



PROGRAMME FOR 2023 - 2024



ORGANISATION
OF SOUTHERN
COOPERATION

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GLOBAL CONTEXT AND GENERAL BACKGROUND



GLOBAL CONTEXT AND GENERAL BACKGROUND

The Covid-19 Pandemic

In a rapidly evolving and complexifying international context, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic merely exhibited the multidimensional and interrelated facets of an underlying global crisis whose roots are to be found in the current paradigm of development, at the heart of which lies education.

Driving millions of citizens into sanitary, economic, social, and psychological distress, the pandemic not only revealed the vulnerabilities and subjacent injustices of contemporary societies but more importantly, the structural dysfunction, unpreparedness and inadequacy of our international systems in leveraging effective mechanisms of coordination, collective action, and solidarity to support national efforts to mitigate, contain, and combat the consequences of this unprecedented planetary emergency.

Beyond a health crisis causing over 5 million deaths worldwide at the time of writing, COVID-19 has disrupted livelihoods, shut down small and medium businesses, destabilised economies, interrupted education and reinforced poverty. The global labour income is estimated to have declined by 10.7%, (for a nominal value of US \$3.5 trillion) in the first three quarters of 2020 alone¹, compared with the same period in 2019. Within the first quarter of 2020, over 1.5 billion learners in 191 countries had been affected by school closures². And whilst the World Bank had already projected, in October 2020, that the crisis would push over 150 million people into extreme poverty by 2021, the wealth of billionaires was estimated to have risen to a record high of US \$10.2 trillion³ during the crisis. COVID-19, much like the other crises elucidated below, has exacerbated the gap between the rich and the poor.

Rising Inequalities

Between 1990 to 2015, the share of income going to the richest 1% of the global population, according to the UN's World Social Report 2020, increased in 46 out of 57 countries where reliable

data was available⁴. The same report reveals that the bottom 40% earned less than 25% of the total income in all 92 countries where reliable data was available. Countries in the Global North are

¹ https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_755875/lang--en/index.htm#:~:text=Global%20labour%20income%20is%20estimated,the%20same%20period%20in%202019.&text=This%20is%20an%20increase%20from,or%20140%20million%20FTE%20jobs

² <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

³ <https://www.pwc.ch/en/publications/2020/UBS-PwC-Billionaires-Report-2020.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/01/World-Social-Report-2020-FullReport.pdf>

also experiencing their highest levels of income inequalities.⁵ The UNDP's HDR 2020⁶ estimates 22% of the global population to be multidimensionally poor.⁷ Half of them are under-18 and 84.3% of them live in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

This alarming rise of inequalities has also transmuted itself at the level of sovereign States. According to the Institute of International Finance's Global Debt Monitor, the global debt-to-GDP ratio hit an all-time high of over 331% of GDP (for a nominal value of US \$258 trillion) in Q1 of 2020, being 40 percentage points higher than at the onset of the 2008 financial crisis⁸. The combined annual total debt service of more than 100 low- and middle-income countries in 2020 amounted to US \$130 billion, half of which owed to private creditors⁹. Recurring economic recessions, drops in fiscal revenues, natural disasters or wars, have forced countries to either resort to additional borrowing or default in payments. Creditors' solutions, prioritising debt repayment, have more often than not jeopardised countries' sovereignty and self-assessed priorities for alleviating poverty, addressing inequalities, and investing in their own, endogenous development.

Despite the current context of the COVID-19 cri-

sis, permeated by an economic dimension, measures such as the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) – although a welcome step in the right direction, with a necessary extension through to December 2021 – remain largely insufficient, falling short of the expectations, and needs, of countries of the Global South as a collective. Similarly, the US \$650 billion worth of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) issued by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in August 2021, whilst being an extraordinary and critical measure, does not appropriately address the concerns and needs of the Global South: since the distribution of SDRs is proportional to country quota shares in the IMF, this has meant a mere US \$21 billion to low-income countries, or a meagre 7% of the total issuance for African countries – which does not even cover their 2020 COVID-19 budgets.¹⁰ The stark reality is that current debt burdens are unsustainable and have negative impacts on the development of countries, regardless of temporary suspensions of debt servicing, and that despite the conspicuous perpetuation of injustices through the prevailing structural arrangements, the international financial system seems unable to unmake itself in order to remake itself in a more equitable and sustainable fashion.

4th Industrial Revolution

The 4th industrial revolution, unprecedented in the scope and speed of the transformations it is causing, has been characterised by three, distinctive aspects:

- **Velocity:** contrary to the previous industrial revolutions, this one is evolving at an exponential rather than linear pace. This is the result of the multifaceted, deeply interconnected world we live in and the fact that new technology begets newer and ever more capable technology.
- **Breadth and depth:** It builds on the digital revolution and combines multiple technologies that are leading to unprecedented paradigm shifts in the economy, business, society,

and individually. It is not only changing the “what” and the “how” of doing but also “who” we are.

- **Systems Impact:** It involves the transformation of entire systems, across (and within) countries, companies, industries and society as a whole.¹¹

Smart technologies, virtual and augmented realities, blockchain, the Internet of Things, omnipresent high-speed mobile internet, big data analytics, cloud technology, and Artificial Intelligence have all indeed become part and parcel of our present realities. The use and reliance upon these technologies has been further accelerated by the advent of Covid-19 and the

⁵ <https://www.un.org/en/un75/inequality-bridging-divide>

⁶ <https://hdr.undp.org/en/2020-MPI>

⁷ A new measure of poverty, as experienced through inadequate health, education and standard of living

⁸ https://iif.com/Portals/0/Files/content/Research/Global%20Debt%20Monitor_July2020.pdf

⁹ https://cepr.org/active/publications/policy_insights/viewpi.php?pino=104

¹⁰ <https://blogs.imf.org/2021/08/26/a-shot-in-the-arm-how-special-drawing-rights-can-help-struggling-countries/#:~:text=SDRs%20are%20being%20distributed%20to,of%20GDP%20in%20some%20cases>

¹¹ K. Schwab, The Fourth Industrial Revolution, <https://www.weforum.org/about/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-by-klaus-schwab> (accessed 17 October 2018)

ensuing lockdowns and travel restrictions across the world.

In many respects, these have been a force of good. With uses ranging from medical diagnosis and treatment to mobile financial services for millions of people who did not previously have access to traditional banking services, it has streamlined processes, enabled greater interrelations between peoples and ideas, and opened a whole new range of employment opportunities. The flip side of the coin is also one of numerous anticipated and unforeseen risks: from the automation of jobs to the growth of socio-economic divides, passing by privacy violations, concerns brought forth by the development of deepfakes, and biases caused by bad data and unconscious design prejudices. It has accordingly become fundamental to articulate the necessary regulatory frameworks and ethical

controls to ensure that societies can tap into the extraordinary potential of this revolution, whilst mitigating its far-reaching risks and unintended consequences.

A prerequisite, however, remains to both benefit from the possibilities provided by the 4th industrial revolution and counter its negative consequences. As exemplified by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which 43% of the over 1.5 billion learners affected by school closures did not have internet access at home¹², access to technology and the internet remains uneven, exacerbating socio-economic inequalities even further in a world increasingly dependent on digital platforms. If the necessity to bridge the techno-digital has been widely recognised for at least two decades, an entirely new sense of urgency has emerged with the advent of the pandemic.

