CHAPTER-5

UNESCO: ORIGIN-PURPOSE-FUNCTIONS AND STRUCTURE

5.1- Background

1945- UNESCO Established-

World War II provided the impetus for the establishment of UNESCO. In 1942, the Ministers of Education from the countries of occupied Europe met in London to examine the possibility of setting up an international organization to address the problems in education created by a devastating war. As more meetings were held, the number of participating countries increased. The aims of the organization developed into rehabilitating education on a global scale, and constructing a peaceful world through international cooperation in education and culture. In November 1945, an inaugural general meeting was called by Great Britain and France in London, and 44 nations attended. When they deliberated the UNESCO charter, the member nations were influenced by the tragedy of the use of nuclear weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. They decided to include science in the remit for the new organization, in the hope that science could be utilized for peaceful purposes. The charter was adopted on November 16, 1945. The charter came into effect on November 4, 1946, by which time 20 nations had signed and UNESCO was inaugurated as an international body.¹

UNESCO was established as an international organization devoted to the pursuit of peace, at a time when the world was reflecting on World
War II. Of course the United Nations was also trying to achieve peace directly through political and military means, but UNESCO was operating on non-military and non-political lines through education, culture, science and communication.

UNESCO is an Organization of 192 sovereign Member States (as on March, 2006) voting with equal rights in the General Conference which decides and funds the Organization’s programme. The Secretariat which includes administrators and specialists in all fields of UNESCO’s activities, is headed by the Director-General, who is responsible to the General Conference.

The constitution of UNESCO is different from the strictly intergovernmental character available in the other Organs of the United Nations because of the Provision of National Commissions, composed of non-governmental elements, to assist government in advancing UNESCO’s objectives and in implementing its programmes. Often, the effectiveness of a country’s participation in UNESCO’s programmes of international co-operation is determined by the autonomy and scope of a National Commission which enlists the support and assistance of such influential groups of teachers, students, scientists, artists, journalists and specialists operating the media of information. If a National Commission reflects adequately the creative forces in the field of education, communication, it is able to mobilize and draw upon the enthusiasm of the general public. This gives it the resources and possibilities of vigorous, independent action, which can help it to contribute to the work of UNESCO in a way that is not open to other U.N. agencies.

5.2 Genesis and Foundation of UNESCO
The early efforts to deal with the problems related to education, science and culture at the international and governmental level were made by a Frenchman Mac Antoine Jullien as early as in 1817. He proposed the creation of a special Commission on education that was to be organized under the auspices and protection of one or more European princes with the purpose of preparing a report on the teaching methods used in the various European countries. Other initiatives to establish an International Council of Education in 1892 by a German namely Herman Molkenbore. The idea, however, could not be materialize the Government of Holland, took initiative in this direction and came forward along with various other European countries to convene a meeting of nations creating an International Educational Organization but that too did not succeed.

The League of Nations was founded after the First World War and the French delegates advocated to establish an International Committee for Intellectual Cooperation as a part of the League of Nations. This committee acted in the capacity of a consultant to the League’s counsel. Much later this committee grew into the well known International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation that began to operate in Paris in January 1926. it had an ample budget and a well defined plan of action. Since, education as a subject was excluded from the area of study, it laid the foundation of International Bureau of Education in 1925. The International Bureau of Education was financed by the Rockefeller Foundation in the United States. Later this Bureau became an Inter-governmental organization. The Bureau is located in Geneva with its offices in the Wilson Palace. This Bureau is an institution with the UNESCO, and its sphere of influence, since its foundation, has been concerned with research in education and its
related areas including information. Although the establishment of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation and the International Bureau of Education are a few events which laid the foundation of the UNESCO and its activities yet its immediate genesis resulted largely from the work of another body, the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education, popularly known as CAME. The British Council played a vital role in the foundation of UNESCO.

