in close collaboration with all members of the Council, the members of the Bureau and the Secretariat";

External audit of the CI Sector

The Cour des Comptes (France) conducted an audit of the Communication and Information Sector (CI) in April 2016. The audit focused on the management and activities of the Sector during 2014-2015 biennium. In some cases, operations carried out previously were considered and wherever necessary, light was shed on the 2016-2017 biennium. The auditors had submitted a list of recommendations. Among the recommendations formulated by the External Auditor, Recommendation 15 is related to IFAP:

Recommendation No.15: *The External Auditor recommended inviting the State Members of the Intergovernmental Council of the IFAP to prepare and adopt a strategic plan for the Programme for the coming years that will make it possible to highlight the concrete contributions of the Programme, distinguished from the other activities of the CI Sector in the same fields.*

IFAP's relevance and synergy with SDGs, WSIS+10 and UNESCO C/4

IFAP and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development creates a new context in which IFAP will positively impact the emergence of inclusive Knowledge Societies. In particular, SDG 16 recognizes the importance of universal access to information with the target of creating peace, justice and strong institutions. In the period 2017-2021, IFAP will support Member States in ensuring that the digital revolution is harnessed for eradicating poverty, empowerment, informed decision-making and human development, to strengthen the foundations of peace.

Information and knowledge have always remained crucial to human development. IFAP believes that Innovation in ICT for learning and equal participation in societal development will be essential for achieving SDG 4 and 11, which call for equitable and inclusive access to quality education for lifelong learning, including most marginalized social groups. Advances in ICT and increasingly inter-connected Knowledge Societies also underscore the importance of ensuring a push to creativity and innovation through an "Open Solutions" approach towards empowerment. It also envisages social, economic inclusion of all (SDG 10.2) and the reduction of the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (SDG 8.6).

IFAP's goal in integrating sustainable development with building inclusive Knowledge Societies is to ensure that ICT opportunities are fully harnessed to:

- Improve people's lives and livelihoods;
- Extend effective access to information and knowledge;
- Further access to scientific research;
- Deepen dialogue and mutual understanding around cultural and linguistic diversity;
- Help address global challenges that threaten the future of humanity, including security, conflict, forced migration, violent extremism and climate change.

IFAP will promote Internet Universality concept by implementing the ROAM principles[1] and ensure that Internet Governance activities are human rights-based, open, accessible to all, and nurtured by multi-stakeholder participation.

IFAP will also address emerging challenges, which are inherent to technological development such as the Internet of things, algorithmic decision-making and Artificial Intelligence (AI), including the risks associated with increased surveillance, profiling and data privacy, with the uncertain impact of huge data and continued digitalization of communication, employment, equality and empowerment.

IFAP will support transparency, inclusiveness and citizen engagement and tackle the opportunities and potentials of Big Data to bring about innovative solutions in participatory involvement of the general public including marginalized and vulnerable communities, by using and processing openly accessible big data generated from scientific research and without the uncontrolled explosion of big data.

IFAP will also support a multi-stakeholder approach towards designing ethical Artificial Intelligence- based system in order to harness the AI immense technological potential to improve millions of people's livelihoods.

IFAP will assist relevant institutions in Member States that struggle to keep up with the tremendous pace of innovation and change. It will seek to counter the risk that digital and knowledge divides will leave behind for those who are relatively disadvantaged, such as LDCs, SIDS, women and girls, youth, people with disabilities and marginalized groups in all societies.

IFAP will continue to play a leading role in tackling complex challenges on Internet such as online hate speech, radicalization and incitement of violence and online threats on vulnerable groups including women and girls and persons with disabilities in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

IFAP will build on the existing frameworks of access to information and knowledge, ICTs, online and offline, as these play a catalyzing role for the achievement of all SDGs. The IFAP will focus on the attainment of the SDGs 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13 and 16, by contributing to:

- Enhancing universal and affordable access to the Internet (SDG 9.c), including through UNESCO's active contribution to the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development and the promotion of policy, capacity and content development;
- Contributing to quality education and lifelong learning (SDG 4), including through, flexible learning, and Media and Information Literacy (MIL) initiatives;
- Empowering women in and through media and the use of ICTs (SDG 5.b) to address gender inequalities through specific gender programming and mainstreaming through use of tools;
- Reducing the proportion of unemployed, uneducated and untrained youth (SDG 8.6) through programmes, which can empower them with high-level skills to develop, promote, and sell locally relevant mobile applications (apps) that address local sustainable development issues, and provide self-generated, viable employment opportunities in the mobile/ICT industry;
- Safeguarding the world's cultural heritage (11.4) by raising awareness about the importance of preservation, dissemination and accessibility to documentary heritage, including in digital

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[1] Internet based on human Rights, and the principles of Openness, Accessibility and Multi-stakeholder participation

form; as an invaluable asset of humanity and an expression of the richness and the diversity of people and cultures;

- Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16) by ensuring public access to information, promoting access to information, preventing violent extremism, building Media and Information Literacy and ensuring media pluralism and diversity. IFAP also will contribute to regular global monitoring of indicators approved by the UN Statistics Commission, to the tracking of indicator 16.10.1 and as UNESCO designated custodian agency for global reporting on indicator 16.10.2.

