WORKSHOP:

**TOWARDS AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF OBSERVATORIES
ON CULTURAL POLICIES**

CONVENED BY
UNESCO
WITH THE SUPPORT OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE, GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND
THE SWEDISH NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO

FINAL REPORT

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Hanover, Germany
(19-20 September, 2000)

CULTURAL POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT UNIT

I.   RATIONALE FOR THE WORKSHOP

The Cultural Policies for Development Unit convened this two-day workshop in order to explore ways and means of building international links among and support for the activities of entities engaged in research, analysis, documentation and information provision relevant to cultural policy making purposes. The starting point for the project was a recommendation in the *Action Plan* adopted by the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (Stockholm, 1998) which invited the Director-General of UNESCO to

> "encourage the establishment of networks for research and information on cultural policies for development, including study of the establishment of an **observatory** of cultural policies."

The recommendation was one of several which gave UNESCO a mandate to renew the work on cultural policy it had carried out so successfully in the 1970s and early 1980s. UNESCO's General Conference confirmed this mandate in November of 1999, which approved the programme and budget for the years 2000-2001 proposed by the Secretariat. .

One of the pillars of the new activities is to reactivate the 'watch' or clearing house function of the Organization with regard to cultural policies. The goal is to promote the collection and dissemination of policy-relevant knowledge and information and forge links between the research and policy-making communities. The aim is to make available international comparative information on the cultural policies and facilities deployed by different levels of government as well as by the non-governmental, private and 'third' sectors and to share best practice and innovative thinking in cultural policy-making and implementation. There is a need for shared work in order to develop the instruments and indicators necessary for analyzing and monitoring not only the evolution of complex cultural processes but also the relevance of cultural policies designed to address them.   There is a need for comparative data collection and analysis on cultural change in the context of current globalizing processes in the socio-economic and technological arenas. Sharing experience could also facilitate the creation or the strengthening of observatories and similar institutions in less privileged regions and countries.

Co-operation and exchange of information between and among such institutions would appear to be essential to building a worldwide 'cultural information infrastructure.'   As pointed out by J. Mark Schuster, "in any policy arena the crafting of appropriate and effective policy depends on the quality of the information infrastructure that is available to the participants in that arena. Such an information infrastructure does not develop on its own accord. Rather it is designed, developed, and managed as a critical element in policy development. This should be no less true in cultural policy than in other policy

arenas."[1]

The feasibility of implementing the recommendation that UNESCO itself establish an observatory of cultural policies, i.e. a new entity or institute, was examined in 1998-99 by Eduard Delgado, the founder and director of INTERARTS in Barcelona, which was set up as an "observatory of urban and regional cultural policies" in 1995. The author was well placed to trace the evolution of the notion of 'observatory' from its astronomical/meteorological roots (as a tool of scientific observation of astronomical/ meteorological phenomena which are complex movements that can be apprehended only by disciplined and exact observation of trends, changes, occurrences, etc.) to its current metaphorical usage as a label for any entity devoted to empirical recording and analysis of observable phenomena in a variety of fields. Delgado's study pointed out that as far as culture is concerned a number of regional and national bodies bearing this title exist already or are in gestation, while many research institutes, think tanks and networks play a comparable role. Indeed, as another observer has noted, there is today a surprising proliferation of entities calling themselves "observatory" which are very different from one another… It appeared difficult therefore for one single entity to monitor all this disparate activity at the global level, reconciling comprehensiveness and geo-cultural diversity.

The conclusion that the UNESCO Secretariat drew from this preliminary analysis was that creating a new entity was neither necessary nor feasible. Recognizing, however, that UNESCO is expected to perform observatory type functions at the international level, the Unit opted for an alternative course of action, viz. to foster an international **network** of observatories and other bodies carrying out like functions.

The main purpose of the Hanover workshop, therefore, was to foster the kind of person-to–person, institution-to-institution and issues-to-issues interaction that would give flesh and blood to such a network and provide the energies and motivation it would need to get off the ground. The idea was to build bridges between and among existing entities with common purposes despite considerable diversity; to enable different actors on the international landscape discover each other and their respective activities.

A second aim was to consider whether the establishment of a network, whether formal or informal, was desirable and, if so, to begin to define possible 'rules of the game' and priorities for its launch and operation.

A third goal was to identify some of the ways in which UNESCO might contribute to the

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[1] In a research proposal formulated in July 2000 for the Culture Program of the Pew Charitable Trusts.

process.

2.   ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAMME OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop was conceived and organized jointly by the Cultural Policies for Development Unit; the Department of Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada and the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO.   Financial support was provided by the Canadian and Swedish governments. The Department of Canadian Heritage having obtained the facilities of the Canadian Pavilion at the Hanover Expo 2000 on 19-20 September 2000, the three partner institutions agreed to organize the workshop at this venue. A preliminary agenda prepared by the Secretariat was enriched by Canadian Heritage and the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO, as were the Annotated Agenda and programme subsequently elaborated (see Appendix 1). A diverse array of national, regional and international observatories, think tanks, networks, research institutes and similar bodies of a governmental, non-governmental or private nature were invited to attend.

The workshop brought together 36 individuals representing 29 entities, including UNESCO in 22 countries of Africa, the Arab World, Asia, Europe and the Americas. The List of Participants (containing also a separate listing of entities which had been unable to accept UNESCO/CPD's invitation) is attached as Appendix 2.

The workshop was opened at 10 a.m. on Tuesday 19 September 2000 by Mr. Dick Stanley, Acting Director, Strategic Research and Analysis, Canadian Heritage, who gave the floor for a brief word of welcome to Ms Carmen Sylvain, Deputy Commissioner General of the Canadian Pavilion. Introductory statements by Mr. Nils-Gunnar Nilsson, Chairperson of the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO and Mr. Y R Isar, Director of the Cultural Policies for Development Unit followed these remarks. In the course of this opening session the participants elected as co-chairs Mr. Stanley (for 19 September) and Prof. Geir Vestheim, Director, Centre for Cultural Policy Research, University College of Borås, Sweden (for 20 September). In view of the fact that the workshop was of two days' duration only, it decided that a report should be drafted by the Secretariat after the event, submitted first to the co-chairs for their approval and then circulated to all the participants before being issued as an official record of the proceedings.

After this opening ceremony, the remainder of the morning session was devoted first to Item 1 of the Agenda. After a brief exposition of the tasks and goals of the meeting by Mr. Y. R. Isar and Mr. Maté Kovacs, Chief, Cultural Research and Management Section, Mr. Stanley invited each participant to present the main characteristics of her/his agency, but to do so very briefly given the fact that a

questionnaire designed to profile each participating institution had been drawn up jointly by UNESCO and Canadian Heritage and that the latter had collated the responses to the questionnaire in a folder which had been distributed to all. The presentations that followed were in fact very concise; they also raised new concerns bearing directly on the key issues of the meeting.

After these presentations Mr. Stanley launched the discussion on item 2 of the Agenda *(What are the existing and emerging constituencies? What are the challenges these entities face in terms of research priorities, policy application, etc?)* by recalling the main findings that had emerged from the questionnaire: that there is a <u>take off process</u> in the establishment of cultural policy observatories in various parts of the world, particularly since 1995; that they are highly diverse in their mission, status, size, resources, as well as geographical and disciplinary scope; finally, that there is a critical mass for building up a network, in spite of this diversity, on the basis of shared issues and challenges that such a co-operation mechanism could address far better then individual institutions acting alone.