In 1942, the Chairman of the British Council, Sir Malcolm Robertson invited the Ministers of Education of all Allied occupied countries whose governments in exile had been established in London, to attend periodic meetings on educational questions affecting Allied countries of Europe and the United Kingdom both during and after the World War-I. In October of that year, the Ministers of Education, of their representatives, from Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Holland, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland and Yugoslavia, and the Commissioner for Education of the French National Committee, met in London under the chairmanship of R A Bulter, President of the Board of Education, with the object of considering what help would be needed by and could be given to the occupied territories of Europe in restoring their educational systems after the World War. Thus, the War-time Conference of Allied Ministers of Education 1942 followed by another conference called by the British and French Governments invited all United Nations Member-states in London in November 1945, which decided on the creation of an educational and cultural organization of the United Nations. The Constitution adopted at the 1945 Conference took effect a year later when Greece, as the 20th State to do so, deposited the instrument of ratification in London. UNESCO, thus, began its official life on November 4, 1946. A preparatory Commission with which the Secretariat had moved into
Hotel Majestic on the Avenue Kleber in Paris became UNESCO, with the well known British biologist Julian Huxley as its first Director General.

5.3 Aims and Objectives

UNESCO’s Constitution define its responsibilities and seats out its Objectives. A key phrase, “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”, is based on the words of a man of State and a poet stand at the forefront of UNESCO’s Constitution and contain the key to all its activities. The man of State was none else than Clement Attlee, the prime Minister of the United Kingdom who inaugurates the Conference in November, 1945, which led to the creation of UNESCO. The poet was Archibald Macleish, the famous American, who while being on the committee drafted the Constitution. The quest for peace was the Evident and overriding priority, for both of these men as well as the representatives of 54 nations who met in war-scared London.

The remark, made by Paul Valery between two World wars that, “A society of minds is the pre-requisite for a Society of Nation” was a source of inspiration to thinkers and politicians alike when, to strengthen the action of the League of Nations, they undertook to create the first international bodies for intellectual Co-operation in Geneva and Paris.

This humanist ideal was part of the body of ideas formed at a crucial moment during the Second World War by those who from 1942 onwards were to found the United Nations, whose network of institutions includes UNESCO. The immense scale of the conflict and
the barbarity unleashed by this War loomed large in the minds of the founding fathers, who were as influenced by the specter of war and the dangers of fanaticism as they were by the philosophy of enlightenment and the ideology of human rights. Their goal was simple: 'peace based on respect for human rights.' Such was the sole objective of these newly established institutions. On the one hand, it was up to the United Nations and its highly political organs the General Assembly and the Security Council to uphold the peace in their duel role as diplomats and policemen. On the other hand, it was up to the other, more “idealistic” institutions like UNESCO, which is the foremost among them, to further peace using the instruments of education, science and culture.

At the preparatory conference convened in London by Great Britain and France, the head of the French delegation, Leon Blum, declared that the aim of the future organization would be “to create the sprit of peace throughout the World”. Ellen Wilkinson, Minister of Education for England and Wales, concurred in this belief by saying, “our watchword is educate so that the minds of the peoples shall be attuned to peace.” While commenting on the role that UNESCO has been playing for the development of Libraries and documentation centres its inception, B.S. Kesavan said,

"UNESCO has neither the intention nor the resource to take upon itself any vast national development scheme and keep it going for any length of time. Expertise and equipment for a period of time, just enough to start a chain reaction within the area, just enough to give body to the initiative to act as a trigger mechanism for further national effort, has always been the aim of UNESCO"
The preamble and Article I of the constitution where the founders of UNESCO declare:

"... the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races(...) a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world (...) the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind".13

Article 1, of the UNESCO’s Constitution states, that the purposes of the Educational and Cultural Organization of the United Nations shall be:

1. to develop and maintain mutual understanding and appreciation of the life and culture, the arts, the humanities and the sciences of the peoples of the World, as a basis for effective international organization and world peace.

2. to co-operation in extending and in making available to all peoples for the service of common human needs the world’s full body of knowledge and culture, and in assuring its contribution to the economic stability, political security and general wellbeing of the peoples of the World14.

The purpose of the foundation of UNESCO as an organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science, and culture, in order to further the universal respect for Justice, for the rule of law and for
the human rights as well as fundamental freedoms, which are affirmed for the peoples of the World without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the charter of the United Nations.

