

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

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Background paper on Unesco's
Second Medium-Term PlanRETURN TO DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARY
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It is useful to see the present consultation by the Director-General on the preparation of Unesco's Second Medium-Term Plan in the broader context of the planning and programming process in the Organization.

Unesco's programme is planned on a biennial basis with the General Conference at each of its biennial sessions approving the programme and budget (the C/5 series of documents) for the next two years. In general there has been a great deal of continuity in Unesco's programme with some activities having been pursued for more than two decades. From the early years the General Conference showed an interest in the future programme of the Organization, beyond the next two years, and began to adopt resolutions with the intent of influencing the substance and direction of the biennial programme and budget that would be submitted at its next session two years hence. When, in the early sixties, it became apparent that some longer term planning framework was needed, the General Conference requested the Director-General to propose such a framework for its consideration. These longer term planning documents (the C/4 series) eventually evolved into the Medium-Term Plan, the first of which was approved in 1976 in Nairobi for 1977-1982 (19C/4), now extended to 1983. The first Plan was still seen as experimental, flexible and open to modification at each session of the General Conference during its period. Some modifications were introduced at the 20th session of the General Conference in 1978 (20C/4), but at the 21st session in 1980, attention was already focused on the preparation of the second Medium-Term Plan.

The purposes that the Medium-Term Plan is expected to serve in the Organization have been articulated by the General Conference and the Director-General:

- 1) To provide a conceptual link between the general purposes of Unesco as defined in its Constitution and its programme;
- 2) To provide to the General Conference a more effective way of influencing the future directions of Unesco's programme;
- 3) To provide greater concentration and coherence to the programme of the Organization as a whole;
- 4) To facilitate and achieve greater interdisciplinarity and integration across the various sectors in the programme of the Organization;