



**General Conference**  
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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

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Item 6.4 of the provisional agenda

**INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF UNESCO**

**OUTLINE**

**Source:** Decision 182 EX/24.

**Background:** By Decision 182 EX/24, the Executive Board recommended that the General Conference at its 35th session decide on an independent external evaluation of UNESCO.

**Purpose:** The document informs the General Conference of the proposed purpose, scope and process of the independent external evaluation of UNESCO. The Director-General requests the General Conference to approve an independent external evaluation in accordance with the terms set out in this document.

**Decision required:** Paragraph 14.



## INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Board, at its 181st session, invited the Director-General to present at the 182nd session possible preliminary scenarios, including the financial implications, for a comprehensive external evaluation of UNESCO (181 EX/Decision 19, para. 6). Such an evaluation would be:

- strategically focused and high-level;
- forward-looking; and
- conducted by independent, external evaluators.

2. These scenarios were presented to the Executive Board (182 EX/24 Part II) which, after discussion, recommended to the 35th session of the General Conference (182 EX/Decision 24) the following:

The General Conference,

Recalling 181 EX/Decision 19,

Having examined Part II of document 182 EX/24,

Considering that since the time UNESCO was established, the world has changed fundamentally, leading to new challenges in the fields of education, science, culture and communication,

Considering that many individual parts of UNESCO have been evaluated, but that the functioning of UNESCO as a whole has so far not been the subject of a comprehensive evaluation,

1. Recommends to the General Conference at its 35th session:

- (a) to decide on an external and independent evaluation of UNESCO of a comprehensive, strategic and forward-looking character;
- (b) to decide that the terms of reference will focus on *inter alia*:
  - (i) the international challenges within the mandate of UNESCO;
  - (ii) the impact of UNESCO in addressing these challenges;
  - (iii) the role of UNESCO within the United Nations system and in relation to other international organizations;
  - (iv) the division of competences between the governing bodies and the Secretariat;
  - (v) the contribution of civil society and the business community;
  - (vi) the coherence between the sectors of the Secretariat;
- (c) to request the Director-General to entrust IOS with initiating this evaluation and to keep Member States informed as appropriate;
- (d) to allocate the appropriate resources for this evaluation from the regular budget, to be supplemented by voluntary contributions from Member States.

## PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

3. The purpose of the external evaluation of UNESCO will be to provide timely recommendations to the governing bodies and the Director-General for their review and action in order to position the Organization in meeting future needs and challenges. The evaluation will take into account the cumulative changes and reforms of the recent past, prospective issues and relevant trends.

4. As a forward-looking exercise, the evaluation should identify the key lessons learned that can be applied to identify the Organization's future strategic direction and to improve the performance of its programmes.

## SCOPE

5. The Executive Board has agreed that the evaluation should be strategically focused, high-level and forward-looking. The evaluation will focus primarily on the current and future opportunities and challenges within the Organization's core programmatic areas of competence as represented by the five major programmes.

6. The evaluation will answer the following overarching question:

*“How should UNESCO position itself to address the challenges of the twenty-first century and make the most of prospective opportunities?”*

7. In line with the recommendations made by the Executive Board (182 EX/Decision 24) to the General Conference at its 35th session, the evaluation will focus on the following areas:

- Strategic positioning
  - The international challenges within the mandate of UNESCO.
  - The impact of UNESCO in addressing these challenges.
- UNESCO within the United Nations system
  - The role of UNESCO within the United Nations system and in relation to other international organizations.
- Aspects of governance
  - The division of competences (understood as the respective responsibilities and division of labour) between the governing bodies and the Secretariat.
- Partnerships
  - The contribution of civil society and the business community.
- Internal cooperation/intersectoral approach
  - The coherence between the sectors of the Secretariat.

The preliminary draft evaluation's terms of reference, which have been published on UNESCO's website ([www.unesco.org/ios](http://www.unesco.org/ios)), can be consulted for more details on the evaluation approach and on the evaluation questions, which are provided for illustrative purposes.

## DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

8. The independent external evaluation team will be responsible for delivering the following:
- (a) Inception report – The inception report contains: the evaluation framework, detailed evaluation methodology, work plan and logistical arrangements.
  - (b) First information meeting for Permanent Delegations of Member States – Permanent Delegations of Member States will be informed about the evaluation progress and about any important emerging strategic issues.
  - (c) Second information meeting for Permanent Delegations of Member States – Prior to the preparation of the draft evaluation report the evaluation team leader will provide Permanent Delegations of Member States with information on the preliminary evaluation findings.
  - (d) Evaluation report – The evaluation report will be presented at the 185th session of the Executive Board in the autumn of 2010.
  - (e) Final evaluation report – The final evaluation report, together with information on proposed actions taken since the 185th session of the Executive Board in response to the evaluation recommendations, will be presented to the General Conference at its 36th session in 2011.

## ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

9. External evaluation team – The evaluation team is responsible for all substantive matters of the evaluation, including conducting the evaluation in accordance with the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), submitting all deliverables on time per the terms of reference, identifying and contracting any additional evaluators or research assistants who possess specialized expertise, informing the Technical Support Group on a regular basis of progress in the conduct of the evaluation and reporting to the Executive Board or to Permanent Delegations in information sessions, as set out above. In view of the strategic component, the evaluation team should include a specialist or international expert on organizational strategy.

10. The external evaluation team will be selected through an open international competition per UNESCO's Procurement Rules and Regulations.<sup>1</sup>

11. Technical Support Group – The main function of the Technical Support Group is to provide, when requested, practical advice on any substantive aspect of the evaluation as well as access to information and stakeholders. The Technical Support Group will also provide comments and feedback on the draft inception report and the draft evaluation report. The Technical Support Group will be comprised of a representative number of UNESCO staff members including each of the five major programmes of UNESCO, UNESCO's Central Services, and may include external experts, if needed.

12. Internal Oversight Service (IOS)/Evaluation Section – The primary function of IOS is to ensure the independence of the evaluation and to ensure the quality of all deliverables through strict adherence to the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). IOS will be responsible for the selection of the external evaluation team, contract management, facilitating the work of the external evaluation team, including contacts within UNESCO and key external partners, and providing access to all necessary documentation. The selection process will strictly follow UNESCO's procurement rules and procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO Intranet. Appendix 10 A. Procurement Guide. 6 April 2007.

## FINANCING OF THE EVALUATION AND THE SPECIAL ACCOUNT

13. To safeguard independence and transparency, a Special Account<sup>2</sup> will be established for the funds to be raised for the evaluation. The account will contain the necessary firewalls ensuring, *inter alia*, that no conditions could be made by donors providing funds. In addition to the voluntary contributions received from external sources, the Secretariat will make available funds from the regular programme. The full terms of reference are provided on the following link: [www.unesco.org/ios](http://www.unesco.org/ios).

## PROPOSED DRAFT RESOLUTION

14. The General Conference may wish to adopt a resolution along the following lines:

The General Conference,

1. Recalling 182 EX/Decision 24,
2. Having examined document 35 C/56,
3. Approves the independent external evaluation of UNESCO in accordance with the terms set out in document 35 C/56;
4. Further requests the Director-General to establish a Special Account and, in doing so, ensure that the appropriate measures to safeguard independence and transparency are in place; and
5. Invites Member States to make voluntary contributions to the Special Account.

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<sup>2</sup> The links below provide more detailed information on the rules and regulations governing Special Accounts:  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001450/145075e.pdf>  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001450/145082e.pdf>  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001450/145081e.pdf>  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001494/149451e.pdf>