Leslie Wilson\textsuperscript{15} summarised the broad purposes of UNESCO as follows:

1. to provide a forum for the examination of common problems;
2. to assist the exchange of information between member countries; and
3. to encourage in various ways the development of Educational, Scientific and Cultural activities by its members.

Luther Evans\textsuperscript{16} has elaborated the above objectives as follows:

1. to collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of people;
2. to give fresh impulse to popular education and the spread of culture;
3. to help to advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity;
4. to assure the conservation and protection of the World's inheritance of books.
5. to give the people of all countries access to the printed and published material produces by any one of them and to realize these purposes the organization will:
6. collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of people, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international
agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image;

7. give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture; by collaborating with members, at their request, in the development of educational activities; by instituting collaboration among the nations to advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race, sex, or any distinctions, economic or social;

8. maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge; by assuring the conservation and protection of the World's inheritance of books, works or art and monuments of history and science, and recommending to the nations the necessary international conventions, by encouraging co-operation among the nations in all branches of intellectual activity, including the international exchange of persons active in the field of education, science and culture and exchange of publications, objects of artistic and scientific interests and other materials of information; by initiating methods of international cooperation calculated to give the people of all countries access to the printed and published materials produces by them.

9. with a view to preserving the independence, integrity and fruitful diversity of the cultures and educational systems of the member states of this organization, the organization is prohibited from intervening in matters which are essentially with in the domestic jurisdiction.

5.4 Organization and Structure
At the time of its establishment, UNESCO had a membership of 20 states. At present it includes 192 member states\textsuperscript{17}. UNESCO's constitution provides for three structural organs: (i) Assembly, (ii) Executive Board, and (iii) Secretariat.

**General Conference**

The general conference is the supreme body of UNESCO. In the association of states making up UNESCO, it serves as a general assembly of Member States. The other two structural components being the Executive Board and the Secretariat, which are headed by the Director General.

**Constitution**

This General Conference is made up of the representatives of all the Member States of UNESCO. It meets in ordinary session every two years for a period of approximately five weeks, either at its headquarter in Paris or in another capital city of its choice, may meet in extraordinary session if it decides to do so itself, if summoned by the Executive Board, or at the request of at least one-third of the Member States.

**5.5 Functions**

As defined by UNESCO's Constitution (Article IV), the General Conference is the supreme decision-making and supervisory body of the Organisation. Its main task is to frame UNESCO's policy, adopt its programme and vote on the biennial budget. It elects the members of the Executive Board and appoints the Director-General. In the
association of States making up UNESCO, it serves as a general assembly of member states, the Executive Board acting as a kind of Board of Directors, monitoring the execution of UNESCO's programme by the Director-General, who is appointed for a term of six years. The Constitution also stipulates that the General Conference can take on other functions as well, such as summoning international conferences of States, adopting recommendations (by a simple majority) or international conventions to submit to Member States (by a two-thirds majority), advising the United Nations on questions of concern to it within the fields of competence of UNESCO, and finally, considering the reports sent to the organization by Member States on the action taken upon recommendations and conventions.

Executive Board

The executive Board is the pivot between the General Conference, which is the sovereign legislative body, and the Secretariat, which executes the programmes, deriving its authority from the General Conference which chooses Board members from among its delegates. The executive Board supervises all the operations of UNESCO, either by following instructions received from the General Conference or by acting on its own initiative, in which case it is accountable to the higher body. The meetings of the Board are held at least twice a year. The tenure of the office is four years. But generally half of the members of the Board retire every 2 years and new ones are elected in their place. The General Conference elects Board members for a term of four-year from among delegates appointed by Governments. In doing so it also seeks to comply with the principle of 'equitable geographical distribution'. The Member States are accordingly divided
into groups based on mainly geographical criteria\textsuperscript{18} for the purpose of electing members of the Executive Board:

- **Group I** includes European countries including Turkey, plus Israel and Canada has ten seats.
- **Group II** includes East European countries including Yugoslavia and Albania, but also the Ukraine and Byelorussia has four seats.
- **Group III** includes Latin American and Caribbean countries have nine seats.
- **Group IV** includes countries from Asia and the Pacific has nine seats.
- **Group V** includes African and Arab countries have twenty seats.