Climate crisis

Sea level rise, ocean acidification, increased frequency of extreme weather events, severe temperatures, droughts and floods have made global warming a reality for millions of people across the world. The ongoing trend is expected to make large parts of the Earth uninhabitable. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, quantified climate change related human displacements between 2008 and 2014 to average around 22,5 million per year, 90% of which occurred in the Global South. And whilst the World Health Organization estimates global warming to cause an annual increase of 250'000 deaths between 2030 and 2050¹³, the Food and Agriculture Organization warns of degenerating living conditions caused by crop failures, livestock losses and reduced availability of marine and forest products for the already food insecure farmers, fishers and forest-dependent people¹⁴.

Existing economic growth models, international trade, energy consumption, excessive consumption, and waste production patterns within the context of population growth constitute

the main drivers behind rising anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions¹⁵. From the first to the fourth version, industrial revolutions have beheld true potential for progress but have not and cannot be expected to redress societal injustices and preserve nature's ability to sustain life unless regulated by concerns for planetary justice, solidarity and sustainability.

Entangled in a mire of intricately interlinked challenges, the climate crisis is not amenable to simple technological fixes or a disparate set of individual solutions. It calls for the unravelling of collective assumptions and beliefs about development, growth and prosperity, acknowledging that current societal constructs have reinforced injustices, magnified inequalities and increased human suffering, and replacing them with new understandings for a future of solidarity-based human and eco-conscious progress. And central to such a cognitive and social shift lies the education system, which must itself be repurposed for a more equitable and sustainable future.

¹² <https://en.unesco.org/news/startling-digital-divides-distance-learning-emerge>

¹³ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>

¹⁴ <https://www.fao.org/climatechange/16606-05afe43bd276dae0f7461e8b9003cb79.pdf>

¹⁵ https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/ipcc_wg3_ar5_chapter5.pdf

The Universal Declaration Of Balanced And Inclusive Education (UDBIE)

Every system is shaped by a set of assumptions. Those that shaped the mainstream education system as it exists today belong to a cartesian thinking and worldview rooted in the first industrial revolution, which have produced development models whose aforementioned dire consequences require the acceleration of a paradigm shift in education and, by extension, development. Adopted at the III ForumBIE 2030 – *International Summit on Balanced and Inclusive Education*, held in Djibouti in January 2020, by countries and organisations from across the Global South, the Universal Declaration of Balanced and Inclusive Education (UDBIE) distinguishes itself from existing educational paradigms by precisely striving to transform education systems towards balance and inclusivity.

The UDBIE embodies above all a spirit: that of critical cultural introspection, self-determination, dialogue, cooperation and co-evolution in

a world where all human beings are inescapably connected to each other and all forms of life interdependent. Its standards offer new frameworks for teaching and learning on the basis of the four pillars of balanced and inclusive education: Intraculturalism, Transdisciplinarity, Dialecticism, and Contextuality. With embedded perspectives and values, they directly engage learners with the complexities of life from an early age and naturally unfold new understandings and perspectives for all concerned stakeholders. They call for pedagogical practices that cultivate skills, thinking habits and unconventional learning outcomes which enable learners to enter into dialogue with their individual and collective complexities. To begin to unfold the paradigm shift proposed by the UDBIE, it seems necessary to provide a general, non-exhaustive exploration of these four pillars as they relate to the modern education system.

INTRACULTURALISM

SHIFT IN ASSUMPTIONS

Main Assumptions About Culture In Modern Education	The UDBIE Statement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Culture is a set of understandings, values, assumptions, imaginaries, customs, rituals, practices, traditions, and languages shared by members of a specific community and handed down to subsequent generations. They remain constant and are distinct from each other. Their internal structures, processes and ways of thinking contribute to their progress or decline. ● Modernity as a culture, founded on cartesian, analytical, and rational thinking, is at the core of societal progress. It is by definition progressive and superior to all other cultures, knowledge domains and ways of thinking. The latter are in fact “backward” and “doomed to ebb”. ● Every nation is dependent on the assumptions, values, and norms of modernity for its own progress towards globally designed standards for development. This has led to a standardised national narrative and the imposition of “globally understood” languages for teaching and learning. The ebbing curve of diverse regional and local traditional cultures are per force reinforced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cultures are dynamic and have not traversed time in isolation. Inside and outside nations, people have ceaselessly interacted and mutually nourished each other. These complex interactions between various local, national, regional and international narratives have led to adaptations, new understandings, perspectives, knowledges, interpretive frameworks and practices within each culture. The shared contemporary world is a co-creation of these cultural interactions. ● Every local culture is “part” of the “whole” national cultural narrative and at the same time, has the “whole” narrative of the latter imbedded in it. Similarly, every national culture is “part” of the “whole” global human culture and has the “whole” of human culture imbedded in it. In this intricately woven web of relationships, no culture can claim hegemony over the others and the non-academic knowledge domains of cultures constitute a wealth for humanity. ● <i>Intraculturalism</i> implies that every individual feels a sense of healthy cultural pride – <i>pride</i>, because of a greater understanding of one’s own culture’s contribution to Humanity and <i>healthy</i> because one sees the whole of the contributions of the rest of Humanity imbedded in one’s own culture, in such a manner that both cultural inferiority and superiority complexes are dismantled.

THE UDBIE STANDARDS

- ▶ Create awareness of the multiplicity of global historical, cultural and social narratives
- ▶ Create awareness of cultural inter-indebtedness and interdependence
- ▶ Create awareness of the evolving nature of culture
- ▶ Create awareness of the endogenous and exogenous dimensions of culture
- ▶ Create awareness of the plurality of narratives and customs as integral to national cultures
- ▶ Use mother tongue as a medium for education

EMERGING UNDERSTANDINGS AND PERSPECTIVES

- An understanding of the complexity within and between historical, cultural and social narratives
- An understanding of the interrelationships and interdependencies between diverse cultures
- An understanding of the dynamic nature of culture, continuously shaped and reshaped by an on-going dialogue between individuals of different cultures as well as sub- and countercultures within a same culture
- An understanding of the importance of cultural diversity and difference

THE SKILLSETS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS ENCOURAGED

From the above, flows the need to develop skills that improve the *quality* of these social and cultural rapports

- ✓ **Cultural awareness skills:** Cultural identity and healthy cultural pride; experiencing inter-dependency with the “other”; effective interactions and meaningful relationship building with people of various cultural backgrounds.
- ✓ **Social awareness skills:** knowing how the world as a cultural phenomenon works, understanding the complexity of the “other”, understanding the intertwined historic and social trajectories that have led the oneself and the “other” towards certain practices, presumptions, and thoughts.
- ✓ **Social facility skills:** Using the above-mentioned awareness for harmonious and effective verbal or non-verbal interactions; shaping the outcomes of social interactions; being ‘concerned’ about the others’ needs and acting accordingly.

THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ➔ Better understanding of the intrinsic diversity of cultures and their inter-dependencies
- ➔ Being appreciative, affirmative and inclusive of all cultural backgrounds
- ➔ Ability to understand the complexity of sub- and counter-cultures within one’s own culture and it is dynamic, non-static nature
- ➔ Sensitive listening, empathy and engagement with other peoples for reciprocal learning and mutual benefits
- ➔ Ability to adapt and innovate in social contexts
- ➔ Ability to communicate effectively: think, act and react with versatility
- ➔ Ability to co-exist, co-create and co-own local/ contextual realities

TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

SHIFT IN ASSUMPTIONS

Main Assumptions About Knowledge In Modern Education

- Knowledge is inherently fragmented and best transmitted in permanent disciplines, some of which are more important than others for the progress of each individual and of society. Categorised as academic, non-academic, intellectual, artistic, manual... subjects are positioned on a ladder of hierarchy.
- Following the industrial-age management model, the education system as a whole is organised into compartments, led by specialists. Subject specialists transmit their portion of knowledge in autonomy and complete isolation.
- Knowledge delivered in schools represents the "truth" and true learning takes place in the classroom. In order to be efficient, schools should be separated from all family and community distractions and interferences. Interpretations of knowledge coming from any of these sources are uncertain and hence not to be trusted.

The UDBIE Statement

- Life presents itself as a whole with interdependent facets. The hierarchical and fragmented management theory leading to fragmented disciplinary learning, renders these interdependencies invisible. Far from expanding, it narrows our perspectives and understanding of things.
- A real-life context is not made of a disparate set of individual elements. It is composed of a complex, interacting web of human and non-human forms of life. These ceaseless interactions are what create the realities of contexts. Hence far from being rendered invisible, these 'relationships' need to be understood in order to make sense of one's life, think and act in it.
- Knowledge itself is socially constructed and inherently contains an element of contingency, error, and illusion. Genuine learning occurs in the contexts of learners' daily lives. The long-term impact of any new learning depends on its relationship to the world around them. There is an extraordinary variety in what individuals want to learn and how they learn. There is an extraordinary wealth of learning spaces, tools, resources and expertise in communities.
- Transdisciplinarity implies understanding complex problems and issues in a holistic manner. It does not forsake the study of disciplines but rather seeks to organise their detailed contributions in a way that creates a coherent story to enlighten learners on the problems they have to encounter in their daily lives enabling them to work towards creative and enduring remedies, including through project-based learning directed towards addressing local and social concerns.

THE UDBIE STANDARDS

- ▶ Engage multi-stakeholder, multi-sectorial and transdisciplinary partnerships and collaborations which produce knowledge and engage with the imperatives facing the world
- ▶ Encourage mutual learning in communities which acknowledge, value and amplify their respective knowledge
- ▶ Overcome disciplinary and fragmented teaching and learning by integrating the interaction of academic and non-academic knowledge domains into curricula and assessment and introduce inter and non-disciplinary thematic subjects into curricula
- ▶ Make knowledge and the world external to formal education settings quintessential to the education process and design educational initiatives in collaboration with marginalised communities

EMERGING UNDERSTANDINGS AND PERSPECTIVES - 1

- An understanding that knowledge cannot be reduced to a static, fragmented set of facts, nor be considered as absolute truth. Knowledge is conceived as ever-evolving phenomena, revealed through a wide and ceaselessly changing spectrum of objects, spaces, expressions and forms of life;
- An understanding that making sense of knowledge in real life, involves understanding the context as a whole, from as many perspectives as possible and studying the inter-retroactions between the (human and non-human) elements that compose it;
- An understanding that uncertainties, the unexpected and a constant emergence of new knowledge and experiences are an inherent part of this dynamic nature of real-life contexts.

THE SKILLSETS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS ENCOURAGED- 1

From the above, flows the need to develop skills that *enable a holistic view* of issues in real life contexts and enable learners to dialogue with the complexities therein.

- ✓ **Systems thinking skills:** Seeing “wholes”; changing perspectives for better understanding; seeing interrelationships and dynamic inter-retroactivity; seeing current events as resulting from patterns of change in the con-

text overtime; anticipating oncoming events; appropriating and thinking in terms of feedback or circular causal loops; identifying problem generating causal loops; identifying leverage points; questioning mental models that underlie these causal structures; re-structuring contexts for preferred outcomes and enduring remedies; developing a flexible and divergent mindset to face ambiguities, uncertainties, the unexpected and the unknown.

THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES - 1

- ➔ Ability to contextualise knowledge and engage with it constructively in complex daily life problems
- ➔ Seeking to see the big picture, making meaningful connections between local concerns and global problems and vice-versa
- ➔ Ability to change perspectives in order to accommodate other viewpoints and collaborate for positive change projects for oneself and for communities
- ➔ Ability to identify the circular nature of complex cause and effect relationships
- ➔ Ability to recognise the impact of time delays between cause and effect and anticipate long-term unintended consequences
- ➔ Ability to surface and test assumptions
- ➔ Ability to identify leverage interventions in a problem situation, design short-term and long-term solutions
- ➔ Ability to think and act for a diversity of options and solutions; check results and change actions if needed

EMERGING UNDERSTANDINGS AND PERSPECTIVES - 2

- An understanding that every context belongs to a larger ecosystem and is in an interdependent relationship with it.
- An understanding that our material world is a network of inseparable patterns of

relationships and that the planet as a whole is a living and self-regulating system sustaining life on earth in which human beings and nature inexorably depend on each other for survival

THE SKILLSETS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS ENCOURAGED- 2

From the above, flows the need to *ensure a high quality and conscientious relationship* with nature.

- ✓ **Ecological intelligence skills:** Experiencing Humanity's oneness with the web of life; experi-

encing empathy for all forms of life; appropriating nature's principles for organisation - networking, flexibility, diversity, feedback loops, recycling, cooperating and co-evolving

THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES - 2

- ➔ Knowledgeable and conscientious about human and ecosystem interactions;
- ➔ Empathy for life in its various forms and a desire to sustain ecosystems;

DIALECTICISM

SHIFT IN ASSUMPTIONS

Main Assumptions About Learning In Modern Education	The UDBIE Statement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners are blank slates which must be filled or transformed into educated final products by transmitting knowledge and suitable social and cultural norms. • Learning is mainly individualistic. Learning is cognitive and, despite inherent sociocultural and psychological differences, learners can or should all learn in the same way. Competition accelerates learning and helps climb the social ladder. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each learner, far from being a blank slate, is unique and carries multiple identities, dreams, desires, motivations, experiences, interiorities and imaginaries; is engaged with knowledge inside and outside schools and is in a continuous dialogue with their own circumstances, peers, family, and communities. • Human development involves both cognitive and social processes. • Standardised curricula and testing have produced feelings of innate failings amongst generations of learners, wherein the latter end up believing they are deficient or do not have what they need to succeed in life. • Dialecticism implies discarding this narrow, restrictive, conforming and 'deficit perspective' of learning in order to proactively understand and engage with one's own complexities; to co-author one's own education and life in dialogue with one's surroundings. • It also implies collaborating with peers for a symbiotic co-evolution. This involves engaging in reciprocal exchanges with educators seen as 'equals'; exchanging with peers, questioning established ideas and social norms; and co-creating desired futures for a harmonious co-evolution within communities.

