ISLAMIC WORLD EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION DU MONDE ISLAMIQUE POUR L'EDUCATION, LES SCIENCES ET LA CULTURE

STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

BY 2025

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At the 41st session of the Executive Council held in March 2021, ICESCO presented its new vision in response to the new global situation triggered by the COVID-19 crisis. Under the framework of the 14th General Conference that will be held in Egypt, ICESCO is presenting its Medium-Term Strategic Orientations 2022-2025 that will set its sectorial priorities of action and the headlines of its activities for the next four years.

ICESCO's Medium-Term Strategic Document 2022-2025 encompasses the Strategic Orientations of the Organization's departments, sectors and specialized centers, which have been defined on the basis of the new vision and the needs and priorities of Member States, taking into account existing regional and international challenges, and anticipating the major future transformations.

The document also provides an in-depth analysis of the priority areas of ICESCO's strategy for the next four years, as well as its key performance indicators that will be used as a reference to determine the degree of concordance and implementation of its new vision as well as its commitments to its Member States. These indicators will also measure ICESCO's strategic and proactive roles in supporting the pace of national efforts to overcome the repercussions of the pandemic and to rapidly cope with developed countries' pace towards the achievement of the 2030 development goals.

Executive Summary

The world is facing with an unprecedented, complex and multidimensional sanitary crisis calling for an international and collective response to mitigate its consequences on different areas of development. This collective challenge comes to highlight the urgent need for the world to unify efforts and coordinate positions to counteract the global dangers and problems. Two years have passed since the spread of the pandemic, and yet the international community remains unable to predict the future and evolution of the crisis despite efforts to mitigate the long-term economic and social consequences on vulnerable populations. In addition to the effects of the global health crisis, climate change, global warming and other environmental issues are having a profound impact on the global economy.

ICESCO, in its fields of competence, has mobilized all its resources to suggest innovative and pioneering initiatives responding to the needs of the Islamic World. Under this perspective, the present document is set to define the series of activities and processes to maximize the performance of the Organization and provide the required efficiency to its role in the service of Member States.

The Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is convinced of the need for full coordination with Member States in identifying appropriate mechanisms to address the crisis and its repercussions. Likewise, ICESCO, guided by an exceptional urge for innovation, translated through its strategic orientations, will spare no effort to encourage development in the Islamic World.

On the level of sectoral programs, the complementarity between ICESCO's sectors and centers is well highlighted. Indeed, the Education Sector has stepped out to support the implementation of the right to quality education and is well-placed to improve the skills and competences of learners to adapt them to the requirements of the 21st century job market.

The Sciences and Technologies Sector aims to strengthen STI knowledge and skills as well as developing and improving emerging technologies.

The Social and Human Sciences Sector seeks to become a pioneering actor in peacebuilding in the countries of the Islamic world.

On the other hand, the Cultural Sector's purpose is to promote the importance of culture, communication, heritage, arts, and creativity in the Organization's efforts to achieve sustainable development and peaceful coexistence among peoples.

Combining the work of all the centers and departments, ICESCO is focused on promoting excellence, innovation and creativity. The present orientations document is the result of a thoughtful and meticulous evolution of ICESCO's work through the past years in order to draw a better and more resilient development.

I. General Introduction

During the 41st Executive Council held on 30th and 31st March 2021, ICESCO has elaborated the Organization's Vision in the light of the economic, social, educational, environmental, and technological transformations triggered by the COVID-19 sanitary crisis. Accordingly, ICESCO presents its Medium-Term Strategic Orientations for the period of 2022-2025.

The Medium-Term Strategic Orientations for the period of 2022-2025 have been geared while taking the impact of the sanitary crisis on the region of the Islamic World into major consideration. The present document is identifying and analyzing future trends, chiefly with the new global situation, to maximize the efficiency of ICESCO in its ongoing efforts to achieve sustainable and prosperous development for its State Members and carry out important milestones in the fields of education, sciences, and culture.

The Medium-Term Strategic Orientations spanned over the period of 4 years are aligned with several international organizations, whose Medium-Term Strategic Plan varies from 4 years to 6 years according to their organizational strategies. The Medium-Term Strategic Orientations of ICESCO is fixed for the period of 4 years, which is also the term of the Directorate General as mentioned in Article 10 of ICESCO's organizational chart.

In addition to that, the elaboration of a quadrennial Medium- Term Strategic Orientation is set according to the horizon of the major transformations impacting the global landscape. As an example,

demography is one of the emerging trends that will shape the future, as in 2050 the world's population will reach 10 billion. This demographic challenge is shading the light on several challenges but also opportunities related to youth, women, gender, and environment.

Therefore, ICESCO is mobilizing all its resources and expertise to forecast these rapid changes, accelerated by time and by the pandemic in setting key priority fields related to education, sciences, culture, communication and other areas to enhance the development of its Member States.

The Medium-term Strategic Orientations of ICESCO, over the period of 4 years, will allow an efficient evaluation of ICESCO's activities and its contributions to Member States' efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.

The Medium-Term Strategic Orientations development process builds on an evaluation of ICESCO's activities during the past years and the latest urgent answers undertaken since the outbreak of the pandemic. It also builds on key areas in which the Organization has gained an accumulated experience and has shifted its focus on those areas, given their increasingly emerging importance along with pursuing a scientific, collective and participatory approach to develop the Strategic Orientations.

ICESCO has also launched several studies such as the "Possible Futures of the Islamic World"[1], "Possible Futures of the African Continent Post Covid-19 Crisis"[2]

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1 Elaborated by the Strategic Foresight Center (2021)
2 Elaborated by the Strategic Foresight Center (2021)

and "Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Tomorrow's World"[3]. These future-oriented studies serve to identify and analyze the emerging trends in the Islamic World and beyond while suggesting crisis exit scenarios to foster the development of communities and nations.

These futuristic studies aimed to enrich the academic content in the Islamic World and spread the culture of strategic planning. The research is not only focused on the Islamic World but goes beyond to a global level where strong trends and weak signals are analyzed and examined. The importance of elaborating foresight studies and reports lies in the fact that they allow us to explore important areas of what the future holds. Foresight methods have developed over the years to fill in the gap of their existence in academia.

Foresight in the Islamic World has long been an under-researched area despite the importance of this field to broaden the framework of thinking about the future and its possibilities. Foresight methodologies allow to set future scenarios that minimize uncertainty of the future[4].

Another important element that ICESCO, under its new vision has been fostering is strategic diplomacy. ICESCO has put strategic diplomacy as an important axis embedded in the spirit of the Organization. The Center of Strategic Foresight as well as all the other sectors and departments of ICESCO constantly strives to share knowledge among all member states and to establish strategic links and partnerships with countries across the Islamic world and globally.

Strategic Diplomacy is an interesting tool to create long-lasting bonds between countries and international institutions as well as key actors and to enhance mechanisms of cooperation and collaboration. It also helps to set a common agenda, a mutual working plan towards specific objectives and aims and to finally communicate on issues and problems that are hindering the process of development. The current decade is evolving very quickly, and the global order is best described as being non-linear and highly inter-connected. Thus, strategic diplomacy is the best solution to mobilize all key actors around one common vision[5].

ICESCO is continuously striving to become a reference in its fields of expertise. The Medium-Term Strategic Orientations is based on a concrete analysis of the current situation in light of the pandemic. This analysis has used concrete data to set the right forecasts for the future in a scientific approach. Some of the key findings are highlighted during the general frameworkpart.

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3 Elaborated by the Strategic Foresight Center (2021)

4 Strategic Orientation of the Strategic Foresight Center: Producing Futuristic Studies and Reports

5 Strategic Orientation of the Strategic Foresight Center: Reinforcing Strategic Diplomacy

1. General Framework : The situation on the global level

The world is undergoing the outbreak of a global pandemic unlike any in the last decades. In addition to the tragic loss of lives, since the Covid-19 crisis erupted, it has been impacting the world order, forcing countries to shift their strategies to cope with the ceaseless havoc caused by this unexpected crisis.

As this pandemic is heading, it is leaving destructive impacts on all spheres of life, namely Health systems, Education, Tourism, Culture, Economy, Social Security, and the Environment.

That is, Covid-19 situation has brought an unprecedented global change by which it challenged the conventional decision-making approaches by its capricious and unexpected nature. Thus, the urgent need to adopt the right attitudes towards the future.

The Covid-19 pandemic is leaving profound impact on almost every aspect of human's lives. The significant health and economic consequences of this disease are crippling even the most developed nations. The sanitary crisis has already had a destabilizing effect on the lives of people around the world reaching a dramatic loss of 3.9 million lives[6].

Unfortunately, the Islamic World was no exception to the outrageous loss in lives. Since August 2020, there was a total of 2 435 647 recorded cases of COVID-19 and 60 397 COVID-related deaths across Muslim-majority countries[7] which has raised the importance to adopt the right policies in decision making processes, able to foresee these major changes and cope with the impacts inflicted by these crises.

Since its upsurge, the COVID-19 pandemic has altered the way in which the world perceives its economies and societies. The global community recognizes the need for urgent and common action to lay the groundwork for a sustainable recovery, to mitigate the devastating health and economic consequences of the pandemic, and to protect vulnerable populations from its disproportionate impact.

The healthcare sector has experienced major disruption due to the severe pressure that it experienced since the outbreak of the virus. The Covid-19 has shed the light on the importance of the resilience of healthcare systems in the world. The sanitary crisis has also highlighted that a coordinated and collective response on the level of healthcare institutions around the world is important. A strong and sustainable investment in health care facilities is a strong need as it would reinforce the responsiveness of countries in such pandemic situations.

Considering the on-going Covid-19 crisis, global economy has been hit harder than any other sector. The unprecedented shock experienced by the global economy has affected vulnerable populations as inflation rates increased in many countries around the world.

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6 (« Covid-19 and Tourism - an Update », s. d.)

7 Jardine R; Wright J; Samad Z; Bhutta ZA. Analysis of COVID-19 burden, epidemiology and mitigation strategies in Muslim majority countries. East Mediterr Health J. 2020;26(10):1173–1183. https://doi.org/10.26719/emhj.20.120

As tens of millions of people are at risk of falling into extreme poverty, nearly half of the world's 3.3 billion global workforce might lose their livelihoods. Informal economy workers are particularly vulnerable because the majority lack social protection and access to quality health care and have lost access to productive assets. Poverty in the Islamic World region is estimated to rise by 14.3 million people, swelling to more than 115 million overall[8]. Food security is also another important issues as, currently, around 50 million people are suffering from undernourishment in the Islamic region, and increased poverty could lead to an additional 1.9 million people facing the same faith[9].

The economic slowdown caused by COVID-19 is expected to further impact jobs, incomes, business, and the flow of remittances in the Islamic World, resulting in a shrinking middle-income class. Job losses are expected to be highest in the 'most at risk' sectors, such as food services, manufacturing, retail and business, administrative activities, and tourism[10]. The latter has a particular socio-economic importance, as it secures prominent job opportunities especially for young people and women in the Islamic world. Covid-19 had put 100-120 million tourisms' direct jobs are at risk[11]. Youth unemployment rate has also increased from 19.5 to 23% between 2012 and 2020 in the Islamic world with limited or no access to social and health insurance or credit facilities[12].

The pandemic has furthermore generated a significant impact on multiple levels. Not only has it completely overwhelmed some health systems, but it has created massive challenges for policymakers, making it necessary to implement disruptive containment measures with very little evidence to support their decision-making.

The Covid-19 pandemic has not only impacted youth unemployment, but also, youth education.

Amidst the world's exposure to the COVID-19 pandemic, education suffered a huge crisis, perhaps the worst in modern times, as countries were forced to close their educational institutions, affecting over 1.5 billion learners in 191 countries. (Based on 20 April 2020, which represents the peak of the crisis), which is about 91.3% of students enrolled in schools and universities worldwide.

In this context, countries worldwide throughout the Islamic world have rushed to adopt alternative methods to ensure continuity of learning despite the closure of schools, using communication and information technologies. Among these countries are those that have the preparation and infrastructure to provide this type of education effectively, while many countries have rushed to include it in their curricula without being sufficiently prepared. In either case, vulnerable groups without access to technology were unable to access and benefit from distance education programs.

8 Jardine R; Wright J; Samad Z; Bhutta ZA. Analysis of COVID-19 burden, epidemiology and mitigation strategies in Muslim majority countries. East Mediterr Health J. 2020;26(10):1173–1183. https://doi.org/10.26719/emhj.20.120

9 Ibid.

10 Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Arab Region: An Opportunity to Build Back Better.

11 Covid-19 and tourism.

12 (« Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 | UNDP in the Arab States »)

Multiple implications have been derived from this situation, the COVID-19 pandemic has vividly demonstrated the need to better imbedded systems, chiefly educational ones as they have been exceptionally affected by this universal crisis, and the cultural and communication systems whose role during the pandemic has unveiled the need to mobilize communities with sophisticated tools, to positively harness the reliance on social media consumption, communication technology, and sciences.

Cultural and creative industries are also one of the most hit sectors by the Covid-19 pandemic. Reports show that the effects of the Covid-19 crisis on the cultural industries have reached 750$ billion in gross value added in 2020. Unemployment in the cultural and creative field has reached almost 10 million, creating a major loss in jobs and an inevitable impact on the livelihoods of people working in this sector. The cultural and creative industries have also been recovering slowly using technologies and digitalization.

On the other hand, the global pandemic has underscored the value of sciences, technologies, and artificial intelligence (AI). Most governments and international organizations have called for an urgent, quick and efficient collective response to the crisis, considering AI as the field of the future.

The pandemic is still rapidly unfolding around the world, extinguishing expected futures, and raising the possibility of different ones. Such periods of great uncertainty are challenging for strategy development.

Policy-makers face challenges in coping with unprecedented trends. Under the same perspective, ICESCO is playing the important role of bringing together important actors in policy making to produce collaborative and effective policy answers to current issues.

By positioning ICESCO as a renowned Think Tank which will plays the role of a laboratory of ideas through the organization of trainings, seminars. It aims to define structural designs and respond to the emerging needs of new societies, in particular in light of the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic.

As the COVID-19 pandemic reveals the economic, scientific, cultural and, societal cracks of the world, insufficient preparedness to deal with such a crisis has brought about a growing recognition of the need for a better global response than the current fragmented system. The turmoil caused by the outbreak has led to a significant burden for the present and thereby also for future generations.

ICESCO has deployed enormous efforts to accurately set its objectives in line with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda and of the African Union Agenda 2063 under a general and comprehensive framework that promotes human rights. Due to the current crisis, the implementation of these agendas is fraught with various challenges and presents many limitations. ICESCO is aware that the COVID-19 pandemic is imposing an adoption for a more realistic, pro-active, and forward-looking attitude towards these goals.

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13 "COVID-19 and Children," UNICEF DATA, accessed January 15, 2021, https://data.unicef.org/covid-19-and- children/
14 Strategic Orientation of the Strategic Foresight Center: Playing the Role of a Laboratory of Ideas

Accordingly, today's policy answers that governments are making around the world are decisive in terms of building a greener, more inclusive and a more resilient future. Thus, ICESCO is at the heart of the international community guidance that aims to provide effective, efficient, tailor-made solutions on the medium and long terms to their state members.

Today provides an opportunity to set a clear path towards a future in which every nation, country and region involved can perseveringly make a contribution.

Nevertheless, there remains scope for fundamental change if the importance of forward-thinking is recognized. It is thus relevant to consider this global situation as a unique opportunity for envisioning the new normal. While a new era is unfolding, the futures are still plural, and therein lies the importance of exploring alternative perspectives and scenarios.

The practice of strategic foresight provides a response to such challenges. Its purpose is not to predict the future, but rather to help organizations foresee multiple futures in a way that enables them to perceive and adapt to change.

Foresight methodologies thereby enable individuals, and ultimately organizations, to consider different future scenarios and plan for greater future resilience. The most

recognizable tool is scenario planning. To use it well, organizations need to consider a range of futures, identify the strategies needed for each, and start implementing these strategies right away. Yet foresight remains an under-used approach on the global scene.

Strategic Foresight is therefore crucial in the implementation of anticipatory action to proceed after the pandemic, enabling the global community to cope with uncertainty and improve the quality of decision making. Foresight also improves the ability of organizations to manage change and assess risks and opportunities arising from variations of the possible futures by charting scenarios, identifying the trajectory which best fits the current situation, and implementing and adapting the most appropriate response.

Under the context of its holistic vision: towards an anticipatory, future-oriented, and forward-looking organization, ICESCO has placed strategic foresight at the heart of its interests, by choosing to adopt a proactive, future-oriented approach, enabling the Organization to be more proactive and prepared to face the uncertainties and the ambiguity during these crisis times and to guide its Member States towards significant progress in shaping the future of the Islamic world and thus achieving prosperous and sustainable development in this region.

2. The approach : The Strategic Orientations of ICESCO will be developed through a scientific, dynamic and modulable way

ICESCO developed the Medium-Term Strategic Orientations for the period 2022-2025 and adapted them to the challenges brought by the COVID-19 crisis. The present document is intended to identify and analyze future trends, chiefly amid the new global situation, to maximize the efficiency of ICESCO in its ongoing efforts to achieve sustainable and prosperous development for its State Members and carry out important milestones in the fields of education, sciences, and culture.

To ensure the right elaboration of the Strategic Orientations document, ICESCO has first conducted a series of workshops with its different sectors and departments. The primary purpose of the workshops is to ask the right questions and gather insights to properly draw the orientations of each of the sectors and departments based on the holistic vision of ICESCO.

Afterward, the system is delimited to three main environments. First of all, on the specific environment level; the Organization's priority actions are identified through the workshops with its different departments and sectors. Second, on the intermediate level, the Strategic Foresight Center has consulted key actors on both the regional and the global scale to identify the major trends of the future. Finally, on a global level, the Strategic Foresight Center has analyzed the emerging best practices, megatrends, future trends, recommendations on the regional and international levels.

After thorough and meticulous drafting, the process of validating the strategic orientations document by all the bodies and the office of the Director of General and submitting the final product to the National Commissions for review will produce a holistic definition of the strategic orientation for the Medium Term.

The Medium-Term Strategic Orientations were elaborated in a participatory, collaborative, and futuristic approach. Thanks to foresight and its methodology, the Organization succeeded to cope rapidly with the different transformations that the world is undergoing. In the current world, disruptive forces include occurrences and trends such as climate change, the digital revolution, mass migration, and most recently, the Covid-19 pandemic. These challenges are unique but also enfold a lot of economic and social opportunities.

Hence, the urgent need to understand these forces shaping the future and systematically address the resulting uncertainty in order to secure a better future. Accordingly, decision-makers require the tools and processes to deal with unforeseen contingencies that might significantly affect their societies and communities. Therefore, the global community is becoming increasingly aware of the value of futures thinking and foresight as strategic planning tools involved in policy-making.

Foresight does not only constitute an intellectual indiscipline; it is also a rigorous and effective tool for anticipation that

provides a response to existing and emerging trends and sheds light on the global action and directs it towards the desired future. This tool enables the right questions to be raised and the inconsistencies in reasoning to be reduced through a process that generally consists of three phases:

1) collecting information,

2) interpreting the data and formulating different versions of the future

3) developing strategic options for action.

II. International Context

1. The efforts established by other International Organizations

The international framework is evolving, with a wide range of international actors and a growing body of regulatory instruments. It has considerably shifted over the years to include new actors, notably International Organizations. These organizations have shown great capacity and agility in responding to new challenges, to changing geopolitical circumstances and to the rapid pace of innovation and technological change.

Moreover, the tendency of international organizations is to focus on the long-term involvement and impact of decisions and actions. However, the medium-term orientation gives organizations the flexibility to appropriately address the various socio-economic, environmental, and political shocks that may occur.

Along similar lines, strategic orientations are referred to as the way in which an organization adapts its strategies to its external environment. In other words, it is the pattern of responses that the organization makes to its operating environment to anticipate and respond to future changes and to improve its efficiency on a global scale.

While the international community is starting to overcome the extensive obstacles associated with COVID-19, it is important that organizations remain vigilant and continue to focus their efforts on providing optimal support to their respective Member States throughout this challenging period. Thus, the timeframe of 2022-2025 is crucial to reflect on their previous achievements and future endeavors in developing strategic orientations which will contribute to a more resilient and responsive global landscape, by providing all stakeholders with the necessary data, policies, and tools to build safer, fairer, cleaner, and more inclusive economies and societies.

Different organizations have different strategic orientations given that they vary in their understanding of the environment and therefore engage differently in various development issues, i.e., economy, culture, health, science, human rights, environment, etc.

Before elaborating ICESCO's Medium-Term Strategic Orientations document, the efforts of other international organizations, such as UNESCO, UNICEF, OECD, and ILO, were explored and their good practices were drawn upon.

- UNESCO's Strategic Orientations plan is set for an 8-year period with a next medium-term strategy for 2022-2029. The document of the Strategic Orientations for 2021, as mentioned in their DG plan, focuses on the new complex situation the world is facing today, on several sustainable development goals such as poverty and education, on various issues related to climate change, on the contribution of science and technology, including those related to the impact of artificial intelligence, as well as on the importance of partnerships, and on conflicts and crises at humanitarian level[15].

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15 « GlobalTrends_2040.pdf » https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/GlobalTrends_2040.pdf.

- UNICEF's Strategic plan is for a period of 4 years with an update in key performances each year, its main focuses are the issues related to Humanitarian aid, Education Partnerships and Children rights.

- OECD elaborates its Strategic Orientations every 2 years presented by the Secretary-General. The latest one was the Strategic Orientations of the year 2020 and the updated one is set for 2022. The 2022 strategic orientations are focused on fostering the importance of research and supporting research on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and its repercussions as well as encouraging policies that are stronger and more resilient. Another key focus of the organization is the digital transformation the world is facing nowadays.

- ILO has prepared the new Strategic Orientations for the period 2022-2025 based on the COVID-19 pandemic in order to align with the 2030 Agenda its key points were both the COVID-19 and 2008 crisis and their repercussion, the importance of an efficient Leadership and governance and finally the need for an inclusive and extensive Cooperation and partnerships.

2. Future Trends:

The COVID-19 crisis disrupted long-standing resilience and adaptation presumptions and led to new socio-economic, governance, geopolitical and technological uncertainties.

With a view towards understanding and assessing the impact of this outbreak, the subsequent section reviews a wide range of assumptions and assessments related to key global trends that are potential change drivers for the post-COVID global context.

The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to produce changes that will persist for years and alter the ways in which people live, work and govern at national and international levels.

In order to further deepen the understanding of the present situation, a range of issues needed to be raised:

- Which trends are picking up or slowing down as a result of the pandemic?

- Are these shifts fleeting or could the pandemic unleash a new set of dynamics to shape the future?

- In which way can international organizations such as ICESCO facilitate their members in tackling these trends, thus strengthening the position of the Islamic world as a pioneering region.

The world embracing uncertainty :
The power of scenario-thinking to enhance decision-making

Amid a crisis, it appears that the future is an intangible and elusive concept. Nevertheless, perceptions of the future form an integral part of understanding crises. As the present coronavirus pandemic illustrated, scenario-based and forward-looking visions are as pressing as vaccinations or government emergency plans.

Not a single country, society, community, or individual was spared the fallout of COVID-19. Hardly any strategy remained intact. Therefore, strategic scenario thinking has the potential to enhance the

decision-making process and abilities to lead in such unprecedented circumstances.

The contextual uncertainty renders decision-making more complex. And yet, the responsibility of critical decision-making is not lost on many decision-makers. On the contrary, the necessity to undertake decisions is rising.

Considering that the COVID-19 pandemic is a real aberration, addressing uncertainty is a central concern of the contemporary world, albeit within a context of now transient stability. Potential reactions to what were considered rare occurrences only a few decades ago are now factored into most strategic scenarios. Taking the "New Normal" as a central refocusing means facing uncertainty frontally and integrating it into the decision-making process. This includes considering uncertainty across a range of horizons, identifying the most prominent uncertainties facing the world, by seeking diverse perspectives, with the overall aim of integrating scenarios into the decision-making process.

For International Organizations, it is essential to assess the risk and opportunity based on both the flagrancy of the current situation and the range of potential ways in which policies may need to be reshaped after COVID-19. Therefore, scenarios can be instrumental in anticipating global changes and providing input on potential actions to be taken.

International Organizations such as ICESCO have the potential to cope with uncertainty. This can be undertaken by ensuring that its Member States are alert to future possibilities and are proactively envisaging different and alternative scenarios. Likewise, international organizations ought to ensure that an array of future

timeframes are assured and accounted for in order to assess opportunities and risks, to undertake difficult choices assertively, and to review and refine scenarios and strategies, with particular reference to their areas of expertise, which in ICESCO's case are Education, Sciences and Culture and Communication.

Exceptional circumstances, such as those of COVID-19, call for a balance between effective decision-making and forward-thinking. The greatest enemies of good decision-making in times of crisis, however, are neither uncertainty nor ambiguity, but rather the absence of informed scenario thinking. The latter, when properly conducted, can mitigate risk by anticipating future contingencies, as well as it can minimize or altogether eliminate uncertainty by providing structured strategies to challenge and validate underlying assumptions.

> "Mega-trends are 'those developments already under way and nearly impossible to change over the coming decade."
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> "Mega Trend Universe encompasses transformative, global forces that define the future world with their far-reaching impact on businesses, economics, cultures, and personal lives. Disruption of the global economy, industry, companies, and investments are making it difficult for the world to prepare for the future".
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> ESPAS Global Trends Report, 2019, p6.

Navigating the future amidst uncertainty: Future Risks and Megatrends

The future under circumstances of accelerated and transformative change may be anticipated either by considering the direction of current developments (**trends and Megatrends**) or by trying to anticipate possible but improbable events (**Weak signals and wild cards**).

