



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



***Title: Development of the UNESCO Inclusive Policy Lab – a global space for inclusive policy analysis and policy innovation***

<b>Geographical scope/benefitting country(ies):</b>	Global coverage with regional and sub-regional dynamics
<b>Duration (in months):</b>	36 months
<b>Name and Unit of project Officer:</b>	Iulia Sevciuc, SHS/Research, Policy and Foresight Unit
<b>Partner(s) institutions:</b>	UNRISD, UNU, UNDP, UNICEF (TBC)
<b>Total estimated budget inclusive of Programme Support costs</b>	1,069,000 USD <sup>1</sup> (project component 1 - 344,000 USD; project component 2 - 500,000 USD; project component 3 - 225,000 USD)

***Rationale and background***

Fluid environment and rapidly changing issues of the today’s world require fast, efficient and evidence-based policy making. Dictated by an inter-linked and wicked (i.e., resistant to clear, tested and agreed solutions) character of the current policy problems is also the growing need for systemic approaches and a higher degree of policy innovation at all levels.

To fulfil these functions, decision makers and policy practitioners require timely (many argue real-time) and high quality data, analysis and policy advice. Often available, however, especially in places where local and public sector’s data production and research capacity is reduced, are policy advice and supporting data that do not match such criteria. Limitations in this area has long been at the core of the debates about the timeliness of such support services and the need for critical assessment of the data and research provided to governments.

The supplied data and advice should also be actionable and allow for rapid absorption and utilization in policy making and planning processes. Such a demand remains, however, often unmet by traditional, in many jurisdictions outdated and/or poorly fit to tackle the current policy issues, knowledge production and supply mechanisms.

An additional issue faced by the decision makers and policy communities at various levels is the availability of sporadic examples of policies and practices that have or have not worked in the past in other jurisdictions rather than of a comprehensive and complex view that would analyse and reveal entire global, regional, sub-regional or national policy trends. The provided analysis also tends to focus on past issues rather than on emerging and forward looking ones revealing a poor fit between long-term/futures oriented policy making and foresight.

A number of development initiatives, many of which are designed as mere repositories, supply policy makers with much needed quantitative/statistical data. A gap is, however, being noticed in

<sup>1</sup> The current project proposal and the associated budget are modular and sequential. Depending on the interests of the potential donor(s), each project module/component (see Activities and Outputs sub-section) can be funded separately and open to a certain degree of customization.

terms of equipping these communities with analytical and actionable information, including but not limited to: (i) models of existing inclusive policy and regulatory frameworks; (ii) qualitative, timely and complex analysis of current inclusive policy realities and trends; (iii) anticipatory enquiries into emerging inclusive policy issues and futures oriented policy analysis; and (iv) innovatory and timely advice in the growing area of inclusive policy design and planning. The project detailed in the current document is designed to meet the afore-mentioned needs and fill these gaps.

Such work will be in full alignment with the current international deliberations and discussions on the post-2015 development agenda throughout which strong and repeated calls are being launched to base the new development framework on the pillars of inclusion and equality, and to stronger intervene at the policy level in view of increasing inclusiveness and coherence of policies at global, regional, sub-regional and national level.<sup>2</sup>

## ***Rationale for UNESCO involvement***

The main objective of UNESCO in this area is to support its Member States in their efforts to create more inclusive, just and equitable societies. Through its flagship Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme, UNESCO is assisting its Member States in improving quality of social policy making by encouraging evidence-based approaches and by building a sustained research-policy interface.

The MOST Programme is strongly positioned to develop and undertake a project that fills the niches identified in the above Background and Rationale section. Amongst other factors, such a position is informed by the Programme's unique mandate in social sciences and policy making within the United Nations system, its programmatic track record and technical expertise in the project areas, and its established and strong networks of policy makers and social science actors.

The current project falls squarely under the UNESCO 37 C/5 – a quadriennial programmatic and biennial budget document – Major Programme III on Social and Human Science and its Main Line of Action 1 concerned with contributing to inclusive social transformations, especially through the promotion of research and evidence-based policy making.