THE UDBIE STANDARDS

- ▶ Educators are mediators and facilitators who foster an education process
- ▶ Learners are encouraged to become co-creators of their own education, engaging with and producing knowledge in dialogue and critical exchange with peers and educators
- ▶ Learners are grounded in interactive dialogue, thoughtful introspection, critical exchange and collective reflection for personal development
- ▶ Learners, individually and collectively, are empowered to construct their world views and question existing societal norms
- ▶ Learners are provided with safe educational spaces to meet with educators and community members to discuss, critique, and exchange diverse views about the world
- ▶ Local community concerns and issues are embedded in and made integral to the educational process

EMERGING UNDERSTANDINGS AND PERSPECTIVES

- An understanding of the incessant need to explore and be aware of 'self' in order to co-create one's own education and future
- Awareness of how one's "mental models" drive one's perceptions of problems, actions and decisions
- An understanding of the importance of emotions in the design of these mental models
- An understanding that mental models affect current reality and the future
- Awareness of mental models underlying existing societal norms
- Awareness of the potentials and risks of collective thinking for co-creating solutions to problems and designing desired futures

THE SKILLSETS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS ENCOURAGED

From the above, flows the need to encourage learners *to understand themselves, understand others and learn to co-create futures* for one's own personal well-being and the collective welfare.

- ✓ **Reasoning and Emotional intelligence skills:** critical understanding of oneself; self-regulation; self-motivation; awareness and understanding of others; empathy and social skills; critical and free thinking

THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES - 1

- ➔ Learner is self-aware, grows in confidence, and able to evaluate themselves critically
 - ➔ Learner is able to manage emotions and face challenges with equanimity
 - ➔ Learner is conscientious, adaptable, and committed
 - ➔ Learner can identify, locate, critically evaluate, and effectively use information to advance their own learning
-
- ✓ **Collective intelligence skills:** Changing perspectives for alternative views of problems; questioning one's own mental models and preconceived notions; reviewing and adjusting one's positions in order to accommodate others' viewpoints; co-creating solutions; communicating effectively and non-violently

THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES - 2

- ➔ Ability to contribute creatively to group discussions and projects
- ➔ Ability to communicate effectively, build bonds, collaborate, cooperate
- ➔ Ability to welcome other viewpoints, to leverage diversity and co-design solutions



CONTEXTUALITY

SHIFT IN ASSUMPTIONS

Main Assumptions About Learning In Modern Education	The UDBIE Statement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common and legitimated body of knowledge along with standardised practices are determined as needed to prepare learners to understand and, upon completion of schooling, constructively participate in society. An age-wise content and expected standards are defined, thus setting up a framework giving all students an equal opportunity for success and the system a better potential for monitoring and evaluating them. • In addition to ensuring uniformity and standardisation, the framework is secured by isolating schools from their own socio-economic and cultural contexts and students from their real-life settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-emphasising standardised curricula transmission prevents learners during the entire period of schooling, from self-reflecting on their own motivations, desires and potential for leading meaningful lives, and will alienate them from their own education and lives. • Schools have to be in constant dialogue with their own socio-economic and cultural contexts. Their persisting self-isolation deprives them of the benefits of their own dynamic and vibrant learning environments and disorients, if not uproots learners from their real-life contexts. • Contextuality implies that schools be imbedded in and connected with their own learning environments; that curricula frameworks incorporate the required flexibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodate local knowledge and experiences • Enable learners to understand the links between local conditions and global realities • Keep pace with rapidly changing knowledge; • Enable young learners to understand, experience and express their individuality.

THE UDBIE STANDARDS

- ▶ Encourage open educational institutions to develop solutions adapted to local realities, concerns, and challenges.
- ▶ Structurally embed cooperation with local communities, institutions and civil society organisations
- ▶ Adapt education to learners' socio-cultural contexts as a basis for their co-ownership
- ▶ Adapt education to interpretative frameworks and individuality of learners
- ▶ Regularly update curricula and make it more flexible, adapted to real needs and relevant to real life
- ▶ Tailor and adapt education to local and individual contexts through local participation and interaction.

EMERGING UNDERSTANDINGS AND PERSPECTIVES

- An appropriation of a wide range of learning spaces, mentors and resources, allowing for the pursuit of individual learning aspirations
- A greater understanding of one's own, local, and national context
- A direct engagement with an ever-evolving body of knowledge, learning contexts and environments

THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- ➔ Ability engage with and enact change on one's context
- ➔ Learners and communities more aware, knowledgeable, and reactive to the impacts of social, economic or ecological changes in their environments
- ➔ Ability to co-exist, co-create and co-own local, contextual realities
- ➔ Better understanding of future possibilities and personal development opportunities

A Path Forward: The OSC Programme for 2023-2024

As an international organisation founded with the purpose of contributing to “the equitable, just, and prosperous social transformation of societies by promoting balanced and inclusive education, in order to attain the fundamental rights to liberty, justice, dignity, sustainability, social cohesion, and material and immaterial security for the peoples of the world¹⁶, the OSC’s Programme has been designed in such a manner as to provide innovative proposals within the context of the OSC’s mandate and which includes assisting Member States in achieving

the educational transformation envisaged by the Universal Declaration of Balanced and Inclusive Education (UDBIE), and addressing the pressing needs of Member States in a rapidly evolving and challenging international environment. As such, the Programme for 2023 -2024 accounts for the essential short-term priorities of Member States as well as the investments which must be made for the medium to long term in order to achieve their collective and respective aspirations, within the bounds of the Organisation’s first biennium.



¹⁶ Article I.1, Constitutive Charter of the Organisation of Southern Cooperation (OSC)

The background is a solid blue color with various abstract geometric patterns. There are large, overlapping circles and squares in different shades of blue. A grid of small dots is visible on the left side, and a cluster of circles is in the bottom right corner.

PROGRAMME PROPOSAL FOR 2023 - 2024



PROGRAMME PROPOSAL FOR 2023 - 2024

Transversal Axes

The Organisation of Southern Cooperation (OSC) is permeated in its entirety by a systemic vision, and a consistent approach, with profound implications for programmatic design and implementation models. This systemic understanding of its mandate also underpins its management model for the provision of technical assistance and the delivery of its programmatic agenda.

The successful delivery of the Programme must, therefore, be measured against its mandated aspiration to impactfully contribute to the transformation of education and, by extension, development. To avoid the dilution of its overall impact and the corresponding failure to reach its expected results due to a lack of coherence of the programmatic agenda when taken as a whole, the Programme – designed with the aforementioned

systemic vision – is conceived through mutually-reinforcing lines of action, rather than as disconnected projects.

As such, in accordance with this systemic approach and in order to preserve the coherence and tangible impact of the programmatic agenda, the concerns for gender equality, minority rights, and collective self-reliance – which pervade the Universal Declaration of Balanced and Inclusive Education (UDBIE) and the OSC Constitutive Charter – do not figure as specific lines of action. They are instead considered as transversal axes that permeate the entirety of the Programme, in order to ensure that the issues of gender equality, minority rights, and collective self-reliance are embedded in each line of action and integrated in their implementation.

GENDER EQUALITY

Notwithstanding the wide recognition of the fundamental requisite of gender equality for a more just, prosperous, and inclusive society, and decades of efforts towards that goal, deeply rooted socio-cultural norms, attitudes, behaviours, practices, and power imbalances continue to disadvantage women and girls, both in the Global North and the Global South. Throughout its organisational policies and programmes transversally, the OSC will address, from an intersectional angle

accounting for the compounding experience of oppression of women and girls, the underlying patterns, mechanisms, and patriarchal structures reproduced through curricula content, classroom practice, research biases, socio-cultural norms, and economic disparities.