The onset of COVID-19 has brought about a shift in pandemics from an implausible risk to an imminent threat to the global community as a whole. In addition to that the corresponding responses to the crisis seem to further refine and accelerate several trends that were already underway before the outbreak. The COVID-19 pandemic has featured global public health issues, exposed to scrutiny or, at times, widened social fissures, highlighted wide global disparities in terms of access to health care infrastructure, and interrupted attempts to tackle other threatening risks. The pandemic also revealed shortcomings in international coordination and the mismatch between undergoing global responses and future challenges[16].

Furthermore, the anticipated implications of the outbreak for the foreseeable future take the form of new barriers to both individual and societal advancement. Such threats hold the prospect of undermining decades of progress, coming at a time when the world is grappling with abrupt changes in social dynamics, widening digital and technological divides, sudden shifts in global markets, setbacks in education and employment, and significant challenges in global coordination.

Indeed, the world is shifting drastically. Accordingly, international organizations must adjust and adapt to the changing risks brought about by the current situation. In terms of the future, ICESCO is striving to fully prepare its Member States for the "New Normal" by identifying future risks so as to apprehend and anticipate them with a view to ensuring adequate responses.

Planning for the future implies a thorough assessment of the looming risks. Technological revolution, climate change, global pandemics, socioeconomic threats and, rising uncertainty are all factors contributing to the international community's inability to address challenges seize opportunities and anticipate future changes.

Emerging dynamics and core drivers facing the global environment today will likely shape the way the world shifts over the next years.

An array of future risks associated with the proliferation of the novel virus are presently looming over countries of in the Islamic World region and throughout the entire world. The following outlines the most pressing risks that are liable to define the future world landscape.

- Technological Advances and Hyper Connectivity:

The array of overwhelming global threats faced in the 2020s has prompted major investments in advanced technological development. Technological innovation is emerging as a key driver.

As societal changes were revealed to be the starting point for new technological

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16 « GlobalTrends_2040.pdf » https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/GlobalTrends_2040.pdf.

paradigms. This shift has sent humankind into a long period of radical transformation,. Today's world is one of abundant information and communication. Advances in new transformational technologies and computational systems, nanotechnology, robotics, artificial intelligence, biomedical engineering, and biotechnology, all give most of humanity access to an increase in living standards, as this transformation has affected the way in which individuals live, work, survive and prosper.

The exponential increase in technology has been key to creating a world of prosperity, providing goods and services to everyone[17]. As such Humans, and machine are now more interconnected than ever.

In the context of a crisis such as the covid-19 pandemic, the global response aimed to quickly stop the spread of the disease. Therefore, the use of Artificial intelligence (AI), is an important part of that action[18]. The Strategic Foresight Center of ICESCO seeks to enhance the use of Artificial Intelligence in the State Members of ICESCO. As AI is considered an important megatrend that is invading personal and professional places, it is constantly influencing the changing dynamics of the technological world. The Organization will carry out the efforts established by the State Members of ICESCO to cope with these interesting yet important changes. The Center intends to become a crossroads for ideas of AI experts aiming to develop the use of new technologies in the world. Thus,

state members with existing established AI strategies will be encouraged to share their journey and experience with other state members who are on their way to encourage the use of AI in their societies[19].

Accordingly, various sectors have been revolutionized, the previous education system used to have a single framework; the current one has been decentralized, personalized and is highly interactive thanks to novel technologies, climate change is in the process of being mitigated, and the majority of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely the 2030 Agenda, are to be met. However, as natural resources are overexploited, the world is likely to suffer major impacts because of these advances. And while technology facilitates progress and leads to more convenient lives and guided the responses to the pandemic, it is important to carefully consider the unintended repercussions resulting from the use of these novel technologies, namely those regarding cyberattacks and AI, with reference to the concerns raised about personal data breaches.

In addition to that ethical decision-making is, of course, already an integral part of global public practices, and giving the fact that AI systems are often used to automate decision-making processes. This automation gives rise to ethical challenges. such as who is to be held accountable for these decisions[20].

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17 («Global Foresight 2050 – Six global scenarios and implications.pdf, 19 »)

18 van der Schaar M, Alaa AM, Floto A, et al. How artificial intelligence and machine learning can help healthcare systems respond to COVID-19. Mach Learn2020;110:114. doi:10.1007/s10994-020-05928-x pmid:33318723

19 Strategic Orientation of the Strategic Foresight Center: Fostering the use of Artificial Intelligence in ICESCO's State Members

20 Peters D, Vold K, Robinson D, Calvo R. Responsible AI—two frameworks for ethical design practice. IEEE Transactions on Technology and Society2020;1:34 47. doi:10.1109/TTS.2020.2974991.

For instance, ICESCO places Artificial Intelligence at the center of its interests to build resilient and prosperous futures taking the most of what new disruptive technologies present as priceless opportunities by engaging in projects to popularize AI and launching studies under the same framework. ICESCO has established the Artificial Intelligence Strategy which examines its ethics and modes of use. In addition, the Organization aims to create a glossary to unify the vocabulary associated with it and to launch a consultation around AI[21].

Over the course of recent years, the presence or the lack of technological advances has consistently intertwined with demographics. Indeed, technology in general and health technology, in particular, have brought about substantial changes in the demographic situation, especially in developing countries.

- Demographic Shifts:

Prior to the pandemic, numerous forecasts entailed that the world population will reach about 8 billion in the year 2025 and roughly around 10 billion at the horizon of 2050[22], making the global demographic situation a major emerging risk, that will impose many obstacles and challenges. In order to fully build a sustainable future, especially in the context of the rapid pace of change and the growing number of the global population, it is important to fully position the demographic evolutions among other societal changes constituting the trends imposed by the future.

The key demographic trends, when taken cumulatively, are responsible for changes in the overall structure of any population. In the same context, the pandemic presents a profound time effect. In 2020, as the new coronavirus spread, these trends became more prominent and even disruptive. COVID-19 has affected each of these, with potentially important implications to be observed in the years ahead.

Yet, when asked to consider how COVID-19 may shape future demographics, It is unclear how this combination of trends will translate into population change and how quickly the patterns will return to pre-pandemic levels, if at all.

ICESCO acknowledges the necessity to address these issues as it is important for a successful recovery and will determine the speed and the extent to which its State Members will be able to rebuild their communities and society's demographic patterns. In the longer term, this constitutes an opportunity to build a fairer and more resilient Islamic World.

- Intergenerational conflict:

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic raises serious threats, such as severe health concerns and economic hardship, for individuals of various ages. Such threats may also be felt asymmetrically by different age groups, bringing to the fore inherent generational differences and tensions due to the difference residing in the efforts to mitigate and reduce the spread of the outbreak. While these trends and the global responses aimed at addressing

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21 Strategic Orientation of the Strategic Foresight Center: Fostering the use of Artificial Intelligence in ICESCO's State Members

22 (« World Population Projections - Worldometer » s. d.)

them have a solid foundation, they have highlighted generational tensions.

Both younger and older individuals have been hit hardest by this crisis, however, this assessment is nuanced. It seems that, in the future the associated economic ramifications of the crisis will fall most severely on the younger generations, especially those without degrees and with lower skills, whose opportunities are being undermined by automation.

The responses to the COVID-19 have further exacerbated the marginalization of the young generations, disproportionately affecting the earnings of youth as they are becoming increasingly poor and the elderly increasingly rich.

In many societies, youth were the first to lose their jobs due to quarantine measures as they are working in the sectors hardest hit by the pandemic. Therefore, Youth are at risk of becoming the double lost generation of the 21st century. This lack of opportunities for future economic, societal, and political participation will have long-lasting global consequences.

Today's youth are at a loss of opportunities[23], aged between 15 and 24, they already bear the scars of a decade-long financial crisis, an obsolete education system, an entrenched climate crisis, and widespread violence. They are now coping with an unprecedented global pandemic and growing inequalities of all kinds, be they gender, generational, economic, or ethnic, which translate into varying

degrees of violence and social disruption. The technology-driven industrial transformation has dimmed the prospects of this generation. While the digital leap forward has opened opportunities for some of these young people, many are now entering the labor market in a job drought.

In May 2020, the World Economic Forum's COVID-19 Risks Outlook warned of a «lost next generation». According to the **Global Risk Perception Survey**[24] (GRPS), «youth disillusionment» is one of the major neglected risks that will become a critical threat to the world in the next couple of years.

Prior to COVID, youth made up two-thirds of the world's poor. COVID-19 has severely worsened this situation. Such intergenerational conflicts at the expense of youth have increased worldwide since the crises. In many cases, national policies are still failing to improve their situation. Weak structural transformations have failed to reduce systemic youth unemployment, which remains high, especially in the Middle East and North Africa.

The Islamic world holds one of the highest concentrations of youth in the world[25]. This offers a huge opportunity, but also an unprecedented challenge, as the largest cohort of youth has joined the workplace in unprecedented numbers to date, yet the opportunities are not the same for everyone. Today's youth face increasing uncertainty about their hopes of entering the job market, and this uncertainty and disillusionment can, in turn, have detrimental

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23 (« Global-foresight-2050-1.pdf » s. d.)

24 (« McLennan et Group - The Global Risks Report 2021 16th Edition.pdf » s. d.)

25 "The Global Muslim Population." PRB, 2020. https://www.prb.org/resources/the-global-muslim-population/.

effects on individuals, communities, economies and society as a whole.

ICESCO as a pioneering International Organization in the region acknowledges that youth, at such times of crisis, are in a vulnerable position. Many witness the numerous disproportions between the educational system and the job market. Therefore, the Organization is well aware of the striking need to positively harness the youthful creativity, energy and skills of the younger generation.

Efforts to predict or forecast the future offer limited value in a world of great uncertainty. ICESCO identifies great value in helping a broad range of youth and women to identify a range of plausible future scenarios, explore the impacts these might have and identify potential policy implications.

Through participation and dialogue, which are essential for the effective use of scenarios, the Organization also aims to help younger generations learn from the future to reframe and re-conceive their understanding of the present[26].

- The Climate Crisis

"Climate change - to which no one is immune - continues to be a catastrophic risk. Although lockdowns worldwide caused global emissions to fall in the first half of 2020, evidence from the 2008–2009 financial crisis warns that emissions could bounce back."

World Economic Forum.
"The Global Risks Report 2021
16th Edition.", 2021.

The Covid-19 pandemic ruled the headlines throughout most of 2020, whereas climate change, which represents the other global crisis with potentially devastating effects, has steadily risen in prominence. While the outbreak itself may have curbed these trends temporarily, it failed to stop them permanently.

Infectious diseases are among the most probable risks identified in the Global Risk Report for the next few years, followed by extreme weather, climate policy failure, human-induced environmental damage, and other environmental risks in addition to cyberattacks, and weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, the shift to greener alternatives can only be stalled until the shocks of the pandemic wear off.

Whereas emissions decreased last year due to the various lockdown protocols, the biggest hit was in the transportation sector. Global travel is always on the downshift.

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26 Priority Field of the Strategic Foresight Center of ICESCO: Training a large cohort of youth and women in strategic foresight practices

Nevertheless, both carbon and methane concentrations in the atmosphere have reached their peak levels recorded over millions of years. Indeed, the pandemic has led to a transient decline in the level of emissions, as indicated by the International Energy Agency's analysis of the monthly change in emissions in 2020 compared to previous years.

Although the world is keen on returning to a state of «normalcy», this means for the climate that the level of pollution is increasing again and, more alarmingly, the pace of climate change is also picking up. Normalcy may not imply uncontrolled climate change, rather the discrepancies resulting from climate change can be mitigated. It is merely a path that the global community is opting to follow in the wake of COVID-19 to rebuild an inclusive and accessible future. However, this remains a challenge, as inaction in the face of economic inequality and societal division threatens to further impede action on climate change and thus constitutes an existential threat to humankind.

The focus of climate crisis-driven assumptions is on how the climate system responds to the interplay of human influence, natural factors, and internal variability. Knowledge of climate change response and the range of possible outcomes, including low-probability and high-impact outcomes, feeds into climate-related services, the assessment of climate-related risks, and adaptation planning. Global, regional, and even local climate facts are developed from multiple data sources, including observational products, climate model outputs, and customized diagnostics.

A wide range of possible futures related to the climate crisis is present in the different scenarios employed to consistently assess the impacts of various assumptions on climate projections. A novelty is the ability to determine when climate responses to emission reductions would become discernible above natural climate variability, including internal variability and responses to natural factors[27].

Facing the uncertainty of the future in the midst of and in the wake of the crisis: Future Scenarios:

The following scenarios, drawn from the World Economic Forum's "The Global Risks Report 2021" and "The Global Trends 2040: A more contested World" a publication of the National Intelligence Council, are plausible, and their fulfillment depends on the decisions taken at this point in time by the global community. A transformed future is achievable through prioritizing investment in research, sustainable practices, and global collaboration, where convenience is key, and progress is made in science and technology. Alternatively, a global disorder and fractured futures will take place, where poverty, disease and the creeping effects of climate change take their toll because nations have failed to recognize the urgency and have acted alone rather than collaboratively against a global threat.

- SCENARIO 1 : Technology Brings a Bright Future

Several massive global threats faced in the 2020s brought the world community at large and led it to massively invest in

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27 (« Climate-change-2021.pdf »)

the development of advanced technology. Following this shift, the world entered a sustained era of radical transformation in which technology has had the greatest potential to significantly raise basic living standards within a new world vision that includes access to clean water, nutritional food, affordable housing, tailored education, advanced medical care and clean energy.

These transformations have affected the way in which people work, live, survive and thrive. Now, humans, machines and nature are strongly interconnected. The exponential increase in technology has been vital to the process of achieving a world of abundance[28].

Climate : The accumulated impacts of embedded technologies have resulted in substantial reductions in emissions in the last few years, to the extent that the **"**-1.5 degree**"** target is expected to be met, and solar energy is now the world's leading energy source. The environmental and social impacts of climate change can be tackled through technological advances. Emissions from point sources are effectively contained in most countries, but cumulative emissions from diffuse sources persist. The lag effect in climate impact, therefore, means that the world is still experiencing the effects of climate change.

Demographics: Technological advances and artificial intelligence are driving rapid and drastic changes in human ethos and civilization. Furthermore, employment opportunities are being created in regions where the labor market was once weak, although this has necessitated the implementation of decentralized, tailored

and extremely interactive education, thereby ensuring a more even distribution of wealth, assets, and services, along with a decrease in emigration and migration. Healthcare has also undergone drastic transformations thanks to technological innovation. As a result, there is less pressure and demand on hospitals, nurses, and doctors. Artificial intelligence has overtaken a significant part of the diagnostic function in the medical field.

Nevertheless, disparities have increased between groups that can benefit from technological developments even so that Technological innovations have penetrated every geographical market, every economic sector and every company in the world and Humans, machine and nature are now highly interconnected.

Socio-Economics: Although the global markets continue to grow, wealth is only heavily concentrated in limited regions of the world. Previously, the global economy ran on oil, now it operates through data. Robotics is becoming the medium through which society is becoming increasingly diverse and through which the global economy is expanding by several orders of magnitude.

The shift to personalized patterns of consumption and lifestyles has reshaped society and regional trade flows. High GDP growth is driven by technological developments that create more employment opportunities, higher income per capita and greater consumption, and increased trade. In response, a number of innovative business models are being pursued, providing new opportunities based on technological advances.

28 («Global Foresight 2050 – Six global scenarios and implications.pdf, 77 »)

- SCENARIO 2: A World of Global Resilience

The emphasis has shifted away from efficiency maximization to vulnerability, mitigation, and resilience across all societal dimensions. Global change is fuelled by inter-societal governance consensus and dialogues on sustainable development of natural resources. Consequently, the world is being steered by global understandings resulting in sustainable social and economic outcomes. As a result of this vision, major frameworks for meeting climate commitments and the Sustainable Development Goals are being implemented[29].

Climate : Technological advances and shifts in consumer behavior have contributed significantly to reducing emissions by reducing the use of energy and other materials, as well as through innovative and intelligent solutions. Nevertheless, the impacts of climate change are still escalating as a result of shifts in the climate system.

Demography: In emerging economies, countless numbers of people have been lifted out of poverty. The world understood long ago that the transition from old to modern skills sets offered the key to moving to sustainability and avoiding social unrest.

Socio-Economics: A shift is underway from the concept of neoclassical economics to concepts such as inclusion, justice, equality and ethics. In the early 2025s, States will in all likelihood agree to rethink fundamentally the mechanism of checks and balances, thereby giving the highest priority to the long-term sustainability of the global system. Although economic growth is important, it has been shown that education, health, human security, anti-corruption and legal justice, are equally important.

> Both of these scenarios suggest a prosperous and sustainable world, where global collaboration prevails, and the international community lives in harmony with nature and technology. Businesses are more sustainable and work in the best interests of all stakeholders.
>
> As such, being an international organization operating in a region prone to these trends, ICESCO must strive to fully assist its member states in achieving such an expansion, in order to make the Islamic world a more prosperous and sustainable region, alongside the global progress that the world is expected to experience in the years to come.

- SCENARIO 3: A World in Disorder

The conventional world, to which everyone was accustomed after the Millennium, has collapsed into a state of conflict. The world dialogue is characterized by individualism. Thus, different regions are unable to identify new economic structures and processes to solve the daunting environmental problems the world is facing. The outcome is that global commitments are not met, which is being replaced by ruined markets and depleted natural resources[30].

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29 («Global Foresight 2050 – Six global scenarios and implications.pdf, 88 »)

30 («Global Foresight 2050 – Six global scenarios and implications.pdf, 90 »)

Climate: Prior attempts to curb the impact of climate change has fallen through. As a result, the world suffered temperature increases, water shortages, droughts, pandemics, destroyed coastlines, conflicts, food deficiencies, and other threats that have never been foreseen before. The issue of climate change has emerged as the fulcrum of the lack of a globally coordinated response.

Demography: Skyrocketing levels of criminality, crumbling education, and collapsing health care systems have proved to be beyond the capacity of governments to handle, as they have failed to transition to the necessary skills for the future. Countries have shut their borders to immigration. A mass of refugees wanders the world in pursuit of safer survival options. As a movement, nationalism has reshaped today's world and has been spreading along with the ongoing process of globalization.

Socioeconomics: Regions around the world have not been apt to figure out new economic systems and mechanisms in order to overcome the daunting environmental problems facing the world and to maintain economic growth. Worldwide uncertainty has contributed substantially to an extended phase of stagnating global growth. All of this, along with crippling protectionism, resulted in a steep decline in global trade.

This scenario will emerge when higher walls are built to divide the world, instead of working together. The effects of the pandemic extend into all areas of life and the overall wellbeing of the planet is being neglected. Accordingly, ICESCO ought to provide guidance to its member states in overcoming these megatrends and mitigating their repercussions by adopting a forward-looking approach designed to overcome any notion of uncertainty.

3. Best practices on the international and regional levels

Countries at varying degrees are operating amidst radical uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 crisis. The international and regional impact of this crisis is wide-ranging, with far-reaching implications for both policy interventions and crisis control. In the following section, through examples of responses to mitigate the effects of the crisis are presented, reflecting on their good practices in managing the impact of the COVID-19. This conclusive part is intended to provide a forward-looking perspective to discuss the implications of the crisis for proactive and efficient cross-sectoral governance and the issues that need to be addressed by International Organizations in order to build more resilient regions.

Reflecting on the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic erupted globally in early 2020, wreaking havoc around the world, as the latter lacked a comprehensive vision of the extent and magnitude of its social, economic and the disruptive potential within and between countries[31].

The world continues to grapple with an unprecedented multidimensional crisis requiring coherent responses. The COVID-19 is a further reminder of the vulnerability of many basic systems, notably health care, education, energy, financial markets.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are therefore even more relevant today, given that they focus on transforming the underlying framework conditions that fuel the vulnerabilities of societies and economies. Nevertheless, the human, social and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic threaten to reverse years of progress made towards the SDGs.

Proper responses are required to prevent further repercussions arising from the outbreak. Indeed, the impact of the pandemic has put great pressure on several aspects, including the economic and the social ones. As such, the achievement of sustainable recovery, aligned with the SDGs, requires intersectoral actions and mechanisms to manage the inevitable compromises between short and medium-term priorities, and between economic, social and environmental orientations. Accordingly, most States are seeking to uphold or enhance their national planning capacity, driven primarily by their priorities[32]. Ideally, governments ought to respond in a proportionate and targeted manner within their operating environment[33].

Whereas the daily realities may differ widely from the ideal. The spectrum of responses to COVID-19 is quite broad, albeit with differing assessments as to whether such responses are appropriate to tackle the persistent problem[34]. Therefore, the projected global impacts of this threat remain a constant and growing concern for States[35].

Indeed, the global responses during the outbreak itself may be extremely difficult. With COVID-19 being a new virus and its global repercussions quite unprecedented, decisions are made in a very uncertain, complex, and rapidly changing environment.

It is commonly known that change occurs only when there is a potential crisis or great opportunity. Many organizations and their decision-makers struggle to move out of their comfort zone. It is therefore often necessary to create a conviction that the organization cannot continue to operate as it has done until now, either through fear

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31   (« GlobalTrends_2040.pdf » s. d.)

32 Kandel N, Chungong S, Omaar A, Xing J. Health security capacities in the context of COVID-19 outbreak: an analysis of International Health Regulations annual report data from 182 countries. Lancet. 2020;395(10229):1047–53. doi: 10.1016/s0140-6736(20)30553-5.

33 Maor M, Tosun J, Jordan A. Proportionate and disproportionate policy responses to climate change: core concepts and empirical applications. J Environ Policy Plan. 2017;19(6):599–611. doi: 10.1080/1523908x.2017.1281730.

34 Maor M. Policy overreaction. J Public Policy. 2012;32(3):231–59. doi: 10.1017/s0143814x1200013x.

35 Guarner J. Three emerging coronaviruses in two decades. Am J Clin Pathol. 2020;153(4):420–1. doi: 10.1093/ajcp/aqaa029.

of imminent failure or through the missed chance of unbounded success. Again, there are some pointers to best practices. Thus, navigating a path out of the crisis through appropriate decisions requires careful consideration[36].

Considering the regional variation in the impact of COVID-19, it is crucial that the recovery strategies of some be based on the best practices of others, as the exit from the crisis remains a challenge for many. It is also crucial to actively involve all stakeholders in the implementation of these strategies at an early stage.

The following highlights measures taken by countries that offer good practices for others to follow in their crisis recovery responses.

1. Health care responses:

- Reducing the risk of a further outbreak of Covid-19, the OECD has emphasized that 70-90% of all contacts should be traced, tested, and isolated if infected[37].

- Enabling an effective contact tracing strategy, the individuals in contact should be reached as soon as possible and test results should be provided as soon as possible, which requires that testing kits and reagents are available.

- Where relevant, introducing flexibility in the rules depending on the severity or spread of the virus in an area, such as through localized approaches to lockddown.

- Encouraging local initiatives and experimentation to better match exit-strategy implementation with local or regional characteristics and populations, thereby managing the differentiated impact of the pandemic[38].

- Communicating the exit strategy clearly and regularly to citizens, establishing explicit and easily understandable behavioural guidelines, and creating platforms for questions, answers and exchanges.

2. Economic and social responses:

- Considering direct funding and tax support for local entrepreneurs and workers in the short term and exploring other forms of economic support in the medium to long terms, such as favorable pricing of land and buildings, flexible lending and collateral arrangements, relaxed permits and regulations, and equity financing[39].

- Considering developing further structural policies to help SMEs adopt new ways of working, including teleworking, digital technologies and green practices, to build resilience for themselves and the wider society.

- Adapting public procurement systems to provide adequate responses to emergencies and situations of hardship and support SMEs development.

- Communicating transparently the available aid for vulnerable populations and how to access it and simplify its allocation.

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36 (« The Territorial Impact of COVID-19: Managing the Crisis across Levels of Government - OECD »)

37 («OECD (2020), Testing for COVID-19: A way to lift confinement restrictions »)

38 (« The Territorial Impact of COVID-19: Managing the Crisis across Levels of Government - OECD » s. d.)

39 (« The Territorial Impact of COVID-19: Managing the Crisis across Levels of Government - OECD » s. d.)

- Providing financial support to civil society organizations that assist vulnerable populations and mobilize volunteer networks.

- Reducing the administrative burdens on those services that provide continuity of basic local services and are most effective in helping vulnerable groups.

- Developing programs for vulnerable communities.

3. Use of digital tools:

- Collecting and sharing information and data between all levels of government in a prompt, transparent and regular manner

- Supporting the spread of data and information between jurisdictions to help manage inter-jurisdictional disparities and uncertainties generated by a crisis, and to promote knowledge sharing and the exchange of good practice[40].

- Strengthening the quality of microeconomic data within and across regions to improve understanding of the crisis and its impact.

- Taking advantage of the opportunities offered by digital tools and big data to monitor and stop the spread of the coronavirus, but with equal attention to privacy and data protection issues.

- Using digital opportunities (e.g. e-health and e-education) to ensure continuity of service delivery, taking into account territorial, economic, and social disparities in access.

- Encourage the exchange of good practice in this area between local authorities and frequent users (e.g. health professionals, teachers, students, etc.).

- Introducing measures to bridge the digital divide in exit strategies and investment plans and strengthen central level support for digitization processes, especially for SMEs, poorer urban communities, and remote rural communities.

- Creating incentives for sub-national governments to cooperate in creating digitalization opportunities across jurisdictions, for example through funding opportunities.

- Encouraging the development of pilot projects on digitization at a local level to test, experiment and encourage innovation by local governments.

4. Inter-governmental coordination:

- Introducing, activating, or reorienting existing multi-level coordination bodies in order to minimize the risk of a fragmented crisis response. Use such bodies to refine strategies, develop solutions, and agree on decisions with profound economic, social, and societal implications[41].

- Fostering coordination across levels of government to agree on joint solutions and enhancing acceptance of measures at all levels.