IFAP's synergy with UNESCO's Medium-term Strategy (C/4)

IFAP will continue to play a lead role globally in the promotion of universal access to information and knowledge, for consolidating the inclusive knowledge societies. The concept of knowledge societies, as defined by Medium Term Strategy (C\4) has taken on a central role in discussions on pathways to sustainable development. Technological evolution has created unprecedented conditions for the production, exchange and use of information. Enabled by an increased access to and use of new technologies, the free flow of information and ideas, strengthens democratic governance, promotes of all human rights, more inclusive, participatory and responsive political and social processes, as well as a culture of peace and encourages dialogue.

Issues including ethical dimensions of the information society, multilingualism in cyberspace, and transforming digital divides into digital inclusions remain unresolved. IFAP will therefore support all relevant stakeholders to strengthen efforts to find solutions to these challenges.

The WSIS+10 Outcomes

On 16 December 2016, United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution 70/125 on the Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS+10.

The Outcome document expresses concern on *significant digital divides, such as between and within countries and between women and men, which need to be addressed through, among other actions, strengthened enabling policy environments and international cooperation to improve affordability, access, education, capacity building, multilingualism, cultural preservation, investment and appropriate financing. Further, they acknowledge that a gender divide exists as part of the digital divides, and encourage all stakeholders to ensure the full participation of women in the information society and women's access to new technologies, especially ICTs for development.(Paragraph 11)*

Acknowledging that differences in individuals' capabilities to both use and create ICTs represent a knowledge divide that perpetuates inequality, the document noted that the ambition to move beyond "information societies" to "knowledge societies", in which information is not only created and disseminated, but put to the benefit of human development. It called on all stakeholders, particularly United Nations entities that are facilitating WSIS Action Lines, within their mandate and existing resources, to continue working together to regularly analyze the nature of digital divides, study strategies to bridge them, and make their findings available to the international community.

IFAP as an Intergovernmental body will contribute to the proposed global effort in which information and knowledge will be put to the benefit of human development. IFAP will also contribute to the implementation by UNESCO of the following WSIS action lines:

- C3: Access to information and knowledge
- C8: Cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content
- C10: Ethical dimensions of the Information Society

3. Strategic Programme Objectives

In order to achieve IFAP's mandate, the Intergovernmental Council has decided that the Programme concentrates its efforts on the six priority areas listed below:

- Information for Development
- Information Literacy
- Information Preservation
- Information Ethics
- Information Accessibility
- Multilinguism in Cyberspace

Consequently, six strategic programme objectives have been identified to correspond with these priorities.

Six Strategic Objectives (SO)

- SO 1: Mainstreaming knowledge society policies in national development plans for sustainable development
- SO 2: Fostering information literate societies
- SO 3: Promoting and widening access to knowledge and information in the public domain through the organization, digitization, dissemination and preservation of content and data
- SO 4: Raising awareness of ethical issues related to information
- SO 5: Enhancing opportunities for disadvantaged communities by providing access to information and knowledge
- SO 6: Reinforcing promotion and use of Multilingualism in Cyberspace

SO 1: Mainstreaming knowledge society policies in national development plans for sustainable development

One of the challenges facing the IFAP is to sensitize governments and communities about the value of information in addressing development issues. IFAP recognizes the transformative role played by information and knowledge across all spheres of human endeavour and, has been promoting its vision of inclusive Knowledge Societies.

Since 2001, IFAP has been playing a lead role in the international policy landscape. IFAP provides a platform for international policy dialogue, cooperation and the development of guidelines for action in the area of access to information and knowledge. The National Information Society Policy Template, which IFAP launched in 2009, was an important contribution to policy-making efforts at the international, regional and national levels. In particular, this tool has been instrumental in supporting the development of national capacities to design and manage policy processes in a number of East African and South Asian countries. Through its capacity-building efforts and mobilization of resources, the IFAP network has been supporting Member States to

develop and implement national policy and strategy frameworks. It is natural that IFAP would seek to develop linkages between UNESCO's concept of knowledge societies and the 2030 SDGs.