## ***Overall Goal/Objective***

The intervention is designed to inform government policy, stimulate public debate, and support formulation of inclusive and evidence-based policies (i.e., sectoral policies that advance social inclusion and social justice objectives, and contribute to the upcoming SDGs concerned with inclusion and equality) at regional, sub-regional and national levels. This development objective will be achieved by:

- (i) Mapping, aggregating and disseminating inclusive policy documents, regulatory frameworks, tested models and practices – an open (inter-disciplinary, inter-sectoral, South-South and triangular) data and policy practice exchange component;
- (ii) Investigating and presenting current inclusive policy realities and trends – a policy analysis component;
- (iii) Analysing and presenting in a policy-friendly manner emerging inclusive policy issues, trends and possible future scenarios – an anticipatory and foresight component;
- (iv) Providing policy practitioners with hands-on advice and backstopping in the area of inclusive policy design and planning – a technical support component.

## ***Main expected results***

**Expected result 1:** Improved inter-disciplinary, inter-sectoral, South-South and triangular sharing of tested models of inclusive policy and concrete practices.

---

<sup>2</sup> See for e.g., [http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP\\_P2015\\_Report.pdf](http://www.un.org/sg/management/pdf/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf); [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Post\\_2015\\_UNTTreport.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Post_2015_UNTTreport.pdf); <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/bitcache/cb02253d47a0f7d4318f41a4d11c330229991089?vid=422422&disposition=inline&op=view>

**Expected result 2:** Enhanced availability and accessibility of high quality and complex analysis of current inclusive policy realities, emerging inclusive policy issues and trends, and possible future scenarios at global, regional, sub-regional and, where applicable, national levels.

**Expected result 3:** Strengthened social data literacy and ability to assess and utilize relevant analysis in inclusive policy design and planning processes amongst targeted policy practitioners.

## ***Activities and outputs/deliverables relating to the achievement of expected results***

For easy of reference and clarity, the multiple products and deliverables of the current project are clustered under the heading of UNESCO Inclusive Policy Lab – a mechanism to be developed and positioned as a global lab and a go-to source of inclusive policy models and policy-relevant analysis with both present and anticipatory dimensions. This Lab will be equally positioned a virtual space for, and an environment conducive to, inclusive policy innovation.

The intervention has three indicative components which intentionally coincide with the functions the Lab is designed to fulfil (i.e., that of a clearinghouse, a policy analysis hub, and a policy innovation and advice space). The principle areas of support within each of these components are elaborated below. Specific output targets and indicative activities for each of the components are detailed in the Results and Resources Framework.<sup>3</sup>

### **Component 1: Inclusive policy clearinghouse**

The primary focus of this component is on improving the availability and accessibility of policy documents, regulatory frameworks, good practices and lessons learned in the areas of social inclusion and social justice. This component will equally foster inter-disciplinary, inter-sectoral, South-South and triangular sharing of tested models of inclusive policy and concrete practices.

This will be delivered through the: (i) development of the complete infrastructure of the Inclusive Policy Lab;<sup>4</sup> (ii) operationalization of the Lab's clearinghouse function; (iii) delineation of the main parameters of inclusive policy to be employed throughout the project; (iv) development of the initial content of the clearinghouse through mapping, analysis, aggregation and presentation in a user-friendly manner of inclusive policy documents, regulatory frameworks, tested models and practices in selected policy areas and jurisdictions; and (v) establishment of strategic communications channels and main project partnerships, including but not limited to networks of global, regional, sub-regional and national contributors, social policy arms of regional bodies, and UN entities running complementary initiatives.

In 2014-2015, the project will focus on two sectoral policies (possibly education and culture)<sup>5</sup> and their linkages with the social inclusion, equality and social justice agendas. It will identify and present inclusive education and culture policies and practices of three countries from each region and, if available, map regional frameworks and/or action plans. At a later stage, the clearinghouse will adopt an interactive approach and will be open to users allowing them, by following a standardized UNESCO-managed process, to feed into the system models from other jurisdictions. The house will also seek to gradually expand its coverage to other sectoral policies within the competence of UNESCO.

In addition to providing the afore-mentioned models, the clearinghouse will allow the users to work with the results by comparing them, tracking evolution over time, and generating customized graphical representations with sectoral and/or geographical focus. It is foreseen that, at a later stage, the project will support simulations that would allow the users to analyse and see how performance in certain policy areas and jurisdictions could be improved through concrete changes in policy conditions and provisions.

---

<sup>3</sup> A detailed Project Document and the associated Results and Resources Framework are available upon request.

<sup>4</sup> For technical and planning purposes, the design of the entire Lab infrastructure is included under this component.