MINORITY AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS

Minorities are composed of two sets of people: communities that constitute a numerical minority in a given society, or in the world, and communities who, despite forming a substantial part of the population, are minoritised through discrimination, marginalisation, and exclusion due to their ethnic, cultural, religious, or other identities. The violation of the human rights of minorities and

indigenous peoples is not only morally unacceptable, but it also negates their valuable contribution to society and to Humanity. The OSC, through its multi-dimensional programme design and inter-rational implementation processes will address minority and indigenous peoples' marginalisation and exclusion through interconnected socio-cultural, educational, civic, and economic angles.

COLLECTIVE SELF-RELIANCE

Building upon resources, capacities and insights of individuals, local communities, and institutions, the OSC will strive to systemically reinforce capacities, autonomy, and resilience at the local and national levels, whilst working with Member States to develop and build collective self-reliance strategies that pool intellectual, technical and financial

resources together, transversally supported by implementation strategies for the OSC Programme ensuring active exchanges, solidarity-based cooperation, regional schemes, and collaborative action amongst Member States at the regional and international levels.



Focus Area I: Systemic Governance and System Enhancement

1. An education system is akin to an organism or an ecosystem, composed of different sub-systems (such as administrative offices, curriculum departments, and schools within a ministry of education), satellite systems (such as non-formal education centres and private schools), direct individual agents (such as teachers and students), and indirect agents (such as other government ministries and international development partners), which are in constant inter-retroactivity. In other words, the respective actions of an education system's sub-systems, satellite systems, and (direct and indirect) agents influence the others and, due to the circular nature of a system, these same sub-systems that have influenced the others are, in turn, influenced back.
2. The performance of an education system is largely characterised by:
 - a. Its vision, goals, and objectives as well as their corresponding implementation plans;
 - b. Its agents: their competencies, their understanding of the manner in which the system operates, and their role within them – including agents of satellite systems that are not fully integrated within the public education system, such as non-formal education programmes, private schools, and tutoring centres;
 - c. The way information, decisions, and feedback circulate amongst the sub-systems and agents, including the procedures and the internal culture pertaining to such a circulation;
 - d. The way inputs are processed, and outputs generated and disseminated – in other words, a system's aperture and porosity to its political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, and demographic contexts.
3. Challenges to reforms of an education system generally arise by the lack of alignment, coherence, and feedback loops between its sub-systems, its agents (both direct and indirect), and its context – in other words, through:
 - a. A lack of clearly identified, understood, and shared vision and goals amongst (direct and indirect) agents;
 - b. A lack of overall coordination with its sub- and satellite systems to ensure coherence within the system when reforms are undertaken in certain areas;
 - c. A lack of compatibility in the capacities of sub-systems – for instance, weaker capacities in teacher training would render the implementation of certain reforms, such as the integration of a competency-based approach within the curriculum and in teacher practice, impossible.
4. A reform should therefore not be understood as a change happening solely in a given sub-system (such as in the classroom, in the curriculum, or in teach training), but rather as a change entailing a transformation in the manner in which the education system as a whole is operating.
5. To avoid well-intentioned reforms from falling short of their objectives, transformative processes – or *Systemic Governance* – must be favoured over pre-set solutions to be implemented on an ad hoc basis. Rather than overloading the education system with additional tasks that are not aligned with the system's internal dynamics, systemic governance identifies and fills gaps in information and competencies, and builds on the strengths of the system, reinforcing it where needed, to ensure coherence in the implementation of reforms.
6. To successfully enact an educational transformation, however, the short-term temporality that is often implied with the concept of "reform" must be substituted by an understanding of educational transformation as a continuous, permanent process of change, with the notable objectives of:
 - a. Building resilience and adaptability in order for the education system to resonate with its context and be able to adjust to changing situations, whether unforeseen

crises in the short-term (such as conflict or public health emergencies), or anticipated crises in the medium- to long-term (such as climate change) and;

- b. Articulating, promoting, and enacting a vision of the future within the education system's social, economic, cultural, and environmental contexts – namely, transitioning from re-activity to pro-activity.

7. Within its first biennium, to reinforce systemic governance and streamline system enhancement in Member States, the OSC will support them in implementing efficient electronic management information systems, on the one hand, and developing a comprehensive, context-sensitive balanced and inclusive education system diagnostic, monitoring, and evaluation tool.

FA 1 - SYSTEMIC GOVERNANCE AND SYSTEM ENHANCEMENT

LoA.1. Support Member States in systemically and contextually monitoring and evaluating their progress towards a more effective and efficient, balanced and inclusive education system

ER.1. Strengthened systemic governance and understanding of the education system's alignment to balanced and inclusive education

KPI.1.1. Percentage of Member States having enrolled into the systemic balanced and inclusive education system diagnostic, monitoring, and evaluation tool	38,5% of Member States
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CP.1.1. Development of a contextually-relevant balanced and inclusive education system diagnostic, monitoring and evaluation tool

Based on the Universal Declaration of Balanced and Inclusive Education (UDBIE), the Global Guide of Ethics, Principles, Policies, and Practices in Balanced and Inclusive Education (ERF, 2018), and contextually relevant elements, develop a system diagnostic, monitoring and evaluation tool through a series of broad consultations articulating quantitative and qualitative criteria, indicators, and methodologies to identify gaps, monitor policy impact, and evaluate progress towards attaining a balanced and inclusive education system. The tool will be conceived with advanced, digital software for data collection, preservation, and analysis, as well as for the modelling of the feedback loops between an education system's subsystems, satellite systems, and (direct and indirect) agents.

LOA.2. Support the implementation and/or enhancement of electronic management information systems

ER.2. Improved, more efficient, and data-driven decision-making and coordination

KPI.2.1. Percentage of Member States having implemented and/or improved electronic management information systems	38,5% of Member States
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CP.2.1. Implementation and/or upgrading of electronic management information systems

Undertake an assessment of existing electronic management information systems (or lack thereof) at the ministerial level and provide policy advice and technical support for the adoption and/or upgrading of software and corresponding procedures.

CP.2.2. Capacity-building in the maintenance and use of electronic management information systems

Develop and provide online and onsite training programmes on the use electronic management information systems and the proper hosting, securing, backing, and authorisation procedures.