Discussion on item 2 then began and continued in the afternoon, after which participants took up Item 3 (Discussion of network goals in the light of the common problems identified in discussion of the previous item). Upon the close of discussion of Item 3, Mr. Stanley observed that there was a consensus in favour of the launching of a networking process among the agencies represented and asked the group whether the suggestions that there be two break out working group discussions the next morning. The two groups would tackle respectively: *Item 3/A: Network goals and how to meet them and Item 3/B: Network procedures and operating guidelines.* Several participants found the separation into two separate themes artificial and thought that they would wish to attend both groups. Various points of view were expressed on this matter, but a majority preferred discussion of the two themes together. In the course of the discussion one participant suggested that there be three working groups rather than two, so as to maximize interaction and spontaneity. After some discussion this proposal was put to the vote and was carried. As only one meeting room with interpretation facilities would be available for the working groups it was then decided that participants would join either an English-speaking group (to be chaired by Prof. Vestheim), a French-speaking group (to be chaired by Dr. Bizerka Cveticanin) or a bilingual group (to be chaired by Mr Dick Stanley).

Before bringing the day's work to a close, Mr. Stanley expressed his doubts as to whether it would be possible to have as detailed and concrete a discussion on Items 4 and 5 as envisaged in the Agenda *(Item 4: Possible joint projects, including schedule, distribution of work, inventory of necessary resources and steps to take to mobilize them; Item 5: General conclusions and a plan of action, with clear targets and a time line).* Mr. Isar, who observed that the reports of the working groups would no doubt result in an abundance of

practical and concrete ideas, shared this point of view -- it did indeed appear unrealistic to expect progress as far as the Agenda had envisaged, as such a result would require at least one more day of work.

In the morning of Wednesday 20 September, therefore, the participants split up into three working groups. Initially envisaged to last 90 minutes, their discussions in fact continued throughout the morning. The plenary session resumed in the afternoon to hear and discuss reports from the three groups, presented by Ms. Cveticanin, Mr. Rod Fisher and Ms. Helen Gould respectively. The three working group reports are attached as Appendix 3, whereas the main conclusions that emerged from the presentations are summarized below.

After this round of discussion Prof. Vestheim cited the main points from an overall conclusions paper he had prepared but was unable to present fully for lack of time (attached as Appendix 4).

3. GENERAL SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS

The plenary and working group discussions revealed more complementarities than differences and raised a number of questions not contained in the agenda. The specificity of the proposed network, which all agreed was necessary, would lie in its being the only inter-regional and interdisciplinary network devoted to research on cultural policies. It should not deal with cultural issues in isolation, but should aim at shedding light on their interaction with development issues and policies in other sectors, and thereby promote holistic frameworks for cultural policy making. Motivations for taking part in any network would involve one of more of the following: staying in touch, surviving, collaborating, forging comparability, carrying out joint projects and building links across disciplines. Participation in the network should be as open and inclusive as possible, on the basis of criteria such as permanence, duration, clear methodology, independence, collaborative character and regional scope. Hence it should be open to any entity that performed one or more of the following tasks: gathering statistics (acting as an authoritative source of data); doing analysis (interpreting data into trends, comparisons and projections); doing research (providing access to the best and most up-to-date thinking) and providing documentation (case studies, sample policies, models…). The principle of diversity and openness should also apply to the clients and beneficiaries of the network: it should develop co-operation with government, civil society organizations, grant-making organizations such as foundations and international institutions alike.

The issues raised and opinions expressed during the discussions may be summarized under the three headings used by the Secretariat in the preliminary summary it presented at the end of discussion of item 2 of the agenda. These were the following:

Structural issues:
- The gap between researchers, policy makers, and practitioners makes it very difficult to improve and enlarge the knowledge base. Documentation, data and knowledge are scarce, dispersed and

disparate. Despite the existence of a number of centres, institutes and networks, there is still a huge gap in information exchange and dissemination. Nobody has a comprehensive idea of the current range of bodies documenting cultural resources. There is a need for more systematic and institutionalized co-operation, for without this it will not be possible to adequately monitor complex cultural policy issues in a global and comparative perspective.

- Existing bodies show a great variety of mandates and functions but this should not be an obstacle to their working together.

- Governments at various levels should be seen as the main audience and clients; it is essential to better understand their needs.

- There is a common challenge of stimulating cultural demand on the part of civil society. Existing cultural policies and structures are often outdated and do not reflect current realities, let alone emerging trends.

- These are problems everywhere, but the countries of the South face the most serious ones. In the absence of appropriate resources, infrastructures, data and capacities, governments find it very difficult to develop sustainable cultural policies and research programmes. 'Observatories', therefore, find it equally difficult to monitor complex policy issues. Capacity building needs to be more than information exchange, although this is vital; in addition there needs to be proactive communication, joint reflection and cooperation. Hence the importance of inter-regional co-operation and authentic partnership. One of the purposes of the observatory network should be to strengthen South - North and South - South co-operation. It should be based on regional co-operation between institutions facing similar problems and situations. Networking should offer opportunities for participants to be involved equitably in global undertakings while preserving their identities.

Conceptual issues

- What are the sorts of entities that should be recognized as legitimate players in the networking process envisaged? There is no need for a rigid definition. Some participants expressed the view, however, that criteria such as the following should be applied: entities should have a permanent structure and clearly defined methodology and should work in a long-term perspective.

- Cultural policies in many cases (particularly developing countries) are anachronistic, too fragmentary

and narrow in their scope. They do not reflect current realities, evolving priorities and emerging values priority is work that can help bring them up to date, broaden the paradigm.

- Indicators are indispensable in order to develop a new language to facilitate communication between culture and other sectors. There is a need for basic statistical information as well as digested and processed figures that are trans-nationally comparable. Indicators are also indispensable for anticipatory analysis, which is essential. Whichever organization comes up with a set of robust cultural indicators will have done a great service to the cause of culture.

- The cultural sector itself is resistant to statistics. Many actors do not want to make the connections between quantitative (as well as qualitative) data and policy. Public authorities are reluctant to be evaluated.

- The relation between culture and sustainable development provides a robust framework for this purpose, one that has great potential.

- Networks have a key role to play in terms of 'cultural globalization.'

Issues of method

- Whatever is done has to build on existing resources **and structures, with great care being taken to avoid duplication.** Information provision and exchange are the main needs; and whatever mechanism is developed must cater first and foremost to these requirements.

- Because no single 'observatory' can monitor global trends and specific situations, there is a clear need to create a collective process based on complementarity in their approaches and capacities and cover the whole production chain from research to policy recommendations. The pure 'information gap' being the easiest one to meet, what is required above all is a forum which promote the exchange of other elements such as memory, ideology, etc. that cannot be exchange easily on the Internet. Technicians will not resolve the issues of content; these require a community of research orientations and practices.

- The need for a specific, visible and global architecture that pools research efforts is not being met by any of the existing networks.

- Any proposed network must carry out thematic work on a project by project basis.

- Since it is difficult to draw pertinent conclusions from work that compares expenditures, existing facilities and the like, there would be more mileage in creating theme-based clusters of approaches, interests and trends.

- Quality control and knowledge management are issues that need to be addressed. A key priority is understanding the knowledge management needs of particular cultural systems or issues, e.g. cultural

rights, cultural industries or employment in the cultural sector. A feasibility analysis of knowledge management needs should be made.

- Activities of the network should not be limited to research but should lead to policy recommendations and alternatives.

- UNESCO itself has a leadership role to play. It should make its information-provision activities more proactive and systematic. Thus a page could be established on its website that would be dedicated to the observatory function. If a network is to be developed, it will need a secretariat. For some activities UNESCO could provide the secretariat, for others it could be provided by one or more members of the network. The representative of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) for example, indicated that his organization, within the limits of its geographical mandate could offer institutional and financial support for the implementation of projects concerning topics such as the cultural industries of ethnic minorities; the impact of informatics on cultural development and the uses of internet in the field of culture.