**Article V** of the UNESCO's Constitution requires that the Conference "shall endeavour to include persons competent in the arts, the humanities, the sciences, education and the diffusion of ideas", and the article adds, "qualified by their experience and capacity to fulfill the administrative and executive duties of the Board."

On an average, the Board meets for approximately eighteen weeks in General Conference years and for about twelve weeks in non-Conference years. The sessions are held in the spring and autumn. At the close of the ordinary session of the General Conference, it also meets briefly to elect its Bureau. A special session of the Board may be called by the chairman acting on his own initiative or at the request of six of its members. Although the Board conducts much of its work in plenary, it also has various subsidiary bodies such as the Bureau, five permanent subsidiary bodies, and the working groups to ease its workload.
The Executive Board has the following functions:

- to prepare agenda for the General Conference.
- To supervise the execution of the UNESCO’s programmes.
- To recommend the admission of new member states; and
- To nominate the Director General

**The Secretariat**

The secretariat is organized and directed by the Director General and the executive body is responsible for UNESCO’s formal functioning and for the implementation of decisions taken by the General Conference and the Executive Board, particularly in carrying out the programmes. The official languages of the Secretariat are English and French. It consists of more than two hundred professional staff Directors, Specialists and others. More than two third staff work in the field and give advice and technical assistance to the member states.

UNESCO’s Secretariat is divided into 5 main sectors, each headed by an Assistance Director General. He is responsible for all the activities and functions of the divisions under his sector. Almost all of them are concerned with libraries, information etc., however, the following deal specifically with these subjects with which we are concerned in this study. They are eight sectors of UNESCO. They are: (i) Education Sector, (ii) Natural Science Sector, (iii) Social and Human Sciences Sector, (iv) Culture Sector (v) Communication Sector, (vi) External Relations and Information Sector, (vii) General programmes and Programmes support Sector, and (viii) General Administration Sector.
In addition to these principal Sectors there are the secretariat of the General Conference, Secretariat of the Executive Board, Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs, Four Regional Coordinators (Africa, Arab, States, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean), Inspectorate General, office of Mediator, Bureau of Studies and Programming, Bureau of the Budget and Central Evaluation Unit etc.

5.6 UNESCO's Activities

UNESCO's activities, which take three main forms as outlined below, are funded through:

- the statutory contributions of Member States, which make up the bulk of Organization's "regular" budget and cover the expenses of its regular programme. These contributions, which are something like a membership fee paid in order to belong to UNESCO, are calculated according to a scale of assessments used throughout the United Nations system, based primarily on the GNP and number of inhabitants of each Member State;

- "Extra-budgetary" resources, which for the most part are used to implement operational projects in the field of education, science and culture. These resources are contributed mainly by other united Nations agencies (particularly the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP), but they can also come from banks and regional institutions (such as AGFUND, the Arab Gulf Programme for the United Nations Development Organizations) and voluntary contributions by Member States, institutions or even private individuals.
5.7 International and Intellectual Co-operation

UNESCO assists the interchange of experience, knowledge and ideas through a world network of specialists. Apart from the work of its professional staff, in this area UNESCO performs the following activities.

- UNESCO co-operates regularly with the national associations and international federations of scientists, artists, writers and educators, some of which it helped to establish.
- UNESCO convenes conferences and meetings, and co-ordinates international scientific efforts;
- UNESCO helps to standardize procedures of documentation and provides clearing house services;
- UNESCO offers fellowships;
- UNESCO publishes a wide range of specialized works, including source books and works of reference; and
- UNESCO promotes various international agreements, including the International Copyright Convention and the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Convention which member states are invited to accept.