- Mobilizing coordination bodies to coordinate and communicate response, exit and recovery strategies throughout government and across a territory. Technical bodies that can help transform

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40 (« The Territorial Impact of COVID-19: Managing the Crisis across Levels of Government - OECD » s. d.)
41 (« The Territorial Impact of COVID-19: Managing the Crisis across Levels of Government - OECD » s. d.)

strategic thinking into operational plans should also be considered and consulted.

- Clarifying roles and responsibilities among different levels of government to optimize crisis response, exit and recovery strategies, as well as resource deployment.

- Establishing coherent guidelines for each level of government to follow, while also ensuring sufficient flexibility for adjustment to situations.

- Working with national associations of regions and/or municipalities to strengthen vertical coordination in a crisis context, to support the implementation of emergency measures and agree on support packages.

- Encouraging knowledge sharing among members.

- Strengthening cooperation across countries and regions to help minimize disjointed responses and competition for resources during a crisis.

- Facilitating cooperation to support recovery strategies by ensuring coherent safety/mitigation guidelines, pooling resources, and strengthening investment opportunities.

- Promoting the use of e-government tools and digital innovation to simplify, harmonize and accelerate procurement practices at a subnational level.

- Actively pursuing and promoting cross-border cooperation to promote a coherent response recovery approach across a broad territory.

Resilience as a new compass for the International Order

Taking a leading role in avoiding the increased weakening and even total collapse of states and societies threatened by fragility challenges. Resilience understood as the existential ability not only to withstand and cope with challenges but also to transform in a sustainable, fair, and inclusive manner[42] must become the compass for the International Order.

The essential tools for this are already available to the international community in various fields notably in climate adaptation, development, humanitarian aid and peacebuilding. However, a closer inspection reveals that the systems for supporting affected states often operate independently of each other. Therefore, the potential for concentrated efforts is insufficiently exploited.

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed several vulnerabilities, as an analysis of the impacts of the crisis, beyond its terrible human toll, revealed severe disruptions across the global landscape. Preparedness and prevention, early warning systems and coordination structures were clearly under strain, thus underlining the need for more ambitious crisis management for large-scale emergencies at an international level.

In light of the COVID-19 crisis and of the transition-led global agenda, it is clear that the world needs to further strengthen its resilience and bounce forward, by drawing lessons from the pandemic, anticipating future developments, and striking the right balance between the wellbeing of current and future generations[43].

42 Manca, A.R., Benczur, P., and Giovannini, E., 2017, Building a scientific narrative towards a more resilient EU society.

43 Giovannini, E., Benczur, P., Campolongo, F., Cariboni, J., Manca, A.R, 2020. Time for transformative resilience: the COVID-19 emergency, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

A Four-Dimensional Analysis of Resilience

In terms of enhancing resilience, the following four-dimensional analysis[44] provides a solid basis for International Organizations to prepare, address and rebuild in the wake of a crisis. Drawing on the expertise of the European Union in consolidating the notion of resilience in its policymaking process, ICESCO ought to embed a four-dimensional analysis of resilience in its agenda in order to become an integral part of the Organization' forward-looking vision.

- The social and economic dimension

The social and economic dimension of resilience refers to the ability to tackle economic shocks and achieve long-term structural change in a fair and inclusive way. It means building the social and economic conditions for a recovery geared towards the transitions, promoting social and regional cohesion, and supporting the most vulnerable in society while taking into account demographic trends, and social rights[45].

- The geopolitical dimension

Geopolitical resilience relates to bolstering the 'open strategic autonomy' and global leadership role of international actors, especially that the COVID-19 crisis has impacted geopolitical trends and power balances[46].

- The green dimension

Green resilience is about reaching climate neutrality in the medium term, while mitigating and adapting to climate change, reducing pollution and restoring the capacity of ecological systems to sustain our ability to live well within planetary boundaries. This entails eliminating our dependency on fossil fuels, reducing our impact on natural resources, preserving biodiversity, developing a clean and circular economy, achieving a toxic-free environment, changing lifestyles, production and consumption patterns, climate- proofing infrastructure, creating new opportunities for healthy living, green business and jobs, actively pursuing ecosystem restoration, as well as saving our seas and oceans[47].

- The digital dimension

Digital resilience is about ensuring that the way we live, work, learn, interact, and think in this digital age preserves and enhances human dignity, freedom, equality, security, democracy, and other fundamental rights and values. This is increasingly important as hyperconnectivity continues to accelerate, with physical-digital integration, the Internet of Things, smart home technology, the use of big data, augmented and virtual reality, machine learning, and other increasingly capable Artificial Intelligence technologies. Digital technologies blur the distinction between the physical and virtual world, and between humans, machines and nature[48].

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44 2020 Strategic Foresight report: charting the course towards a more resilient Europe. P8
45 2020 Strategic Foresight report: charting the course towards a more resilient Europe P8
46 2020 Strategic Foresight report: charting the course towards a more resilient Europe P14
47 2020 Strategic Foresight report: charting the course towards a more resilient Europe P22
48 2020 Strategic Foresight report: charting the course towards a more resilient Europe P29

III. Regional Context

Vision of ICESCO

Toward an anticipatory, future-oriented and forward-looking Organization in the fields of: Education, Sciences and Technology, Human and Social Sciences and Culture

ICESCO is embracing its role to become an admirable model in the Islamic world through a multi-dimensional approach of several mechanisms. It has adopted a proactive and forward-looking approach enabling it to better shape the futures of the Islamic world and achieve sustainable development and build prosperous societies.

The revised vision of ICESCO aims to lead innovative and pioneering change in education, sciences, technologies, culture, and communication. Under the same perspective, ICESCO intends to support the efforts of its Member States to mitigate the grave effects of the COVID-19 crisis. The future-oriented revised vision epitomizes ICESCO's commitment drive significant progress in the fields of education, sciences and culture, despite the new challenges that have emerged during the COVID-19 crisis. ICESCO was able to transit from anticipation to strategic planification in order to be an active actor of change.

As part of revising the holistic vision adapted to the new situation and in a bid to strengthen its structural cohesion, ICESCO relies on a pool of high-skilled specialized staff enjoying decision-making autonomy in their fields of competence who do not encounter any interference in the exercise of their roles.

ICESCO has paid special attention to aligning its new regulatory framework with international instruments to make its interventions more effective and powerful, in a way that enhances its international reputation and yields a positive impact on the Islamic world. ICESCO also firmly believes in the importance of a participatory approach out of its desire to enhance relations between its Member States in such a way as to ensure expertise, experiences, and best practices are fairly shared among them. Furthermore, ICESCO is fully committed to providing opportunities for constructive global partnerships with major international organizations and developed countries, while observing the rules of fair competition, to contribute to building relations as part of development.

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IV. ICESCO's Sectors' Strategic Orientations

During the 41st Executive Council that was held March 2021, ICESCO has presented its sectorial vision for education, sciences and technology, human and social sciences, and culture and communication in which ICESCO has asserted its unique role to strengthen the development of a lasting sustainable development for its Member States.

ICESCO has mobilized all its bodies and sectors to become more impactful and efficient. The Organization is committed to strengthen its activities and deliver excellency in its fields of competence, provide outstanding performance and innovative strategies.

The **vision** of the educational sector of ICESCO is based on a comprehensive and integrated perspective considering education as a basic human right and a key factor for eradicating poverty, achieving development, peace, democracy and common knowledge. It seeks to benefit every child and every citizen from good education chiefly women and girls. Benefiting from its large expertise, ICESCO works to promote the development of educational policies and programs based on positive values and standard of excellence. The Organization aims to support the efforts of member states in their endeavor towards achieving the 4th goal of SDGs[49].

The Scientific and Technological **vision** of ICESCO aims to enhance the use of disruptive technologies in its Member States, enhance their visibility and competitiveness on the international scene. ICESCO aims to make the Islamic World a sparkling model in the field of Sciences and Technology to overcome the 21st century challenges facing the Islamic world, by promoting the use of new technologies in Member States, for a more inclusive, prosperous, dynamic and sustainable development[50].

ICESCO's **vision** embraces reasserting human and social legislation, policies or programs in the international agenda for more inclusive, prosperous, resilient and sustainable development[51].

The Cultural **vision** of ICESCO aims to support the development of cultural policies in the Islamic world, support cultural production and build strong networks with local communities and civil societies organizations. Besides, it also aims to encounter the challenges of cultural digitalization, digital cultural economy, cultural social and solidarity economy, and innovative industries through the promotion of new digital frameworks. ICESCO is also involved in protecting the cultural heritage and invest its elements in developing traditional industries and develop tourism and environmental tourism[52].

To maximize its efficiency and visibility, ICESCO is translating its ambitious and determined vision to strategic orientations that are straight-forward, efficient, and proactive, enabling the Organization to become more agile.

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49 Vision ICESCO, March 2021.
50 Vision ICESCO, March 2021.
51 Vision ICESCO, March 2021.
52 Vision ICESCO, March 2021.

1. Strategic Orientations of the Education Sector:

Introduction

Under ICESCO's new vision, education is a major priority, as it represents a basic human right that every human being should enjoy without discrimination. It is also the most effective way to change the world, meet challenges, and shape the future. Education is the power of the future and the greatest hope for humanity, as well as being the main pillar for building peace, citizenship, tolerance, social justice, respect for human rights, eradicating poverty, hunger, unemployment, and inequality, and preserving the planet and achieving its sustainable development and human welfare.

The 21st century is characterized by rapid, overlapping, and complex changes, uncertainty, and relies on proactivity in dealing with current issues, wherein knowledge and innovation play a central role in achieving the desired development such as: big data, knowledge revolution, communication and information technologies, applications of Artificial Intelligence and other modern technologies and mechanisms of progress. The astonishing scientific and technological revolution represents a tremendous revolution that touches and affects profoundly all aspects of our lives, which imposes the need to upgrade educational systems so that they contribute more than ever to the advancement of people's well-being, the progress of countries and the realization of the desired future.

Despite the international community's commitment to achieving the fourth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals, which aims to «ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all», millions of children, youth, and adults are deprived of education and suffer from lack of opportunities to learn. Girls and women are particularly deprived from their educational right for several social, political, and economic challenges. In addition, a large proportion of young people in school are not receiving a quality education, with more than half of the world's children and adolescents failing to meet minimum standards of literacy and mathematical proficiency. Furthermore, educational opportunities are unevenly distributed, and the barriers to quality education are still hindering the accessibility and reachability to a large cohort.

In addition, almost one billion adults have been denied real learning opportunities. Therefore, more efforts are urgently called upon to accelerate progress in expanding and improving the quality of learning opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable groups.

Therefore, providing education and making it accessible to all, and then expanding it and improving its quality, is the focus of the Education Sector at ICESCO, occupying a prominent place in its agenda as the main priority of the sector. To achieve this, the Education Sector is expanding its efforts to provide full support to Member States to help them develop their education systems, with the aim of achieving the fourth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, the sector provides technical, material and moral support to Member States in order to improve their capacity to meet current and future demand for education, and to continue accelerating

the progress made in providing quality, equitable and inclusive education for all.

One of the repercussions of the pandemic on the education system is that many students were not able to continue their studies, because of the interruption of communication with their teachers and schools, their low academic level and the need for continuous support from the educational body, or because of their poor economic and social situation, which prevents the continuation of education via Internet, resulting in the dropout of many students, especially among the most disadvantaged groups. Moreover, the curricula presented during the crisis were the same as those before that were implemented for teaching face to face, not taking into account distance education, its philosophy and nature. In some cases, parts of the curricula have been limited and others cut back, notably weakening the target competency system. Additionally, teachers were not qualified for e-learning and distance education. Thus, practices became improvised, little different from the previous way of dealing with students inside the school, but rather lacking real communication between teachers and students. The education sector is also at the forefront of sectors that have been directly affected by the reduction in public spending as a result of the economic shock of the pandemic in many countries.

Since the onset of the pandemic, ICESCO has promptly intensified its efforts and measures to ensure the continuity of the educational process, which is one of its top priorities, while striving to support the efforts of its Member States. ICESCO educational strategic orientations are also adopting a proactive and future oriented perspective, allowing ICESCO to be more efficient in the field of education. ICESCO has been at the forefront of international organizations that have paid close attention to the issue of continuing education by adopting alternative means during the period of social distancing, and by preparing for the reopening of schools throughout the pandemic and its aftermath. However, it is important to recognize that the current crisis will have long-term consequences for education in terms of enrolment, quality, equity and governance, which are likely to persist beyond the pandemic. This highlights the growing need to improve the flexibility, capacity and quality of education systems, and to develop education policies, strategies and plans that take into account the necessary state of preparation to deal with crises and emergencies, and to work towards achieving the fourth sustainable development goal.

Despite the challenges that the pandemic brings to education, it also provides a real opportunity to start planning for a better future for education. In this sense, and based on ICESCO's new vision, which embraces a holistic and integrated forward-looking approach to its areas of work and given that the post-Covid-19 world will change dramatically, and because education is shaped to adapt to the times and respond to their needs, education systems ought to shift from their current state to become more efficient, better quality, fairer, more sustainable, more peaceful and resilient. Such that education systems need to be rebuilt differently, so that they become comprehensive education systems , equitable, and more responsive, appropriate, and flexible, to meet the needs of countries in crisis and

post-crisis contexts. Therefore, ICESCO's Education Sector (through the 2022-2025 strategy) is implementing several projects, programs and activities that express the needs and desired goals of ICESCO's Member States and advance the future of education in the Islamic world, in order to achieve the fourth sustainable development goal. The aim is to ensure quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, in an equitable and inclusive manner.

Major Strategic Orientations:

Implementing the human right to quality education

Improving the skills and competences of learners

Rational value acquisition

Effective Investment in information
and communication technologies
and artificial intelligence techniques in education

Continous professional development of teachers

Promotion of the literacy of youth and adults,
especially girls and women,
and enhancing their capacities

Engaging in a forward-looking and proactive approach
approach in planning based on scientific foundations

Meeting the educational needs
and priorities of Member States

Strategic Orientation 1:

Implementing the human right to quality education

Ensure that no one is deprived of an adequate education that meets their needs, aspirations, preparation, skills, and creativity, by supporting Member States in developing education systems that promote quality, equitable and inclusive lifelong learning for all, by increasing opportunities for learning through a variety of educational pathways (formal education, non-formal and informal learning), and by providing real education and training opportunities for those who are not in school, to enable them to learn. In addition, addressing all forms of exclusion, marginalization and discrimination, inequality and equity of access to education, disparity in learning outcomes, and focusing on the marginalized, poorest, most vulnerable and most disadvantaged groups.

Strategic Orientation 2:

Improving the skills and competences of learners

There is a need to develop education to better prepare learners for what the future may bring. The education sector, therefore, plays a leading role in empowering learners to become creative and responsible citizens, by focusing on improving the quality of the educational process and developing curricula, teaching methods and materials, and methods of assessing learning outcomes.

Strategic Orientation 3:

Rational value acquisition

One of the main objectives of education is to establish tolerant values, healthy attitudes, and behaviors to prepare learners to

contribute effectively to the establishment of fairer, more equitable, more peaceful and more sustainable societies. Assuming its central role in this regard, the education sector seeks to strengthen efforts to provide learners with a tolerant Islamic value system, and to strengthen their willingness to act in accordance with it, by focusing on activating this value system within the educational process.

Strategic Orientation 4:

Effective investment in information and communication technologies and Artificial Intelligence techniques in education

The importance of the use of information and communication technologies and Artificial Intelligence techniques for all aspects of societies and individuals' life, including education. It is beneficial for all, especially for marginalized groups, by increasing the use of education, improving its quality and reducing inequalities, and encouraging the production, exchange and adaptation of quality educational resources. In this context, the education sector is committed to following developments in the field of new technologies and Artificial Intelligence techniques, striving to make them available, to develop their investment and use, to make the best use of them in the educational process, to crystallize a new conception of teaching and learning processes, and to adopt educational strategies based on them which would facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and ensure more effective learning by students. In order to promote the effective use of these technologies in education, the sector supports Member States' efforts to develop technology-based learning strategies and to build and develop capacity in this area.

Strategic Orientation 5:

Continuous professional development of teachers

Teachers are the cornerstone of improving the quality of education and achieving learning outcomes, and it is not viable to adopt policies and practices to develop education without raising the performance level of teachers. It is therefore necessary to allocate programs and activities aimed at developing teachers' capacities, disseminating innovative pedagogical practices aimed at improving the effectiveness of education, as well as using information and communication technologies in education and in improving educators' skills.

Strategic Orientation 6:

Promotion of the literacy of youth and adults, especially girls and women, and enhancing their capacities

Literacy is the basis for the lifelong learning process and skills acquisition. The Education Sector will focus on promoting programs and activities that address the needs of illiteracy eradication, capacity building and development, including the learning of 21st century skills and labor market skills, for the benefit of youth and adults, especially girls and women in Member States, considering those countries with the largest number of illiterates. The sector intends to strengthen the use and employment of information and communication technologies in this regard.

Strategic Orientation 7:

Engaging in a forward-looking and proactive approach in planning based on scientific foundations

To map out the desired future of education in our Member States in an implementable way that contributes to the upgrading of education systems. In the light of rapid and complex global changes, new opportunities, challenges, and requirements for education systems are appearing on the horizon, which requires the adoption of foresight and strategic thinking in the planning of education systems. There is therefore a need to work towards helping Member States to advance their foresight and planning capacities in the field of education, to develop educational policies and plans and to create the future they want for their education systems, in order to achieve a real qualitative leap in education.

Strategic Orientation 8:

Meeting the educational needs and priorities of Member States

Taking into account the local conditions of each country, by providing the necessary support for the advancement of their education systems, such as the preparation of educational strategies, studies and textbooks, and contributing to the development of curricula, teaching methods and evaluation, and by providing them with the technological and educational means necessary for the success of the educational process, taking into account that ICESCO's expertise in its fields of work. **Responding to emergencies and crises**, rebuilding and striving to build more resilient and durable education systems capable of responding to crises are also of a great importance.

Regional and International Challenges:

Population growth and increasing demand for education

Massive Digital Revolution

Significant gap between the skills of graduates, the need of the labor market and the skills of the future

Increasing poverty and vulnerability of certain groups, especially women and youth

COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath
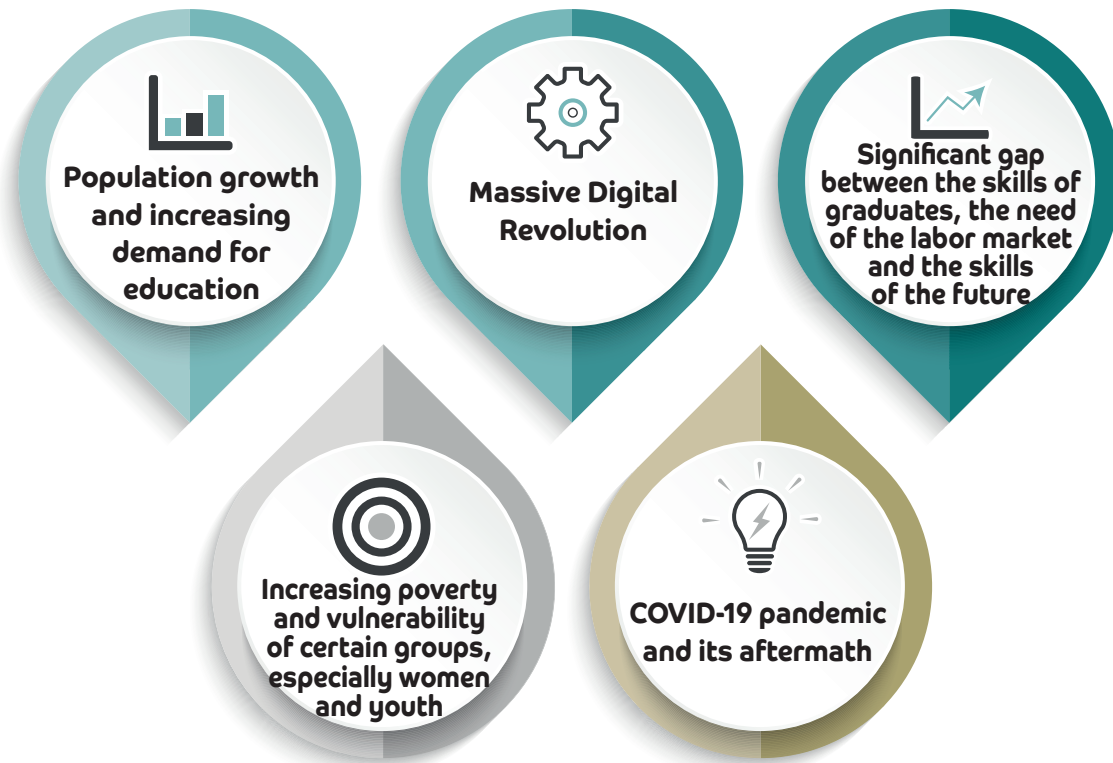
1. **Population growth and increasing demand for education:** Demographic trends in turn affect education in different ways. Population growth leads to a growing demand for education, which requires increased investment to expand access and availability of education and improve its quality and equity for all.

2. **Increasing poverty and vulnerability of certain groups, especially women and youth, persistent practices of discrimination and exclusion, and the exacerbation of social, economic and gender inequalities**, which increase vulnerabilities and undermine the foundations of social peace. These factors pose enormous challenges to the realization of the right to education, as wide disparities in access to quality education are widening. Thus, reducing poverty and inequality and achieving equity are key policy challenges, and

education can contribute directly to addressing them. At the same time, education is negatively affected by these challenges. Therefore, education policies, strategies and programs should adopt an equitable perspective for the poor and overcome any poverty-related barriers that prevent the realization of the right to education for all without discrimination.

3. **COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath**; As a result, education is still undergoing a violent shock that threatens its continuity on the one hand, and its quality and equity on the other. This imposes the need to strive to rebuild education systems, to ensure access, quality and equity for all, and to make them more responsive, appropriate and flexible in crisis and post-crisis contexts.

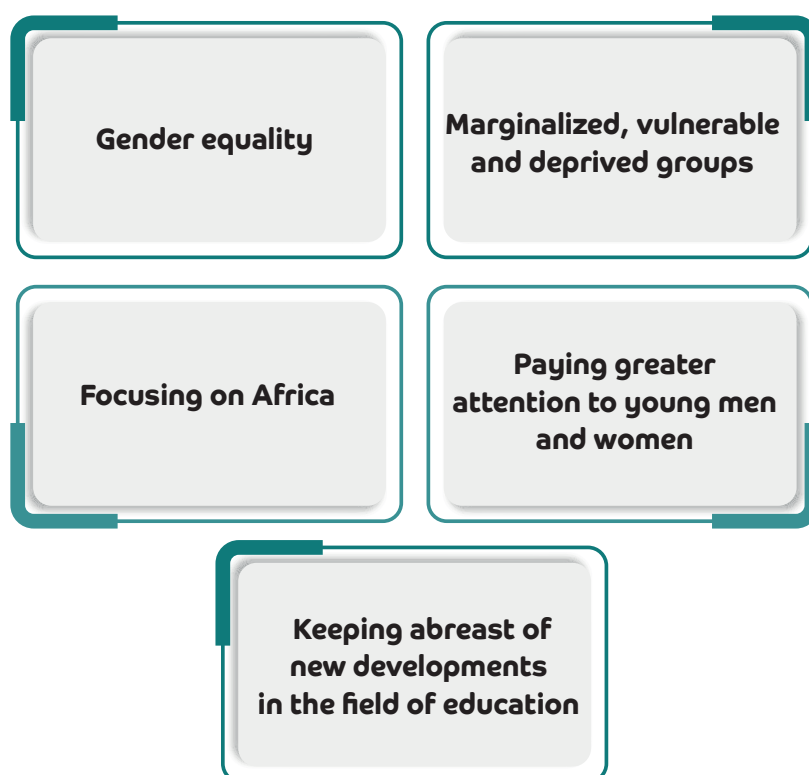4. **The massive digital revolution, including information and communication**

technologies and applications of artificial intelligence, carries many hopes and opportunities for human well-being and social progress, and opens up unprecedented horizons in various fields, foremost among which is education, where technology is helping to deliver education in a cost-effective manner and to increase student enrollment. It also helps in the preparation of teachers and their professional development. At the same time, however, it imposes many challenges, as it creates a knowledge gap between many countries, as these technologies are distributed inequitably. As a result, many societies are not able to benefit on an equal footing with other societies from the opportunities offered by modern technologies. Furthermore, the effects of this digital revolution on the social fabric and the system of societal values and norms. Growing explosion of information and knowledge available through technology is transforming education systems, increasing the opportunities for learning and generating a demand for new skills, which in turn affects the types of skills that learners should acquire.

5. **The significant gap between the skills of graduates, the needs of the labor market and the skills of the future**, as more and more graduates realize that the quality of the education, received is no longer relevant to the times and the labor market, young graduates of higher education are lacking the necessary skills to engage with the rapidly changing labor market. There is ample evidence that the output of many educational institutions is not adapted to the requirements of current situations and the skills of the future, in terms of the knowledge, skills and abilities needed. This makes it necessary to support the efforts of Member States to improve the quality of education and to develop their curricula.

Priority Fields:

Gender equality

Marginalized, vulnerable and deprived groups

Focusing on Africa

Paying greater attention to young men and women

Keeping abreast of new developments in the field of education

1. **Gender equality** is a fundamental human right, a foundation for sustainable development, as pillar of social justice and an economic necessity. Sustainable development and peace can only be achieved if women and men are given ample opportunities, choices and capabilities as equal citizens with full rights. This is why the focus is on gender-sensitive programs and activities that empower women and men in social, political and economic terms, changing gender stereotyping and mainstreaming gender equality considerations in education policies, programs and initiatives. Pre-school education will be given increasing importance under this priority, as young people are the hope of the future and solid gender equality begins at an early age.