For instance, in order to respond to the need for tools for policy makers, IFAP published a Knowledge Societies Policy Handbook in 2016, which offers multiple diagnostic lenses for exploring each society, understanding its strengths, challenges and characteristics, thereby supporting the collective formulation of appropriate policy responses. The Handbook builds on existing knowledge and practices to provide policy-makers with an actionable conceptual framework for understanding and assessing the relationship between the SDGs and Knowledge Societies. By identifying gaps as well as strengths, the Handbook will enable countries to more effectively deploy resources and implement appropriate policy measures.

Furthermore, looking at the importance and significance of universal access to information in creating knowledge societies and its key role in building peace, sustainable economic development, and intercultural dialogue, IFAP in collaboration other partners of CI Sector decided to recommend Member States of UNESCO to promulgate 28 September as the International Day for Universal Access to information and its celebration. This Day has a significant resonance to IFAP's role and activities, which promotes universal access to content, technology, and processes through awareness raising, policy formulation and capacity building. IFAP participated in preparation of the documents for Executive Board (197 EX/Decision 35) and General Conference (38 C/70) and also involved in proactive lobbying for the approval of the day since the inception of the idea.

To achieve the SDGs in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), equal and universal access to information could be a powerful engine for positive change, widening opportunities to overcome inequalities, to reach the marginalised, to create and share knowledge to strengthen the foundations of democratic institutions. The Third International Conference on SIDS in Apia, Samoa in 2014 focused the world's attention on the group of countries that remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities. Therefore, universal access to information should be included in all development agendas of the SIDS with an emphasis on the digital revolution, which must be a development revolution, drawing on the empowering force of new ICTs for inclusion and innovation – such as broadcasting, satellite communications, broadband cable or mobile technologies..

Possible future activities of IFAP:

1.   **Formulation of policies and strategies to strengthen global standards on social media, Internet governance and national IFAP priorities**. IFAP may support alignment of Internet-related laws, policies and protocols with international standards, support the Internet Universality principles (R.O.A.M) that promote a Human Rights-based, Open Internet accessibility to all and characterized by multi-stakeholder participation, thus strengthening role of the Internet in all UNESCO's programmes. IFAP will continue to engage in producing standard setting instruments in the field of social media, internet governance and IFAP priorities.

2.   **Promotion of Knowledge Society Policy in Member States for adaptation in their national information policies and strategies.** IFAP will support Member States in the adaptation of the Knowledge Society Policy and integration into information policies with gender equality as one of its core activities.

3.   **Celebration of International Day for Universal Access to Information:** IFAP will encourage Member States to take advantage of the Day to organize activities, to advance universal access to information.

4. **Mainstreaming Universal Access to Information in the development process of Small Island Developing States**

SO 2: Fostering Media and information literate societies

The Alexandria Proclamation of 2005 describes information literacy and lifelong learning as the "beacons of the Information Society, illuminating the courses to development, prosperity and freedom. Information literacy empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. It is a basic human right in a digital world and promotes social inclusion in all nations."

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) enables people to interpret and make informed judgment as users of information sources and to become producers of information in their own right. Information literate people are able to access information about their health, environment, education and work, empowering them to make critical decisions about their lives.

Information literacy reaffirms the spirit and content of the progression and gradual repositioning of MIL in previous Declarations such as Grünwald Declaration (1982), Prague Declaration Towards Information Literate Societies (2003), Alexandria Proclamation on Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning (2005), Paris Agenda-12 Recommendations on MIL (2007), Fez Declaration on MIL (2011), Moscow Declaration on MIL (2012), Framework and Action Plan of the Global Alliance on Partnerships on MIL (2013) and Paris Declaration on MIL in the Digital Age (2014);

Information literacy supports economic growth and competitiveness of societies and the well-being of individuals, in that such competencies are in increasing demand in job markets and are vital for many sectors. It is to be noted, the information, media and communications landscape is very complex and rapidly changing, and different stakeholders and creators are in a dynamic relationship with one another. Further, security concerns about the increasing misuse of information and media resources aiming at disinformation, propaganda, hate speech and incitement of violence, urge need for a concerted effort to empower societies with stronger media and information literacy competencies.

IFAP recognizes the importance of Information Literacy and supports Member States to integrate information literacy standards and assessment systems into their education systems to support students and citizens. It also recognizes the role of MIL for building Open Governments.

Possible future activities of IFAP:

Integration of Media and Information literacy standards and assessment systems into the education systems of Member States to support students and citizens. IFAP will help its Member States to gather first valid and reliable data on the status and availability of competencies on Media and Information Literacy. IFAP will also continue its support to Member States for designing

and implementing projects in this field. The UNESCO Global MIL Assessment Framework will enable Member States to carry out comprehensive assessments of the information and media environment, and to monitor at the national level the extent to which citizens have acquired MIL competencies, particularly targeting teachers in service and training.