<sup>5</sup> TBC; Such initial sectoral focus is also applicable to the other two project components.

Progress made under this component will be measured against such indicators as the number of inclusive policy documents, regulatory frameworks, tested models and practices gathered under the umbrella of the clearinghouse; the number of users (disaggregated by sex, geographical region, and stakeholder type – i.e., governmental sector, academic and research communities, civil society, mass-media, development community, private sector) benefitting from the facility; and the extent to which the targeted policy practitioners are satisfied with the service and find it conducive to an efficient exchange of practices in the area of inclusive policy design and planning.

## **Component 2: Inclusive policy analysis and foresight hub**

This component is designed to produce and equip targeted policy practitioners with high quality and complex analysis of current policy realities, emerging inclusive policy issues and trends, and possible future scenarios. This work will fall under the second function of the Lab which will take the project beyond the role of a clearinghouse to that of a global go-to and a constantly evolving inclusive policy analysis hub.

Such targets will be achieved through the: (i) operationalization the Lab's policy analysis function and the associated services; (ii) production and provision of regular policy briefs on current inclusive policy realities, including global, regional and sub-regional trends in this area; (iii) production and provision of regular anticipatory analysis of emerging inclusive policy issues and trends, as well as possible future scenarios; (iv) development of the "play with data" part of the hub; (v) building and management of the network of contributors; and (vi) advocacy and support for utilization of the outcomes of the above work in high level discussions and policy debates at all targeted levels.

The emphasis of this component will be on generating and providing analysis that is actionable and suitable for rapid absorption and utilization in inclusive policy making and planning processes. This will apply to both parts of the hub. The first part of the facility will deal with the analysis of current inclusive policy issues and enquiries that examine and reveal entire global, regional, sub-regional or national policy trends. Under its second workstream, the hub will support long-term and futures oriented inclusive policy making through the provision of anticipatory analysis and the strengthening of the overall fit of foresight and policy in this area. Owing to the very nature of this analytical exercise, both of the afore-mentioned parts will also have an inherent comparative policy dimension.

As in the case of the previous project component, contribution to this work of a limited number of highly qualified individual researchers and relevant institutions will be actively sought. Playing the role of thematic and regional/sub-regional/national contributors and experts of the Lab, they will have the possibility of feeding into the hub, by following a standardized and UNESCO-managed process, their input and relevant analytical pieces in the area of inclusive policy. Such cooperation will ensure local relevance of the project and a higher degree of its ownership by actors at the afore-mentioned levels.

In order to measure the above efforts, the project will monitor the number of briefs and analytical products (both on current issues and those with an anticipatory dimension) developed and made available by the policy analysis hub; client feedback (to be sought routinely) on the actionability and policy relevance of the afore-mentioned analytical deliverables; the extent to which the results of this work inform public policy debates, and relevant thematic and/or high level discussions at regional, sub-regional and, where applicable, national levels.

## **Component 3: Inclusive policy innovation and advice space**

This last project component will strengthen the competences of the targeted policy communities in the area of inclusive policy focusing, more specifically, on their social data literacy and ability to assess and utilize relevant analysis in inclusive policy design and planning processes. It will equally stimulate public policy debate and policy innovations in the afore-mentioned area.

The list of main activities under this component comprises: (i) development and provision of an e-training program for policy practitioners working on both in-government and outsourced inclusive

policy design and planning; (ii) provision of the registered practitioners with direct and tailored advice on specific policy issues and scenarios; and (ii) creation and operationalization of e-task forces of policy practitioners (targeting in particular young research and policy makers, and liaising the activity with MOST Summer Schools) on priority policy issues.

The course of action outlined above puts equal emphasis on the innovatory character and timeliness of the provided services. Updated regularly to reflect changing realities and emerging issues, the e-training is envisaged to comprise, amongst others, modules on accessing, critically assessing, and utilizing social science research and data in the design of policies and practices that advance social inclusion and address inequalities; participatory approaches to policy making; and employment of foresight and anticipatory analysis in the above processes. Under its online policy support part (Activity ii), the hub will provide selected users with the opportunity of posing a concrete inclusive policy question to the Lab's experts and receiving timely and tailored advice that would be also sensitive to their specific policy setup. The third and last activity will be geared towards stimulating public policy debate and inclusive policy innovations through the creation and management of called e-task forces of policy practitioners. Such e-teams will be tasked with discussing, debating and proposing innovative solutions and options to priority policy issues put into discussion. Participation in the e-task forces of young research and policy makers will be actively sought.