- The network should identify some concrete actions, which can be carried out swiftly, e.g. the compilation of research findings already available at the level of its member institutions. These results could be disseminated in a series of publications with the network's label, giving it visibility and professional credibility. As a first step, the results of the questionnaire initiated by Canadian Heritage could be complemented by further information that maps the past, on-going and planned research projects of participating institutions.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The key recommendations that emerged from the Workshop may be summarized as follows:

4.1   Objectives

The network should

a. **Develop exchange and dissemination of information**, by establishing systematic international information exchange in relation to policy-making and becoming a platform for access to information on main trends. The information should preferably be processed, classified and indexed in order to facilitate its use and retrieval. Another possibility would be to focus on providing meta-information.

b. **Promote the analysis, evaluation and future-oriented study of cultural policies** by capitalizing on the experience and achievements of existing centres, think tanks, information services and networks.

c. **Fortify the knowledge base for cultural policy design and evaluation**, by reducing knowledge gaps, bridging differences between institutions, concepts and approaches, particularly as regards interaction among researchers, policy makers and practitioners. The harmonization of statistics as well as the development of indicators will be key elements for improving the knowledge base.

d. **Facilitate the updating of cultural policies** and their adaptation to recent geopolitical, economic, technological, scientific and cultural changes.

e. **Upgrade (valorize) the role of cultural policies in development** and co-operation as well as in promoting dialogue between cultures. Promote advocacy to this effect among policy makers and UNESCO Member States and with their support.

4.2   Working procedures and operating guidelines

a. There should be regional focal points in order to balance the requirements of decentralized structure and efficient co-ordination, and a realistic vision of the needs and capacities of different constituencies.

b. The network will need a steering committee and this should be set up in due course as voluntary, self-monitoring group. In the meantime, the UNESCO Secretariat should set a follow up process in motion.

c. A web site and discussion forum should be created, either by UNESCO or by Canadian Heritage if the latter is able to do so.

d. Three working languages should be used (English, French and Spanish); the use of Russian and translation into other languages should be facilitated.

e. The network should have regular conferences on specific issues of topical relevance. (The representative of the "Centro de superación cultural" in Havana put forward a proposal to organize such a gathering in Havana in 2001 during the 2nd International Congress on Culture and Development.)

f. Joint studies should be organized for the development of cultural indicators and statistics as well on other key issues identified as priority themes. Defining a series of key subject clusters could facilitate comparative research. In implementing joint projects the ownership of the contributions should be respected. At the same time the procedures for establishing responsibilities and quality control should be clearly defined.

g. The network should also focus on simple indexing of specialized knowledge, observatory activities, networks, etc.

h. The network should generate publications and compile information and research findings.

i. The network should adopt an effective name and logo for itself. Whatever name is chosen should reflect not the *kinds* of bodies that take part but its real functions, i.e. research, analysis, documentation and information on cultural policies.

APPENDIX 1

ANNOTATED AGENDA

Background

UNESCO is convening this two-day workshop with the financial support of the governments of Canada and Sweden in order to lay the ground for a possible international network of observatories on cultural policies.   Its main purpose is to foster the kind of person-to–person, institution-to-institution and issues-to-issues interaction that would give flesh and blood to such a network and provide the energies and motivation it would need to get off the ground.

This project responds to the recommendation made to the Director-General of UNESCO in the *Action Plan* adopted by the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (Stockholm, 1998) that he "encourage the establishment of networks for research and information on cultural policies for development, including study of the establishment of an **observatory** of cultural policies."

The recommendation was one of several which gave UNESCO a mandate to renew the programme on cultural policy it had carried out so successfully in the 1970s and early 1980s, by adapting its strategies to the vastly different challenges, needs and expectations of the twenty-first century. The Conference stressed the need to "design and establish cultural policies or review existing ones in such a way that they become one of the key components of endogenous and sustainable development" and to "promote to this end the integration of cultural policies into development policies, in particular as regards their interaction with social and economic policies".

The 'watch' function is one of UNESCO key modalities, one in which it is expected to take global leadership, i.e. function as an 'observatory' at the world level. The Secretariat's proposal to begin work in this area was approved by UNESCO's General Conference in November of 1999 when it adopted a resolution authorizing the Director-General to

"promote public policies that recognize the central role of culture in development, including the creation of income-generating activities, by mobilizing and sharing information and new knowledge in this domain, in particular concerning the trade in cultural goods, facilitating the elaboration of innovative policy frameworks and strengthening national and local capacities in the management/administration of cultural institutions; and to develop further inter-agency co-operation with a view to establishing close links between cultural and educational, social, health and development policies."

Implementation of this mandate currently involves a three-pronged set of activities:

- research and analysis, including the construction of cultural indicators;
- clearing house and awareness-building work that shares the new knowledge and
- capacity-building that applies that knowledge to local needs and situations.

As part of the streamlining of the UNESCO Secretariat structure being led by Director-General Matsuura, these activities will incorporate efforts relating to the promotion of cultural pluralism, seen as a major policy issue at the macro level. In this and other ways, the new cultural policy thrust will seek to build complementarities between macro level frameworks on the one hand and specific sectoral issues

in the different areas of cultural practice on the other, e.g. arts and heritage, cultural industries, intercultural dialogue. The aim will be to provide 'think tank' services and support across UNESCO's entire culture programme (see organizational chart attached). This has implications for the scope of cultural phenomena that should be covered by the activities of observatories and similar entities whose work is being promoted under the current exercise. It requires the organizing unit to envisage outcomes for the workshop that are in harmony with the transversal mandate it has been given.

Under the information and awareness-building function component of the cultural policies programme, the goal is to collect and disseminate policy-relevant knowledge and information and forge links between the research and policy-making communities. The aim is to provide international comparative information on the cultural policies and facilities deployed by different levels of government as well as by the non-governmental, private and 'third' sectors. We also intend to share best practice and innovative thinking in cultural policy-making and implementation.

With a view to exploring the feasibility of the specific recommendation that UNESCO itself establish an observatory of cultural policies, i.e. a new entity or institute, an informal study was carried out in 1998-99 by Eduard Delgado, the founder and director of INTERARTS in Barcelona, which was set up as an "observatory of urban and regional cultural policies" in 1995. The author was well placed to trace the evolution of the notion of 'observatory' from its astronomical/meteorological roots (as a tool of scientific observation of astronomical/ meteorological phenomena which are complex movements that can be apprehended only by disciplined and exact observation of trends, changes, occurrences, etc.) to its current metaphorical – and increasingly modish – usage as a label for any entity devoted to empirical recording and analysis of social behaviour in various areas, including the cultural. Delgado's study pointed out that a number of regional and national bodies bearing this title exist already or are in gestation, while many research institutes, think tanks and networks play a comparable role. Indeed, as another observer has noted, there is today a surprising proliferation of entities calling themselves "observatory" which are very different from one another… It would appear difficult therefore for one single entity to monitor all this disparate activity at the global level, reconciling comprehensiveness and geo-cultural diversity.

The conclusion we drew from this preliminary analysis was that creating a new entity would be neither necessary nor feasible. A more realistic course of action would be to foster an international **network** of observatories and other bodies carrying out like functions.

Purposes of the Workshop

Bridge building among people who share a cause and encouraging them to discover common purposes amidst their diversity is our first purpose. In other words, the workshop is intended simply to enable different actors on this international landscape discover each other and their respective activities. Hence it is bringing together practitioners representing national, regional and international observatories, think tanks, research institutes and other like bodies that observe, document and analyze cultural phenomena with a view to informing and influencing policy-making. Representatives of the convening bodies as well as representatives of interested inter-governmental organizations and foundations will join them.