SO 3: Promoting and widening access to knowledge and information in the public domain through the organization, digitization, dissemination and preservation of content and data

Universal access to information is a prerequisite for building knowledge societies. Throughout history, libraries and archives have been the guardians of the documentary heritage of humankind. However, in a world increasingly being shaped by digital technologies, the traditional guardian institutions are challenged to keep pace with the rapid growth in information. They also face a new challenge as technology advances the stability and lifespan of documents is considerably decreases. If nothing is done, many important documents in electronic format will not survive or will become inaccessible within a short time. It will result in permanent loss to the collective memory of humankind. This challenge needs to be tackled urgently. The costs of preserving digital information should not be underestimated as these far exceed the preservation costs experienced to date with five millennia of traditional documents.

IFAP supports the Memory of the World normative instrument - the *Recommendation concerning the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage including in Digital Form* adopted at 38th General Conference of UNESCO in 2015. The Recommendation aims to assist Member States both, at national level through identification of documentary heritage and policy measures ensuring preservation of and access to it, and at international scales through bilateral or multilateral research projects and publishing guidelines, policies and best practice models.

Possible future activities of IFAP may include:

IFAP will help the Member States initiate appropriate steps to
- Assist implementing the normative instrument and promote the *Recommendation concerning the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage including in Digital Form* .
- Raise awareness on the importance of preservation, dissemination and accessibility to documentary heritage, including in digital form.
- Participate in initiatives aiming at preserving and making accessible software source code (Software heritage). IFAP may support a number of projects in Member States to index, organize, and make accessible all these precious heritages. Like Documentary Heritage, Software Heritage showcases "Information Heritage" down the memory lane.

SO 4: Raising awareness about ethical issues related to information

The international debate on information ethics (Info-ethics) addresses the ethical, legal and societal aspects of the application of ICTs. Ethical principles for knowledge societies derive from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. IFAP supports and promotes the ethical dimensions of the information society as one of its priorities to implement the decisions of the WSIS. Free and unhindered access to information on the interactive networks remains a key goal, raising various ethical issues that require the attention of the international community.

One of the most challenging ethical issues that also sets off one of IFAP's landmark engagement and a flagship activity, is the use of cyberspace for the radicalisation of young people leading to violence, UNESCO organized, in the framework of IFAP, three major international conferences

and several follow-up initiatives to counter youth radicalization on the Internet, leading to violent extremism. UNESCO and the Government of Québec organized in Québec City, from 30th October to 1st November 2016, the international conference "Internet and the Radicalization of Youth: Preventing, Acting and Living Together''. It was a concrete follow-up to the organisation of the first-ever international conference on "Youth and the Internet: Fighting Radicalization and Extremism", held in Paris, in June 2015.The Québec's Call for Action is a concrete result of the International Conference in Canada.. In May 2017, the third international Conference on "Youth and Information and Communication Technologies: Preventing Violent Extremism in Cyberspace" was organized by IFAP in cooperation with UNESCO's Beirut Office and the Rotary Club of Beirut.

In addition, IFAP launched a report on "Policy Options and Regulatory Mechanisms for Managing Radicalization on the Internet" in Quebec conference. The report analyses the legal measures taken specifically against online radicalisation. It also examines international treaties, European directives, and resolutions at a regional and international level in an attempt to identify grounds of a common understanding and a consensual approach to measures against online radicalisation by the international community.

Changes brought about by the rapid development of ICT not only open tremendous opportunities to humankind but also pose unprecedented ethical challenges. They ensure that information society is based upon principles of mutual respect and the observance of human rights is one of the major ethical challenges of the 21st century. Along with the benefits of a digitally connected world come the threats of misuse and abuse. UNESCO, in collaboration with its partner institutions, and through its IFAP seeks to address these challenges towards a fair and multicultural information society.

IFAP promotes research into the ethical implications of new and emerging technologies as well as undertake future-oriented initiatives that seek to assess their potential societal implications, for instance by establishing task forces on ethical issues with a digital dimension. IFAP supports policymakers to enhance their awareness, and capacity to address the ethical aspects of the Information Society by providing relevant training and tools and resources that support their decision-making and policy-formulation activities, also extending these efforts to organizations involved in quasi-policy setting/ implementation roles such as Internet intermediaries and bodies establishing technical standards.

In recognition of the trans-boundary nature of the Internet, IFAP supports regional and international cooperation, capacity-building, research, the exchange of good practices, and development of broad understanding and capabilities to respond to ethical challenges. IFAP will continue to support research to assess the impacts on privacy of digital interception, collection, storage and use of data and other emerging trends.