Progress made under this component will be measured against indicators such as the number (disaggregated by sex, geographical region and stakeholder type) of policy practitioners benefiting from e-training, online policy support service and e-task forces; the level of client satisfaction with the provided services; and the breadth and depth of participation of policy practitioners, particularly of youth, in the work of the hub.

## ***Beneficiaries and stakeholders***

This project is developed for the direct benefit of policy practitioners working on both in-government and outsourced inclusive policy analysis and planning at global, regional, sub-regional and, where applicable, national levels. This larger group is formed of:

- (i) Government decision and policy makers from relevant line ministries and subordinate agencies;
- (ii) Non-governmental policy practitioners working in the area of inclusive policy;
- (iii) Research institutions, social science communities, and other relevant research and data producers;
- (iv) Rights-holder groups, including representatives of most exclusion prone and vulnerable segments of the population.

In light of the existence of complimentary initiatives designed and implemented by other institutions, the project will initiate a consultative and partnership building process with the relevant parties (e.g., UNRISD, UNU, United Nations' Global Pulse, World Bank's Open Data, UNICEF's DevInfo). Such a process will ensure further complementarity of efforts, avoidance of duplication, and diversity of views, expertise and advice provided for the design and implementation of the project.

A key concern of the intervention will be to build partnership with social policy arms of the relevant regional bodies (e.g., AU, ASEAN, CARICOM) which will have the primary role of ensuring a regional and sub-regional relevance and dynamic of the project. Close partnerships with a wide range of national policy stakeholders (including but not limited to government line ministries and agencies, research community, private sector and affiliated foundations, formal and informal CSOs, academia, mass media, UNESCO longstanding partners and affiliated institutions, MOST National Committees, development community etc) will also be pursued in each beneficiary jurisdiction. Participation in the project of a limited number of highly qualified individual researchers and relevant institutions will be actively sought. Playing the role of thematic and regional/sub-regional/national contributors and experts of the Lab, they will have the possibility of feeding into the hub, by following a standardized and UNESCO-managed process, their input and relevant analytical pieces in the area of inclusive policy.

## ***Implementation strategy***

Throughout the entire circle, the project will be guided by two core and complementary approaches to designing and managing development interventions, namely human rights-based approach to programming and gender sensitive analysis applied to policy making.

The integration of human rights into the broad range of the UN's activities is at the heart of the ongoing efforts of the UN Secretary-General for the Reform of the Organization. UN specialized agencies, programs and bodies, responding to the call of the Secretary-General, have repeatedly manifested their commitment to the mainstreaming of human rights in their work and have agreed upon a common understanding concerning the content of a human rights-based approach to programming. This approach is to be closely followed in the context of this project.

Policy analysis and formulation are the jumping-off points for the entire spectrum of services provided to citizens by both public and non-governmental actors, yet these processes often overlook women's specific needs and priorities. By conducting gender sensitive policy analyses and by involving women groups at all stages, this intervention will ensure that gender equality is a stated component and objective of all relevant project deliverables.

In addition, the project will put an increased emphasis on a balanced geographical focus and distribution of its deliverables, involvement of institutions, networks and individual contributors from all targeted regions (with a special emphasis on Africa), and alignment with development priorities (as articulated in UNDAFs/UNPDFs, NDPs, PRSPs) of the beneficiary jurisdictions.

## ***Sustainability and exit strategy***

The Lab is designed to as a part of the MOST Programme that would serve as an outlet for the work of MOST in the areas of building research-policy-society nexus and contributing to inclusive social transformations. The initial investment by UNESCO and, if applicable, the immediate project partners will be regarded as seed investment into the initial project infrastructure that is to later attract external funding and support.

Throughout the design and implementation of the current project, considerable efforts will be invested into gradually creating regional, sub-regional and national dynamics that would allow actors at all levels to feed (with low or no-cost) in the long-run relevant content into the Lab. The facility will be also open to users allowing them, by following a standardized and UNESCO-managed process, to feed into the system examples of policy and regulatory framework from various jurisdictions (Component 1) and contribute to the policy analysis and innovation (Components 2 and 3). Such cooperation will ensure local relevance of the project and a higher degree of its ownership by actors at the afore-mentioned levels.