
INTRODUCTION

At its 31st session, the General Conference of UNESCO approved the Medium-Term Strategy for the period 2002-2007 (31 C/4) which sets out the main strategic thrusts for UNESCO's action for the next six years, as well as the Programme and Budget for 2002-2003 (31 C/5) which corresponds to its first implementation phase.

Built around a single unifying theme, *Contributing to peace and human development in an era of globalization through education, the sciences, culture and communication*, the Medium-Term Strategy defines a limited number of strategic objectives – a total of 12 for the entire Organization and three for each of UNESCO's four main domains. These strategic objectives are complemented by two cross-cutting themes: the *Eradication of poverty, especially extreme poverty*, and the *Contribution of information and communication technologies to education, science and culture, and the construction of knowledge societies*. These cross-cutting themes are intrinsic to all programmes, and strive to create an environment that will foster intersectorality in UNESCO's action, both at Headquarters and in the Field.

In May 2002, UNESCO distributed a questionnaire (see Annex I) to solicit comments and proposals from Member States, Associate Members, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the priorities and issues that should guide the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2004-2005 (32 C/5) during the second phase of implementation of the Medium-Term Strategy.

This document represents the response of Canada to the questionnaire. It reflects the views of federal and provincial governments and non-governmental members of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, and of other experts in the fields of education, the natural, social and human sciences, culture, communication and information. The consultation was co-ordinated, and this document prepared, by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, and submitted to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade for consideration and submission to UNESCO.

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO would like to extend its sincere thanks to the members of the Commission, representatives of government departments, professional associations, non-governmental organizations and individuals who contributed to the consultation for preparation of this document. Without their knowledge, expertise and insight, we would not have been able to present this comprehensive, and uniquely Canadian, perspective on the role and future activities of UNESCO.