IFAP supports initiatives that promote people's awareness of the right to privacy online and the understanding of the evolving ways in which governments and commercial enterprises collect, use, store and share information, and the ways in which digital security tools can be used to protect users' privacy rights. It supports efforts to protect personal data, which provide users with security, respect for their rights, and redress mechanisms, and which strengthen trust in new digital services.

Possible future activities of IFAP:

IFAP will provide leadership in building counter/alternative online narratives for youth radicalization leading to violent extremism. To follow-up "Call of Quebec", the following activities may be undertaken by IFAP:

- Establish guidelines for capacity-building measures through a policy handbook to combat the online radicalization of youth and violent extremism,
- Organize a international/regional events and initiatives on the themes of "Internet and Youth Radicalization leading to violence"
- Support the creation of a comprehensive network of partner institutions who are working on this issue of online radicalization,
- Equip the young generation with Media and Information Literacy skills at an early stage of life to enable them to understand and appreciate genuine piece of information/knowledge from propaganda published in the Internet.
- Organise information and awareness sessions on "Policy Options and Regulatory Mechanisms for Managing Radicalization on the Internet" for Member States to sensitize them on how to create an enabling environment for managing radicalization in the internet without compromising human rights.
- Encourage Member States to establish an info-ethics advisory board or info-ethics council, supported by eminent technologists, academics and community representatives to provide a framework for action to debate the issues and highlight them in their national information policies.

SO 5: Enhancing opportunities for disadvantaged communities by providing access to information and knowledge

IFAP promotes access to information for all disadvantaged communities and encourages constructive dialogue on information accessibility, with a special focus on access to information and knowledge using accessible ICTs for the inclusion of disadvantaged communities and marginalized groups

The SDGs and targets in the outcome document agreed by UN Member States includes specific targets, which explicitly refer to persons with disabilities. Numerous examples of effective usage of ICTs demonstrated that accessible and inclusive ICTs could improve the livelihoods of persons with disabilities. The adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) in 2006 by the UN General Assembly provided a comprehensive normative framework for disability-inclusive development. Although the commitment of the UN and States Parties of the UN CRPD to the rights of persons with disabilities and their inclusion are implied in all aspects of the SDGs and articulated in other international documents, this does not automatically result in their inclusion in either general or targeted efforts to meet SDGs and integration into the national information and technology-related policies, practices and processes.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that 15 per cent of world population are with disabilities. However, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have the potential to make significant improvements in the lives of these persons, allowing them to enhance their social and economic integration in communities by enlarging the scope of activities available to them.

UNESCO is one of the UN agencies that promotes and supports the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted in 2006. UNESCO's vision is to create knowledge societies that are inclusive, pluralistic, equitable, open and participatory for all its citizens.

In this context, IFAP will provide space for open consultations and encourage constructive dialogue on information accessibility, with a special focus on access to information and knowledge using accessible and inclusive ICTs for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. It will build on the outcomes of the recently held consultation particularly in consonance with the Outcome document of the international Conference "From Exclusion to Empowerment: Role of ICTs for Persons with Disabilities" organized from 24 to 26 November 2014 in New Delhi, India. IFAP will explore how the recommendations may be incorporated within IFAP's activities on Information Accessibility- the usage of inclusive and accessible ICTs by persons with disabilities to access information and knowledge.

In 2016, UNESCO has published the Guidelines on the Inclusion of Learners with Disabilities in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) with an aim to integrate it in higher education. These guidelines provide an overview for governments, institutions, instructors and instructional designers, along with quality assurance and qualification recognised bodies, when developing ODL platforms, processes, courses, examination and others with a view to incorporating the needs of learners with disabilities.

IFAP will raise awareness about disability issues in a cross-disciplinary, cross-sectorial manner and draw attention to an urgent need to mainstream accessibility of ICTs for persons with disabilities in the post-2015 development agenda.

Possible future activities of IFAP may include:

- Supporting upscaling initiatives aiming at empowering young women (especially in Africa) to develop ICT/mobile applications addressing local issues of sustainable development and generating employment opportunities in partnership with initiatives such as Youth-mobile. IFAP and its partners may provide young people with the high-level skills and confidence to develop, promote, and sell locally relevant mobile apps that solve local issues of sustainable development and provide employment.
- Promotion of the Guidelines on inclusion of Learners with Disabilities in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in higher education in the Member States. IFAP will support Member States to integrate open and inclusive solutions into higher education with a special focus on marginalized social groups such as persons with disabilities, speakers of lesser-used languages, people living in remote areas and not the least young girls and women.

SO 6: Reinforcing promotion and use of Multilingualism in Cyberspace

Language is a primary vector for communicating information and knowledge, thus the opportunity to use one's language on the Internet will determine the extent to which one can participate in emerging knowledge societies. The beginning of the internet has brought about diverse opportunities for sharing information and knowledge in various languages..