2. **Marginalized, vulnerable and deprived groups**, as these groups suffer from insufficient accessibility to education and do not benefit from it, especially during crises and outbreaks, as proven by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the educational opportunities. They were unable to acquire sufficient technology and internet to access and interact with the educational process remotely, thus widening the gap between marginalized groups and others. Therefore, these groups need to be addressed and placed at the heart of ICESCO's agenda, with the education sector focusing on supporting Member States to reform and develop their education systems, address disparities and inequalities, and provide programs and activities specifically for

these groups. Giving special attention to the reconstruction of education systems in countries affected by crises, conflicts and natural disasters is also a must.

3. **Focusing on Africa** since it is one of the poorest regions in the world, which has had a negative impact on the development of educational institutions. The low capacity of educational personnel, the lack of financial resources available, the lack of necessary supplies and means for the educational process, the high rate of illiteracy, especially among girls and women, and the low quality of education and its regulation are the main issues in the continent. This requires an intensification of many programs and activities for the development of poor African countries, modernizing their education systems and improving their quality and governance. More education, training, social integration and vocational empowerment programs and activities are needed to keep pace with the changing demographic structure of the continent, which is expected to have two billion inhabitants by 2050[53], most of whom are young people, in order to improve human well-being and achieve sustainable development on the African continent.

4. **Paying greater attention to young men and women**, especially as they have enormous potential that can be harnessed to mobilize efforts and achieve renewal and progress. Their needs and aspirations are a major concern for achieving sustainable development. The burden of change lies primarily with

53 Bandar Hajjar, "Africa's Population Growth Will Triple by 2050," World Economic Forum, January 13, 2020.

young people, as they are leading the way in crucial social transformations. The education sector therefore attaches great importance to mainstreaming youth issues and better identifying their needs in the preparation and implementation of programs and activities. The sector's activities focus on developing the capacities of young people to participate actively and effectively in the development of their society.

5. **Keeping abreast of new developments in the field of education**, as changes and developments are very rapid, and the educational and training process cannot remain trapped in rigid models that do not interact with them. In the context of the search for a better future, it is not possible to continue with the model of education that has been perpetuated in the past era, and which is impossible to contribute to the realization of the desired development by any solid standard. This compels to work hard and relentlessly to build a new education that corresponds to the desired image for the future. It is important to rethink education: its philosophy, objectives, roles, functions, structure, content, methods and means. The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the urgent need for new methods and models of education, especially e-learning, co-education, reverse education and alternative education.

Key Performance Indicators:

Major Strategic Orientation	Key Performance Indicators
Implementing the human right to quality education	ICESCO will work through the education sector, as part of its new vision, to support the efforts of its Member States towards achieving the fourth goal of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals for education: « Ensuring equitable and inclusive quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all», as indicators and reports indicate international efforts of the slow pace of progress towards the achievement of the fourth goal. The education sector is thus called upon to intensify its efforts to support, strengthen and guide Member States' efforts to achieve the objectives of the fourth goal by 2030.
Improving the skills and competences of learners	- Literacy and numeracy rates. - Qualified skills and capacities in digital technology use in literacy programs. - Improved national experiences in empowering women and girls.
Rational value acquisition	- Number of projects submitted for sector awards. - Number and quality of studies, evidence, and reference materials. - Number of international days celebrated.

Effective investment in information and communication technologies and artificial intelligence techniques in education	- Number of educational caravans and beneficiaries and their satisfaction rate. - Number of educational institutions benefiting from logistic equipment. - Optimal use of technological means in the educational process. - Good practices for the integration of the pedagogical uses of the ICT. - The number of virtual learning platforms established and activated. - The number and quality of multimedia courses developed.
Continuous professional development of teachers	- Educational institutions developed and adapted to the needs of the time. - Number of qualified national executives, experts and officials (in person or at a distance) in the sector's fields of activity. - Qualified educational personnel capable of contributing to the development of educational systems. - Advanced skills and capacities in modern teaching strategies.
Promoting the literacy of youth and adults, especially girls and women, and enhancing their capacities	- Educational institutions that support the education of all groups, especially the marginalized and underprivileged. - Fewer female school dropouts and improved educational conditions for disadvantaged girls. - National education policies that reduce illiteracy among girls and women. - Number of women and girls benefiting from income-generating projects. - Better economic and social situation for girls and women rescued from illiteracy.
Engaging in a forward-looking and proactive approach in planning based on sound scientific foundations	- Advanced skills and capacities in modernizing teaching methods and materials and investing in information and communication technologies in Quranic and Islamic education. - Policies and strategies compatible with literacy and non-formal education programs - Advanced skills and capacities in the field of educational planning, methodologies, and operations.
Meeting the educational needs and priorities of Member States	- Number of Member States and Muslim educational institutions outside the Islamic world that have benefited from the sector's projects and programs. - Higher educational performance and less educational loss in member states. - Increased exposure of ICESCO in the Balkan countries in the field of education for sustainable development values. - Concrete development of education systems, improved quality and higher performance of education systems in the Member States. - A better future for education systems in light of the digital revolution and artificial intelligence in the Member States.

2. Strategic Orientations of the Sciences and Technologies Sector

1. Introduction

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen an accelerated rise of digitization, artificial intelligence, distant education and online services, as well as cutting-edge research for the production of vaccines from mRNA, a need for connected cities, Water and Food security, Hygiene and Health improvement, etc. The pandemic has reinforced the importance of science, scientists, researchers and Science and Technology based knowledge production systems. During the pandemic, countries have turned to science to find solutions and public has become increasingly interested not only to understand the pandemic, but also answers to other pressing questions related to environment, health, education, etc. This reveals the importance of investing in science and technology infrastructure in our member countries and emphasizing the importance of science, technology and innovation (STI) in times of crisis in understanding and solving global challenges. The contribution of STI is not only limited to the times of COVID-19 but also for providing solutions for the recovery after the pandemic.

Looking at it from a different angle COVID-19 crisis has destroyed all geographic barriers and demonstrated the importance of international cooperation in science and technology when dealing with complex global problems. To this end, it is essential to promote open science policies and open innovation. ICESCO will focus on strengthening cooperation among its Member States in the field of science and technology to strengthen institutional capacities and human resource development so that the Member States can benefit from technological advances and subsequently create, understand, adapt, use STI for the sustainable development of their population. Indeed, the transfer of technology and the development of technological capacities will be the priority, in particular for the least developed countries, to develop national and regional innovation ecosystems. For this purpose, a new technology transfer mechanism should be developed among the Member countries.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also shown the fragility of the health system in majority of the ICESCO member states. It is thus necessary to use the lessons learned from this pandemic to strengthen research, development and innovation systems at all levels and to strengthen the capacities and preparedness of the various health establishments and research centers and stakeholders in order to prevent, prepare and respond to new crises. On the other hand, most of our Member States have insufficient or no manufacturing capacities in the pharmaceutical and medical device industry, forcing them to depend heavily on imports. ICESCO will thus focus on the development of local health industries, as well as disease treatment, scientific research and capacity building programs in the production, supply of medical devices to improve the health and well-being of our population.

New economic concepts and trends have opened the doors for better built after COVID, based on 'Greening the Future' and 'Green Recovery' while promoting the

preservation of nature and accelerating the digital transformation. Certainly, in a context of Post-Covid Economic recovery, our member countries are facing crucial challenges to accelerate the transition to Digital and Green economies. Thus, there is a need to implement smart development technologies taking into consideration the preservation of the environment and biodiversity while meeting economic needs, ensuring a smooth transition to green and digital economy, without exacerbating inequalities. Digital and technological transformation is the key to the accelerated growth and development of Member States, especially the least developed countries by creating enabling policy environments.

Obviously, the pandemic has shown that countries that have mastered STI are capable of creating innovation and have thus been the countries that have been able to provide rapid solutions to the pandemic by developing vaccines in a timely manner and providing an impetus of emerging out of this crisis. This has demonstrated clearly that STI constitutes a powerful engine in the processes of socio-economic transformation with regard to its impact in growth sectors such as Agriculture, Energy, Environment, Health, Water, Infrastructure and Security.

It is for this reason that the International Community has made the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) imperative by 2030. These goals cover improving employment prospects in increasingly diversified economies, particularly for women and young people, as well as improving energy efficiency, promoting sustainable production and consumption models, while taking STI

into account in all growth strategies, both nationally and internationally. Support for these goals were also clearly included in the agenda 2026 of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) at its first STI meeting held in 2017.

The Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) as a part of its New Vision has set its sights to promote STI in its Member States to boost endogenous, inclusive, and sustainable socioeconomic development. However, the implementation of this will remain dependent on the level of development of STI in the various countries. The analysis of member country policies reveals a great disparity in terms of the development of STI and the methodologies adopted in their development and implementation. Despite the encouraging progress made in a few Member States in the fields of higher education, which is reflective in their scientific publications, as well as an increase in the number of their researchers, and the higher investment in education and scientific infrastructures, most of the Islamic World is still lagging in these areas due to a lack of proper funding. For example, France allocates 2.2 of its GDP to Research / Development; while for countries like Ivory Coast and Algeria, the rates are 0.10% and 0.54%, respectively. Another observation is that the number of researchers is steadily increasing in the world, but this rate remains very low in OIC member countries, mainly in the African region. For example, even though sub-Saharan Africa is home to 14% of the world's population, it represents only 0.7% of the world's researchers.

UNESCO's report on science draws attention to the fact that the current World trend of

publications is mainly focused on artificial intelligence, there were almost 150,000 publications on artificial intelligence and robotics in 2019 alone. This field dominates scientific production at the expense of other technologies that have potential benefits for developing countries, such as energy, material sciences, nanotechnology, biotechnology, etc. What is of even higher concern to note is that climate resilience and sustainable environmental management continue to account for the smallest share of research by volume.

In addition to the traditional sciences the World long ago identified the importance and benefit of investing in space sciences and worked on improving the knowledge transfer mechanism in space-inspired industries as areas of implementation in its space education and innovation strategy. Unfortunately, in the developing countries, particularly in the Muslim World there is a big gap in awareness about the importance of space science in fields such as communications, disaster management, education improvement, environment protection, agriculture development, and natural resource management. There seems to be a general lack of vision to leverage scientific research and technological innovation as engines for increased national productivity and economic growth, it thus becomes mandatory in the member states to establish significantly strong links in space-inspired industries for bridging the huge gap between them and the developed World.

Dr Salim M. AlMalik, the Director General of ICESCO recently very aptly expressed that: "To meet the challenges of the future, the world needs to utilize the full potential of women in all spheres of life, especially in sciences". This very clearly lays the foundation of the importance of empowering women in sciences, which will allow us to achieve two SDGs (4 & 5) of agenda 2030. ICESCO has thus revitalized its efforts to fill the gender gap in science through not only an equal participation of women in all areas of Science but in fact it is taking an affirmative action towards it. Unfortunately, Women accounted for one in three (33%) researchers in 2018, this is even though they have achieved parity (in numbers) in life sciences in many countries and even dominate this field, in some cases. This disparity exists mostly due the fact that they make up a bit more than one-quarter (28%) of tertiary graduates in engineering and 40% of those in computer sciences, in addition just 22% of professionals working in the field of AI are women. Unfortunately, women thus remain as a minority in technical and leadership roles in tech companies in the Islamic World.

Hence, there is not only a need of gender equality but also to intensify efforts to consolidate the achievements and ensure steady growth and progress with regards to human and natural resources, which are as rich as they are varied in the Muslim World. We believe that the development of these can improve STI capacities and allow a better response to the requirements of competitiveness and development.

The Science and Technologies Sector of ICESCO is also engaged and future orientated and forward-looking perspective, translated through its strategic orientations.

2. Major Strategic Orientations:

Improvement of knowledge and skills in STI

Development and Promotion of emerging technologies

Promotion of Technopoles to develop cooperation between companies, universities and research centers

Greening the future and fostering a positive climate action plan

Strengthening cooperation amongst member states through Science Diplomacy

Boosting Space Sciences and its applications

In the context of improving the STI capabilities of the member states the Science and Technology Sector has included among its priorities the implementation of ICESCO's vision aimed at supporting them in all their endeavors. This strategy of the Science and Technology Sector takes into account the evolving trends in STI on the global scale and the existing opportunities at the State level. Members of ICESCO need advancement in terms of human and natural resources, as well as a need to address the social demands of its vast, diverse, complex society, which demands improvement in their quality of life based on ethical principles.

Strategic Orientation 1:
Improvement of knowledge and skills in STI

Considering the fact that the World has become a highly competitive market for ideas, creativity and innovation, the strengthening of human capacities and skills in ICESCO Member States will promote socio-economic development, strengthen their competitiveness, as well as increase their contribution to the World market. To this end, the need of universities and research institutions is to strengthen human capacities and engage in cutting-edge research for development; such that the countries' economies become more competitive in terms of scientific and technological research and innovation.

It should be noted that alongside formal systems for acquiring knowledge and skills, special attention should be paid to Endogenous Knowledge Systems, which play an important role in the appropriation of socio-economic development processes. Indeed, the fact that these Systems continue to survive alongside modernization trends is an indication of their strength, flexibility, and relevance.

- **Priority Objective 1:** Develop advocacy to induce Member States to promote STI in socio-economic development policies

- **Priority Objective 2:** Evaluate, develop and harmonize policies relating to knowledge production and STI policies at the national level and between Member States

- **Priority Objective 3:** Strengthen research and higher education establishments, as well as the capacity for conducting research and development of innovation

- **Priority Objective 4 :** Put in place mechanisms to ensure the continuous training of teachers in science, mathematics and engineering while updating their knowledge and skills

- **Priority Objective 5 :** Establish national think tanks and networks between Member States to leverage political decision-makers to develop STI

- **Priority Objective 6 :** Promote the twinning of teaching and research institutions and exchange of STI experts between Member States

- **Priority Objective 7:** Provide opportunities to younger people, and especially young women, to turn to education and careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

- Priority Objective 8: Integrate Endogenous Knowledge Systems into the methods, processes and practices of learning scientific and technological know-how and skills throughout the school system in Member States.

Strategic Orientation 2:

Development and Promotion of emerging technologies

The current conditions in the World have shown very clearly that there is an urgent need for a fundamental change in the way we live through the integration of digital technologies in all fields of human activities, including healthcare, education, public services, etc. These technologies cover innovations such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), the Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, quantum computing, artificial intelligence, 3D printing, cloud computing, blockchain technology, etc. Some of these technologies have given birth to FabLabs that can work as a global network of manufacturing workshops, which facilitate innovation by making computers and computer-controlled tools available to the public. They are used in particular for computer-aided design and manufacturing, additive manufacturing, computer numerical control, VR and AR for the design of technological products and the manufacture of prototypes.

In addition to transformative technologies, the focus of development should be on material sciences, nanotechnology, synthetic biology, biotechnology, high-through-put DNA sequencing, genomic editing, genomic medicine, neurosciences, etc.

These developments in the field of STI and the possibilities offered by them will undoubtedly contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, in particular the improvement of employment prospects in increasingly diversified economies, particularly for women and young people, as well as improving energy efficiency and promoting sustainable production and consumption models.

- **Priority Objective 9 :** Promote development and improved access to digital technologies in Member States

- **Priority Objective 10 :** Build capacities and skills to obtain a critical mass of human resources in emerging technologies

- **Priority Objective 11 :** Promote emerging technologies in the various production systems

- **Priority Objective 12 :** Establish technological platforms to facilitate knowledge exchange between Member States

- **Priority Objective 13 :** Develop ethical standards to frame the development and use of emerging technologies

- **Priority Objective 14 :** Promote synergies and encourage pooling of resources to benefit from the augmented advantages between the Member States

- **Priority Objective 15 :** Promote innovation and entrepreneurship for sustainable and inclusive development

Strategic Orientation 3 :

Promotion of Technopoles to develop cooperation between companies, universities and research centers

The purpose of the Technopoles is to provide companies with an environment where they will have the opportunity to develop close collaboration with specific centers of excellence from which they can draw mutual benefit. They also maintain formal and operational linkages with knowledge centers such as universities, institutes of higher education, research organizations and the local and global markets. As such, they facilitate the creation and growth of innovation companies through business incubators or nurseries and spin-offs in order to offer value-added services as well as providing high-quality spaces and facilities.

The Technopoles thus act as job creators through the establishment of traditional businesses and creation of new businesses, thus contributing to the economic growth of countries. This business creation is possible thanks to the economic valuation of research results and technological innovations. The development of technopoles play an important role in the economic growth through (i) the dissemination and transfer of knowledge, (ii) support for the production of knowledge and (iii) skills training.

- **Priority Objective 16:** Identify strategic technological areas with growth potential for the creation and / or development of technopoles

- **Priority Objective 17:** Ensure better coordination between businesses, university, research institutions and market needs

- **Priority Objective 18:** Promote the development of incubators in cutting-edge growth technologies

- **Priority Objective 19:** Establish sustainable financing mechanisms for the production of knowledge and skills

- **Priority Objective 20:** Develop synergies in the different technopoles according to their comparative advantages

- **Priority Objective 21:** Establish and coordinate networks of scientific and industrial skills at the national and international level

- **Priority Objective 22:** Promote business technologies to ensure the promotion of products and technologies

- **Priority Objective 23:** Ensure scientific and technological monitoring to upgrade processes and products.

Strategic Orientation 4:

Greening the future and fostering a positive climate action plan

During the COVID-19 lockdown, pollution decreased, rivers became healthier, and we began to breathe cleaner air. The 2020 pandemic has thus raised awareness around the World about the importance of preserving nature and its biodiversity. Therefore, the World now attaches a higher importance to green as well as circular economy, to green growth, to blue economy, to green jobs, to sustainable agriculture, to renewable energies, as well as nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation and using innovative technologies for integrated water resource management. The International Labor Organization estimates that the shift to a greener economy could create 24 million new jobs worldwide, by the year 2030, through the adoption of sustainable practices in the energy sector,

the use of electric vehicles and increasing the energy efficiency in existing and future buildings as well as cities. It is under these dynamics that ICESCO is committed to supporting the efforts of its Member States for a greener future.

According to UN, the current crisis is an opportunity for a profound rethink and shift to a more sustainable economy that will work for not only a better life for the people but also slow the progression of parameters that are leading to the destruction of the planet that we live on. The UN Secretary-General has thus proposed six climate affirmative actions for the governments to take in order to build sustainable societies, these include:

1. "Green transition: Investments must accelerate the decarbonization of all aspects of our economy"

2. "Green jobs and sustainable and inclusive growth"

3. "Green economy: making societies and people more resilient through a transition that is fair to all and leaves no one behind"

4. "Invest in sustainable solutions: fossil fuel subsidies must end and polluters must pay for their pollution"

5. "Confront all climate risks"

6. "Cooperation: no country can succeed alone".

Based on these six elements, S&T Sector at ICESCO has formulated the following priority objectives:

- **Priority Objective 24:** Fostering Eco-innovative solutions and concepts for environmental protection mainly through the implementation of Smart, Sustainable

and Resilient cities, Green and Circular economy, Blue Economy, etc.

- **Priority Objective 25:** Upgrading Skills on Eco-technologies, Green Project preparation and encouraging entrepreneurship

- **Priority Objective 26:** Green Technology Transfer for tackling Climate change effects in different sectors

- **Priority Objective 27:** Encouraging Green Scientific Research and collaboration.

Strategic Orientation 5:

Strengthening cooperation amongst member states through Science Diplomacy.

The concept of science diplomacy, also called "smart power" or "soft power" in academic discourse, is of relatively recent origin. Science diplomacy is about using scientific collaborations between nations to solve common problems and to build constructive international partnerships. Because of its vocation, it offers a new dimension to international relations. As such, the concept aims to build bridges between communities, societies and nations through closer interactions between scientists, as well as to strengthen the role of science in foreign policy in order to meet national and global challenges.

The lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and from the crises period in general is that **collaboration is at the heart of the STI response and that the concerted response to COVID-19 offers renewed hope that international STI co-operation can help provide solutions to other global challenges.** Indeed, The Islamic World should

capitalize on this to refocus international STI cooperation on global issues through new innovative mechanisms and stronger collaborative innovation models.

Given the disparities observed in the fields of science and technology in the Islamic World, ICESCO will promote scientific diplomacy among its Member States to meet common challenges and promote the sharing and transfer of knowledge, skills and technologies on the basis of distinctive comparative advantages. In addition, it will also allow further input into the major issues being debated globally in STI thus allowing the narrowing of technology gaps and disparities between the nations of the World.

- **Priority Objective 28 :** Establish platforms for dialogue between experts and political decision-makers for a better appropriation of the concept of scientific diplomacy

- **Priority Objective 29 :** Promote the transfer of knowledge, skills and technologies through the mobility of students and teachers

- **Priority Objective 30 :** Create networks and chairs in specific fields to connect scientists, researchers and the universities.

Strategic Orientation 6 :

Boosting Space Sciences and its applications

Space sciences and technologies are transdisciplinary and multifaceted, and they offer applications that can contribute, directly or indirectly, to the achievement of the SDGs, in particular:

- Ensure food security, boost agriculture and reduce poverty

• Limit Disaster Risks and prevent humanitarian crises

• Better management of natural resources and the environment

• Improve knowledge of the environment and degradation processes

• Climate and meteorological monitoring

• The development of health information infrastructures for better access to care

• Promote regional planning.

In other words, sustainable inclusive development relies heavily on the use of space science and technology applications. In addition, it should be noted that the considerable progress made by the developed countries in the field of space science and technology has contributed to significantly reduce their costs of access and use. Unfortunately, most developing countries are lagging far behind in the use of these technologies. Therefore, it appears urgent to promote collaboration between space industries and space technology institutions in the developed countries with other countries, particularly ICESCO member states, to increase their direct impact on national productivity as well as accelerate economic growth. It is in this perspective that the new orientations of the global governance of activities in space emphasize the capacity building of all States to raise them up to the new realities, challenges and opportunities offered by the space field. Thus, there is a need to implement a global, inclusive and strategic project to strengthen international cooperation, in which space is seen as an essential engine for the achievement of sustainable development goals for the benefit of all countries.

As a common heritage of humanity, and therefore the inalienable right of all States, the exploration and exploitation of outer space recommends inclusive global governance for the benefit of the present and future generations. It is in this spirit that the United Nations in 2018 called for the further development of «Space 2030» through the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space for greater international cooperation.

This means that it is essential that space science and innovations become an important part of the long-term plans and strategies of the governments of these countries. ICESCO has given the highest priority, in its Five-Year Action Plan, to support Member States in building the capacities of young people and women, as well as developing appropriate infrastructure within the framework of a partnership based on mutual benefits in space science and technology.

The main priority objectives for space sciences are listed below.

- **Priority Objective 31:** Raise awareness of the different stakeholders on the importance of space sciences and technologies

- **Priority Objective 32:** Integrate space science and technology into formal and non-formal education and training systems in developing countries

- **Priority Objective 33:** Encourage development of an entrepreneurial spirit in space science and technology

- **Priority Objective 34:** Emphasize development of synergies and the construction of dynamic and balanced

partnerships between scientists, engineers, technicians and specialists

- Priority Objective 35: Work on mobilization of funding to support Member States' initiatives for the development of space sciences and technologies.

3. Regional and International Challenges and Prospects

Achievement of the SDGs by 2030

Achievement of the 2063 Agenda

Environmental Challenges and Climate Change Agreement

Rapid Industrialization
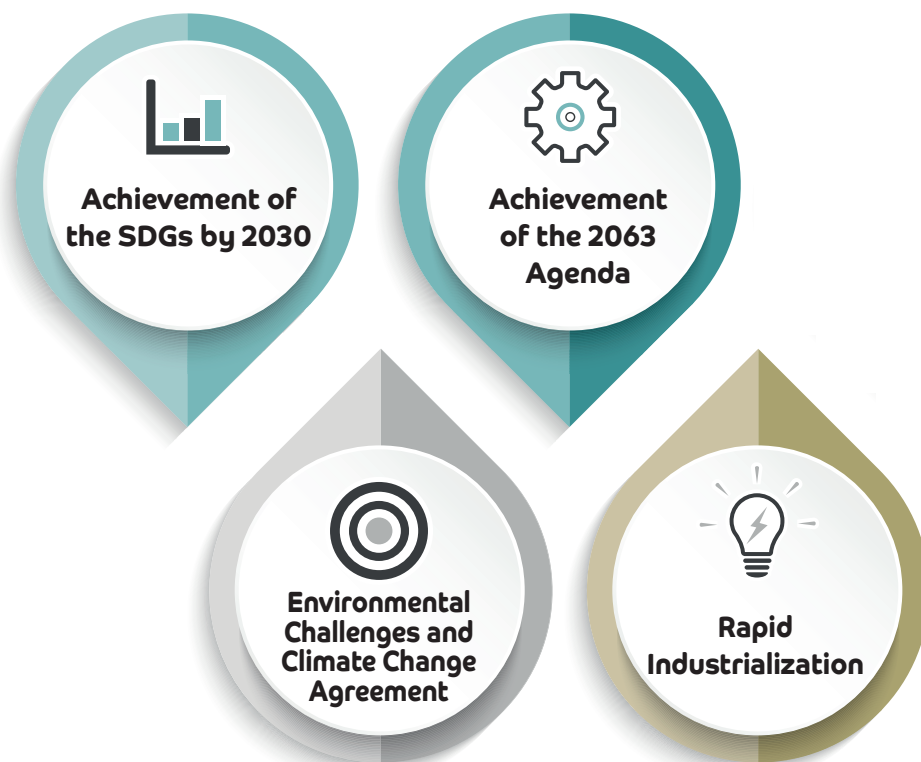
Global and regional challenges will determine as well as shape the future of scientific and technological trends in the world, particularly so in the Islamic world thus creating a new reality. Much is expected from STI to not only provide solutions to the existing problems, but also to improve the quality of life and human development, overcoming the current barriers. There are a number of challenges, including, but not limited to:

- **Achievement of the SDGs by 2030:** The year 2016 marks the first year of the implementation of the SDGs, which include 17 different goals that have been based upon the principle of "leaving no one behind". Only 9 years are left now and still, significant efforts are needed to meet these objectives mainly so in the developing countries. The 2030 Agenda positioned STI as the key means for the achievement of the SDGs.