Networks become viable when their members together define workable 'rules of the game' and identify the ways in which their promoters – in this case UNESCO and the governments of Canada and Sweden at this initial stage – can contribute to creating an internationally favourable environment for them. Working out these umbrella frameworks and guidelines is thus the second purpose of the workshop. This should provide an overview of the sorts of initiatives that have proved successful as well as of those which have not, on what is sustainable and what is not.

The entities represented at the workshop have been created in different ways and with different

kinds of support/ funding. Government has created some. Others have emerged on a mixed public/private sector basis. Yet others are based in academia. Some of them have been long in existence; others are recent or in a start up phase. While the overwhelming majority is not-for-profit they are all in the market place for knowledge services. Hence, even though they do not operate on a commercial basis, their survival is based on work commissioned by one type of 'client' or another. A contract-based existence is by definition competitive. But functioning in a network means that each member body will at some point be required to share with others experience and knowledge that serves as its own 'intellectual capital.' Thus establishing rules of the game also means envisioning how services are going to be shared within the network. For such sharing to be worthwhile, each entity needs to be able to adopt the building of comparative perspectives as one of its objectives.

Networks thrive when they have things to do. Otherwise, as George Soros once famously said, with a touch of paradoxical irony, as he gave a Keynote Address at a networking-oriented conference in Prague several years ago, "networking is what I call **not** working." The third purpose of the workshop, therefore, will be to try to identify, on the basis of the above-mentioned comparative perspective, some common projects and identify ways in which these projects can be supported.

Finally, there is a broader issue that might at least be adumbrated by the workshop. This is the poverty of the links between researchers and policy-makers in most countries, which is one of the main reasons why the knowledge base for cultural policy-making is so inadequate. This issue was included in the brief for a three-day workshop. Since it will take place over only two days, however, it would be unrealistic to burden the agenda with it. Doing so would in any case be putting the cart before the horse to some extent. Nevertheless, if time permits it would be an advantage if some lines of inquiry could at least be identified.

In summary, this workshop is intended:

- To inform its participants of a diversity of identities, activities and organizational models and allow them to identify shared goals.

- To pinpoint the factors which could motivate participants to put time and energy into the forging of a network and explore ways of strengthening those factors.

- Assuming that they will want to go ahead with establishing a network, to establish the operating conditions and frameworks – the 'rules of the game' -- activities, methods of work and co-ordination that will make it productive and sustainable. This would include the role of UNESCO.

A long-term goal: building the cultural information infrastructure

As J. Mark Schuster has pointed out in a research proposal he formulated recently for the Culture Program of the Pew Charitable Trusts, "in any policy arena the crafting of appropriate and effective policy depends on the quality of the information infrastructure that is available to the participants in that arena. Such an information infrastructure does not develop on its own accord. Rather it is designed, developed, and managed as a critical element in policy development. This should be no less true in cultural policy than in other policy arenas."

In most countries, however, this infrastructure is either absent or insufficiently developed. Much of the research carried out in existing centres of various kinds is not of the kind that readily finds an audience beyond the academic community – culture is a far cry from the economic realm, where two-way flows between the academy and the policy arena are common place; the social science and humanities disciplines in general do not fare well on this account.   Methods and tools for data collection on cultural processes are far less developed than in other fields.   Thus, policy is all too often made with scant knowledge of the complex problems that it is supposed to address.

Growing recognition of these gaps has led to the emergence of new types of institutions, which are avowedly oriented towards policy making, monitoring, evaluation and forecasting. A pioneer institution of this kind is the *Département des Etudes et de la Prospective* of the French Ministry of Culture. They now range from the international (CULTURELINK, INTERARTS, ERICARTS, the Budapest Observatory on Financing Culture in Central and Eastern Europe), to the national (Australia, France, Portugal, Uruguay), regional (Lombardy) or local levels. They may cover the whole cultural policy area or limit their action to specific key areas such as financing. Some existing institutions are beginning to develop observatory type functions within their existing structure. These developments are occurring in many cognate fields such as media, language, human rights, ethnic relations and the like.

Co-operation and exchange of information between and among such institutions would appear to be essential to building a worldwide cultural information infrastructure. There is a need for shared work in order to develop the instruments and indicators necessary for analyzing and monitoring not only the evolution of complex cultural processes but also the relevance of cultural policies designed to address them.   There is a need for comparative data collection and analysis on cultural change in the context of current globalizing processes in the socio-economic and technological arenas. Sharing experience could also facilitate the creation or the strengthening of observatories and similar institutions in less privileged regions and countries.

Item 1:   Presentation by UNESCO of the tasks of the workshop followed by brief presentations of the work of each entity represented

After a brief review of workshop tasks and expected outcome by the Director of the cultural Policies for Development Unit, UNESCO, and each participant will be invited to present the activities of their institution or network. These presentations should focus on questions such as: How are the information collection, processing and communication activities handled? Who are the principal supporters/funders of the entity? What interests are being met? It is imperative for these statements to respect the time limit; it should be easy to do so since all participating institutions will have filled in a questionnaire designed by Canadian Heritage and circulated to them in advance, on the basis of which Canadian Heritage experts will have collated and distributed the data to all. The statements will be followed by open discussion.

Item 2:   What are the existing and emerging constituencies? What are the challenges these entities face in terms of research priorities, policy application, etc?

The discussion could focus on issues such as the following:

- What problems and/or needs have led to the establishment of observatories and like bodies?
- Which institutions and networks are likely to be interested in participating in the observatory network project?
- What would be the 3 main reasons for wanting to participate? For **not** wanting to participate?
- What are their profiles, geographical and subject coverage?
- What are their common analytical/descriptive priorities?
- Are there overlaps? Neglected areas? Newly emerging zones of interest?
- How useful would it be to introduce a comparative perspective into the work of each entity?
- In which areas are the tools of observation and analysis inadequate?
- What has been their experience in communicating with and serving policy makers?

Item 3:   **Discussion of network goals in the light of the common problems identified in discussion of the previous item**

Airing of the shared problems will, it is hoped, prepare the ground for deconstructing the motivations and conditions that would promote the creation and development of a network (or, in the absence of a shared commitment to this end, that would promote in other ways the goals for which such a network is being envisaged). It is suggested that the workshop break out into two sub-groups to discuss respectively:

Item 3/A: Network goals and how to meet them

The complexity of cultural policy issues and their variations in the context of local situations and development problems may will clearly make it impossible for any such network to tackle all the problems at once. Strategic and choices will have to be made in the light of needs, analytical capacities and material resources.

What are the areas in which the network might work? The range of possible domains is considerable, i.e. innovation in cultural policy design; training and capacity building; employment and income generation; development of comparative research methods and instruments, statistics and indicators; developing information systems; financing and management; relations between cultural policies, the economy and trade; impact of globalizing processes and economic integration; cultural impacts of new technologies; cultural diversity in cyberspace; harmonization between cultural, educational and communication policies; free and effective access to, and participation in cultural life; inter-community interaction within multicultural societies; the role of cultural policies in conflict resolution; culture and urban and regional development; development of new cultural co-operation systems; cooperation and solidarity with developing countries; encouragement of non-state and non-official cultural co-operation systems, etc.

What kinds of outputs/outcomes should such a network achieve? How can these be made as useful as possible for information <u>as well as</u> advocacy purposes?   Possible outputs: information exchange and the sharing of expertise, creation of web sites and data bases, dissemination of "best practice" and innovative experience, joint research and publication, definition of methodologies and indicators, compilation of periodical reports on topical issues, training and awareness-building activities, issue-based workshops and symposia?
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Item 3/B: Network procedures and operating guidelines

Networking is based on the assumption that their members share not only the advantages, but also the work involved in keeping their co-operation alive and in maintaining continuity. Networks function in a democratic, decentralized, co-operative and participatory spirit. In other words, in order to be viable and coherent, they need rules regarding co-ordination and decision-making. They also need an appropriate 'architecture' to manage their operational work, as well as a minimum of facilities and resources, human and financial.