However, many languages are not present on the Cyberspace. There is a vast linguistic divide in cyberspace today and this will only exacerbate the digital divide. Nations, communities and individuals without access to the Cyberspace and its resources will certainly be marginalized with limited access to information and knowledge, which are critical elements of sustainable development. Speakers of non-dominant languages need to be able to express themselves in culturally meaningful ways, create their own cultural content in local languages and share through cyberspace. The digital divide has two important aspects: firstly, everyone should have access to

the Cyberspace, and secondly, access to quality content created not only at international or regional level, but locally and in local languages.

IFAP is convinced that cultural diversity and multilingualism on the cyberspace have key roles to play in fostering pluralistic, equitable, open and inclusive knowledge societies. IFAP encourages its Member States to develop comprehensive language-related policies, to allocate resources and use appropriate tools in order to promote and facilitate linguistic diversity and multilingualism, including the Internet and media. In this regard, the Organization supports the inclusion of new languages in the digital world, the creation and dissemination of content in local languages on the Cyberspace and mass communication channels, and encourages multilingual access to digital resources in the cyberspace.

IFAP organized several activities to promote of multilingualism in cyberspace which include IFAP International conference on Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Cyberspace (Yakutsk, Russian Federation, 2014), the International Expert Meeting on Improving Access to Multilingual Cyberspace (UNESCO HQ, Paris, 2014), and Ugra Global Expert Meeting on Multilingualism in Khanty-Mansiysk, Russian Federation (2015) and International Conference on Multilingualism in Cyberspace for Inclusive Sustainable Development in Russian Federation in June 2017, which was the first international forum to address the importance of multilingualism and linguistic diversity in the implementation of the sustainable development goals, thus reaffirming IFAP's leading role.

In the future, IFAP may further assist Member States in implementing the *Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace* adopted by the UNESCO in 2003.

Possible future activities of IFAP may include:

- Support to universal access to knowledge for the empowerment of indigenous people through promotion of indigenous languages in cyberspace.
- Foster universal access to multilingual information by monitoring the status of linguistic diversity at a global level an online tool: the World Atlas of Languages.
- Promote ethical dimensions of making data, information and documentary heritage of indigenous communities accessible in the public domain by respecting fundamental universal ethical principles, in particular those related to the production of new content, storage, distribution, privacy, access to and use by a global community.

4. Modalities of Cooperation with Key Partners

IFAP as an Intergovernmental Programme is mainly working with Governments of Member States. It largely benefited from their expertise and contributions to many IFAP projects and activities. Notable among them are those of China, the Russian Federation, Canada, Bulgaria, Lebanon and Egypt. It also developed bilateral intergovernmental partnerships that have been valuable in addressing development issues. These are referred to as public-public partnerships, North-South partnerships or, as even South-South partnerships. Partnerships between developing countries can sometimes deliver more positive results than the more traditional north-south development aid model. In a digitally connected world, the opportunities for stimulating and enhancing partnerships between governments is greatly increased.

IFAP also recognizes that the path towards information and knowledge societies can only be shaped in a multi-stakeholder collaborative environment. IFAP has therefore a long history of working closely with civil society and more recently with the private sector.

International Non-Governmental Organizations

A range of international NGOs with an interest in IFAP are cooperating with the Programme. Some of them are now regular participants in IFAP meetings and events

At IFAP Council meetings, representatives are allocated speaking time in accordance with the rules of the meeting, during which time they can provide advice or specific suggestions within their fields of expertise; at Bureau meetings, representatives are encouraged to freely engage with Bureau members and participate in thematic discussions. Representatives from these organizations also engage actively with specialists in the CI Sector on an ongoing basis. All these relationships are expected to continue for the foreseeable future. In terms of strengthening these relationships, NGO partners have had the opportunity to implement the strategic plan.

- Experts are invited from professional associations to engage with relevant IFAP Working Groups;
- A speaking slot is sought at each annual conference of the professional association for an IFAP representative;
- Professional associations are consulted on the agenda for IFAP meetings (Council, Bureau and Thematic);
- Representatives from each professional association are invited to give a brief informational presentation at each Council meeting;
- Professional associations are given the right to bid for any IFAP contract work within their fields of expertise.

Intergovernmental Organizations

A number of United Nations agencies took an active part in the WSIS process and have been assigned specific roles as facilitators in the follow-up process. UNESCO has an obligation to liaise with all these organizations and provide an information clearing house service in fulfilling its WSIS facilitation role for six Action Lines. IFAP expects active engagement from all intergovernmental organizations in its meetings and in turn, will make sure to identify a focal point in each organization and ensure that they receive information about its activities, meetings and other IFAP-related events with a standing invitation to engage whenever appropriate. Pro-active representation from relevant organizations should also be sought in IFAP Working Groups.