Operational Assistance

UNESCO has established missions which advise governments, particularly in the developing member countries in the following areas:

- UNESCO advises in the planning projects;
UNESCO appoints experts to assist in completing these projects successfully;
UNESCO establishes libraries and documentation centres;
UNESCO imparts training for journalists, radio, television and film workers;
UNESCO works for improvement of scientific and technical education training of planners in cultural development; and
UNESCO helps in international exchange of persons and information;

UNESCO’s activities related to various disciplines like Education, Natural Sciences and Technology, Social and Human Sciences, Culture, Communication, Information and Informatics have been discussed on more detail in subsequent sections.

5.8 Education

UNESCO’s most important activities, as announced in its programme for 1990’s-1995, are in the sphere of education, particularly the spread of literacy, adult education, and the encouragement of universal primary education. It gives special emphasis on the attainment of education by people with disabilities (within its special Education Programme) and by women, and on literacy as an integral part of rural development. Each year it sends experts missions to member states on request to advice on all the matters concerning education, and provides fellowships and travel grants. Priority is given to the rural regions of developing countries. Some of the examples include: educational assistances for African refugees; the development of materials to aid teachers in education of children with special needs; and about 90 teachers training schemes. The international
institute for educational planning and the International Bureau of Education undertake training, research and the exchange of information on aspects of education.

UNESCO was given responsibility for organizing International Literacy Year 1990, which was proclaimed by the UN as a means of initiating a plan of action for the spread of literacy. The principal aims of the International Literacy year were to increase action by governments to eliminate literacy among women and disadvantaged groups; and to increase public awareness of the extent and implications of illiteracy.

5.9 Natural Sciences and Technology

While the main emphasis on UNESCO's work in science and technology is on harnessing these for development, and above all on fulfilling the needs of developing countries. The organization is also active in promoting and fostering collaborative international projects among the highly industrialized countries. UNESCO's activities in this area can be divided into three levels: International; regional and sub-regional, and national.

At the international level, UNESCO has over the years established various forms of intergovernmental co-operation concerned with the environmental sciences and research on natural resources. Some of these programmes include: the Man and Biosphere programme (MAB); environmental resource management in arid lands, humid tropical zones, mountain ecosystems, urban systems, etc., and those which provide the framework for a research programme on biological diversity; the International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP),
the Intergovernmental Informatics programme; and encourages cooperation between developing countries in computer sciences.

In addition UNESCO, in the basic sciences, helps to promote international and regional co-operation in close collaboration with the world scientific communities, with which it maintains close cooperative links, particularly through its support for the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICUS) and member unions. Major disciplinary programmes are promoted in the fields of physics, the chemical sciences, life sciences, including applied microbiology, mathematics, informatics, engineering sciences and new sources of energy.

At the regional and sub-regional level, UNESCO develops co-operative scientific and technological research programmes through organization and support of scientific meetings and contacts with research institutions, and the establishment or strengthening of co-operative networks.

At the national level, UNESCO assists member states, upon request, in policy-making and planning in the field of science and technology generally, and by organizing training and research programmes in basic sciences, engineering sciences and environmental sciences, particularly work relevant to development, such as projects concerning the use of small-scale energy sources for rural and dispersed populations.

5.10 Social and Human Sciences
UNESCO’s activities in the field of the social and human sciences aim to promote teaching and research in these disciplines and to encourage their application to a number of prioritized issues by the Organization including education, development, urbanization, population youth, human rights, democracy and peace. The social sciences constitute a link between UNESCO’s two main functions:

➢ International intellectual co-operation leading to reflection on major problems, and action to solve these problems. For example, studies are conducted to elucidate the complex relations between demographic changes and socio-cultural transformation on a global scale;

➢ Co-operation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) which has led to a technical assistance programme which benefits developing countries in the areas of population education and communication. Other examples of research activities include the ways in which societies react to climatic and environmental change, and changes affecting women and families.

UNESCO’s social and human sciences programme gives high priority to the problems of young people who are the first victims of unemployment, economic and social inequalities and the widening gap between developing and industrialized countries. Under the project ‘youth shaping the future’ an international youth Clearing House and Information Service was established in order to increase and consolidate the information available on the situation of young people in society, and to heighten awareness of their needs, aspirations and potential among public and private decision-makers. UNESCO’s programme also focuses on the educational and cultural dimensions of physical education and sport and their capacity to
preserve and improve health. An activity specifically aimed at young people is education to prevent the spread of AIDS.