What are the procedures and guidelines that should be applicable to the network now being envisaged? How can it be made as inclusive as possible, yet effective? What models exist to guide it regarding the design of its working mechanisms? What are the basic conditions – substantive, financial, political and administrative -- that would make it efficient and sustainable?

What sort of governance structure would be appropriate? How should one or more focal points be established?
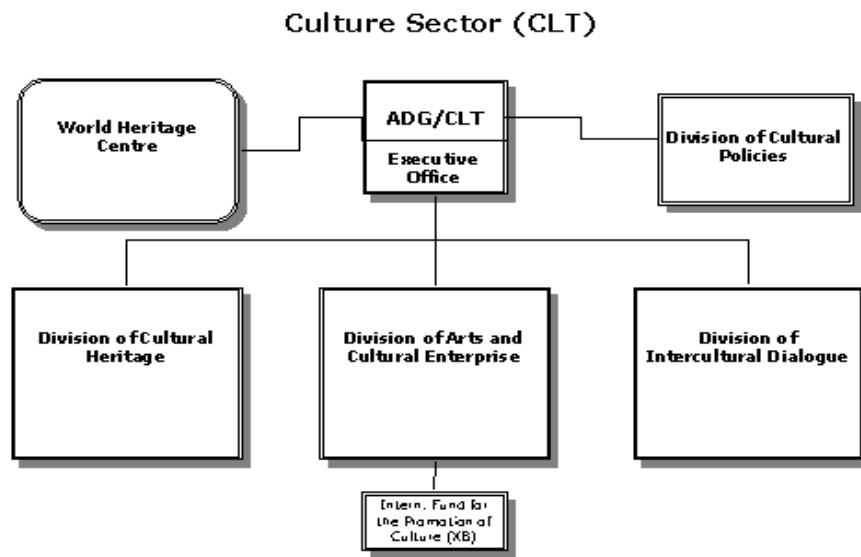
What role for UNESCO? While the Organization would be prepared to muster some financial support for its development, various facilitating, legitimizing and bridge-building functions could be envisaged, in matching clients with services, promoting inter-regional connections, serving as a platform and lobby for further development, etc.

Item 4: **Possible joint projects, including schedule, distribution of work, inventory of necessary resources and steps to take to mobilize them**

In the light of the conclusions of concerning the previous items, the participants could formulate proposals as to desirable and viable concrete projects. Instead of who should do what, the discussion should concentrate on who can do what. Indications could be given on the partnership required and the distribution of the tasks. Offers of concrete and immediately available services, initiatives and pledges are welcome. Proposals can be based on-going projects or initiatives already envisaged and open for extension. Proposals could also be made in the perspective of a strategic plan of action to be launched and implemented over the longer term.

Item 5:   <u>General conclusions and a plan of action, with clear targets and a time line.</u>

The workshop could take a clear position on the desirability of launching the network to begin with. Should this be recommended, a set of activities should be proposed which could be implemented in the framework of a strategic action plan. It would probably be wise for the first activities to be projects, e.g. a pilot project to exchange information and develop relationships with a variety of clients. If the workshop reaches a negative conclusion, what alternative to the network solution may be proposed?

Culture Sector (CLT)

APPENDIX 2

Final List of Participants / Liste finale des participants

International and Regional Observatories / Research Centres

Observatory of Regional Cultural Policies - INTERARTS (Barcelona)	Mr Eduard Delgado Director INTERARTS Rambla Catalunya 81, pral. 08008 Barcelona Spain Tel: 34 3 487 7022 Fax: 34 3 487 2644 E-mail: interart@pangea.org
Regional Observatory on Financing Culture in Central and Eastern Europe (The Budapest Observatory)	Mr Peter Inkei Director H-1251 Budapest, Pf. 27 Hungary Tel/fax: (361) 487 0162 E-mail: bo@budobs.org
ERICARTS – Helsinki	Dr Ritva Mitchell President of ERICARTS e.V C/o Arts Council of Finland Maneesikatu 7, 00171 Helsinki Finland Tel.: + 358.9.1341.7382 / Fax: + 358.9.1341.7060 E-mail: Ritva.mitchell@minedu.fi
Southern African Cultural Information System (SACIS, Maputo)	Mr Jorge Ngwele Head of Planning Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) Francisco O. Magumbwe Av. 780, 9th floor P.O. Box 1154 Maputo - Mozambique Tel.: 258 1 492285 / 497 944 Fax: 258 1 497 943 / 492 285 jngwele@sadc.uem.mz

National Observatories, Research Centres, etc.

Osservatorio culturale e reti informative Direzione Generale culture, identitiá e autonomie Regione Lombardia	Ms V. Cannada Direzione Generale culture, identitiá e autonomie Regione Lombardia Pzza IV Noviembre, 5 2014 Milano - Italy Tel.: +39 2 6765 25 22 / +39 Email: cannadav@regione.lombardia.it Ms Giuliana Marangon Email: giulia@reteculturale.regione.lombardia.it
EUCLID (EU-funded agency, UK-based, but	Mr. Geoffrey Brown

documenting work across Europe and elsewhere) www.euclid.co.uk	LIVERPOOL, 1st Floor, 46-48 Mount Pleasant Liverpool, L3 5SD United Kingdom Tel ++44 (0)151 709 2564 / Fax ++44 (0)151 709 8647 E-mail: euclid@cwcom.net
Centro de superación cultural (Havana) www.cubarte.cu	Sr Andrés E. González Beltrán, Vicedirector Centro de Spureracín para la Cultura, Ministerio de Cultura Calle 15 No. 754 e/ Paseo y 2 Vedado C.P.10400 Plaza de la Revolución Ciudad de LA HABANA - Cuba Tel: (537) 552299 / 552300 / 552301 / 553691 Fax: (537) 552301 Email: csuper@cubarte.cult.cu OR andresgonzalezcu@yahoo.es
Creative Exchange – The Forum for Cultural Rights and Development www.gn.apc.org/creativeexchange	Ms Helen Gould Coordinator Creative Exchange 18 Percy Road, London E11 1AJ Tel.: + 44(0) 208.532.8870 E-mail: creativx@gn.apc.org
Observatorio das Actividades Culturais www.ics.ul.pt/bdodos/oac.htm	Sra Maria de Lourdes Lima dos Santos Observatorio das Actividades Culturais Rua Garrett, 80 - 2ᶲ C 1200-204 Lisboa Portugal Tel.. 351 21 321 90 60 / Fax. 351 21 342 96 97 E-mail: oac@ics.ul.pt
University of Nottingham-on-Trent, Cultural Policy and Planning Research Unit	Prof. Colin Mercer Director Cultural Policy and Planning Research Unit The Nottingham Trent University Burton Street, Nottingham NG1 4BU. Tel/fax: 0115 848 6321 E-mail: cppru(@- ntu.ac.uk mobile: 07887 563382 Email: kate.dawson@ntu.ac.uk
Australian Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policies www.gu.edu.au/cmp	Prof. Tom O'Regan Director School of Film, Media and Cultural Studies Griffith University Nathan (Brisbane), Queensland, 4111 Australia Telephone +61 (0)7 3875 7772 Fax +61 (0)7 3875 5511 Email: CMP@mailbox.gu.edu.au