- **Environmental Challenges and Climate Change Agreement:** Climate change is affecting every country in the World posing great socio-economic risks and even threatening the life and health of the people. Keeping this in mind the Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015 contained resolutions to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius, which level of increase is currently above the pre-industrial era. The agreement also aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change, through the development of newer technologies and an enhanced capacity-building framework.

- There is also a need for the **rapid industrialization** in the different sectors and enhancing the dominant role that science and technology plays in the development of countries and the need to accelerate the transition to smarter development by promoting the Digital and Green economies simultaneously.

- **Agenda 2063:** The Africa We Want: is Africa's master plan to transform Africa into the world power of the future. It is the continent's strategic framework which aims to achieve its objective of inclusive and sustainable development. Agenda 2063 identifies key flagship programs that can boost Africa's economic growth and development and lead to the continent's rapid transformation.

4. Priority Fields

Development and Promotion of emerging technologies and supporting innovative research	**Develop a new comprehensive program on environmental innovation and Green Technology transfer as well as fostering Climate Action**
For Strengthening Cooperation and Science Diplomacy	**Promote the establishment of Technopoles to strengthen cooperation between companies, universities and research centers**

Regarding ICESCO's strategy to overcome the challenges faced by humanity, ICESCO will focuses in the following priority areas:

1. Development and promotion of emerging technologies and supporting innovative research by providing scholarships to help researchers from the Member States to develop sustainable innovative solutions in science and technology as well as launching the ICESCO Innovation award for Best Innovation in Science and Technology in the Member States, while also promoting Space Sciences and its applications in different fields.

2. Develop a new comprehensive program on environmental innovation and Green Technology transfer as well as fostering Climate Action in the Islamic World in different sectors in partnership with multiple stakeholders.

3. For Strengthening Cooperation and Science Diplomacy, ICESCO will ensure further cooperation with international partners, research centers, and universities inside and outside the Islamic world to achieve the objectives by narrowing the gap between its member countries related to Science and Technology fields.

4. Promote the establishment of Technopoles to strengthen cooperation between companies, universities and research centers in the member countries and boost entrepreneurship. Start a program of identifying viable and innovative start-ups through a process of conducting boot camps and accelerator programs in member states. As well as launch a program for setting up and linking incubators and technology clusters in the ICESCO Member States.

Key Performance Indicators

Major Strategic Orientation	Key Performance Indicators
Improvement of knowledge and skills in STI	- Awareness-raising meetings for decision-makers in Member States
	- Commitments to be made by Member States to promote STI
	- Member States have produced the STI baseline
	- A report on the development of STIs is produced at Member State level
	- A "disruptive innovation laboratory" is created in two Member States
	- Teacher training in STEM education
	- Scholarships for young people and women for training in STEM
	- A network of experts is created across the Member States
	- Expert exchange visits are organized between universities and research institutions to discuss teaching and research in STI.
	- Organize excellence camps for the best young students and women in STEM
	- A directory of endogenous knowledge that can be used in education systems is produced at the level of the Member States
Development and Promotion of emerging technologies	- The capacities of trainees is strengthened in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, Big Data, etc.
	- 10,000 beneficiaries are made literate and trained in digital technologies
	- Promotion of Spaces equipped with ICT technologies which are created in peri-urban or rural areas
	- An international technology fair is organized in a Member State
	- Training sessions are organized on ethical standards in the use of emerging technologies
	- Two educational visits are organized between universities on emerging technologies
	- Funding is leveraged of youth and women for the creation of innovative businesses.

Promotion of Technopoles to develop cooperation between companies, universities and research centers	- Open days are organized in partnership with technopoles - Some consultation frameworks are created and / or revitalized between universities, research institutions and the private sector in Member States - 2 youth startups and 2 women startups are funded in Member States - 100 scholarships are awarded for the training of young people and women - A network is established of technopoles in the Member States - A framework for consultation of experts in the field of technopoles has been set up at the level of the Member States - A portal of the main products of the technopoles is created
Greening the future and fostering a positive climate action plan	- Training sessions are organized to promote the concept of eco-innovation for the protection of the environment - Training sessions are organized on green entrepreneurship - Good green technology practices are scaled up - Young people and women are trained in green jobs
Strengthening cooperation amongst member states through Science Diplomacy.	- Training sessions on science diplomacy are organized - Two awareness-raising meetings on science diplomacy are organized for the political decision-makers - A group of experts is created to bring together scientists, diplomats and civil society - A chair on scientific diplomacy is created in a member state
Boosting Space Sciences and its applications	- Awareness meetings are organized for promoting the importance of Space Sciences - A meeting at the ministerial level is organized to examine the possibilities of integrating and / or strengthening space science and technology in the education systems of member states - Two camps are organized for young people and women on space science and technology - A consultation framework is setup at the state level on space sciences and technologies - A collaborative project on space science and technology is developed.

3. Strategic Orientations of the Social and Human Sciences Sector

Introduction

As part of ICESCO's vision, Human and Social Sciences Sector brings forward a holistic, inclusive and multisectoral approach to Development aimed at building a strong and resilient human capital in ICESCO Member States and beyond. Within this systemic vision, Peace, Citizenship and Security are the foundation that goes along with promoting gender-responsive policies, socially empowering youth and vulnerable groups while promoting research to build knowledge on social transformations in our Member States and beyond.

To this end, HSS Sector serves as a bridge connecting diverse stakeholders and countries to jointly produce a civilizational knowledge system aimed at building a better understanding of the social transformation that positions ICESCO as a guiding model to improve strategies, policies and programs to build the "**Societies We Want**".

The "**Societies We Want**" Initiative is the overarching vision that guides our projects which are directed towards building human capital, focusing on key actors that are the Youth, Women and Vulnerable groups, for more peaceful, prosperous, inclusive, resilient societies which guarantees the health and wellbeing of its constituents.

The Human and Social Sciences Sector initiatives are all included under the umbrella of the futuristic perspective that ICESCO has adopted in its new vision. The HSS sector contributes heavily to the creation of better societies of tomorrow, centered on the idea of the importance of Human capital, as the key factor for sustainable development.

This vision unfolds into six strategic objectives:

- Pioneering in peacebuilding and positioning peace security and citizenship in policies and programs

- Addressing Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Populations

- Promoting the Protection, Empowerment and Leadership of Children, Youth and Women

- Harnessing Mental health and psychosocial support for resilience in the context of crises and vulnerability

- Using Sport for Social Cohesion

- Building vibrant research and knowledge systems within ICESCO networks to guide policies and programs.

Our strategy consists of facilitating and creating synergies of actions for a better coordination and implementation of the agendas of reference such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the OIC 2025 Program of action, the Africa Union Agenda 2063, Mecca Charter (Islamic Values and Principles) and endogenous initiatives.

2020-2021 has been a period of piloting a new approach in reaching a development concept based on good practices and lessons learnt from the COVID-19 crisis.

Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a deep impact on the global population as countries implement various measures to contain and curb the spread of the virus, while at the same time destroying the existing social fabric that people have been relying upon for cultural sustenance and community livelihood. Such drastic change in life patterns has gravely affected the societies especially children, youth, women, the eldest and the people most in need.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the increasing gender gap that has been persistent even before the onset of the crisis. According to UN Women, 47 million more women have been pushed into living on less than $1.90 per day, while 10 million more girls are anticipated to be at risk of child marriage over the next decade. Additionally, an estimated 740 million women around the world are working in the informal economy, and as such they have been particularly vulnerable.

COVID-19 has also had a devastating impact on the physical and mental wellbeing for the most vulnerable sectors of the population, mainly women and youth. According to United Nations, before COVID-19 depression and anxiety were pressing issues costing $ 1 trillion per year to the global economy, with depression affecting 264 million people in the world, while suicide was claiming more lives than war and homicide together. COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly deteriorated the situation of mental health in the world. Not only did it add to the fragility of the already vulnerable people living in contexts of crisis and conflict, but it also affected those who were relatively spared by mental health issues. To this, one can add WHO report according to which between

35-50% of people with serious mental disorders in developed countries and 76-85% in developing countries had received no treatment in 2020.

COVID-19 has also driven a deeper wage between the rich and poor around the world, with 120 million people pushed into extreme poverty due to massive global recession and the resulting job losses. It has also barred minority groups and people with disabilities from access to essential services.

COVID-19 has revealed itself as a threat to peace and social cohesion in many countries, generating social unrest, and violent mobilization, while several violent and extremist organizations have taken advantage of the power vacuum left by the government authorities due to the enforcement of lockdown and social distancing measures to commit violence or expand their activities.

COVID-19 has increased gender disparities making women more subject to domestic violence, unemployment and health issues, including mental health. It has therefore hampered much of the efforts deployed in the previous years to curb the gender gap, promote socioeconomic inclusion and human welfare, and preserve livelihood.

It is within this context that HSS Sector puts paramount importance to empowering women in ICESCO's focus of the year 2021 as the year of women. To harness their entrepreneurship skills thereby securing their financial wellbeing during these tumultuous times, HSS implemented a program in collaboration with Alwaleed Philanthropies to assist women in 10 African countries in making hygienic and sanitary products to help their country battle the

Covid-19 pandemic while securing a stable income. HSS also implemented a program called Leadership Training for Peace and Security (LTIPS) as a means to train and mobilize women peacebuilders and future youth leaders of peace to nurture peace-driven leaders in the next chapter of modern history. Therefore, **under ICESCO initiative, an Alliance for Peace that includes CONFEJES, CONFEMEN, G5 Sahel Secretariat, UNESCO and Youth organizations worldwide has been established**.

The 2022-2023 period will be an opportunity to reinforce the human-centered dimension of our programs in a COVID-19 context that has taught us that the human being is both the means and the end of any developmental process.

To this end, HSS will use the following approaches:

1. **Policy, Community Analysis, Advocacy and Dialogue:** Influence Governments and other policymakers to formulate and implement policies that will achieve greater and better participation of girls, adolescents, and women in building the SWW while creating platforms for more synergy of action

2. **Training/ Capacity Building:** Through a range of training and capacity building plans, HSS sector contributes to build

and transfer knowledge and skills to empower the people with a focus on Youth, Women and the most vulnerable.

3. **Demonstrative Intervention:** HSS sector has developed various human centered-responsive interventions and has implemented in different ICESCO member states with a special attention to entrepreneurship and community health for youth, women and the most vulnerable from the African Region.

4. **Networking and Partnership:** Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support Peacebuilding and Development as a priority approach for HSS.

5. **Research and Knowledge:** Produce a civilizational knowledge system aimed at building a better understanding of social transformation to guide policies and programs in our Member States and beyond. Undertaking Research on Human and Social Sciences is therefore crucial in our Sector as it makes it possible for our strategies and actions to be backed by evidence-based data and information for more efficiency and impact. ICESCO's Chairs will be key knowledge platforms for this purpose.

Major Strategic Orientations:

Pioneering in peacebuilding and positioning peace security and citizenship in policies and programs

Addressing Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Populations

Promoting the Protection, Empowerment and Leadership of Children, Youth and Women

Harnessing Mental health and psychosocial support for resilience in the context of crises and vulnerability

Using Sport for Social Cohesion

Building vibrant research and knowledge systems within ICESCO networks to guide policies and programs

Strategic Orientation 1:

Pioneering in peacebuilding and Positioning peace security and citizenship in policies and programs

Building human capital fist requires to lay a fertile ground for human activities to take place, thrive and prosper. Nothing guarantees this fertile ground more that peace and security which are the main prerequisite for any developmental process to occur. At ICESCO, Our Commitment to Peace is deeply rooted in our strong belief that there is no human and social development without Peace. A peaceful and secure environment is the main prerequisite for any human activity to take place, thrive and prosper. In a world of challenges and turmoil, the Islamic values which promote love, tolerance, moderation, interfaith dialogue and peaceful resolution of conflict should be leveraged to achieve

peaceful and stable societies in the Islamic World and beyond.

ICESCO's vision on peace puts forward a holistic approach that takes into and multiple of the factors that interplay in breaking or making peace. It is also based on bringing about «positive peace», which goes beyond the absence of conflict but tackles the structural conditions for violence and extremism to occur in our societies.

In its efforts to promote peace, which are focused on the key social actors that are women, youth, religious and community leaders, ICESCO will leverage societal, educational, cultural and communicational tools, while emphasizing the power of interfaith dialogue, science and artificial intelligence in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction with a special focus on the Sahel, Lake Chad Basin and Middle East regions.

ICESCO aims at building peaceful, resilient and cohesive societies, through internally developing intersectoral synergies to cover the various dimensions that interplay in peace and security, while externally building community of practices and multistakeholder initiatives with like-minded partner organizations.

Human and Social Science Sector lays emphasis on building peace through the training and mobilization of major actors that play a key role in any social process: Youth, Women and Religious/traditional leaders.

Through our training programs, such as the Leadership Training In Peace and Security, we aim at strengthening their knowledge and leadership skills and at mobilizing them into networks in order to build a large coalition of changemakers for peace in their community.

By mobilizing religious leaders in order to valorize and spread the Islamic values, such as those enshrined in the Mecca Charter, we ensure that moderation, peaceful resolution of conflicts and tolerance are spread within our societies to curb violent extremism and all forms of violence.

Grasping the complex dynamics of violence is also crucial in building a peaceful and secure environment. Therefore, promoting research through innovative programs that put forward our holistic approach to peace by promoting interdisciplinary and multisectoral research is very important. In this regard, we will develop partnerships with leading universities and research institutions to promote policy-oriented research on peace and security, in a view to highlight ICESCO's new approach on peace and to build connections between academia, researchers and policymakers.

Advocacy is also an important part of our strategy for peace, through several programs that will target lawmakers and policymakers for the integration of peace in the learning spaces curricula. Ensuring peace and citizenship are integrated in the curricula of learning spaces at all levels will make it possible to sow the seeds of peace within our societies and counter violent extremism and all forms of violence.

Human and Social Sciences Sector will also develop a large network of partners within the international, regional and intergovernmental organizations, as well as the civil society organizations to build synergies and coordinate actions and agendas for peaceful and resilient societies.

The advent of the new technologies offers endless opportunities in transmitting knowledge, especially to the youth and children, and shaping their attitudes and values to build peace and citizenship. Local endogenous knowledge has for long time been underestimated and overlooked due to historical and political dynamics. Yet, they do have a great potential in transmitting values and a culture of peace and citizenship, especially when paired with technological innovation. The Directorate will therefore launch a series of initiatives valorizing local endogenous knowledge though the use of new technologies to raise awareness on peace, human rights, citizenship, etc.

Strategic Orientation 2:

Addressing Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Populations

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us how fragile our social systems are and how a large number of our populations are vulnerable to poverty, disease, climate change and other socioeconomic crises. The Human and Social Sciences Sector which had already directed its actions towards assisting the vulnerable population, will reinforce this strategic orientation.

The HSS Sector will lay strong emphasis on the humanitarian aspect, through direct interventions aimed at making impact on the daily lives of the most vulnerable groups and communities. These interventions will have a social focus and geographical one.

From a social perspective, a strong focus will be placed on assistance to women, children, refugees and displaced persons.

From a geographical perspective, we will focus on the transborder areas which appear to be particularly vulnerable, making it possible for violent extremist groups to take advantage of the social distress prevailing there.

One of our signature humanitarian programs is the "Medical and Socio-Educational Caravan" which has been implemented during the period 2015-2019. With the advent of COVID-19 and restrictions on travels, the caravan has been transformed into direct emergency assistance to countries, through the provision of medical and hygienic equipment.

As the world reopens, the Caravan program will be resumed but we will undergo a major strategic shift epitomized by a new name: "**The Humanitarian Caravan for Social and Human Development**". Building upon the achievements of the Caravan program during the period 2015-2019, and in light of the new ICESCO's vision which brings forward a holistic approach to human development, the program will be revamped for the 2022-2025 period. The rationale behind this evolution is to consolidate the emergency response approach of the Caravan program, which addresses basic and urgent needs, while providing long lasting and sustainable solutions to uplift the targeted vulnerable communities. The new program is also based on an integrated approach which seeks to act on the various levels that interplay in achieving a sustained human development.

In addressing the humanitarian needs of the populations through the Caravans program, we will be reinforcing the

educational aspect, while enlarging the health component to include nutritional, physical and psychosocial health. In the spirit of proving long lasting effects to the program, the Social Solidarity Economy will be added. Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) is a response to the marginalizing effect of globalization, insofar as it allows the socio-economic integration of grassroots communities and the construction of stable societies from the Islamic Values own values of solidarity, mutuality and entrepreneurship with strong social utility. SSE is composed of a wide range of activities of production, transformation, distribution, exchange and consumption of goods or services with a high economic and social purpose. Within SSE, Fair Trade aims to change the way trade is conducted through higher prices and decent working conditions for farmers, artisans and workers.

Adding the SSE component will make it possible to promote, develop and nurture local production capacities for more revenue generation hence reducing the vulnerability of these social groups.

Addressing Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Populations goes through helping them meet their needs in terms of health services. Woman and children are the most vulnerable ones, they are living in poor sanitation conditions and environments; women are more likely dying from maternal health issues, and children are suffering from malnutrition and severe diseases resulting from lack of water, sanitation, and nutrition. In this regard, Human and Social Sciences Sector will be implementing a "**Mobile Hospital Project**", which is aimed at bringing medical

service to populations in remote areas who don't have access to it.

The HSS Sector will therefore, in the 2022-2025 period strengthen its humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable population through a new vision that doesn't just bring emergency response but tries to leave long lasting effects to cope with their vulnerability.

Strategic Orientation 3:

Promoting the Leadership, Protection and Empowerment of Children, Youth and Women

The Human and Social Sciences Sector's vision which places human capital as its key strategic objective strongly relies on building inclusive societies that allow all social groups to fully contribute to its prosperity. One can't deny that youth, women and children are subject more than any other groups to social inequalities. Therefore, through the Human development and Social Empowerment Division, HSS Sector will lay emphasis in promoting their protection and empowerment, while ensuring that youth and women leadership is a reality in our Member States and beyond.

Women are the bedrock of successful civilisations. Beyond their demographic weight, the central role of women in economic, social, cultural, environmental, scientific life in societies therefore cannot be underestimated. Throughout mankind's modern history, women's contribution permeates across a multitude of sectors and they have been pivotal in ensuring the stability, progress and long-term development of nations.

Women comprise about 43% of the world's agricultural labour force, but in many agrarian societies, this can reach up to 70% of the workforce. Across Africa, 80% of agricultural production comes from small farmers, most of whom are women. The role of women therefore is pivotal since agriculture is a major driver of growth, agent of peace and is a sustainable way out of poverty in many developing nations.

But women's role is not only confined to agriculture. Women also play the largest role in family nutrition and well-being, and are instrumental in determining the psychosocial health of family members and their productivity in public life. Their contribution to society's transition into an educated and literate society is also undeniable, as women are pillars of basic education in the household, which in turn translates into improved agricultural productivity, enhanced status of girls and women, reduction in population growth rates, enhanced environmental protection and the overall increase in the standard of living in societies.

It is therefore equally important that girls are educated sufficiently so that they can become responsible and influential members of society who continue to become pillars of strength in the sustainability of societies. Education and leadership training for girls especially are therefore an indispensable part of policy planning of each country and this cannot be emphasized more. However, despite the progress made by countries to improve the status of women from all generations, they are still living discrimination and violence.

Marriage before age 18, is a violation of children's rights that jeopardises their education and career prospects, leading them to social isolation and the risk of early pregnancy. But premature marriages still exists in many regions, especially for girls, although it has slowly declined over the last two decades, from 26% to 20%. In Southern Asia, where child marriage has declined by 23 percentage points since 2004, there is still a 29% prevalence of child marriage, while in sub-Saharan Africa, with a proportion of child marriage of 34.5%, has recorded only a minor 2% decrease. In tandem with the decline in child marriage, motherhood among adolescent girls aged 15-19 has declined globally from 56 to 41 births per 1,000 women in the period 2000–2020, although it remains high in sub-Saharan Africa, at 101 births per 1,000 women.

Pregnancies and childbirth among adolescent girls are linked to wide range of negative long-term consequences for both mothers and their babies, including risks to their health, as well as poverty because of discontinued schooling and fewer job opportunities.

The COVID-19 crisis has been transformed as an opportunity for Youth and Women by promoting their Innovation and Empowerment through Entrepreneurship. As a result, in partnership with Alwaleed Philanthropies, a major project in 10 countries has helped us lay the ground for a new model on youth and women empowerment through Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Building on the lessons learnt from this important project, the Human and Social Sciences Sector will scale up this model in the 2022-2025 period by widening its geographical areas of implementation, and by extending it to other socioeconomic

sectors. In this regard **agriculture pro-nutrition**, through value chain programs offers opportunities that will allow not only successful entrepreneurship stories but also important social impact through curbing child malnutrition and increasing school attendance among children.

Promoting **socioeconomic empowerment of youth and women through entrepreneurship** is an important orientation that will not only help curb inequalities but will also prevent much of the social disruptions stemming from COVID-19 and other crises. Given the demographic context in our Member States, where they represent 70% of the population in some countries, it is important that we tackle youth unemployment through developing entrepreneurship.

On the issue of entrepreneurship, Human and Social Sciences Sector will undertake to build an internal synergy within ICESCO by spearheading a major intersectoral initiative that will serve as platform for sharing best practices and building a generation of women and youth entrepreneurs who can serve as role models for better impact.

Women protection, empowerment and leadership will also remain a major orientation for the Sector through initiatives aimed at curbing gender-based violence and promoting women health and its role for social cohesion through sports, especially Football. Mobilizing high level personalities to promote Women protection, empowerment and leadership is also an important part of this strategy, through the setup of the **ICESCO First Ladies Network**, which will serve a powerful advocacy, agenda setting and resource mobilization mechanism.

Within the social empowerment strategy, adolescent girls will be a group of special interest due to their specific needs and their demographic relevance, especially in the Islamic World. The Human and Social Sector will also undertake several initiatives for **Children Protection**. Given the prevalence of street children issue in some of the Member states, we will roll out an initiative for their empowerment and protection through sports, especially football.

Engaging **Youth and promoting their leadership** will be a major tool for bringing about the positive social transformation in our societies. The Human and Social Sector will build and mobilize large coalitions of youth leaders in all its areas of intervention to leverage the energy and potential of youth as changemakers.

Strategic Orientation 4:

Harnessing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Resilience in the context of Crisis and Vulnerability

The annual report to the Human Rights Council in 2019 elaborates the critical role of the social, psychosocial, political, economic and physical environments as crucial to mental health, and as such the Human and Social Sciences Sector will embark on projects such as the Mental Health Support Program aimed at producing an Orientation Guide on Psychosocial Support for families, communities and educational actors in 2020, which also includes its translation and dissemination in all 54 member countries. This Mental Health project also includes training the trainers of up to 100 persons a year in 6 selected countries, to be able to scale up

the reach and impact of this project to the intended communities. The culmination of this project will be in the form of the establishment of a mental health unit which would help give critical mental health care for the surrounding communities.

Ensuring mental health should not only be confined to a published guide, but equally important, to nurture an environment where the most vulnerable members of the population, namely women and youth, be given a psychosocial outlet and relief through sports in order for them to maintain a mentally healthy mind that can withstand the challenges brought about by the Covid-19 crisis. In this light, the Human and Social Sciences Sector is embarking on 2 football-related projects namely, Empowering Street Children through Football and Eradicating Violence against Women and Promoting Health and Social Cohesion through Football, which is in collaboration with FIFA, as a means to empower women and street children with sports leadership and career opportunities in the football industry, as well as improving their emotional wellbeing through engaging in competition through a Junior Street Challenge and the Islamic World Women's Football Cup respectively. Another sports-related project by HSS is the Marathon Run for Resilience, which is meant to inculcate the spirit of social cohesion and community resilience especially as the communities heal from the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The United-Nations Special Rapporteur's work on mental health has been developed in numerous thematic reports. In a 2020 report to the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur addresses the need for a **global agenda for mental health that is human rights based**. He makes a few recommendations to States, organizations in the psychiatric profession and World Health Organization on how to do so.

In 2019, the annual report to the Human Rights Council elaborates on the **critical role of the social determinants of mental health**. In particular, the Special Rapporteur focuses on the key role that the social, psychosocial, political, economic, and physical environment has in enabling a person to a life in dignity, in rights, and in the equitable pursuit of their potential.

However, Mental health remains one of the most neglected global health issues, even though it is critical to the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs

"One in four people experience a mental health episode in their lifetime, but the issue remains largely neglected," said UN Secretary-General António Guterres

COVID- 19 pandemic has resulted in tremendous impacts on nearly every aspect of the world of work, contributing to an environment in which physical distancing, teleworking the erosion of work-life balance and the loss of jobs have become the new norm. These changes have had an unprecedented impact on the mental health of workers globally.

A number of contributing work-related psychosocial factors have been exacerbated during the pandemic lockdown and are expected to continue through the phased return to work. These psychosocial factors have led to increased stress, anxiety, reports of depression and other related physical diseases.

According to OECD, during 2020, the risk factors for poor mental health –financial insecurity, unemployment, fear –increased, while protective factors –social connection, employment and educational engagement, access to physical exercise, daily routine, access to health services –decreased.

People with less secure employment, lower educational status, and lower income are experiencing higher rates of mental distress during the lockdown.

For UNICEF, At least one in three of the world's schoolchildren – 463 million children globally – were unable to access remote learning when COVID-19 shuttered their schools. And the actual number of students who cannot be reached is likely significantly higher than this estimate. In many situations, despite remote learning policies and the presence of the necessary technology at home, children may be unable to learn due to skills gaps among their teachers or a lack of parental support and presence.