Thus, the programme helps particularly the developing countries:

- in defining national strategies for the development of human resources;
- in strengthening research and training capabilities in order better to anticipate social, economic and cultural changes and their impact on development.

The social and human sciences programme also focuses on the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy through education, information and documentation and research, particularly those rights related to UNESCO's areas of competence, i.e. education, science, culture and communication. The struggle against all forms of discrimination is a central part of the programme. It disseminates scientific information aimed at combating racial prejudice, works to improve the status of women and their access to education, and promotes equality between men and women.

5.11 Culture

UNESCO's programme on culture comprises three parts: activities designed to foster the world-wide application of three international conventions that aim to protect and conserves cultural property; international safeguarding campaign to help member states to conserve and restore monuments and sites; and the training of museum managers and conservationists and promotion of public awareness of the cultural heritage.
UNESCO's world Heritage Programme, launched in 1978, aims to protect historic sites and natural landmarks of outstanding universal significance, in accordance with the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the protection of the world cultural and Natural Heritage, by providing financial aid for restoration, technical assistance, training and management planning. By October 1993 the 'world Heritage List' comprised 360 sites in 80 countries: for example, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, the Galapagos Islands(Ecuador), Chartres Cathedral (France), the Taj Mahal at Agra (India), Auschwitz concentration camp (Poland), the historic sanctuary of Machu Picchu (Peru), and the Serengeti National Park (Tanzania). The world Decade for cultural development began in 1988, as part of which UNESCO undertook two major projects: the reconstruction of the ancient library in Alexandria, Egypt; and the Silk Roads project, in which scholars were to retrace the network of routes, followed by medieval and pre medieval traders, which linked Europe to all part of Asia.

In 1993 UNESCO was completing its eight-volume General History of Africa. UNESCO was also in the process of preparing a history of Latin America and a six-volume publication on Islamic culture, and updating a history of the scientific and cultural development of mankind. A 10-year programme for the collection and safeguarding of humanity's non-physical heritage (oral traditions, music, dance, medicine, et.) was begun in 1988. UNESCO encourages the translation and publication of literary works, publishes albums of art, and produces records, audio-visual programmes and travelling art exhibitions.
In December 1992 UNESCO established the world Commission on Culture and Development, to strengthen links between culture and development and to prepare a report on the issue.

Copyright

UNESCO supports the development of books publishing and distribution and the training of editors and encouraging the enforcement of international legislation on copyright. UNESCO’s programme in the field of copyright consists of the following types of activities:

- those aimed at heightening member states awareness of the role played by copyright as a stimulant to intellectual creativity;
- the preparation of international instruments, the implementation of which is assured by the Secretariat;
- activities intended to ensure the adequacy of traditional laws vis-a-vis the means of reproduction and of successive diffusion made possible by the latest technological revolutions in the field of reprography, satellites, computers, cable television, cassettes and magnetic discs;
- the organization of individual or group training courses intended mainly for the nationals of developing countries;
- activities to promote access to protected works;
- publications and a database on legislation for copyright specialists; and
- production of a video to increase public awareness of the importance of copyright.
UNESCO’s communication programme has three main objectives:

- to ensure free flow of information at both national and international level;
- to ensure its wide dissemination without impediment to freedom of expression; and
- to strengthen the communication capabilities of developing countries so that they may participate more actively in the communication process.

UNESCO’s activities in the field of communication include:

- Assistance towards the development of training programmes and infrastructure facilitates for the media in countries where independent and pluralistic media are in the process of emerging;
- Assistance through professional organizations in the monitoring of media independence;
- Work for pluralism and diversity in the field of communication, information and informatics;
- Promotion of exchange programmes and study tours especially for young communication professionals from the least developed countries and central and eastern Europe; and
- Assistance in the adaptation of communication technologies to suit the needs of developing countries through International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) which provides support to communication and media projects in the developing world.