Russian Institute for Cultural Research **www.rik.ru**	Ms Tatiana Fedorova Director Russian Institute for Cultural Research Bersenevskaya Nab 20 109072 Moscow Russian Federation T: 7 095 959 0908 / 7 095 230 0177 F: 7 095 959 1017 / 7 095 230 0882 E-mail: Razlog@riku.msk.su
G. 30, Dakar, Senegal http://grop30afrique.ifrance.com/group30afrique	Mr Oumar Sall Coordonnateur du G.30 Groupe 30 Afrique BP 2801 Dakar(SENEGAL) Tél : (221) 827 31 02 / Fax : (221) 827 30 85 E-mail: oumarsall@hotmail.com
Observatorio cultural (Buenos Aires)	Sr Héctor Schargorodsky Director Observatorio Cultural Av. Córdoba 2122 (1120) Buenos Aires Argentina E-mail: obscult@econ.uba.ar
São Paolo Cultural Policy Observatory	Sr Jose Teixeira Coelho Director Museo de Arte contemporaneo Observatorio de politicas culturales Rectorate, Cidade Universitaria, 05508-900 Sao Paulo, Brazil Tel: +55 11 8183 039 Fax: +55 11 212 0218 E-mail: joteixei@usp.br
Source de la mémoire et identité culturelle (Tunis)	Mr Ridha Tlili President Association des Liaisons Méditerranéennes 9, Rue El Moez,1004 El Menzah Tunis Tel.: 216 1 34 45 30 Fax : 216 1 35 48 04 E-mail: ites2@ites.nat.tn
Center for Cultural Policy Research, University College of Borås (Sweden) www.hb.se	Prof. Geir Vestheim Director Center for Cultural Policy Research University College of Borås Allegatan 1 501 90 Bors Sweden Tel.: +46 33 16 40 42 / Fax: +46 33 16 40 05 E-mail: geir.vestheim@hb.se
Obsevatorio de políticas culturales municipales (Montevideo)	Sra Silvia Vetrale Advisor

	Observatorio de Politicas culturales Montevideo Instituto de Investigación y Desarrollo (IDES) San Jose 1230 Montevideo, Uruguay Tel.: +598 2 902 31 86 Fax: +598 2 900 81 66 E-mail: ides@adinet.com.uy c/o Sr. D. Gonzalo Carambula Departamento de Cultura Intendencia Municipal de Montevideo Avda. 18 de julio 1360 - Piso 3 C.P.: 11200 Montevideo Tel./Fax (598 2) 903 04 43/44 **E-mail:** dcultura@piso3.imm.gub.uy
ZfKf - Zentrum f. Kulturforschung Bonn	Prof. Dr. Andreas Joh. Wiesand Director Dahlmannstr. 26 D - 53113 Bonn Germany Tel.: +49 228 211 058 / Fax : +49 228 217 493 E-mail: zentrum@kulturforschung.de

International and regional networks

Inter-regional Network of networks of research and co-operation in Cultural Development Culturelink (Zagreb) www.culturelink.org	Mrs Biserka Cvjeticanin Editor in Chief Culturelink Lj. F. Vukotinovica 2 P.O. Box 303 10000 Zagreb Croatia Tel.: (385 1) 48 26 522 Fax: (385 1) 48 28 361 E-mail: clink@mairmo.irmo.hr
The International Arts Bureau www.international-arts.org [under construction]	Mr Rod Fisher Director 4 Baden Place Crosby Row London SE1 1YW United Kingdom Tel.: 44 20 7403 6454 / Fax: 44 20 7403 2009 E-mail: general@international-arts.org

Foundations

Boekman Schtichting (Netherlands) www.boekman.nl www.recap.ul	Ms Eva Brinkman Advisor The Boekman Foundation Study centre for arts, culture and related policy Herengracht 415 1017 BP Amsterdam, The Netherlands Telephone +31 20 624 37 36 / Fax:31 20 638 52 39 E-mail: secretariaat@boekman.nl
The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation	Mr Carl-Johan Kleberg Advisor The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation Borgargatan 14 SE 117 34 Stockholm Tel. : 0046 8 668 73 86 E- mail : cjk@gamma.telenordia.se
Asia-Europe Foundation	Mr Cai Rongsheng Director Cultural Exchange Asia-Europe Foundation No. 1 Nassim Hill Singapore 258 466 Tel.: (65) 838 47 22 / Fax: (65) 838 43 71 E-mail: wendylee@asef.org or infor@asef.org

Regional and International Organizations

Agence de la Francophonie www.agence.francophonie.org	Mr. Bernard Petterson Directeur de la Culture et du Patrimoine Agence de la Francophonie 13, quai André Citroën 75015 PARIS Tel.: 33 1 44 37 32 70 Fax: 33 1 45 37 32 42 E-mail: bernard.petterson@francophonie.org

Observer

Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft e.V. www.kupoge.de	Ms Frauke Burgdorff Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft e.V. Weberstr. 59a 53113 Bonn Germany Tel.: 0049.228-20167-21 Fax: 0049.228-20167-33 E-mail: burgdorff@kupoge.de

Organizers

UNESCO – Cultural Policies for Development Unit 1, rue Miollis 75732 Paris Cedex 15 France Tel.: +33 (0)1 45 68 43 49 Fax.: +33 (0)1 45 68 57 07 k.diallo@unesco.org	Mr Raj Isar Director E-mail: yr.isar@unesco.org Mr. Maté Kovács Chief, Cultural Research and Management Unit E-mail: m.kovacs@unesco.org
Patrimoine Canadien / Canadian Heritage www.canada.pch.gc.ca Site de l'Observatoire (en développement)	Mr Dick Stanley Acting Director, Strategic Research and Analysis Canadian Heritage E-mail: Dick_Stanley@pch.gc.ca Mr Michel Normandeau Directeur de projet, Observatoire culturel canadien Patrimoine Canadien E-mail: Michel_Normandeau@pch.gc.ca Ms Yohanna Loucheur Conseillère en politiques, Relations internationales Patrimoine Canadien E-mail: Yohanna_Loucheur@pch.gc.ca Ms Terry Cheney Consultant Canadian Heritage
Swedish National Commission for UNESCO www.unesco-sweden.org	Mr Hans Enflo Deputy Director Ministry of Culture 103 33 Stockholm Tel.: 46 8 405 23 95 / Fax.: 46 8 405 23 21 E-mail: hans.enflo@culture.minstry.se Mr Nils Gunnar Nilsson President Swedish National Commission for UNESCO Ministry of Education S – 103 33 Stockholm Fax.: 46.8.411.04.70 E-mail: nils.gunnar.nilsson@sydsvenskan.se Ms Eva Hermanson Deputy Secretary-General Swedish National Commission for UNESCO E-mail: eva.hermanson@education.ministry.se

Other Entities Invited but Unable to Attend

Asia-Pacific Regional Centre for the Culturelink Network (Seoul)	C/o Korean National Commission for UNESCO Street address : Unesco House, 50-14, Myongdong 2-ga, Chung-gu, Seoul 100-022, Korea C.P.O. Box 64, SEOUL 100-022 Tel : (82-2) 755.0068/9 (Sec-Gen) / (82-2) 755.1105/9 (Information) Fax : (82-2) 755.6667 (Sec-Gen) Telex: MOCNDM K23231 E-Mail - ynha@mail.unesco.or.kr Or khuhmail@unesco.or.kr
The Centre for Arts and Culture (Washington, D.C.)	Ms Gigi Bradford The Centre for Arts and Culture 401 F Street NW, Suite 334 Washington, DC 20001 Phone 202.783.5277 Fax 202.783.4498 E-mail: center@culturalpolicy.org
Commonwealth Secretariat http://commonwealth.org/	Christopher CHILD Expert Commonwealth Secretariat Political Affairs Division The Commonwealth Secretariat Marlborough House Pall Mall London, SW1Y 5HX E-mail: c.child@commonwealth.int
Convenio Andrés Bello (SECAB)	Secretaría Ejecutiva Convenio Andrés Bello -SECAB Avenida 13 No. 85-60 Apartado Aéreo 53465 Santafé de Bogotá, D.C. Colombia Teléfonos 6181712 - 6181701 Fax: (571) 6100039
Conseil de l'Europe	Ms Vera Boltho Director Cultural Policy and Action Division Council of Europe Avenue de l'Europe 67000 STRASBOURG Tel : +33 3 88 41 20 00 / Fax: 03 88 41 37 82 Telex : 870943 E-mail : n.org.vera.boltho@coe.fr
Cultural and Social Planning Bureau	Dr Paul Schnabel General Director Cultural and Social Planning Bureau