Focus Area II: Formal, Technical, and Vocational Education and Training

1. The Universal Declaration of Balanced and Inclusive Education (UDBIE) promotes a transformative, systemic approach to inclusion and quality in education in order to attain social cohesion and justice, and to ensure the socio-cultural relevance of learning and its adequacy to local, national and global priorities as well as the synergising of inter-relations between learners, their schools and the communities to which they belong.
2. A critical component for the transformation of education systems towards balance and inclusivity is the curriculum. As a set of policies, regulations, orientations, and guidelines that govern teaching, learning, and assessment, the curriculum defines the vision of society to be built and of citizens to be edified through the education system.
3. Teaching practice and assessments are equally essential to the vision of the UDBIE, as teachers interpret, create, and recreate the curriculum as the praxis of its delivery to enable learners to acquire and develop the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes, and lead meaningful and productive lives, which requires assessment models that adequately reflect the fundamental shift in the education system's orientation.
4. Such efforts include fully engaging and preparing teachers, because their instructional decisions and capabilities are crucial to student learning, as well as local communities that must co-own schools so that they become pro-active actors of their own development and which belong to them. It is therefore a complex and dynamic process, that could be qualified as curriculum alignment, which involves a range of actors and factors: curriculum developers, textbooks and learning material developers, teacher-training programmes and trainers, inspectors, heads of schools, teaching practice, and assessment models.
5. In practice, unless curriculum alignment has been sought purposefully, it is unlikely that the existing gaps between what is described in the written curriculum, what is actually taught, and what is assessed will be bridged. Identifying curriculum alignment gaps to lessen or close them becomes an indisputable path to an improvement in learning outcomes.
6. This process is of equal relevance to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) as an integral part of the education system as whole. Involving the same range of actors, TVET nonetheless faces the further challenge of being socially perceived as a lesser path of learning and one which should be avoided unless no other opportunities present themselves.
7. This additional layer of complexity requires a supplementary two-pronged approach:
 - a. Increased employability and professional relevance – unless TVET results on better employment opportunities, the case for its expansion would be self-defeating. It is fundamental for TVET qualification frameworks to be not only developed with prospective employers, but also in line with the sustainable economic development orientations of the country as a whole, in order to ensure that TVET both responds to immediate market needs and to the pro-active shaping of such markets in the interest of collective development.
 - b. Pedagogical and participatory communication – the resistance to TVET finds its roots in the sociocultural sphere. It is fundamental, therefore, for communication strategies to be developed with an understanding that they constitute a pedagogical process that must be, in order to remain consistent with the spirit of balanced and inclusive education, participatory in nature by listening and responding to community concerns. As such, the case for TVET cannot merely be economic – it must also be one shaped by community and national aspirations and demonstrably act, in consequence,

as a lever for a participatory development that is understood as a collective effort requiring skillsets and competencies to be gained through TVET, so that it is no longer considered to be the path of the education system's outcasts but, rather, a conscious individual choice to serve one's own, personal development as well as a particular vision of society's future.

3. Within its first biennium, to support Member States in achieving balanced and inclusive education for all, the OSC will, on the one hand, establish an institute at its headquarters to train Member States' curricula developers, master trainers, and assessment designers in balanced and inclusive education; and, on the other hand, work with Member States to develop multi-stakeholder strategies to raise the social value of TVET and ensure its uptake as a lever of personal, local, and national development.

FA 2 - FORMAL, TECHNICAL, AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

LOA.3. Accelerate the implementation of balanced and inclusive education

ER.3. Strengthened national capacities in balanced and inclusive education

KPI.3.1. Percentage of Member States whose experts have taken part in balanced and inclusive education training	100% of Member States
KPI.3.2. Number of ministry officials trained in balanced and inclusive education	81

CP.3.1. Establishment of the OSC Institute

Establish an OSC Institute organising intensive 2-month trainings covering, in the first biennium, curricula, teacher training, and assessment models for ministry officials, designers, and master trainers. The OSC Institute will cover the accommodation, per-diem, and training material costs of participants for the duration of the trainings.

LOA.4. Support the development of innovative strategies to enhance technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

ER.4 Improved social perception and uptake of TVET

KPI.4.1. Percentage of Member States having developed and/or implemented new strategies and initiatives for the enhancement of the social perception of TVET and its quantitative and qualitative uptake	38,5% of Member States
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CP.4.1. Design and implementation of strategies to improve the social perception and uptake of TVET

Provide policy and technical support to Member States in the development of strategies to overcome entrenched social perceptions and values attached to TVET and ensure its quantitative and qualitative uptake through multi-sectoral consultations for relevant TVET qualification frameworks.

Focus Area III: Higher Education and Transdisciplinary Research

1. The role of higher education and research institutions in sustainable human, social, and economic development cannot be understated. Despite fundamental shifts undergone by societies, they remain indispensable to the transmission, production, and dissemination of knowledge in addition to the building of institutional, professional, and technical capacities.
2. Long perceived as neutral institutions acting as the custodians and transmitters of knowledge, higher education and research institutions are nonetheless subject to, and in many respects reflect and reproduce, the shortcomings and inequalities of society. From the socioeconomic and urban-rural divides in terms of access to higher education, to the urgent need for alternative solutions to the deep crises of dominant models of knowledge production, of socio-economic development, and of relations between human beings and nature, a critical global debate is ongoing across societies and within academia itself.
3. To leverage the potential of higher education and research institutions as effective catalysts of development, it is therefore fundamental to address the barriers hindering access to knowledge as well as its nature and relevance. Consequently, Article X of the Universal Declaration of Balanced and Inclusive Education (UDBIE) advocates for an opening of (higher) educational institutions to align “their processes to development of solutions to local concerns and challenges” as well as embedding “cooperation with local communities, institutions, and civil society organisations in the formal and informal structures of [these] institutions”. Its further emphasis on the importance of transdisciplinarity, the integration of academic and non-academic knowledge domains, and multi-sectorial approaches also encourages the transformation of the paradigms currently dominating higher education and research.
4. As such, the present and emerging crises of the world, which in fact signal crises in the epistemologies of knowledge, provide countries of the Global South with a unique opportunity to revisit their endogenous philosophies, knowledges, know-how, and practices in view of building alternative epistemologies and interpretive frameworks resulting on new understandings of modernity.
5. The democratisation of higher education and research must hence centre around:
 - a. Access – strategies and policies to ensure the quantitative and qualitative expansion of higher education to reach communities, both in rural and in economically marginalised areas, that have so far been excluded, as well as the provision to researchers of the means necessary to engage with and contribute to the global scholarly record and the latest publications;
 - b. Nature – knowledge being itself a social construct, the integration of endogenous ideas, perspectives, and experiences through proper criteria and methodologies is central to knowledge democratisation as a form of positive appropriation;
 - c. Capacities – condition sine qua non to ensure access and the re-framing of knowledge are the corresponding national capacities in terms of skills and expertise, as well as the existence of the adequate infrastructure, technologies, and conditions to both conduct research and disseminate knowledge.
6. The relationship between higher education, research, and the formal (primary and secondary) education system is inextricable, as it is through this triumvirate that educational theories that inform reform are also generated. Research in the Global South has in many respects remained underdeveloped, underrepresented in the international discourse (and therefore unable to shape it), and portrayed, at times, as lacking sufficient legitimacy when exploring alternative paradigms. Notwithstanding these challenges, endogenous research on education remains vital to the vision contained within the UDBIE as it is necessary to balance the influx of

theories of education from the Global North, which translate into corresponding reforms, that are based on concepts tested in contexts which are, generally, incompatible with the myriad of contexts in the Global South.

7. Notwithstanding their importance as catalysts of sustainable and equitable endogenous development, the role of higher education and of research cannot be limited to that of mere instruments or technical processes whose only purpose is material development. They can and ought to also play a key part in the development of socio-cultural and emotional intelligence skills when conceived as enriching opportunities for collaborations and exchanges between researchers as well as between students. Whilst numerous schemes have been developed in the Global North and in certain sub-regions of the Global South, in addition to bilateral agreements
8. between countries, in order to tap into this dimension of higher education and research, there is a gap and need for such schemes to be developed so as to ensure the mobility of students and academic staff across the Global South.
8. Within its first biennium, the OSC will support its Member States in the areas of higher education and transdisciplinary research by accelerating the democratisation of higher education – through innovative strategies for quantitative and qualitative expansion in addition to platforms for digital access to the latest in research –, reinforcing regional endogenous capacities to make research more contextually relevant, and strengthening the social, cultural, and academic ties across Member States through university pairings and the development of frameworks enabling the mobility of students and academic staff.