**5.13 Information System, Services and Library Development**

**UNESCO's** General Information Programme (PGI) is an intergovernmental programme concerned with the development and promotion of information systems and services in the field of scientific and technological information, documentation, libraries and archives at the National, Regional and International levels. Its activities, including those directed to the development of UNISIST (inter-governmental programme for cooperation in the field of scientific and technological information) fall into the following themes:

(a) promotion of the formulation of information policies and plans;
(b) promotion and dissemination of methods, norms and standards for information handling;
(c) contribution to the development of information infrastructure;
(d) contribution to the development of information systems;
(e) promotion of the training and education of information specialists and users;

UNESCO's role in the field of information, Informatics and Library development is undoubtedly tremendous. It has been concerned with information matters since its inception. Under its Constitution, it has been stated that it is the duty of UNESCO to maintain, increase and disseminate knowledge and information by:

- protecting the world’s inheritance of books;
- encouraging the exchange of information materials;
initiating international co-operative efforts to give the people of all countries access to the publications produced by any one of them.

It is prime importance to strengthen the capacity of member states to exchange, store and use information in support of their economic and social development. It is also necessary to reduce disparities among countries in the field of information, facilitate access to it by all and remove obstacles to its dissemination. Keeping in view this fact, the General Information programme (PGI) was established in 1976 to provide a focus for UNESCO's activities in specialized information, documentation, libraries and archives. The PGI is an intergovernmental programme grouping the activities of the organization which promote the utilization, organization and dissemination of specialized information in member states for economic and social development, especially in the developing countries. Under the PGI, UNESCO through its UNISIST programme, aims to facilitate the elaboration of information polices and plans to modernize libraries and archives services; to encourage standardization; to train information specialists; and to establish specialized information networks. The objectives of the programme are accomplished by improving access to scientific literature; the holding of national seminars on information policies; the furthering of pilot projects, and preservation and conservation efforts under the Records and Archive Management Programme (RAMP); the training of users of library and information services; and the implementation of activities relating to the re-establishment of the library in Alexandria at Egypt.

UNESCO's Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (IIP) was set up to reinforce the promotion of international co-operation and to
increase resources for collaborative efforts in informatics. Since 1988, IIP has launched numerous projects in informatics, providing multilateral and bilateral support for national and regional efforts. The projects, which underline the priorities established for IIP, concentrate in areas which include the development of human resources in informatics and provision of infrastructure, as well as the establishment of regional networks in informatics.

5.14 The Indian National Commission (INC) for UNESCO

In India as in most other countries, the two main pillars for interaction with UNESCO are the Indian National Commission for UNESCO (INC) functioning from the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Permanent Delegation of India (PDI) to UNESCO in Paris.

The Government of India in compliance with Article VII of the UNESCO Constitution set up the Indian National Commission (INC) in 1949 which was later placed on a permanent footing in 1951. The Commission consists of five Sub-Commission namely (i) Education; (ii) Natural Sciences; (iii) Social Sciences; (iv) Culture; and (v) Communication. The Commission advises the Government of India on all matters relating to UNESCO.

The Indian National Commission for UNESCO functions with the Minister of Human Resources Development as President and Education Secretary as the Secretary-General. The Commission acts as an advisory, coordinating and liaison agency at the national level in respect of all matters within the competence of UNESCO. It also collaborates with the National Commissions of the Asia-Pacific region.
and with UNESCO's Regional Offices. It performs executive functions like: operation of UNESCO Coupon Programme, Public Information activities, coordination of UNESCO Clubs movement and UNESCO Associated School projects in the country, Publication of Hindi and Tamil Editions of UNESCO's monthly magazine, courier, nomination of experts to participate in National/Regional and international meetings and conferences, convened by or held under the auspices of UNESCO, identification and recommendation of candidates for various vacancies notified by UNESCO, handling of contracts offered by UNESCO to experts in India for writing articles or undertaking special studies and administration of funds allocated under the Participation Programme of UNESCO.

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