(Netherlands)	JC Van Markenlaan P. O. Box 37 2280 AARijswijk The Netherlands Tel.: 0031 70 3198700 / Fax: 00 31 70 3963000
European Audiovisual Observatory, Strasburg	Mr. André Lange European Audiovisual Observatory 76, allée de la Robertsau F-67000 Strasbourg France Tel. (33) 3 88 14 44 00 Fax (33) 3 88 14 44 19 E-mail: obs@obs.coe.int OR a.lange@obs.coe.int
The European Foundation Centre (Brussels)	Mr. John Richardson The European Foundation Centre Chief executive 51 rue de la Concorde Brussels Belgium Tel.: +32.2.512.8938 / Fax: +32.2.512.3265 Email: efc@efc.be
The Ford Foundation	Mr. Damien Pwono Program Officer Media, Arts and Culture 320 East 43 Street New York, N.Y. 10017, USA Tel.: 1 212 573 5317 / Fax: 1 212 351 3649 E-mail: d.pwono@fordfound.org
Hong Kong Development & Strategic Centre	Mr Mattias Woo Chairman Hong Kong Development & Strategic Centre Rear Part, 15 Hawthorn Road Happy Valley, Hong Kong Tel.: 852 2893 8704 Fax: 852 2838 7527 E-mail: zunimw@vol.net
Organización de los Estados Iberoamericanos (Madrid)	Mr Fernando Rueda Director Programa de Cultura Organización de los Estados Iberoamericanos Bravo Murillo, 38 28015 Madrid, España Tels.: (34) 91 594 43 82 / 91 594 44 42 Fax: (34) 91 594 32 86 E-mail: oeimad@oei.es
Organization of African Unity (OAU)	Mr Mahamat H. Doutoum Secrétaire général adjoint chargé de l'ESCAS Organisation of African Unity PO Box 3243 Addis Ababa

	Ethiopia Tel.: 251 1 517 700 Fax: 251 517 844 E-mail: johnson@telecom.net.et
Osservatorio Culturale della Regione Lombardia	Sra. Guido Belli Osservatorio Culturale della Regione Lombardia Piazza IV Novembre 5 I-20124 Milano Italy Tel.: 39 2 676 526 01 Fax: 39 2 676 527 04 E-mail : bellig@regione.lombardia.it
The Pew Charitable Trusts (USA)	Mr. Stephen K. Urice Officer, Culture Program The Pew Charitable Trusts 2005 Market Street, Suite 1700 Philadelphia, PA 19103-7077, USA Tel.:+1 215 575-9050 Fax: +1 215 575-4939 E-mail: surice@pewtrusts.com
The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation	Mr Dan Brandström Director dan.brandstrom@rj.se Mr Mats Rolen mats.rolen@rj.se The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation Glasbruksgatan 42 116 20 Stockholm Sweden Tel.: 46 8 643 71 85 Fax: 46 8 1030 76

APPENDIX 3

Working Group Reports

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1. ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORKING GROUP

Chaired by Prof. Geir Vestheim
Rapporteur: Mr Rod Fisher

Rich debate, if ultimately, unfinished. We devoted more time to discussing goals and how to meet them and less on procedures and operating guidelines.

My comments represent an attempt at a synthesis and are non-attributable.

At the outset, we thought it important to clarify whether or not a network was necessary and the almost overwhelming conclusion was in the affirmative.

We also discussed whether the network should comprise observatories concerned with cultural policies or whether it should encompass observatories or networks concerned with cultural life or culture and development. We favoured the broader remit - after all cultural policies are not developed in a vacuum. But we also recognized that the focus of the networks should be on cultural policies and the research that contributes to policy-making.

We also recognized that there was the potential for a diverse network of institutions with different needs and perspectives, but that these might coalesce into some key goals.

We drew up a mission statement for the network and in itself a key goal …

**1)   To establish more systematic international co-operation on information exchange
       (on research for policy-making).**
The keyword is systematic, because there is nothing to stop us co-operating now in an ad-hoc way much as we may be doing already.

In effect, this mission and goal is the architecture of knowledge. Incidentally, we discussed, but then disregarded, the inclusion of the words 'cultural sector' (rather than research for policy-making) as being too broad.

2)   Facilitate dialogue between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners
There were several references yesterday to the gap between research and policy-making, so our second goal would be for the network to facilitate a dialogue between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners. A number of group members pointed out that there were <u>three</u> sets of players not just two.

3)   Demonstrate the importance of policy-enabling research
We thought goal 3 should be to demonstrate to politicians and policy-makers in particular the importance of policy-enabling research.

Some of us considered the importance of targeted research - in other words research that meets policy-makers' needs. We recognized that UNESCO needed advocacy and that is integral to this objective.

4) Foster co-operation on joint projects
Goal 4 is to foster co-operation on joint research and targets.

5) Provide platform for access to and dissemination of information on trends and forecasts
Our 5th and final goal - and I should point out that the numbering here does not denote any hierarchy - would be to provide a platform for access to and dissemination of information in trends and forecasts derived from research to inform policy-making.

We then looked at a series of options on how to meet these objectives.

1. Do nothing - define precise problem again
One option, of course, is to do nothing and perhaps redefine the problem. It was not an option any of us took seriously.

2. Build 'regional' and/or 'intermediate' networks
We did feel that the foundation of the network should be to build regional (in the UNESCO sense of that term) and/or sub-regional or international networks within continents. We were conscious of the costs of travel, and networking, face to face, at a regional level, could be more realistic than across continents. Of course, electronic networking could carry on without such barriers.

3. Proactive networking
We thought the network should be proactive but recognized the extent of how proactive it was would be dependent on a number of factors, such as resources and the enthusiasm of the partners.

At one level, a network might be set up with a co-ordinating secretariat, and a basic agreement to exchange information and establish a web-site, etc.

However, we were generally of the opinion that a more active network would be desirable which would include pro-active management, collaboration on projects, producing indicators, occasional face to face meetings and perhaps the provision of a synthesis of research findings that would be useful to UNESCO and to policy-makers.

Indeed there was a general lack of enthusiasm for simply electronic co-operation. A web-site could be a useful tool but it was not enough to motivate and mobilize researcher.

But, of course, this has both human and financial resource implications.

The group recognized that UNESCO has limited resources and welcomed UNESCO's willingness to provide technical advice. However, there was a feeling that resourcing would be necessary and the first port of call for that should be UNESCO.

By now, we were rapidly running out of time when it comes to procedures and operating guidelines. Nonetheless, we were of the view that:

-      Every attempt should be made to build on existing institutions to avoid duplication.
-      The network might learn from models trended towards other disciplines, such as sociology.
        We believed a memorandum of understanding should be drawn up between partners in the

network and UNESCO.