Private Sector

IFAP is engaged in building positive partnerships with a number of major global players in the private sector.

Partnerships include:

- Fully operational partnerships,
- Partnerships on sharing of resources and best practices,

- Partnerships towards setting norms and standards, and
- Advocacy partnerships.

All partnerships are based on the following set of critical success factors:

- To ensure consistent internal and external communication flow on the partnership,
- To clearly define expectations and perceived added value for both partners,
- To ensure total transparency in handling the partnership, and
- To ensure sustained briefings to both governments and the respective civil societies

Strategies for enhancing private sector partnerships during the next five years (2017-2021) include:

- Maintaining an active relationship with each partner and develop new partnerships
- The IFAP should be promoted directly to private sector partners, with practical suggestions for engagement;
- Companies with official high-level agreements with UNESCO should be invited as Observers to Council and Bureau meetings as well as all other related IFAP-supported events;
- Opportunities should be sought to develop ongoing joint IFAP-private sector initiatives;
- Promote IFAP's strong ethical approach in pursuing information for all.
- Embrace innovative strategies for fundraising with the aim of scaling the partner's contribution impact (building on models such as crowdfunding), as per the recommendation of the IFAP Council

Academic Institutions

IFAP will continue to develop deeper collaboration with academic institutions in order to put diverse areas of expertise in a broader context of the Programme's vision thus creating a fertile environment for generating new ideas, concepts and methods.

For instance, IFAP has successfully collaborated with the University Paris Nord and the Reflection Group on Creative Activities and Regeneration of Territories, under the theme: Which Potentials for Cultural and Environmental Activities in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) organized in September 2017 in UNESCO – Paris, to present IFAP's actions and contribution to building inclusive knowledge societies in SIDS.

Furthermore, IFAP is engaging distinguished academia representatives on a regular basis to share their knowledge and views during the IFAP-related meetings and conferences.

Within UNESCO, IFAP will continue building synergies with other UNESCO programmes and Sectors such as the IPDC, the Memory of the World Programme and COMEST as well as with the regional and field offices, thus strengthening internal collaboration and mutually supportive character of the Organization's programmes.

Monitoring and evaluation framework

IFAP is developing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework in line with the new Terms of reference for the Working Groups and the Criteria to evaluate IFAP Projects that were presented and approved by the 27th IFAP Bureau. The monitoring and evaluation strategy models should be used where applicable and with respect of the specificity of each project. IFAP will be opened to innovative methods of evaluation including participatory approaches such as involving the project beneficiaries in defining success indicators.

5. Roles and responsibilities

IFAP Working Groups

At its seventh session, the Intergovernmental Council of the IFAP requested that the Secretariat invites Member States to nominate national experts to participate in the activities of the IFAP Working Groups.

In its 9th session of the Council, new terms of reference for each working group were adopted.

IFAP has six Working Groups, which address a range of issues linked to all the six IFAP priorities. The Working Groups represent an important linkage to the implementation of the activities and an opportunity for the non-members of the Bureau, as well as for Member States non-member of the Council, to contribute to the Programme's agenda. Their interventions are oriented towards achieving the corresponding strategic objectives and to contributing to policy resources and guidelines, working with various stakeholders to support and promote open standards, conducting capacity building and raising awareness amongst key stakeholders.

The Working Group will devote attention to identifying emerging challenges and opportunities in its specific priority area, supporting reflection, research and debate on these issues and providing recommendations that inform IFAP's responses and contributions to UNESCO and its Member States. Given the complexity of the issues being addressed and the interconnectedness of the IFAP strategic priorities, collaboration with other Working Groups will be pursued.

Recognizing the ever-changing environment in which IFAP is called upon to provide responses, the Working Group will play a key role in supporting the ongoing capacity building of its members and raising awareness of new methods, tools, events and other resources, particularly those developed within the IFAP network, thus ensuring competent advice and innovative approaches.

Members of the Working Group provide their technical expertise in one or more of the IFAP strategic priorities, on a voluntary basis, to support the achievement of the Programme's overarching goals.

The Bureau appoints a Chairperson of the Working Group during its first meeting following the election of the new Bureau. The Chairperson of each Working Group in consultation with its members elects a Vice-Chairperson and a Rapporteur who will support the Chairperson in his activities. Each Chairperson is responsible for:
- Reporting to the Bureau and Council on the activities of their Working Group;
- Developing the work-plan of their Working Group and supporting its realization;
- Maintaining regular contact with members of their Working Group to ensure their ongoing engagement and participation in the implementation of the work-plan;
- Supporting collaboration and exchange with other Working Group Chairs.