Therefore, delivering an integrated whole-of-society policy response to support mental health during and after the COVID-19 crisis is needed.

especially for women, youth and children who are the more vulnerable groups. The COVID-19 crisis and its psychosocial effects has been an eyeopener for the international community as evidenced by the call for action from the United Nations Secretary General. The Human and Social Sciences Sectors has already initiated several initiatives in this regard. For the 2020-2025 period, within our strategic orientation that places health in its physical, nutritional and psychosocial dimension as key for building

human capital, we will be increasing our actions on mental health.

To this end, ICESCO will proposes a guide on Mental health support to educational actors, family and policy makers. Still in the framework of its mental health initiative, HSS sector will propose a plan of training of trainees on psychosocial support in order to set up a network of expert on mental health support with a special attention to children, youth, women, the most vulnerable people and educational actors.

Strategic Orientation 5:

Promoting Sport for Social for Social Cohesion

Sport for Development and Peace refers to the intentional use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific development and peace objectives. Sport programs work to realize the rights of all members of society to participate in sport and leisure activities. Effective programs intentionally give priority to development objectives and are carefully designed to be inclusive. These programs embody the best values of sport while upholding the quality and integrity of the sport experience. Strong Sport for Development and Peace programs combine sport and play with other non-sport components to enhance their effectiveness. They are delivered in an integrated manner with other local, regional and national development and peace initiatives so that they are mutually reinforcing. Programs seek to empower participants and communities by engaging them in the design and delivery of activities, building local capacity, adhering to generally accepted principles of transparency and accountability, and pursuing sustainability

through collaboration, partnerships and coordinated action.

Furthermore, Sport industries can be a powerful tool for Youth Entrepreneurship during the COVID-19 recovery. Therefore, ICESCO has been building a long-term partnership with the Conference of Ministers in charge of Sport and Youth from the Francophonie (CONFEJES) along with Ministers in charge of Education from the Francophonie (CONFEMEN) and FIFA for a better integration of sport values and industries in policies while designing projects on Sport for Peace and Social Cohesion.

Strategic Orientation 6:

Building vibrant research and knowledge systems on social transformation to guide policies and programs.

The Human and Social Sciences Sector serves as a bridge connecting stakeholders from diverse background and countries to jointly produce a civilizational knowledge system aimed at building a better understanding of the social transformation to guide policies and programs in our Member States. It will therefore contribute to making the Organization a repository of knowledge destined to inform the public policy choices in the Member States in order to build human capital.

Research on Human and Social Sciences is therefore crucial in our Sector as it makes it possible for our strategies and actions

to be backed by evidence-based data and information for more efficiency and impact.

This strategic orientation will be materialized by setting up several chairs that will make it possible to produce action-oriented knowledge that will guide the policies and programs for better efficiency and impact on the vulnerable population. Additionally, the Chairs will also make it possible to build a civilization-based knowledge that will position the Organization's discourse on contemporary issues.

To this end, the Chair on Family and Societies is a project that aims to develop a knowledge and research base to explore the most effective framework to manage the modern family unit in contemporary societies in the Islamic World.

The Chair of African Renaissance is aimed at providing a research base and publications surrounding the idea of the African renaissance in various fields of economics, social and political growth.

The creation of the Chairs is only the first step in a global strategy aimed at connecting the sphere of knowledge to the sphere of decision. This is an overarching strategy that guides all the Sector's programs.

Our Fellowship programs are also tailored to this specific need and will allow us to tap on external expertise in key issues by making the state-of-the art knowledge available to our Member States to get a grasp of the social transformation under way.

Regional and International Challenges and Prospects

Conflicts, wars, tensions, intercommunity crisis

Data on the most vulnerable people in terms of humanitarian needs is a critical issue.

Lack of Inclusive approach on Health care and systems

Gender Gap

The presence of Girls and Women in Sport
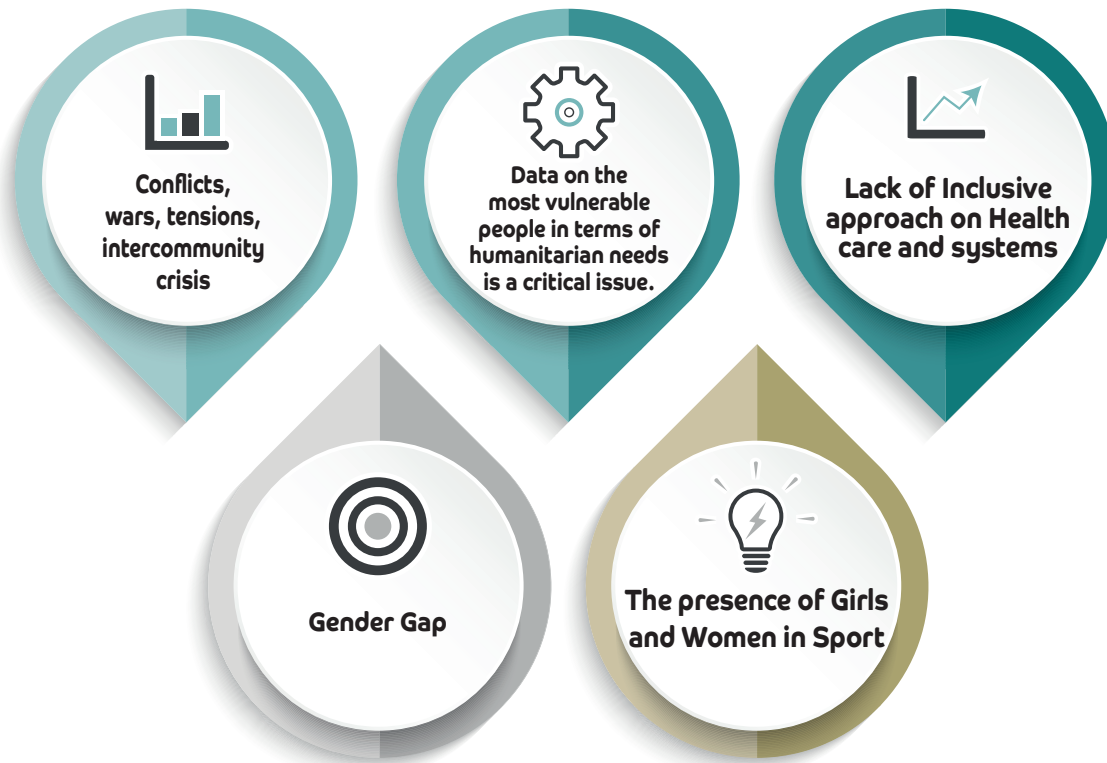
The Islamic World has been facing issues and challenges related:

• Peace: with the number of conflicts, wars, tensions, intercommunity crisis

• Gender Gap: equality between men and women remains a big issue.

• The presence of Girls and Women in Sport is very low.

• Data on the most vulnerable people in terms of humanitarian needs is a critical issue.

• Lack of Inclusive approach on Health care and systems

Based on the above listed challenges, ICESCO added value in the political and partnership landscape will be to:

• Reasserting Social Policy and Inclusive Development in Development Strategies: Reducing the Inequality Gap in Societies

ICESCO is therefore well-poised to contribute to reassert the centrality of social policy in development strategies, defining

social policy as a key instrument for inclusive development. Furthermore, ICESCO's updated vision brings social issues back into the international, national and local agendas, in particular after a challenging period of debt crises, structural adjustment policies and globalization pressures during which poverty and inequalities were exacerbated while economic development stagnated. Therefore, ICESCO has since examined the causes of and solutions to pressing social problems, explored the relationship between economic and social development, and used its political and technical landscape and power to both undertake and foster the uptake of critical research not only on policies, but also on the "politics" of social development and processes of social change, at the highest levels of the international system while initiating assisting to the most vulnerable and marginalized communities through humanitarian projects.

• Building And Promoting A Holistic Approach On Peace

ICESCO's vision on peace puts forward a holistic approach that takes into and multiple of the factors that interplay in breaking or making peace. It is also based on bringing about «**positive peace**», which goes beyond the absence of conflict but tackles the structural conditions for violence and extremism to occur in our societies.

In its efforts to promote peace, which are focused on the key social actors that are women, youth, religious and community leaders, ICESCO will leverage societal, educational, cultural and communicational tools, while emphasizing the power of interfaith dialogue, science and artificial intelligence in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction.

ICESCO aims at building peaceful, resilient and cohesive societies, through internally developing intersectoral synergies to cover the various dimensions that interplay in peace and security, while externally building community of practices and multistakeholder initiatives with like-minded partner organizations.

• Human Capital Development For Youth And Women

The work of ICESCO is at the heart of identifying the contributing factors to human capital development and implementing them in earnest. This includes engaging youth in a plethora of varied programs that touches leadership, technical and vocational skills, as well as digital technology that will equip them with the emerging needs of the job market of the 21st century. For women, especially in commemoration of 2021 as the year of women for ICESCO, this includes baseline research and implementing a framework that best cater for women's equal role in the 21st century workplace and society, their psychosocial wellbeing as well as their traditional role as the leading figure in the family unit.

Key Priority Fields:

Peace	**Vulnerable groups in the population, namely women, girls and children**
Women's wellbeing in all its different aspects	**Building research and knowledge systems**

The Human and Social Sciences Sector focuses heavily on peace and human and social development and these orientations constitute the guiding principles and are reflected in all the proposed projects under the sector. At the Human and Social Sciences Sector, we believe that Peace is the indispensable prerequisite for human development, as no human being can ever develop effectively under the conditions of chaos and war. And only when we achieve an adequate level of human development, can we envision a better society with high quality human capital which can contribute to economic growth and cultural sophistication.

In order to achieve this, the HSS Sector focuses on the most vulnerable groups in the population, namely women, girls and children. All HSS projects revolve around these 3 main target groups in the population. This is because, in the event of a calamity, whether economic or human disasters, the groups which are the most susceptible to the disruptions that comes with the calamity, are these 3 groups.

In terms of peacebuilding, HSS focuses on empowering young and women leaders in peace as we believe that in order to nurture a culture of peace in the near future, we need to equip the next generation of peace leaders with contemporary tools and innovations to instill peace in an increasingly tumultuous period of human history. This entails a series of workshops through the LTIPS program, which includes discussions with subject matter experts for the young peace leaders to have an efficient grasp of contemporary peace discourse, as well as simulations on building scalable peace-

related projects and technical tools, so that these young peace leaders are able to tap on avant-garde methods and tools to spur greater impact on creating the culture of peace and building projects and institutions of peace in the near future.

Our focus on the youth and women leaders is not only confined to peace. Indeed, the same focus on the next generation of youth and women empowerment and leadership are also reflected in our plethora of projects. Projects such as EDUC8 Africa, INNOV8 all focus on building the capacity of the next generation of leaders through education and entrepreneurship respectively.

The other key priority field is the importance of women's wellbeing in all its different aspects. As the nucleus of the family unit and the most important group in the labor force of critical sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing, women's wellbeing is crucial to create a sustainable trajectory for economic growth and cultural sustenance in all countries around the world. As such, projects such as Marathon Run for Resilience (R4R), Jamal Award for Women Peacebuilders, Islamic World Women's Football Cup, the Humanitarian Caravan for Social and Human Development (which is mostly targeted for women) and the

Mobile Hospital, which focuses significantly on maternal healthcare amongst other critical medical issues.

As is evident in the nature of projects such as the Islamic World Women's Football Cup, Marathon Run for Resilience and the project on Empowering Street Children through Football, the main uniting factor is empowerment through sports, which is an effective way to rally vulnerable groups to achieve social cohesion and build community resilience.

The final key priority is building research and knowledge systems, in which we focus attention in the academic field to champion critical issues such as peace and citizenship, conflict management and the governance of peace, role of AI in peace and conflict prevention, women and youth empowerment, Child protection, family and societies and the African renaissance. These are reflected in projects such as the Master in Artificial Intelligence Applied to Peace and Conflict Prevention, Master in Conflict Management and Governance of Peace, Advocacy for the Integration of Peace and Citizenship in Learning Spaces Curricula and Programs, Chair on Family and Societies and Chair on the African Renaissance.

Key Performance Indicators

Major Strategic Orientation	Key Performance Indicators
Pioneering in peacebuilding and Positioning peace security and citizenship in policies and programs	- 60 youth leaders and 60 women leaders will benefit from intense training and sharing of best practices in a wide array of fields on peace, mental health, children's rights and women's rights. - generating scalable projects and creating greater impact on the subject of peace, mental health, children's rights and women's rights.
Addressing Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Populations	- 50,000 beneficiaries are targeted for the Mobile Hospital project in which women in conflict-prone and poverty-stricken areas will be given critical relief especially maternal care - 7,000 beneficiaries are targeted for the Humanitarian Caravan project which involves the provision of critical medical care and training to women so that they can also administer basic healthcare to people under their care. - The relief initiatives also include giving provisions to 50 schools and 20 hospitals in the same selected areas - humanitarian projects involve the production of certain types of products mainly to mitigate the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the types of humanitarian products produced in the foreseeable future would include a wide variety of products relevant to its stated objectives.
Promoting the Leadership, Protection and Empowerment of Children, Youth and Women	- Projects such as EDUC8 Africa, INNOV8 all focus on building the capacity of the next generation of leaders through education and entrepreneurship. - 308 young women trained under the INNOV8 program, out of which 28 will be trained under INNOV8 Labs, and 280 will be participating in the INNOV8 Forum. - a total of 20 youth and women organizations will be trained and supported for the whole project period
Harnessing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Resilience in the context of Crisis and Vulnerability	- 60 youth leaders and 60 women leaders will benefit from intense training and sharing of best practices in a wide array of fields on peace, mental health, children's rights and women's rights. - 30,000 indirect beneficiaries and 1,000 trained on the psychosocial discourse - generating scalable projects and creating greater impact on the subject of peace, mental health, children's rights and women's rights.

Promoting Sport for Social for Social Cohesion	- Football and community runs are selected as an effective means to nurture social cohesion and community resilience amongst women and street children, 2 vulnerable groups that are gravely affected by the economic and social disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and its resultant economic recession. - It is envisaged that 350 women and 500 street children will be covered under these projects.
Building vibrant research and knowledge systems on social transformation to guide policies and programs.	- high-level lawmakers and policymakers, as well as influential thought leaders from diverse geographical backgrounds and a balanced gender representation, are expected to meaningfully participate in advocacy projects and other activities. - the level of engagement and appropriation of member states would include financial, logistical or in-kind support of various types in order to facilitate the projects' implementation and would lead to policy adoption as a result of these projects. - the HSS cluster of projects relating to the advocacy through academia, outcomes would take the form of high-quality academic publications of different types, including major publications and scientific colloquiums. - 1 psychosocial guide will be developed, 10 major publications to be published in respected academic journals, as well as 4 colloquiums to be convened as a culmination of the works of the respective Chairs that HSS proposed. - HSS plans as part of its qualitative measure to involve 1st tier or respectable and credible media platforms that carry the plans and narrative of the projects that will be carried out, with the expectation that it will be cascaded upwards to high-level discussion of policymaking.

4. Strategic Orientations of the Culture and Communication Sector

Introduction

The coronavirus pandemic has fundamentally disrupted many aspects of our daily life, accelerating the dynamics of change in fast-paced world. It has introduced unprecedented changes and challenged traditional old ways of thinking. Accordingly, there has been fundamental changes in many aspects and fields of life, and the cultural one is of no exception.

Government lockdown measures and mobility restriction tactics suggested by the World Health Organization (WHO) have resulted in the closure of all gathering and meeting locations worldwide, forcing more than 128 nations to close all their cultural institutions. According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), COVID-19 crisis is affecting 95% of the world's 60,000 museums, the vast majority of remain closed to up to this date.

There has been a progressive cancelation of cultural events, forcing artists all over the world to deal with an unprecedented economic instability, closure of cultural institutions, abandonment of heritage sites, and disruption of cultural practices, in addition to a major crisis in the tourism sector that is considered one of the vectors of culture.

Indeed, the tourism industry has been hit hard and has dramatically suffered from the effects of the global pandemic, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), approximately 96% of all global destinations have imposed full or partial travel restriction policies since then.

The impact of COVID-19 on the cultural sector is felt worldwide and its implications on social, economic, and political orientations are confounding. While the hope of the universal mass vaccination has allowed some countries - particularly in Asia and Europe - to ease restrictions and reopen their cultural institutions, others, especially the most vulnerable are affected, and mostly those in which culture is very much needed, the hope has been erased.

For some of ICESCO's Member States, the economic implications of the crisis even precede the health impact. In most countries, cultural life has been hit hard, both socially and economically. The pandemic has revealed structural fragilities both within and between countries, it has also revealed inequalities regarding access to the Internet and computer equipment. The digital divide has never been more glaring and noticeable during this crisis, where simple fundamental rights such as the right to quality education became dependent on the digital.

It is also in this context that two facts should be noted: the first is related to the important role of culture as a major resource for resilience, social reconnection, and recovery.

Indeed, it is in the midst of a crisis, such as the one we are currently experiencing, that the inherent desire of humans to connect with culture is most obviously conveyed. It is the time when everyone turns to

all sources of consolation, well-being, listening, exchange, sharing, and comfort.

The second element highlighted by the crisis is the interdependence of Communication and Culture, which have become intrinsically interconnected in an ever-increasing digital era.

During the past year of the pandemic, a massive progress in digitization has been witnessed. Digitalization of the cultural supply and its democratization has incredibly increased, comparing to the last several years of efforts in this area. The crisis has undertaken what international efforts has been struggling to do for over a decade.

The massive rise in access to online culture in all its forms confirmed that communication and culture are linked. They are also complementary and can be considered as resilience factors promoting economic recovery through multiple forms of creativity.

It is important to note that the shrinking of the cultural sector as a whole (estimated at an average of 25% for 2020/2021) and more specifically of the cultural industries (estimated at an average of 75% for 2020/2021) has highlighted the contribution of this sector to the global economy, which before the pandemic has been elevated to 3% of the global GDP. For instance, the cultural and the creative industries sectors contribute with more than USD 2,250 million and 29.5 million jobs in the world.

While most countries around the world continue to face significant challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to grow and change, which will undoubtedly have an impact on future decision-making and planning in all sectors, including the culture and communication sector, whose ecosystem has been severely disrupted and affected.

ICESCO, as an organization committed to the promotion of culture in the Islamic world and to the preservation of the Islamic cultural and civilizational heritage, cannot ignore these new imperatives imposed by the pandemic must adapt its strategy accordingly.

As a result, there is an urgent need to alter, update, and reflect on ICESCO's vision for it to better fulfill its mission in assisting Member States to fully recover from the pandemic's impact.

The health crisis has underlined the urgent need to adopt new attitudes when approaching culture and accessing it, as has been pointed out, through the promotion of new digital frameworks.

ICESCO's revised vision provides a roadmap and guidelines for addressing the economic, social, and technological impacts of the crisis on the countries of the Islamic world[54]. It is also imperative to think about the culture of tomorrow, a culture that considers sustainable development and solidarity by integrating the notions of living together in peace. As a result, ICESCO intends to address the need to link innovation and technology to culture through its Culture and Communication Sector.

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54 ICESCO Revised Vision. March 2021.

Major Strategic Orientations:

Promote the importance of culture, communication, heritage, the arts, and creativity in the Organization's efforts to achieve sustainable development and peaceful coexistence among peoples.

Begin by examining human civilization in relation to that of the Islamic world, with the goal of establishing communication, cooperation, respect, cohabitation, and partnership in all sectors.

Strengthen ICESCO's position at the international and domestic levels by adopting a number of essential structural milestones as well as cultural and artistic programs.

In line with the objectives of 2020-2030, the Medium Term Strategic Cultural Action Plan has three strategic objectives:

Strategic Orientation 1:

Promote the importance of culture, communication, heritage, the arts, and creativity in the Organization's efforts to achieve sustainable development and peaceful coexistence among peoples.

It is a question of a polyvalent and multi-dimensional approach capable of involving women and men of art, science, and heritage in this renewal process, with the goal of presenting the works produced and taking advantage of the Organization's support

mechanisms through a diversified weekly program including specialist congresses on thought, literature, and the arts.

Strategic Orientation 2:

Begin by examining human civilization in relation to that of the Islamic world, with the goal of establishing communication, cooperation, respect, cohabitation, and partnership in all sectors.

The new projects and sustainable programs are based on both old and new ways of human civilization, in terms of creativity, representation and mutual influence on the forms of universal civilization.

The goal is to improve human civilizations in general, and the civilizations of the Islamic world, through modernizing points of view and promoting the Organization's image and position on a global scale.

The new projects will be launched in 2021-2022 as part of the international civilizational program entitled "ICESCO Roads for the Future".

The cultural vision of ICESCO is to assist in the development of cultural policies in the Islamic world, to promote cultural output, and to foster strong partnerships with local communities and civil society organizations. On the other hand, it also intends to solve the issues of cultural digitalization, digital cultural economy, social and solidarity cultural economy, and creative industries through the promotion of new digital frameworks. ICESCO is also involved in the preservation of cultural heritage and invests its resources in the development of traditional industries as well as tourism and environmental development.

Strategic Orientation 3:

Strengthen ICESCO's position at the international and domestic levels by adopting a number of essential structural milestones as well as cultural and artistic programs.

In this regard, the Organization has supported the Scientific Networks and Digital Platforms, for better international presence and visibility. In the same way, its action and influence will be able to reach the media and academic, artistic, and digital intellectual mediators as a reference and a space of international entrepreneurship that federate women and men of thought,

knowledge, and arts, from Rabat, the headquarters of ICESCO and elsewhere, in partnership with different actors (countries and organizations).

These orientations will find their concretization in a series of actions, in the short and medium term.

- Reorganize the field of cultural creativity, including artistic events, works, and exhibitions connected to cultural and artistic activities.

- Preserve, protect, and enhance heritage, monuments and civilisation.

- To encourage cross-sectoral collaboration between the Culture and Communication, Education, and Human and Social Sciences sectors.

- Develop the literature, and publishing sectors.

- Strengthen the role of cultural organizations and civil society.

- Plan and coordinate conferences and symposiums.

- Strengthen partnerships and agreements.

- Providing education and training to improve capacity and skills.

- Encourage multilateral collaboration and cultural diplomacy.

- Promote the creative and cultural industries, as well as the digital cultural economy and solidarity and social cultural economy.

- Encouraging cultural rights.

- Improve the visibility of the Organization's activities via modernizing communication methods.

- Promoting sustainable tourism, culture and heritage

- Encourage and activate cultural and communication governance structures.

Regional and international challenges and opportunities

Education

Access to culture

Migration

Cultural policies

Promoting the role of women

The digital divide

Quantification

Employability of youth

ICESCO's 54 Member States face multiple and complex challenges, including the protection and enhancement of cultural and civilizational heritage, and the promotion of the common cultural values of peace and living together specific to the Islamic religion.

The Islamic world shares a common civilizational project, which contributes to the historical, scientific, and cultural progress of Humankind, thanks to a young and dynamic population. It holds an important share of the world's energy resources and has the potential to stimulate trade and investment worldwide.

Despite this enormous potential, the Islamic world is facing various economic, energetic, and cultural challenges, particularly related to the issues of identity, personality, modernity, progress, inclusive and holistic development.

Education:

Nowadays, there is an imperative need to improve education systems, at all levels of instruction up to higher education and scientific research, by integrating a more important and diversified cultural offer.

Cultural policies:

The absence of inclusive cultural policies leads to a rethinking of a more dynamic approach to cultural sectors.

Quantification:

The lack of cultural indicators of growth and performance in the economies of member countries needs to be addressed, to raise the importance of culture in integral and sustainable development.

Employability of youth:

Greater youth participation in the economy and cultural life leads to stronger and more inclusive economic growth. Reforms for youth employment, through the cultural and communication professions, would help economic diversification, particularly in the digital economy and industry.

Promoting the role of women:

Building inclusive societies through the emancipation of the role of women, to invest the social citadels through productivity, economic empowerment, poverty reduction and inequality. It also requires resilience in overcoming obstacles through women's participation in the social, educational, and cultural life of the Islamic world, which is essential for the development of its countries.

Access to culture:

The difficulty of access to culture is a major obstacle, hence the need to democratize culture.

Migration:

The fragile and unstable situation in many countries of the Islamic world and geopolitical tensions have led to waves of internal migration. These migrants face many challenges and there are limited means to help them. The cultural element is sometimes overlooked, but it is risky to do so since migrants frequently become permanent residents, and disregarding their cultural education puts them at risk for the host nation.

The digital divide:

The interdependence of Communication and Culture underlines the need for access to a quality digital environment.

It is therefore urgent to remedy the growing digital divide, otherwise a large part of the population will be excluded, especially the most isolated in the rural world, with the risk of creating two-speed societies.

ICESCO is actively engaged with its Member States and partners in addressing these challenges through methodical working methods, based on dialogue, exchange of good practices, peer learning and support to reforms.

Key Priority Fields:

Art, creativity
and cultural industries

Heritage and cultural
patrimony

Cultural policies,
research
and development

Books, publishing
and literature

The Culture and Communication Sector, in line with its Strategic Cultural Action Plan and its three strategic objectives, has identified four key priority areas for the next five years to increase the effectiveness of strategies based on a proactive and forward-looking culture.

These areas of activity are complementary and interconnected and should be approached in a holistic manner that serves a comprehensive approach to promoting culture in the Islamic world.

1. Art, creativity and cultural industries

ICESCO is aware of the human, economic and social potential of art, creativity and cultural and creative industries and wishes to invest in this field to create new perspectives of development and employability in the Member States.

These professions, sometimes ignored, often poorly known, are nevertheless profitable, bring a certain added value and generate direct and indirect employment in many sectors for a significant growth of the GDP.

The Organization intends to invest in promoting the cultural and creative sectors, to create employment opportunities and enhance the innovative cultural and creative industries.

It is important in the competitive world in which we evolve to help the young creative people of our Member States to realize their future projects.