2. FRENCH-SPEAKING WORKING GROUP

Chaired by Dr. Biserka Cvjeticanin
Rapporteur: Dr. Biserka Cvjeticanin

Specificity

The particularity of this Network compared to already existing ones is that it would be exclusively dedicated to research on cultural policies on inter-regional and interdisciplinary levels. It is this interaction itself, of cultural issues with different disciplines and within various regions, that will be the focus of the Networks activities. This particular approach is in part an attempt to bridge the gap that exists between researchers and policy makers to the detriment of the knowledge base on the topic.

Objectives

The following objectives of the network will have the highest priority:

- Exchange and diffusion of information;
- Analysis, development and prospective of cultural policies
- Capitalize on Existing Results
- Facilitate the Harmonization and Actualization of Cultural Policies
- Highlight the Role of Cultural Policies in the Development of Co-operation and Dialogue
- Promote Research
- Elaborate the Propositions that will Facilitate Decision Making

Beneficiaries

This project would benefit the members of the network itself and partners such as national and local authorities in the cultural and related sectors, civil society organizations, universities, international organizations, artists, individuals, etc. Participation in the Network should be open to any entity involved in one or more of the following: gathering statistics, doing analysis, doing research, providing documentation.

Practical Aspects

The **organization** of the Network would build on existing resources and structures. A project-oriented approach would be adopted as the best way to tackle the priority themes identified. This approach would be the best in order to produce policy recommendations and the identification of concrete and feasible actions.

Regarding the modalities of the coordination, we have reached the conclusion that it would be

necessary to create an overall **focal point** as well as a regional focal points.

Concerning the **working languages**, it would be necessary to work in at least three languages and having Russian as a working language was discussed evoke as has been the question of translation.

Actions (short-term)

Among the activities and modalities of the network that were discussed was the need to create a **Web site** containing the possibility of maintaining an on-going discussion forum.

Within the framework of the eventual development of a **Web site** for the Network of Observatories and as a follow-up to the compilation of and the responses to the questionnaire prepared for the Hanover Workshop Canadian Heritage proposed to set up a Web page. This page would be elaborated and designed in the form of a world map with hyper-links permitting the visitor to directly access the web sites of Network members. This interactive map would be located within the Network's site and could also provide basic information on each of the Observatories.

A proposal was made suggesting that a meeting be organized in the year 2001 for the purpose of further developing the Web site project. The importance for holding an **annual meeting** was also highlighted.

the possibility of creating a **sub-working group** was discussed. The group would concentrate on the structural organization of the Web site and the search tools that would be made available (according to theme, field of study, etc.)

Ideas were proposed for **joint research projects** namely on topics such as cultural indicators and statistics as well as other themes mentioned in the questionnaire.

In addition, a suggestion was made that an **Index or Catalogue** be created of documents concerning cultural policies. Within this context the idea of compiling and publishing a series of papers on current events and news regarding cultural policies was also laid on the table.

Finally, the elaboration of an effective **name and logo** for the Network was also mentioned as a priority.

3. BILINGUAL WORKING GROUP

Chaired by Mr. Dick Stanley
Rapporteur: Ms. Helen Gould

Background

The group was small and multilingual. Because of its size, it was able to proceed with an excellent strategic discussion which focused on developing functionality, manageability and inclusivity within the network. It started by outlining motivations for participating in the network and followed by defining goals and procedures for the network. In the process it defined the function both of an observatory and network of observatories.

Group Outputs:

MOTIVATIONS	GOALS	PROCEDURES
Staying in touch Surviving Collaborating Forging Comparability Joint projects Building links across disciplines	Developing the information base: gathering, sharing and disseminating data Identifying gaps: not only obvious gaps like the lack of connectivity between research, policy and practice, but also needs analysis at a local, regional and global level Bridging gaps: building relationships with policy-makers, linking policy to practice.	Building ownership: Need for partners to accept responsibility Developing electronic resources (website, lists) with public and limited access Quality control: avoid bureaucracy, include a broad range of information providers , quality control is a self-selecting process Organising periodic meeting: annual/biannual conference possibly on specific themes Forming an executive body: a voluntary self-nominating group which will conduct its business virtually Developing indexing: a simple and immediate process of classifying specialist knowledge & activities of networks. Focal points: informal regional contact points possibly mirroring membership of executive body The role of UNESCO: Web/resource development Facilitating executive body Organisational capacity Brokerage role – securing funding/venues/partners for meeting

What is an observatory?

STATISTICS   An authoritative source for policy makers

ANALYSIS   Interpretation of data into trends, projections and comparisons

RESEARCH   Providing access to the best, most up-to-date thinking

DOCUMENTATION Providing case studies, sample policies, models

What is a network of observatories?

SHARING STARTISTICS
                Generating data from a multiplicity of authoritable sources

DEVELOPING COMPARABILITY
                Harmonising definitions and processes for data gathering

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
                Sharing access to data and comparative analysis of data at an
                international level

INDEXING   Sourcing appropriate data and signposting sources of specialist knowledge:
                the process of indexing will have in-built inclusivity since it excludes no-one
                but ensures that bodies with relevant high quality data are accessible.

APPENDIX 4

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

By Prof. Geir Vestheim
(Centre for Cultural Policy Research, University College of Borås, Sweden)
Co-Chair of the Workshop

I will introduce my comments on this workshop by saying that after two days with presentations and discussions in a heterogenous assembly of people from all over the world, it seems to be clear that we want to establish some kind of network that will promote research and information on cultural policy. Being a first step that is important and it is a positive point of departure for future work

However, after this first meeting I find it difficult to draw any clear conclusion with respect to *what kind* of network this should be. The participants of the workshop come from various institutions and consequently have different expectations. A majority of the participants have talked a lot about observation, documentation and distribution of information about cultural policy. In connection with this a lot of ideas about how this could be done have been put forward, and many representatives have stressed the idea that UNESCO itself should play a decisive role in the collection and distribution process. Some say this should be taken care of by Unesco in an introductory period and after some time the responsibility for this work should be given to a few units in some regions around the world.

Although many of you have mentioned the importance of a Unesco website in the process of building a network, I have the impression that many of us expect the network to be more than a tool for establishing electronic access to information. We should therefore have the ambition that some times participants should also meet physically to discuss and exchange knowledge and viewpoints. This may happen in small cooperating groups but also on a larger scale. Of course this is a question of resources.

In our discussions I miss some issues. We have not addressed the question of what *research* should be in this context. Neither have we discussed the different roles that observatories and research institutions can play in a network. My understanding of an observatory is that it is an institution that collects, elaborates and distributes information in a relatively short time perspective whereas a research institution works with longer time perspectives and is more focussed on theorizing empirical findings. Although observatories and research institutions are overlapping in methods and practical approaches we should not oversee the fact that they work with different perspectives. In the future the roles of observatories and research institutions should be thoroughly analysed and discussed because future cooperation between the two will depend on a common understanding of what they can expect of each other.

My conclusion on this point is that we should take it for granted and respect the fact that observatories and research institutions will have complementary functions, and an important challenge for them together will be to find a common platform that can facilitate practical exchange of services for the benefit of international research and information on cultural policy.

As far as I can understand research institutions are the minority group in this workshop. To broaden the character of a forthcoming network it is necessary to bring in more research institutions. To mobilise the research world is a task that must be done seriously, not at least by us who are here today as representatives of the research society.

Personally I believe that whether a Unesco network for cultural policy research will survive or die depends on its practical results. If participating institutions find it useful they will invest time and competence in contributing to the network, if not, they will just disappear. To avoid this it is necessary, as soon as possible, to establish some pilot research projects between interested parts that can serve as a "take off" for future networking. These projects may be completely new but they may also be ongoing projects that can be connected to each other via contacts in the network.

At this moment I will not say anything more about money. Really I do believe that if we are able to establish a mental and social network between participants we will in the next turn also find resources to keep the network alive.

And with these few comments I will finish by saying: See you again!