



REGIONAL MEETING OF AFRICAN NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO

TO DELIBERATE ON UNESCO'S GLOBAL PRIORITY AFRICA

CONCEPT NOTE

11th – 14th SEPTEMBER 2022, ACCRA

INTRODUCTION

The Ghana Commission for UNESCO under the auspices of the Government of Ghana is seeking to host a **regional meeting of African National Commissions on UNESCO's Global Priority Africa Flagship program from 11th – 14th September 2022, in Accra Ghana**. The goal of this important dialogue is to bring together the National Commissions, as key stakeholders of the Global Priority Africa programme to deliberate upon Africa's collective actions towards a renewed implementation agenda.

UNESCO has since 1984 defined the African continent as a priority in the implementation of its mandate by providing responses to the continent's developmental challenges. Currently, key challenges are in the domains of population growth, youth unemployment, and inclusive development; Education and knowledge sharing; Climate Change and environment; Africa's Cultural Renaissance, Heritage, and History; and peace, governance, and democracy among others.

UNESCO's support to Africa under its Global Priority Africa Programme is geared towards 'an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, and representing a dynamic force in the global arena' - an objective which also aligns with the broad continental vision of the Africa Union – 'The Africa We Want', Vision 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To realize these objectives, five flagship programs (2022 – 2029) have been adopted by the 41st General Conference of UNESCO as follows:

- **Campus Africa: Reinforcing Higher Education in Africa.**
- **The General History of Africa (GHA) as a catalyst for achieving Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.**
- **Fostering Cultural Heritage and Capacity Development.**
- **Harnessing new and emerging technologies for sustainable development in Africa including the implementation of the recommendation on the ethics of Artificial intelligence.**
- **Enhance open science, reinforce capacity building in basic and applied sciences, and scientific research to strengthen innovation and technology development and use in ocean science, climate change resilience, and water resource management in Africa.**

It is the vision of the Government of Ghana to provide leadership by convening this important dialogue. The meeting is expected to engender a new impetus for African Member States and partners at the regional, sub-regional and national levels to discuss/strategize on key issues of the Global Priority Africa programme. It is further expected to heighten the overall profile of programme on the continent and beyond for the purposes of prioritization and fundraising.

An Accra Declaration on Global Priority Africa by Secretaries-General of National Commissions for UNESCO is expected from the three-day Conference to commit respective Governments to the strategic action to be agreed upon in the implementation process.

RATIONALE

National Commissions, according to UNESCO's constitution, are National "cooperating bodies" tasked with helping UNESCO succeed at country level. Their role in the success of this priority is therefore pivotal.

Divided by the different official languages of our various countries, efforts to congregate have often succeeded on Anglophone, Francophone or Lusophone basis but seldom collectively. It is expected that such a joint meeting with interpretation will surmount the language barrier and result in a truly African meeting working as one to achieve a collective goal.

Additionally, Resolution 43 of the 41st General Conference of UNESCO calls for active partnerships with the political, economic, cultural, and social actors in the sphere of development in the region to actively engage in these flagships for the benefit of the continent. These actions are to enhance the visibility of Global Priority Africa within and outside UNESCO, to serve as advocacy and to reinforce strategic actions.

The objectives of the programme are as follows:

- A** To raise awareness of the five flagships for National Commissions to be able to prioritize and participate in the Global Priority Africa flagships effectively.
- B** To engage National Commissions and experts to share experiences on best practices and to share ideas on the implementation process.
- C** To capacitate National Commissions in Member States become effective national champions in the Global Priority Africa flagships in terms of mobilisation for partnerships, resources and advocacy.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS

- A** Key themes/issues of the Global Priority Africa flagships identified and discussed for experiential learning, innovation and synergy among partners.

- B** Increased awareness, advocacy, and funding among governmental and non-governmental partners engineered for Global Priority Africa program.
- C** The capacities of Secretaries-General of UNESCO National Commissions built to become effective champions for advocacy, partnership mobilization and fundraising.

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Over 100 participants are expected to participate in this meeting. Participants will be Secretaries-General and staff of National Commissions for UNESCO; Principal Secretaries/Chief Directors of Ministries in the UNESCO domains in Member States of Africa, Experts from UNESCO, the UN system, Regional Blocs and other stakeholders.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

The meeting will be organized in both Plenary and Working Sessions to achieve the objectives and outcomes set out for this meeting.

The key issues to be discussed are, among others, the following:

- Transforming Education towards attaining SDG 4 Targets.
- Fostering science for the sustainable management of Africa's natural resources and disaster risk reduction.
- Harnessing the Power of Culture for Sustainable Development and Peace in a context of regional integration.
- Promoting an Environment Conducive to Freedom of Expression and Media Development.
- Promoting a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence.
- Harnessing STI and Knowledge for the Sustainable Socio-Economic Development in Africa.

Information regarding the issues and related themes to be discussed can be accessed via the meeting website:

<https://unescoghana.gov.gh/regional-meeting-african-natcoms/>

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