FA 3 - HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

LOA.5. Accelerate the democratisation of higher education and research

ER.5. Improved access to higher education and transdisciplinary knowledge

KPI.5.1. Percentage of Member States having developed and/or revised strategies and policies to expand the higher education offer to rural areas	19,23% of Member States
KPI.5.2. Percentage of Member States with institutional access to references, international academic articles and publications, and endogenous knowledge databases through the OSC digital platform	100% of Member States

CP.5.1. Development of innovative strategies and national policies to expand higher education to rural areas

Provide policy and technical support to Member States for the development of strategies and policies to provide and/or adjust the higher education offer to rural areas in accordance with national development plans and local needs, including through the design and leveraging of digital and technological solutions.

CP.5.2. Creation and management of a digital platform granting institutional access to references and international academic articles, journals and other publications, and endogenous knowledge databases in partnership with other institutions

Identify, collect, and digitalise academic references, articles, and publications as well as endogenous knowledge to feed a free-of-charge online platform developed by the OSC for the use of higher education institutions and researchers of Member States and Associate Members.

LOA.6. Reinforce endogenous research capacities

ER.6. Strengthened regional transdisciplinary research ecosystems

KPI.6.1. Number of regional agreements for the establishment of regional research centres reached	2 agreements
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CP.6.1. Establishment of contextually-relevant and transdisciplinary regional research centres or institutes

Provide policy advice, technical support, coordination, and partnershipbuilding for the establishment of regional centres or institutes of excellence in areas of common interest for transdisciplinary and contextually-relevant research.

LOA.7. Strengthen cultural, social, and academic ties and amplify exchanges between students of Member States	
ER.7. Increased South-South student exchanges and mobility	
KPI.7.1. Number of bilateral agreements for university scholarships, as well as student and academic staff exchanges, amongst Member States and Associate Members reached	3 agreements, with at least 1 involving Member States in emergency situations
KPI.7.2. Number of OSC frameworks for the mobility of university students and credit equivalence developed	1
CP.7.1. Facilitation of bilateral university scholarships and exchanges	
Facilitate intergovernmental and institutional bilateral agreements for student university scholarships as well as student and academic staff exchanges between Member States and Associate Members	
CP.7.2. Development of a Framework to Reinforce Exchanges between Youth and Regions through Education (FREYRE)	
Through a series of consultation of Member States and Associate Members, develop a Framework to Reinforce Exchanges between Youth and Regions through Education (FREYRE) for the implementation, in the second bien-nium, of scheme enabling the mobility students and credit equivalence across Member States.	



Focus Area IV: Innovative Technologies and Digital Infrastructure

1. The advent of the 4th industrial revolution has not only profoundly altered Humanity's understanding of the world and the manner in which it interacts with it, but it has also transformed societies and who they are, as individuals and as collectives. Having become a matter of strategic and vital importance, the use of technology as a tool to streamline, enhance, and hasten personal and national development is no longer in debate.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this revolution as the world, undergoing unprecedented national lockdowns and restrictions on both local and international mobility, became more dependent on digital technologies for work, social interactions, and basic necessities. Regardless of the accuracy of the multiplying predictions on the long-term impact of these development on post-pandemic society, it is indisputable that the paradigmatic overhauls that have been caused in all sectors are there to stay, and it is impossible to return – for better or for worse – to the pre-pandemic status quo. The societal debates surrounding technology have, in fact, irreversibly shifted from the conditional abstract to the practical: “when” to use technology, “how” to use it, and under “what” ethical and regulatory frameworks.
3. Education is arguably the sector around which the issue of technology use has crystallised during the pandemic – both in terms of its positives implications and its fundamental limitations. With over 1.5 billion students affected by school closures at the peak of the crisis, the availability of technology proved essential to ensure the continuity of learning. This simultaneously demonstrated, however, the importance of the social functions of education which can simply not be replicated through individualising virtual platforms. It also instilled a new sense of urgency with regard to the issue of bridging the techno-digital divide as millions of students did not have access to the internet or computers necessary for distance learning.
4. In order to leverage the potential of technology, and mitigate the aforementioned limitations, there is now an imperative need for the expansion of digital infrastructures (such as personal devices, internet connectivity, interoperable information systems, and cloud solutions), the design of appropriate digital learning resources, more adequate training of teachers in the use of educational technologies, and the development of technological skills and digital competencies in learners.
5. The principal challenge facing countries across the Global South remains the effective investment cost of ensuring connectivity, installing educational technologies, and providing digital devices in all school and, more widely, for the entirety of their populations. There are also legitimate concerns regarding the durability of technological hardware when implemented at the national scale as matter of public policy, given the velocity of the 4th industrial revolution, as well as preoccupations on the proper protection of the personal data of users, in particular that of minors.
6. Notwithstanding the ability of Member States to ensure connectivity at the national scale, in addressing educational technologies, especially from the perspective of balanced and inclusive education, the issue of the contextual relevance of technology and digital learning resources emerges. Despite the appearance of the contrary, technology is neither socially nor culturally neutral: the development of technology is neither a random nor independent process as it inevitably gains non-neutral properties as a result of its developer's ends, their (conscious and unconscious) biases, and their sociocultural interpretive frameworks – and it is, ultimately, a tool that has the potential to shape the purposes of its users.
7. As such, to sustainably bridge the techno-digital divides – between the Global North and the Global South, between countries of the Global South, and within countries themselves –, the need for the development of endogenous (local, national, and/or regional) technologies arises. This is not only to afford the opportunity to countries of acquiring more affordable technologies which simultaneously

stimulate and autonomise economies, but also to produce more contextually-relevant technologies that enable countries to be proactive actors and shapers of the 4th industrial revolution, opening the door to an exponential development factor, rather than a linear one, in certain sectors.

8. Within the first biennium, the OSC will support its Member States in the areas of innovative

technologies and digital infrastructure, by facilitating the production of digital balanced and inclusive learning resources through contextually-relevant and free software, and assisting in the development of endogenous technologies through policy advice, strategic partnerships, and the promotion of endogenous technologies at the international level.

FA 4 - INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

LOA.8. Facilitate the production of digital balanced and inclusive learning resources

ER.8. Reinforced institutional capacities to produce digital learning resources

KPI.8.1. Percentage of Member States with access to the interactive digital learning resource production tool	100%
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CP.8.1. Development and provision to Member States of a digital tool for the production of interactive, contextualised learning content

Develop and provide a free-of-charge advanced, open-source, and customisable digital tool to Member States and/or curriculum development centres in Member States for the production of interactive and contextualised digital learning resources

LOA.9. Accelerate the development of endogenous technologies

ER.9. Improved environment for the development of endogenous technologies

KPI.9.1. Percentage of Member States having developed and/or revised strategies, policies, and/or regulatory frameworks for the development of endogenous technologies	19,23% of Member States
KPI.9.2. Percentage of Member States represented at the international fair for endogenous technologies	100% of Member States

CP.9.1. Design and implementation of strategies, policies, and regulatory frameworks for the development of endogenous technologies

Provide technical and policy support to Member States in the design and implementation of strategies, policies, and regulatory frameworks conducive to the development of endogenous technologies, and facilitate multi-sectoral partnerships in terms of capital-investment.