ICESCO's priority is to support art and creativity and all related industries. And in a priority way two components :

a) Cultural Industries:

The cultural and creative industries are essentially made up of structures that carry out design, production or reproduction, distribution, and marketing of cultural products, as well as support services for cultural activities, advice and supervision of cultural professionals.

b) Cultural services:

They include all the related trades which are not creation per se but which contribute to creation through their contribution, support and know-how. They are essential to the accomplishment of any artistic or cultural creation, even indispensable. In this category we find a heterogeneous but homogeneous mix of cinemas, craft centers and complexes, cultural centers, bookshops, photo studios and video reportage spaces, printing, silk-screening and reprography structures, costume designers, stagehands, etc.

It is therefore about promoting these professions, encouraging vocations and joint projects, and facilitating exchanges between professionals and scientific events.

By encouraging our young people to develop, we create opportunities for funding, sponsorship, mentoring, promotion and support. We also value their work and their determination to contribute to the evolution of the cultural industries.

By connecting them with the most relevant collaborators in the sector and highlighting their visibility and presence, connecting them with the collaborative and intermediary industries in each cultural and creative field to enable them to make a

living from their creations and contribute to the growth of their society.

2. Cultural heritage

Our missions in this field are essentially divided into three (3) sub-sections, namely the registration, preservation and enhancement of cultural goods and elements, the safeguarding and promotion of cultural values and the constitution of a database relating to museums and the promotion of cultural tourism.

a) Listing, preservation and enhancement of cultural properties and elements.

The aim is to support the Member States in training professionals and registering cultural, natural and industrial sites and cultural elements in the first phase. This will be followed by projects for the enhancement, restoration and development of income-generating activities in order to reconcile the conservation of civilizational values and the sustainable development of the communities located around the sites or holders of the know-how. The center for the Heritage of the Islamic World (CPMI), created in January 2020, is dedicated to this mission.

b) Preservation and promoting cultural values.

The Islamic world has a rich, dense and diversified cultural diversity, which makes up its beauty and constitutes instruments of social cohesion, sources of art and obvious economic resources. Our mission as a sector is to accompany the communities to safeguard them through training, the search for funding and the structuring of cultural festivals. It is a question of truly promoting the social and solidarity economy, the digital cultural

economy and making culture a lever for development, the fight against poverty and violent extremism.

c) Promotion of cultural tourism:

In addition to creating wealth and employment, cultural tourism allows the discovery of new spaces (of people and cultures) and encourages tolerance and acceptance of people and their cultures. It is in this perspective that we plan to create «bridges» between communities through the support of cultural and tourist enterprises, the constitution of a database related to museums and monuments to visit knowledge and understanding within the Islamic world and to support the tourist economy.

3. Cultural policies, research, and development

With the new projects of ICESCO's International Network of Chairs for Thought, Literature and Arts and the international programs for research and studies, ICESCO aims to lay the foundations for a cultural and civilizational approach aimed at developing innovation skills as a starting point for humanities, research and renewal in all fields related to development, technology and communication.

Starting from their literary, academic and research dimensions, the network will give culture a prominent place.

4. Books, publishing, and literature

ICESCO seeks to develop the field of books, literature, and publishing in support of the main orientations of the Organization and of the Culture and Communication sector in general, and of the «ICESCO International Network of Chairs for Thought, Literature and Arts», in addition to the international

programs for research and studies in particular.

The edition is an immense possibility that promises and allows to realize the «ICESCO International Network of Chairs for Thought, Letters and Arts» and related universities, scholars, and artists, in the fields and sectors :

- Art, culture, and heritage
- Cultural policies
- Innovation and startup
- Sustainable development
- Artificial intelligence
- Dialogue and living together
- Education and science

Key Performance indicators:

Strategic Orientation	Key Performance Indicator
Promote the importance of culture, communication, heritage, the arts, and creativity in the Organization's efforts to achieve sustainable development and peaceful coexistence among peoples.	- Support a large digital artistic activity and research, related to "ICESCO CREATIVE" and all related platforms. - Train and supervision for cultural professions. - Promote of innovative cultural industries. - Promote the Social and Solidarity Cultural Economy (ECSS).
Begin by examining human civilization in relation to that of the Islamic world, with the goal of establishing communication, cooperation, respect, cohabitation, and partnership in all sectors.	- Improve the indicators of inscription of ICESCO, cultural sites and elements to reach one hundred annual inscriptions. - Strengthen the inscription of sites on the List of the Islamic World Heritage. - Strengthen training. - Restore of museums and inventory of collections.
Strengthen ICESCO's position at the international and domestic levels by adopting a number of essential structural milestones as well as cultural and artistic programs.	- Support the publication of numerous research papers in "Cultural Policies, Research and Inclusive Development" at the rate of ten papers per year. - Foster Research in Cultural Policy and Development. - Train and coach on cultural policies. - Improve of cultural GDP indicators in Member States. - Improve ICESCO's publishing indicators to ten annual publications for major works. - Co-publish of reference books under the direction of ICESCO. - Participate in international fairs and exhibitions. - Create and launch of scientific journals.

V. Other important Strategic Orientations

1. Legal Department

Major Strategic Orientations:

Drafting a recommendation on the prohibition of illicit trafficking in cultural property in the Islamic World

Development of a Moroccan strategy relating to Human Rights in the digital space (PANDDH)

Adoption of a recommendation on the ethics of AI in the Islamic World

Strategic Orientation 1:

Drafting a recommendation on the prohibition of illicit trafficking in cultural property in the Islamic World.

In the absence of any regional initiative to regulate trafficking in cultural property in the Islamic world, and the fact that culture is a major and important field among other fields that ICESCO is keen to promote in line with the principles and objectives stipulated in its charter and statutes, the preparation of a recommendation framing the field of trafficking in cultural property in the Islamic world will be an important initiative towards The consolidation of a legal accumulation that could one day reach the point of adopting an agreement with binding force for all.

The idea of preparing this recommendation is based on a participatory approach between the Legal Affairs Department, which will oversee the formulating the terms of this recommendation, and the recommendations, observations and visions of the members of the Executive Council at the moment this project is presented to them, so that its final version will include all opinions and directions.

The idea of adopting a recommendation instead of calling for the enactment of a framework law or an international agreement stems from the legal vacuum in the field of cultural property protection in the Islamic world in its regional sub-global aspect, and therefore it will be difficult to draft a binding law from the beginning, while the recommendation will enable the measurement of the degree of response and interaction with it. By the member states, and accordingly a bigger step can be taken then.

In addition, the tendency towards drafting and adopting an international agreement, for example, to organize and frame this field, will make the road long towards regulation, given the complex and many procedures that accompany the adoption of international agreements, between negotiations, expressing reservations and respecting privacy, as well as varying ratification procedures from one country to another, each according to its ruling political system.

Strategic Orientation 2:

The development of a Moroccan strategy relating to Human Rights in the digital space (PANDDH)

It is a strategy that will be developed in the framework of partnership between the Ministry of Human Rights and ICESCO to promote human rights in the digital age, and fight against fake news and risks that emanate from the digital space.

Strategic Orientations 3:

Adoption of a recommendation on the ethics of AI in the Islamic world

AI as defined by the Council of Europe's is "a set of sciences, theories and techniques whose aim is to make a machine imitate the cognitive capacities of a human being." However, the increasing use of AI technology in many fields such as media, marketing, follow-up, and control raised the need for an Ethical Charter or recommendations to overcome the risks caused by Artificial Intelligence and protect citizens from any improper uses. Many countries, organizations, civil institutional advocates, think-tanks and universities hold meetings and seminars, gather experts in ad hoc committees to elaborate research papers to identify problems and explore potential solutions amid the mutant nature and fast evolution of this technology to ensure its respect for the universal principles, human values and dignity especially in the Islamic World.

Amid the lack of efficient legislations likely to preserve people's lives, rights and security from the side-effects of this technology; and in line with ICESCO's global vision, the Department of Legal Affairs aspires to gather prominent experts in addition to Member States stakeholders for consultations in order to set up ethics guidelines and recommendation for AI in the Islamic World.

Key Priority Fields:

Supervising the organization and framing of training workshops on ways to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in cultural property

Elaboration of a legal and good use guide of the digital space to increase awareness of the risks and dangers emanating from the digital space

Setting the fundamental rights to be protected and respected in Artificial Intelligence Field in the Islamic World and beyond:

Priority Field 1 :

Supervising the organization and framing of training workshops on ways to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in cultural property :

The main idea of this project revolves around the supervision of ICESCO in supervising the organization and framing of training workshops on ways to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in cultural property, by starting from multiple and diverse axes, such as introducing cultural property, highlighting its great importance, introducing the framework international legal mechanisms, highlighting the roles of various governmental and non-governmental actors.

These training courses will come within the framework of a general context characterized by the rampant phenomenon of illegal trafficking in cultural property in the Islamic world, to the extent that the fear of reaching a point in time when the Islamic world becomes devoid of its cultural property.

The role of ICESCO, as an international regional organization concerned with the fields of culture and heritage, stems from several points, and its supervision, through its experts, frameworks and partners, on these training and training workshops will be the first stage of several steps under the theme of combating illegal trafficking in cultural property in the Islamic world. Besides also, it would be important to prepare a guide on preventing and combating illicit trafficking in cultural property.

Finally, the legal department of ICESCO will also publish summary notes and scientific articles on national legislation relating to the prohibition of illicit trafficking in cultural property. The publication of summary notes and scientific articles on the problem of illicit trafficking in intellectual property in international journals by international experts who criticize international instruments (Convention UNESCO 1970 and Convention UNIDROIT 1995).

Priority Field 2 :

A legal guide to the proper use of the Internet : Elaboration of a legal and good use guide of the digital space to increase awareness of the risks and dangers emanating from the digital space.

- Strengthening the role of the media in the fight against the risks of the digital space: Because of its impact, and to make a success of this large-scale project, ICESCO has relied on the media to reach all categories of Moroccan society to disseminate good practices of the Internet and launch an awareness campaign on the danger and challenges of the digital space.

- Encourage scientific and research participation in higher education institutions and cooperate with national and international research centers.

- Directing researchers towards themes that meet the needs of Moroccan society and the Arab community in general in the field of digital risks, and that contribute to meeting digital challenges.

- Support and strengthen the work and roles of civil actors working to combat discriminatory speech and incitement to violence and hate in the digital space: This project aims to support Moroccan

civil society working in this field through a series of trainings and workshops.

Priority Field 3 :

Setting fundamental rights to be protected and respected in Artificial Intelligence Field in the Islamic World and beyond.

- Data protection and privacy (Respect for private and family life, residence and correspondence)

- ICESCO Ethical Charter on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in judicial systems

- Addresses the risks caused by algorithmic and other types of artificial intelligence

- Promote ethical frameworks and guidelines on Artificial Intelligence

- Ensure the implication of Governments in the process of the amending protocol of Convention.

- Ad hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence

- Mitigating the risks of lobbying by some digital companies to prevent regulation

- Mitigating the risks of multiple and non-compatible recommendations with national regulations

Key Performance Indicator:

Major Orientations	KPIs
Drafting a recommendation on the prohibition of illicit trafficking in cultural property in the Muslim world.	- Supervising the organization and framing of training workshops on ways to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in cultural property - Holding an international symposium entitled "The Field of Trafficking in Cultural Property in the Islamic World and the Necessity of Regulation" - Preparing an introductory guide to cultural property in the Islamic world: - Publication of summary notes and scientific articles on national legislation relating to the prohibition of illicit trafficking in Cultural property.
The development of a Moroccan strategy relating to Human Rights in the digital space (PANDDH):	- Quality of the strategy/ Number of workshops with officials
Adoption of a recommendation on the ethics of AI in the Islamic world	- Prominent experts from the Muslim world and outside. - Budgetary of the project. - Involvement of Member States and stakeholders. - Side-events and activities held. - The quality of reports and recommendations derived from each activity. - Conclusions reached by researchers

2. Media and Institutional Communication Department

In line with the overall vision of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), a leading international influence in its fields of competence, the Department of Media and Institutional Communication at ICESCO continues to work on several axes, in order to contribute to the achievement of the Organization's mission and regulating the elaboration of operational plans for the work of ICESCO's media.

Major Strategic Orientations:

Reinforce outreach to media and social networking site users

Assisting sectors in maximizing the benefits of ICESCO's programs and activities

Addressing poor digital content and fake news

Training and building the capacity of journalists and media professionals in the Member States as to how to take advantage of modern technologies in their field of work

Strategic Orientation 1:

Reinforce outreach to media and social networking site users

As part of the strategy of transparency and inclusiveness on which ICESCO's vision is based, the Media and Institutional Communication Department adopts a dual communication approach. The first is good communication with the media, especially news agencies, newspapers, websites, and TV channels, and providing the representatives of these media with information and statistics, as well as everything they need. Using data to convey ICESCO's messages to the largest number of followers, covering the organization's programs and activities and all the studies, reports, and other publications it issues, to highlight the roles ICESCO plays in various fields, for decision makers in the Member States and the public as well.

The second communicative approach, adopted by ICESCO's media department, aims at conveying ICESCO's educational, scientific and cultural messages to the largest number of citizens in Member States and Islamic communities around the world, using the various social media sites, where these messages are disseminated in the three working languages of the organization (Arabic-English-French) on ICESCO's different platforms on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Nabd, Flickr, YouTube, Dailymotion and Vimeo, in addition to publishing news and reports on ICESCO's website in the three languages as well.

By interacting with these publications, comments, messages and questions from followers of the organization's accounts and pages on social networking sites, the most influential publications are measured, and the requirements of the beneficiaries of the organization's activities and followers through ICESCO's platforms are

known. These indicators are transferred to the different sectors, departments and centers of the organization, to update the operational plans of the programs and activities according to these priorities.

Strategic Orientation 2:

Assist sectors in maximizing the benefits of ICESCO's programs and activities

The Department of Media and Institutional Communication works alongside ICESCO's sectors, departments, and centers in all the programs and activities implemented, before, during and after the implementation. This is a strategic orientation for the work of the department, which aims at introducing and publicizing these activities, to mobilize the largest number of beneficiaries.

Working in cooperation with the concerned sector well before the launch of these programs and activities is initiated, and upon information related to the activity, press releases are issued and disseminated to newspapers, websites and satellite channels, in addition to multimedia publication on ICESCO's various social media platforms, which includes the preparation of publications, illustrations, designs and videos to show all the details and objectives related to the program or activity, and how to participate in and benefit from it.

While the activity is taking place, it is transmitted live in the three working languages of the organization via the Facebook pages, and live tweets are continuously written on the Twitter accounts to describe what is happening and transmit statements on the participants of the activity, to give the maximum benefit to

the public of the expertise and knowledge of the experts and specialists who participate in ICESCO's activities.

Following the end of the activity, the latter is documented, by publishing a press report on the activities it included on ICESCO's website, and by disseminating this report to various media. A playlist is being created on ICESCO's YouTube, Dailymotion and Vimeo channels, including videos of all the events and the program of the activity. Documentation is also done through photos, publishing an album on the organization's Flickr account, following up on the publication of the details of the activity's outcomes on ICESCO's social media pages and accounts, receiving messages and questions from participants and followers about the activity, and forwarding these questions to the relevant sector for response prior to the administration of the notification by sending a reply to the questioner.

Strategic Orientation 3:

Addressing poor digital content and fake news

Embodying ICESCO's mission in the fields of education, culture and communication, the Department of Media and Institutional Communication adopts, within the framework of its strategic orientations, the fight against bad digital content and fake news, considering the phenomenon of the dissemination of such harmful content, which negatively affects the new generations in Member States and threatens their national identity.

In this context, ICESCO's media department has not only commented on bad content, or refuted fake news only, whether through

its platforms on social networking sites, or by participating in international conferences and workshops that discuss these issues, but ICESCO's media has deliberately contributed to changing this. In fact, by adding quality and useful digital content that brings the media back to its original function of raising awareness and education, either through direct production by the multimedia unit of ICESCO's information department, or by partnering with reputable media outlets in the organization's member states and jointly producing such good content, as well as by cooperating with several international organizations and bodies in the production of high-value digital content.

One example of what has been done as part of this ongoing strategic orientation of ICESCO's Media is that with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and the accompanying false reports, some of which question the existence of the disease in the first place, the organization has produced a number of videos to raise awareness of the danger of the emerging corona virus, and to clarify how to prevent and avoid infection, and these clips have been presented in several languages, including local African languages, and have achieved high viewing and interaction rates.

ICESCO also cooperated with the International Football Federation (FIFA) in the production of a video clip featuring the world's biggest soccer stars applauding the medical staff at the frontline of defence. The video, which was produced in eight languages, reached millions of views on FIFA and ICESCO's channels on various social media platforms, and was the best response to the intimidation campaigns and exclusion attempts that targeted medical staff at one point in the pandemic.

Strategic Orientation 4:

Training and building the capacity of journalists and media professionals in the Member States as to how to take advantage of modern technologies in their field of work

ICESCO's new vision is focused on the need to provide quality and comprehensive lifelong education and training, and because the field of media is among the fields that are undergoing successive developments, in line with the rise of technology, communication means and artificial intelligence applications, the Department of Media and Institutional Communication is setting up training, rehabilitation and capacity building for journalists in ICESCO's Member States. Among its most important strategic orientations, especially regarding new media and taking advantage of technological developments to serve the media message, in cooperation with a group of official and governmental news agencies in several ICESCO Member States, by signing partnership and cooperation agreements with them, based mainly on training and capacity building of journalists and media professionals.

Geographical distribution has been considered in these agreements, so that the agencies serve as training centers for the benefit of journalists and media professionals from all member states. Two cooperation agreements have been signed with the Arab Maghreb News Agency, which provides for the training of journalists and media professionals from the Kingdom of Morocco and the African member states of ICESCO. A similar agreement was also signed with the Azerbaijan National News Agency (AZERTAC), and among its terms is cooperation in training journalists and media professionals from Azerbaijan and neighbouring ICESCO member states. Agreements with news agencies from other regions are currently under discussion.

These trainings, in addition to contributing to the development of the performance of journalists and media professionals, aim at deepening their sense of belonging to the Islamic civilization and culture, and presenting them in a correct manner to the media audience, whether inside or outside the Islamic world, to preserve the identity and pride of the Islamic world, and to face the attempts to offend Islam in all its forms.

Key Priority Fields:

Press Editing	Enriching the digital content
Social Networking	Multimedia
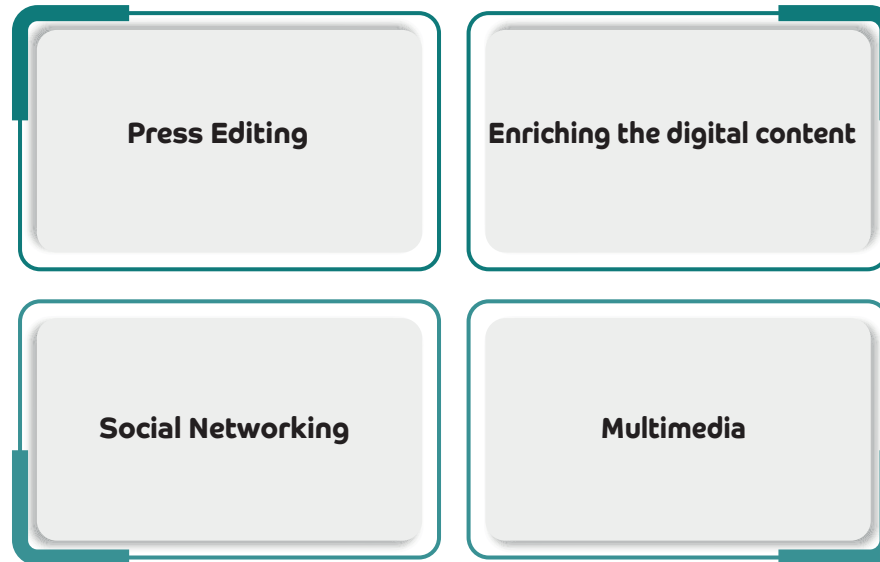
To achieve the strategic objectives of ICESCO's Media and Institutional Communication Department, which are in line with the overall vision of the organization, the Department gives priority to several main areas in its work, which can be presented as follows:

Priority Field 1: Press Editing

Press editing is one of the main areas of work of ICESCO's Media and Corporate Communication Department, which expresses the organization's point of view on almost all subjects, from press releases issued by the organization on an event related to its fields of competence, to a review of ICESCO's efforts in a field on World or International Days, through the coverage and communication of the organization's programs and activities, following up on the formulation of press interviews conducted by the media with the organization's leaders, so that no errors or misinformation about ICESCO and its fields of work, initiatives and programs are made.

Press releases are prepared in the three languages of the organization (Arabic - English - French), and the editing method used by the Media Department is periodically updated, and consists in emphasizing, in writing news, reports and press releases for ICESCO, the diversification of the angles of coverage of the activities, focusing on «highlighting» the event, without neglecting the participants.

The Media Department ensures professional editing to provide information that adds value to the reader, while highlighting ICESCO's activities, focusing on unconventional, diverse, and interesting short headlines, supporting the news with images specific to each activity and writing several reports on the same event, each dealing with a different angle.

Priority Field 2: Enriching the digital content

Enriching ICESCO's digital content on the Internet is one of the main work areas of the Media and Institutional Communication Department, encompassing everything related to the organization, including Internet publications, images, videos, Wikipedia pages, and other aspects of its digital presence on the Internet.

The department's work aims to support ICESCO's digital presence on the Internet, adopting the latest methods of adapting content (whether in publications, social media messages, etc..) to be suitable for electronic search engines (SEO), a method that produces a cumulative effect, and changes the content so that it becomes thousands of times more positive than negative, for example, ensuring that the name of the organization is in the titles of news, and its repetition in the different texts (ICESCO - the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) . ... etc., and this accumulation makes that the search for the word (ICESCO) in Arabic language, and on a search engine, Google, currently yields more than one million results.

Through adopting modern methods of content adaptation, news and documents published on ICESCO's website, as well as

the organization's pages and accounts on social networking sites and its YouTube channel, appear at the top of Google search results. Work is underway on ICESCO's Wikipedia pages, which are now available in 14 different languages, to constantly update the organization's data, and to create new pages in other languages of the Member States.

Priority Field 3: Social Networking

Social networking sites have become one of the most important new media, and their influence is increasing day by day. ICESCO's strong presence on social networking sites, like other international organizations and bodies, is of great importance to contribute to the full realization of the organization's mission.

From this point of view, ICESCO's Media and Institutional Communication Department considers the field of social media as one of the most important areas of its main work, and the department continues to work assiduously around the clock to strengthen ICESCO's presence on these important platforms.

Moreover, work is underway to enrich ICESCO's content on the platforms: Facebook (we have three pages in the three working languages of the organization), Twitter (we have three accounts in the three working languages of the organization), the Nabd app (we have a platform in Arabic, as the app is reserved for Arabic news), and Instagram. This is done by a team specialized in social media, using the latest methods of writing, design and video, to present ICESCO's different initiatives, programs and awards, and to follow and

cover the activities and forums that the organization organizes in real time.

The social media team also responds to the messages of the followers of the pages and accounts, interested in ICESCO's fields of work, and answers the questions raised by them, after going back to the sector, department or center concerned with the issue, if necessary, and conveying the orientations of the audience and their areas of interest, and what they are expecting from the organization, to ICESCO's stakeholders, in order to achieve the best positive results for the organization's programs and activities.

A qualitative leap has been made in ICESCO's social media pages and accounts over the past two years, with the organization's pages in the three languages on Facebook becoming the primary promoter of the organization's activities and programs, and the primary source of interaction with its audience.

Priority Field 4: Multimedia

Multimedia is considered one of the most significant tools for influencing new media. As such, the Media and Institutional Communication Department considers it one of its main working areas. The team that deals with this work within the department is specialised in the preparation, shooting, and editing of video scripts produced by ICESCO.

It also documents, with audio and video, all the activities and forums organized by ICESCO, to present the work of the organization, and to obtain the greatest impact of these activities by making all these videos available on the Internet, through ICESCO's channels on YouTube, Dailymotion, and Vimeo, and by publishing this production on the Facebook pages, as well as on the Twitter and Instagram accounts.

Key Performance Indicator:

Major Strategic Orientation	Key Performance Indicators
Outreach to media and social networking site users	- The number of news, reports and press releases issued by the Department in the three languages during the year. - The rate of publication in newspapers and websites at the level of Member States during the year - The number of countries whose media published news and reports about ICESCO and its activities. - b - Frequent publication of the news of the organization by the media in those countries. - The performance of the organization's pages and accounts on social networking sites during the year (a comparison of the detailed figures for the performance of pages and accounts between the beginning and end of the year): - Comparison between the number of followers, the volume of interaction, and the percentage of access on Facebook pages in the three languages at the beginning and end of the year. - Comparison between the number of followers, the volume of interaction, and the percentage of reach on the Instagram account at the beginning and end of the year. - Percentages of the increase in the number of followers of the organization's accounts on Twitter. - Comparing the number of views on ICESCO's video channels (Youtube - Dailymotion - Vimeo) at the beginning and end of the year. - Comparison between the number of followers of the ICESCO platform on the Nabd application at the beginning and end of the year. - The number of videos produced within the department during the year.
Assisting sectors in maximizing the benefits of ICESCO's programs and activities	- Repeated audio-visual coverage of ICESCO activities by the media in the Member States within a year: - The number of reports produced by the radio stations in the Member States on ICESCO and its activities. - The number of reports produced by the television channels in the Member States on ICESCO and its activities.
Addressing poor digital content and fake news	
Training and building the capacity of journalists and media professionals in the Member States as to how to take advantage of modern technologies in their field of work	

3. Cooperation and International Partnership Sector:

Partnerships are at the heart of all ICESCO's activities, enabling it to expand its reach and influence, and to mobilize resources to advance its universal mandate for its member countries. In the context of COVID 19, declining overall development assistance, and limited budgetary space, building partnerships, raising funds, and mobilizing resources from a range of partners in the public and private sectors as well as NGOs are essential to closing the projected gaps in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. ICESCO will continue its long-standing practice of building capacity, mobilizing resources and influencing its sectors and programs through partnerships with both qualitative and quantitative reach.