Working Group Chair submits written reports of their activities to each session of the Council and Bureau. Given the international scope of their membership, Working Groups are expected to organize their activities primarily through online collaboration. They are, however, encouraged to take advantage of seminars, conferences, training events and other opportunities for face-to-face collaboration both amongst themselves and with other members of the IFAP network.

IFAP National Committees

IFAP National Committees have been recognized as one of the potential strengths of the IFAP.

While over 50 exist, at least in name, very few have demonstrated a tangible outcome. There has been a consistent call for more direction. What exactly is expected from a National Committee? Field offices were allocated budget in the 39 C/5 (2018 - 2019) to support the establishment of National Committees. Some IFAP National Committees have strong links with National Commissions and this appears to be a strength.

In developing countries where the need for national committees is probably the greatest, national commissions are probably least able to provide any support, particularly in terms of funding. The approach adopted in some regions such as the Pacific has been able to form a regional IFAP committee, where developed countries in the region can provide support for nearby developing countries. UNESCO field offices are also able to provide limited funding support for national committees.

Activities that National Committees should undertake include:
- Contribution to the integrating Knowledge Society Policies adjusted to the needs and circumstances of respective countries;
- Creating multistakeholder forums (with the involvement of government officials, private sector, NGOs and academia) for an ongoing debate on national information and knowledge policies and strategies, their development and implementation;
- Convening multistakeholder thematic discussions on IFAP priority areas, e.g. information literacy, information ethics, etc. (using IFAP reports as discussion starters);
- Engaging in a constant dialogue with government agencies and other stakeholders on the development and implementation of information and knowledge policies and strategies;
- Facilitating (or just engaging in) high-level collaboration among government agencies to help develop national information policies;
- Participating in the IFAP Working Groups;
- Securing funding support for IFAP projects;
- Helping establish partnerships with civil society and private sector organizations
- Providing information and data for inclusion in the online Information Society Observatory;
- Maintain relations and cooperation

IFAP Secretariat, Knowledge Society Division

The Statutes of the IFAP Council require the Director-General of UNESCO to provide a Secretariat to facilitate the necessary services for the sessions of the Council and meetings of its working groups. The Secretariat is also required to assemble suggestions and comments from Member States and other international organizations as well as formulate specific projects, for examination by the Council.

Administrative support for a Council that meets once every two years and a Bureau that meets every year does call on a significant amount of staff time, not just in organizing the meetings, but also in preparing and distributing papers for each meeting. But an even greater challenge is the staff resource needed to implement the ideas and suggestions emerging from the Council and Bureau. The scope of activities undertaken by the Secretariat has included:

- Collecting project proposals, coordinating implementation and reporting
- Sharing information among the key partners for IFAP
- Providing platforms for discussions online and for thematic debates
- Facilitating establishment of IFAP National Committees
- Developing visibility material, e.g. IFAP's brand and promotional materials
- Coordinating research and disseminating results, e.g. IFAP publication series
- Technical and administrative assistance to the work of the Council, its Bureau and
- Working Groups, e.g. organizing statutory meetings, preparing papers, developing online tools

Recognition must be given to both the administrative functions in supporting the working of the various IFAP Groups and the content activities recommended by the Council, which potentially engage a much wider staff group. Programme content should be dealt with by the most suitably qualified staff in the Information Society Division and integrated with their regular work plans. IFAP work should not become an add-on. This is consistent with the IFAP primary purpose as a key participant in the fulfillment of UNESCO's mandate to contribute to "education for all", to the "free exchange of ideas and knowledge" and to "increase the means of communication between …peoples"[2] as well as with the view that IFAP is not separate from the regular programme, and that activities from throughout UNESCO, especially the CI Sector, can contribute, to the achievements of its goals, forming part of the UNESCO's own goals.

IFAP Secretariat should be resourced to support with IFAP initiatives and carry out the necessary work until these can be integrated into existing or future work plans. This would entail:

- Dedicated Secretariat support provided to IFAP Council, Bureau and Working Groups to provide both administrative support and new initiative development
- IFAP Programme content activities integrated progressively with CI Sector work plans
- Ongoing support provided to Member States
- Online platforms established and maintained to support ongoing information sharing amongst Council members and National Committees

6. Conclusion

IFAP will adopt a strong SDG orientation in its work in line with the WSIS + 10 outcome documents, which put universal access to information at the heart of the knowledge societies. It will enhance cooperation on it six priority areas with all relevant stakeholders and profit from their expertise and contribution. In collaboration with governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, research institutes, other international organizations and the private sector IFAP will achieve its ambitious goals and strategic objectives.

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[2] The 160th session of the Executive Board adopted decisions 3.6.1 on the "Replacement of the General Information Programme (PGI) and the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP) by a new intergovernmental programme" (160 EX/Decision 3.6.1)

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