CP.9.2. Organisation of an International Fair for Endogenous Technologies

Organise the first edition of an international fair, to be hosted in a different Member State every two years, for the promotion of endogenous technologies, the development of strategic partnerships, and the pairing of local technologies with global platforms.

Focus Area V: South-South Cooperation and Multilateral Platforms

1. From climate change to global health emergencies, passing by the techno-digital divide and financing for education, the importance of concerted multilateral action in addressing the great issues of the 21st century is beyond dispute. Governments aiming to build equitable, inclusive, and effective education systems face serious challenges – calling for considerable investment of technical and financial resources, in addition to political commitment, over the medium and long term. Essential tools to achieve such goals and pool such resources are international platforms of cooperation amongst countries.
2. Article XIV of the Universal Declaration of Balanced and Inclusive Education (UDBIE), in fact, not only affirms that “Humanity shares a collective, inextricable destiny”, but it also upholds the right of “all nations to benefit from true solidarity and equitable cooperation”, which naturally translates into “the principle of a mutually beneficial partnership of equals” that “acknowledges, respects, and abides by national priorities and local realities.” This particular approach to multilateralism carries within it three fundamental concepts:
 - a. Multilateralism is not merely an opportunistic choice, but rather an unavoidable necessity due to the indivisible nature of the ultimate, fundamental interests of the collective that is Humanity;
 - b. Not all forms of multilateralism are created equal, since the dynamics of multilateralism, unless conceived within a framework of equality (of parties), equity (in relations), and solidarity (rather than charity), will simply reproduce the very imbalances, injustices, and instabilities they purport to rectify and address;
 - c. Multilateralism does not entail a disappearance of the national and local dimensions of development nor of the respective priorities and contexts of countries – on the contrary, the spirit of the UDBIE advocates the view that true universality emanates from and is built through the respectful and enriching encounter of the world’s particularities.
3. From its unambiguous, affirmative stance, the UDBIE identifies profound limitations to the predominant conception of multilateralism. These underlying flaws of current multilateral frameworks have most recently been illustrated by the failure of the international system to effectively ensure an equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and of the liquidity injected to assist countries in mitigating the dire consequences of the crisis.
4. As such, there is a pressing need to address the inefficiencies and the inflexibility of multilateral cooperation frameworks, that must be repurposed and revitalised in the complexifying context of the 21st century. This demands the placing of the concerns, needs, and aspirations of countries and peoples at the centre of global policymaking and at the forefront of development efforts, whilst always respecting and adapting to respective national priorities, local aspirations, and socio-cultural contexts.
5. One major concern permeating the Global South, lying at the heart of policymaking, is the issue of securing the financing that is necessary for development, and which is intimately linked to the issue of unsustainable, rising external public debt burdens. Exacerbated by the economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis, the issue of debt, in particular, and financing, in general, have become central to the agenda of countries of the Global South as they combat the economic consequences of COVID-19 – from calls for the full relief of debt to the more equitable redistribution of the Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) issued by the IMF in August 2021.
6. This indissoluble relation between multilateralism, education, development, and financing is recognised in Article XV of the UDBIE through the commitment to “create mechanisms of coordinated educational financing and solidarity which abide by national priorities, adapt to local realities, assist in achieving debt relief, and facilitate budgetary increases for education” as a means to ensure “the unalienable right of all peoples and nations to benefit from prosperous, humane, equitable, and sustainable development, of which education is the initiating spark.”
7. With this particular conception of multilateralism and the affirmation of the



right to material and immaterial security, the UDBIE promotes a profound paradigmatic and epistemological shift to enable the realisation of the vision which it contains. Recognising, in Article XV, that the “Global South is constituted of vastly diverse countries, peoples, and cultures who simultaneously share systemic characteristics, challenges, and aspirations”, it advocates for them “to collectively construct and espouse a third, alternative, inclusive way of development emerging through and from education, founded upon the spirit of multilateralism, solidarity, and self-determination.”

8. Within its first biennium, the OSC will support its Member States in mitigating the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis and in achieving their

common aspirations for development through education, by establishing a Transregional Partnership in Education for Development (TPED) to strengthen and streamline coordination amongst intergovernmental organisations in education, establishing a Common Leveraging Union of Borrowers (CLUB) and a sustainable Public-Private Partnership evaluation framework – as collective mechanisms to achieve debt relief and secure more favourable financing terms for development –, and convening a Congress of the Greater South to collectively define and articulate a common, cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder roadmap and action plan for the construction of a “third, alternative, inclusive way of development.”

FA 5 - SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AND MULTILATERAL PLATFORMS

LOA.10. Strengthen and streamline coordination amongst intergovernmental organisations in education

E.R. 10. Enhanced capacity for South-South best practices exchange and coordination to achieve common education and development agenda goals

KPI.10.1. Number of regional intergovernmental organisations having joined the Transregional Partnership in Education for Development (TPED)

At least 3 organisations

CP.10.1. Establishment and management of a Transregional Partnership in Education for Development (TPED) with a permanent coordination office hosted by the OSC

Establish a Transregional Partnership in Education for Development (TPED) comprising regional intergovernmental organisations active in the education sector; open a permanent TPED coordination office at the OSC; organise two meetings of the heads of the member organisations chaired by the OSC Secretary-General; organise the regular virtual and presential meetings of the relevant technical teams of member organisations for follow-up actions.

LOA.11. Support Member States in reducing debt burdens and increasing financing for education and development

ER.11. Increased funding and budgets for education systems as well as for sectors critical to sustainable development

KPI.11.1. Percentage of Member States part of the CLUB having achieved favorable agreements in terms of debt burden reduction and fresh financing for education and development	100%
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CP.11.1. Establishment of a Common Leveraging Union of Borrowers (CLUB) designed to reduce debt burdens and secure more favourable financing terms for education and development

Through a series of bilateral consultation meetings with each Member State covering their current external debt and funding requirements, establish a Common Leveraging Union of Borrowers (CLUB) to negotiate external debt with major creditors and secure fresh financing for education and development on more favourable terms. Host the first meeting of the CLUB to agree on the consolidated common requirements and negotiation strategy mandate, accordingly undertake the negotiations with the concerned creditors, and host subsequent meetings of the CLUB on the tentative agreement(s) negotiated before their finalisation.

CP.11.2. Development of a sustainable Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Framework

Through a series of consultations with Member States, develop a comprehensive, context-sensitive framework to provide a common standard and tool to evaluate, monitor, and regulate the sustainability and quality of Public-Private Partnerships.

LOA.12. Accelerate the construction of a third, alternative, and inclusive way of development

ER.12. A collective roadmap and common action plan adopted for the construction of a third way of development

KPI.12.1. Percentage of Member States having participated to the governmental consultation and the concluding summit	100%
KPI.12.2. Number of sectoral consultations	3
KPI.12.3. Number of roadmaps and action plans produced and adopted	1

CP.12.1. Organisation of a Congress of the Greater South

Organise a Congress of the Greater South comprising three sectoral conferences – 1) with leading intellectuals, artists, and scientists from across the Global South; 2) with civil society organisations and academic institutions from across the Global South; 3) with the Governments of Member States – in order to analyse and explore the big questions faced by humanity, providing insights and orientations to build the philosophical and practical foundations for an epistemological shift in development, and concluding with a Summit of the Greater South to produce and adopt, on the basis of the sectoral consultations, a collective roadmap and common action plan for the construction of a third, alternative, and inclusive way of development.