Major Strategic Orientations:

Resource development through the consolidation and diversification of ICESCO's funding sources and financial mechanisms

Partnership with the private sector and corporate social responsibility

Promote ICESCO's roles and contributions in the implementation of regional and international Development Agendas, Goals and Frameworks, through global partnerships

Reinforce the Strategic Position of ICESCO and promote its image as an international key actor in its fields of competence on the level of regional, international, governmental and non-governmental organizations

Strategic Orientation 1:

Resource development through the consolidation and diversification of ICESCO's funding sources and financial mechanisms

In the framework of the first project, ICESCO will endeavour to strengthen its current cooperation with its network of active partners and to diversify its funding sources in order to meet the ever-changing needs of its Member States, in the context of the COVID-19 which has impacted the regional and international scene, the emphasis will be placed, In this regard, the focus will be on actions to be taken to meet the priority development needs of Member States, particularly by harmonizing efforts on the ground, directing strategic approaches and taking advantage of the institutional dimension in order to help Member States cope with the fluctuations that the world is undergoing in various sectors. It is also a matter of strengthening good governance and best practices and encouraging pilot and innovative initiatives likely to boost development.

Strategic Orientation 2:

Partnership with the private sector and corporate social responsibility

The Organization is giving increased interest to cooperation with the private sector. To this end, ICESCO intends, through this axis, to strengthen this orientation which is now one of the new dimensions of its cooperation policy, thus ensuring complementarity with the previous field of intervention relating to cooperation and diversification of funding sources.

ICESCO also intends to intensify contacts with private sector institutions in order to sensitize them on the need to get involved in the programmes and projects it carries out in favour of Member States, emphasizing the need to invest in human resources as well as in knowledge and technology structures geared towards sustainable development.

In the light of the above, and with a view to diversifying the bases of partnership and developing its methods, ICESCO has deemed it useful to include, within the framework of its new vision, what are commonly known as extra-budgetary projects. These projects are distinguished by their comprehensive approach in addressing relevant issues, broad geographical coverage of beneficiary parties, flexible implementation procedures, and easy control of their administrative and financial procedures.

Strategic Orientation 3:

To Promote ICESCO's roles and contributions in the implementation of regional and international Development Agendas, Goals and Frameworks, through global partnerships

ICESCO Fosters key international development initiatives to help the international community tackle common challenges in a coherent way. Through substantial international cooperation, ICESCO also fully and continuously contributes to the achievement of the SDGs, by 2030, especially within the Member States, but also on an international scale.

The first **strategic objective** of this major orientation is to accelerate action and transformative pathways to realize the sustainable development goals, through

intensified global partnerships. The second major strategic objective of ICESCO's commitment to achieving Agenda 2030 is to fight extremism and terrorism, both inside and outside the Member States. To this end ICESCO is for a holistic approach where the educational, cultural and communication means team with the security dimension undertaken by the relevant competent agencies to combat these dangerous and growing phenomena which undermine development processes and compromise peace and security in a number of regions across the world including, many ICESCO Member States.

Among the **expected results** of this ICESCO major orientation are to:

- Meet the evolving needs of Member States, particularly in light of the recent regional and international developments, such as the Covid 19 crisis,

- Boost development financing, fight poverty and promote well-being for all,

- Foster innovation, create job opportunities and promote decent employment and economic growth and development

- Empower the vulnerable, the marginalized and the disadvantaged (refugees, women, girls, youth, rural areas..) and reduce inequalities to develop inclusive societies,

- Insure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong educational opportunities for all.

In this context, focus will be laid on trying to meet the developmental priorities of Member States, through unifying field efforts, orienting strategic approaches to strengthen good governance, encourage

best practices and step up pilot and innovative initiatives likely to give a great impetus to developmental action.

To this end, the relevant **partners** and various stakeholders for ICESCO include regional and sub-regional communities, governmental and non-governmental institutions, local, regional and intergovernmental organizations and multilateral agencies, both inside and outside the UN system. In exploring bilateral and multilateral relationships of constructive complementarity, ICESCO both shares its experiences and benefits from the quality expertise of its valuable partners in developing work mechanisms and promoting implementation tools in issues related to shared priorities in areas of common interest.

Hence, the **suggested activities** in this major orientation include:

- Organize, participate to, and sponsor cultural, educational and scientific formal meetings and high-level events and activities, in order to encourage capacity building, mutual learning, exchange of good/best practices on the management of social transformations

- Implement relevant projects and programs and develop protection and assistance programs for women, children, and people with disabilities.

- Develop regional communication strategies and awareness campaigns, both in Member States and beyond (to combat climate change and its impacts, for example)

- Sponsor and publish relevant scientific studies

Strategic Orientation4:

To reinforce ICESCO's strategic positioning and promoting its visibility and image as a key and essential international actor in its fields of expertise within the regional and international, Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations.

In light of its outstanding recent achievements, and thanks to its credibility, seriousness, efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism, ICESCO, will continue to succeed in extensively enlarging the scope of its partnerships network with cooperating parties, through concluding MoUs, cooperation agreements, and programs of action with the most important regional and international organization in the same area of competence.

A better visibility for the ever-increasing role and involvement of ICESCO in the execution and evaluation of international agenda will enhance more cooperation partnerships, on financial and institutional levels with various regional and international institutions, inside and outside the Member States.

The Sector will be dedicated to concluding cooperation agreements and action programs, holding bilateral and multilateral coordination meetings, as well as participating in, and contributing to sponsoring and supporting, whenever needed, conferences, forums and international events.

The suggested activities in this major orientation will have the greatest impact not only on promoting the image of ICESCO regionally and internationally, as a modern forward-looking and internationally engaged, but also on active contribution to the development of Member States and the promotion of their educational, scientific, cultural and communication levels. Serving society and the civilizational mission of ICESCO, they include to:

- Implement important developmental projects and joint programs in the fields of expertise of ICESCO.

- Participate, organize and sponsor national, regional and international conferences, symposiums, forums, colloquia, meetings, trainings and workshops

- Sponsor cultural, educational and scientific activities and studies

- Prepare reports on the realizations of ICESCO

- Publish various media tools on the actions of ICESCO

- Develop cooperation and partnership relations with governmental and nongovernmental organizations and bodies.

Key priority fields:

Cooperation with civil society institutions	Develop a strategy and a board table for the mobilization of the global resources for 2022-2025
Update Funds cartography	Reinforce advanced capacities for the sector's experts for the elaboration of propositions and projects

Alike its global vision, cooperation at ICESCO is oriented towards development, through projects that have a direct benefit on the ground, mainly in the Member States

Key Performance Indicator:

Strategic Orientation	Key Performance indicator
Partnership with the private sector and corporate social responsibility	- Number of resource mobilization strategies and dashboards prepared and updated. - Number of donors mapped. - Number of beneficiaries identified, targeted and contacted Number of proposal templates developed. - Number of projects developed, number of meetings held, number of outreach and networking events attended. - Number of agreements signed. - Number of agreements signed amount of funds raised - Reports produced and qualitative impact on partnership achievements - Size of resources mobilized and level of strategic positioning and institutional visibility
To Promote ICESCO's roles and contributions in the implementation of regional and international Development Agendas, Goals and Frameworks, through global partnerships	In total respect of its administrative measures and financial regulations, ICESCO shall ascertain that the outputs and implementation mechanisms of these partnerships take the form of integrated programs and projects that address key issues and propose effective solutions according to set deadlines and in coordination with the benefitting and implementing parties as well as partners. The positive and concrete results achieved, both in quantitative and qualitative terms are to be measured and demonstrated by : - The number of Beneficiaries reached out, - The number of countries supported, - The size of services provided and activities implemented, - The number of projects developed and the number of programs implemented, - The number of joint committees held, meetings, outreach and networking activities organized and attended.

To Promote ICESCO's roles and contributions in the implementation of regional and international Development Agendas, Goals and Frameworks, through global partnerships	This cooperation approach is based on quality standards and criteria and assessment indicators of the field impact of these programs and projects, instead of quantitative considerations and measures which focused only on the number of activities and spent amounts, without necessarily confirming their effective results and the real benefits brought to Member States. - The number of new partnerships established, with stated qualitative impact on partnership achievements. - The list of challenges addressed and assets consolidated. ICESCO's Strategic positioning and institutional visibility

4. Arabic Center for non-Arabic speakers

Major Strategic Orientations:

Providing technical advice, knowledge expertise and building national educational capacities

Providing programs and activities to serve the teaching of the Arabic language

Strategic Orientation 1:

Providing technical advice, knowledge expertise and building national educational capacities

The establishment of ICESCO's Arabic Language Centre for non-Arabic speakers is an expression of the organization's new vision and future strategic orientations, and of its firm awareness of the role of the Arabic language in perpetuating the principle of multilingualism so as to broaden the horizons of learning and improve the educational process, in promoting a rational and open civilizational identity, and in building bridges of dialogue and knowledge between all peoples of the world, and refuting the discourse of closure, hatred and violence.

Undoubtedly, the adoption of a specialized body, based on the decision taken by the Executive Council of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at

its Fortieth Session (Abu Dhabi, 29-30 January 2020), is in line with ICESCO's new organizational structure, to become a center of international leadership in capacity building and educational qualification of institutions and individuals in the field of Arabic language for non-Arabic speakers confirms the organization's determination to play a more prominent role and implement more effective and sustainable programs in this field, in response to the educational and cultural needs of Member States, especially those speaking other languages, as well as the educational and cultural institutions of Muslims outside the Islamic world.

While Arabic is the mother tongue language of about 300 million people worldwide[55], most of whom live in the Arab world, hundreds of millions of Muslims use

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55 "Arabic | Bryn Mawr College," Brynmawr.edu, 2020.

it as a second language or as a language of worship to perform their religious rituals. Arabic language institutions outside the Arab and Islamic worlds are also seeing increasing numbers of students, whether in Europe, South-East Asia or North and South America. As much as the interest in the Arabic language is growing and the appeal for its learning by non-native speakers in the various countries of the world is increasing, prominent officials in some non-Arab countries are calling for the need to give it the high position it deserves in the educational systems of these countries. In turn, most of the educational programs, projects and efforts in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers, both official and private institutions, are unable to meet the quality standards of education and cannot achieve the expected results and products.

In the light of this situation, which is characterized by the need for institutions and individuals working in the field of Arabic outside their countries to receive institutional support for their efforts in the field of education or theoretical and applied linguistic research, cultural activities and writing the languages of the Islamic nations in Arabic script, ICESCO believes that, on the basis of its successful experience in Chad and Malaysia, which has set up two specialized centers in the field of Arabic for non-native speakers, there is a need to localize experience and expertise in the above-mentioned educational, linguistic and cultural fields. Through comprehensive and integrated projects and initiatives, based on the approaches of sustainability and efficiency, for the benefit of national education, sciences and culture officials concerned with the dissemination of the Arabic language, as well as teachers, curriculum writers and students, and thus contribute to raising the status of the Arabic language at the Islamic and international levels, it will as well guarantee a permanent and prominent presence in the beneficiary countries of this project.

Based on this analytical reading of the conditions of Arabic education and this forward-looking vision of its future prospects in countries speaking other languages, ICESCO's Arabic Language Center for Non-Arabic Speakers has set itself a major strategic orientation for the years 2022-2025, which aims at providing technical advice, knowledge expertise and to strengthen national educational capacities through the establishment of more than one of the specialized training centers and poles in non-Arabic speaking Member States, and the opening of more specialized university chairs in the Islamic world and beyond, which have established departments to teach Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

Strategic Orientation 2:

Providing programs and activities to serve the teaching of the Arabic language

Based on its international reference, ICESCO Arabic Language Centre for Non-Arabic Speakers is continuously striving to provide everything that serves the Arabic language, improves its dissemination, and strengthens its presence in the Islamic world and onwards.

Aware of the challenges facing the field of teaching and learning Arabic for Non-Arabic Speakers, and the difficulties encountered by most educational
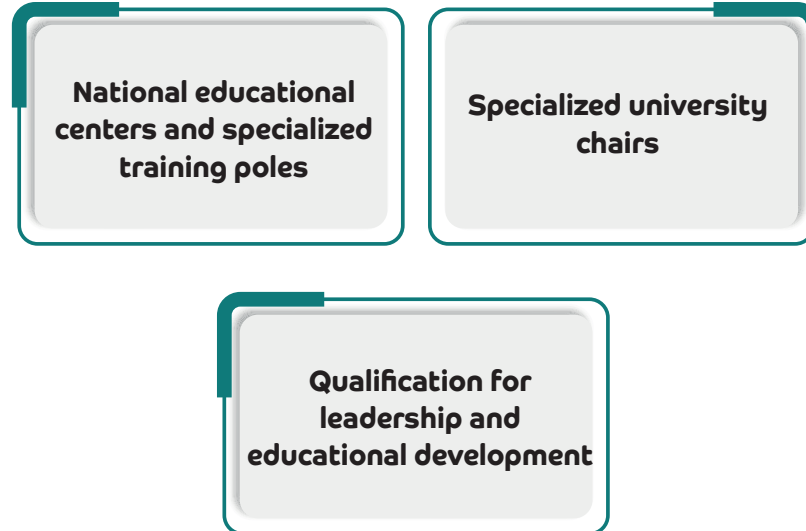
institutions, namely the lack of proper preparation and continuous readjustment in their educational frameworks, and the inability to keep pace with educational and technological developments in their curricula, decisions and pedagogical means, while aiming at finding an overall organizational framework for the center's programs and activities, in the light of ICESCO's new vision and its future strategic orientations, the center has adopted in its forward-looking vision for its future prospects in foreign language speaking countries a strategic orientation aimed at serving the Arabic language by offering various programs and activities that serve the interests of the Arabic language. This includes providing appropriate training and rehabilitation programs to build national capacities in non-Arabic speaking countries in the field of curricula, methods and facilities for non-Arabic speakers, coordinating efforts and organizing working visits, and establishing partnerships with institutions and organizations specialized in teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, organizing conferences, seminars, meetings of officials and experts and workshops to develop the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, updating its mechanisms, preparing and publishing references and specialized studies, and supporting the production of national educational books and advanced digital materials for teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, supporting ICT and digital media-based Arabic language teaching program, supporting programs for writing the languages of the Islamic nations in standard Arabic script, establishing an electronic network to publish the news of the center and the activities of institutions and centers of common interest, and organizing competitions and awarding prizes for pioneering initiatives in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

With the onset of the spread of the Corona pandemic worldwide, the Center, based on the directives of ICESCO's General Administration, has put educational and pedagogical alternatives, virtual scientific and cultural activities and educational content on ICESCO's channel for the benefit of non-Arabic speaking students of Arabic. Investing in educational technology and digital media in the development of its educational programs, methods and processes, the Center created the online platform «Mishkat» for educational skills with the aim of networking national centers and institutions in the Member States and abroad and investing in modern digital communication and technology to ensure continuous and regular educational services to workers in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

Key Priority Fields:

National educational centers and specialized training poles	**Specialized university chairs**

Qualification for leadership and educational development

First Priority Field

National educational centers and specialized training poles

Expected Outcomes:

1. Establishing appropriate administrative, organisational and educational mechanisms to localise pedagogical expertise in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers in other language speaking countries;

2. Adopting national education policies that integrate the Arabic language into the official education systems of other language speaking countries;

3. Qualifying educational personnel working in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers (leaders, managers, educational mentors, curriculum and training experts, and teachers) and developing their professional capacities and educational skills;

4. Improving the quality of national programmes, curricula, teaching aids and national textbooks for teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Establishing (2) two training centres in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers in Member States speaking other languages each year for the period 2022 and 2025.

2. Expanding the programmes of ICESCO's specialized centres in Chad, Malaysia and Comoros, and strengthening their national status and regional influence.

3. Preparing a unified guideline for ICESCO's national centers and training poles in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers.

Targeted Groups:

- Officials and experts in the field of Arab education in other Arab-speaking Member States;

- Educational and pedagogical institutions working in the field of Arabic education in the Member States benefiting from the training centres and poles;

- Male and female teachers in the field of Arab education in the countries covered by the project;

- Civil society organisations and parents of students;

- Students and all learners wishing to learn Arabic in the countries hosting the centers;

Geographical scope and places of implementation:

8 non-Arabic speaking member states.

Main Executive Programs:

1. The educational qualification program for leaders and mentors working in the field of Arab education;

2. The program for preparing teachers of Arabic education for the basic stage;

3. Arabic language teaching program for adults who speak other languages.

Specialized university chairs
Expected Outcomes:

1. A stronger presence of the Arabic language in universities in other language-speaking countries;

2. Opening up broader horizons for specialized scientific research in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers;

3. Building positive attitudes among non-Arab students towards the Arabic language and its learning;

4. Closer scientific exchanges between universities concerned with issues of the Arabic language to non-Arabic speakers;

5. The increasing pace of academic publishing in Arabic in non-Arab universities;

6. Creating platforms for dialogue with people of other cultures and followers of other religions.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Opening eight (8) university chairs in eight countries during the years 2022 and 2025 in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers;

2. Deepening scientific and pedagogical research on Arabic language issues for non-Arabic speakers in universities in other language countries;

3. Preparation of 16 university research papers in the framework of a master's or doctoral degree, dealing with the educational dimensions in the field of Arabic language for non-Arabic speakers;

4. Implementation of 16 training programs in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers;

Targeted Groups:

- Universities of the Islamic world interested in teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers;

- Universities outside the Islamic world that have established departments to teach Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

- Muslim educational institutions outside the Islamic world;

- Educational leaders and officials in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

- University professors working in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers;

- Students of the Arabic language departments in the universities that will host the chairs;

Geographical scope and places of implementation:

Member and non-member states and Muslim institutions outside the Islamic world.

Main Executive Programs:

1. A program of periodic academic lectures in the field of Arabic language and Arab-Islamic culture;

2. The training program for educational qualification in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers;

3. The Arab Culture Program (organizing exhibitions, competitions and prizes);

4. Program to support scientific research specialized in the field of Arabic language for non-Arabic speakers.

Qualification for leadership and educational development

Expected Outcomes:

- Improving the educational efficiency of the frameworks working in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, and achieving theoretical and practical keeping pace with educational developments and benefiting from educational technology;

- Providing qualified national educational leaders to supervise, plan and evaluate authentic education programs, and to guide and train teachers;

Strategic Objectives:

1. Implementation of four (4) educational qualification programs annually for the benefit of administrative officials, educational mentors and teachers to develop methods of teaching Arabic in the Member States and in Muslim countries outside the Islamic world;

2. Completing the computerization of the system of writing the languages of Islamic peoples in the Arabic script.

3. Preparing (16) specialized studies in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers;

4. Providing educational advice and expertise for the benefit of educational authorities in four (4) member states in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers;

5. Providing a continuous program for distance educational training for educational frameworks working in the field of the Arabic language for non-Arabic speakers.

6. Organizing an annual competition for students of Arabic speaking other languages;

Targeted Groups:

- University professors working in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers;

- Researchers specialized in teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

- Arabic language teachers.

- Students of the Arabic language at all levels of study.

Geographical scope and places of implementation:

Other language speaking countries (priority will be given to Member States),

Main Executive Programs:

1. Implementation of four (4) educational qualification programs annually for the benefit of administrative officials, educational mentors and teachers to develop methods of teaching Arabic in the Member States and in Muslim countries outside the Islamic world;

2. Issuance of (4) specialized studies in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers annually;

3. Providing the "Mishkat" platform with teaching programs and educational contents for the benefit of non-Arabic speaking students.

Key Performance Indicators:

Major Strategic Orientation	Key Performance Indicators
Providing technical advice, knowledge expertise and building national educational capacities.	- The number of qualification mechanisms approved by ICESCO over a period of two years for the benefit of educational frameworks working in the field of the Arabic language for non-Arabic speakers; - The number of specialized studies to be issued by ICESCO during the years 2022-2025; - The number of countries benefiting from the advice and educational experience that ICESCO will provide in the field of the Arabic language for non-Arabic speakers; - The number of participants in the ICESCO competition for students of other languages, and the type of participation in the competition; - Availability of a computerized system for writing the languages of Islamic peoples in the Arabic script. - Establishing (8) training poles in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers in Member States speaking other languages over the years 2022 and 2025; - The opening of eight (8) university chairs in eight countries over the years 2022 and 2025 in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers;

Providing programs and activities to serve the teaching of the Arabic language	- The number of Member States that have benefited during the years of the Plan (including the departments of Arabic education in the relevant ministries) from the programs of the ICESCO's national centres and training poles in the field of Arabic language for non-Arabic speakers; - The number of major programs and projects implemented by ICESCO's centers and its specialized training poles during the years 2022 and 2025; - The number and quality of educational cadres benefiting from the programmes of ICESCO's national centres and its specialised training poles in the field of Arabic language for non-Arabic speakers. - The number of educational university chairs that will be established over two years in the field of the Arabic language, and the extent to which these chairs contribute to the development of the beneficiary university programs; - The number of training programs that will be implemented for the benefit of specialized frameworks in the field of Arabic for non-Arabic speakers; - The number of educational frameworks benefiting from the ICESCO's Distance Educational Training Program; - The number and quality of specialized university research that will be prepared within the framework of the activities of university chairs. - Implementation of four (4) educational qualification programs annually for the benefit of administrative officials, educational mentors and teachers to develop methods of teaching Arabic in the Member States and abroad over the years 2022 and 2025; - Issuance of (16) specialized studies in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers over the years 2022 and 2025;

5. Civilizational Dialogue Center:

Major Strategic Orientations:

Enhancing China - Islamic World Relationship

Future Leaders of Civilizational Diplomacy

Training in Interfaith Dialogue

Connecting the Islamic Communities in Europe with their Origins

Strategic Orientation 1:

Enhancing China - Islamic World Relationship

The world's economic power is shifting from west to east in recent years because of the latest technological developments in China. China aims to build strong relations with a number of Islamic Countries countries.

ICESCO's significant contribution in order to reinforce relations between China and the Islamic World through holding international conferences followed by international symposiums, seminars, and training sessions to educate people about the importance of a steady relationship between China and the rest of the Islamic world. It aims to emphasize the importance on how it would benefit the Muslim community and grow and develop. ICESCO has formed a set of strategic objectives to accelerate action and set up a clear pathway to achieve its goals.

It aims to implement these Strategic Objectives to reach its goals on time. The purpose of these seminars would be to:

• Educate people about the importance of improving the relationship between China and the Islamic world.

• Talk about the increasing shift of economic power from west to east and how we can benefit from this change.

• Increasing trade between China and the Muslim world strengthens the ties and makes this shift of power more flexible.

Expected Outcomes can be assumed to be as follows as a result of these seminars:

- It would help in an influx of the latest technologies.

- The increased exports can result in a positive impact on GDP and would bring in foreign currency.

- China aims not to intervene in the domestic affairs of the counties it invests in, so it is beneficial for both countries. It is creating a win-win situation on both sides.

- These events would help create awareness about the importance of this China and Muslim world partnership.

- Increase engagement of people.

Key Priority Fields:

To accomplish these goals, ICESCO is to take growing interest in educating people about the importance of improving the relationship between China and the Islamic world, because the scope of its development is broader. With this anticipated growing significance of interfaith harmony, ICESCO promotes cooperation with China. It would hold four high level programs (International Conference and Symposium) and ten training workshops, ensuring that these events would help create awareness about the importance of this China and Muslim world partnership.

Strategic Orientation 2:

Future Leaders of Civilizational Diplomacy

ICESCO would hold an international conference followed by an international symposium, a seminar, and a training session for the future leaders of Civilizational Diplomacy. They would help teach young individuals the importance of civilizational diplomacy and engage more people towards this initiative. It would also provide in-depth training to the individuals with the help of various training sessions along with webinars to people who are present remotely. The primary aim of this program is to attain acceptance of cultural diversity and promote civilizational interests in the upcoming generation and the people who have traditional thinking to expose them to various beneficial cultural opportunities.

Civilizational diplomacy has become immensely important in today's world, and it is essential to attain world peace and discourage the ongoing war and hatred all over the world. If common goals of diplomacy bring different communities together, it will increase research and development and better relationships between the countries to achieve the common good.

These Strategic objectives would help provide training efficiently and effectively:

- To train people following the requirements of an individual who should be open to civilizational diplomacy.

- To train people how to resolve civilizational disputes.

- To train to form new and everlasting bonds with the people from other communities.

- To teach diversification of the society.

- Teach more about acceptance towards other civilizations and their methods to attain open communication and intermixing of ideas.

• Introduction of common goals and ideas of communities

These Expected Outcomes can be taken away from the provision of these training sessions:

• Increased communication.

• New ideas of development and technologies.

• The fruitful relationship between two communities brings their own set of advantages to the table.

• Attain individuals of high intellect and those who are open to new ideas and growth.

Key Priority Field would help discuss the key objectives of the organization to prioritize its future goals. The ICESCO would hold four high level programs to properly conduction of Civilizational Diplomacy and provide a detailed guide on achieving it. It will also discuss the significance and how it can be practiced in life by the upcoming generation to have vital decision-making skills in the future. Training in Civilizational Dialogue will also be provided for the graduates and post-graduate students, holding ten training sessions per year for better understanding and implication of Civilizational Dialogue by the participants.

Strategic Orientation 3:

Training in Interfaith Dialogue

The international conference, seminars, and training sessions would help connect people from all over the world. These activities would allow people to engage in this new communication initiative belonging to different cultural backgrounds and religious faiths. It would help diversify the nation, promote interfaith communication, and bring about harmony among other religions.

Interfaith Dialogue is important to achieve peace and acceptance all over the world. In recent years, religious intolerance has increased at alarming rates. It can only be discouraged if there is better communication between the different faiths, and people need to be trained to achieve this goal.

Strategic Objectives help set a clear goal for ICESCO to provide successful training to people about interfaith Dialogue, and it aims to:

• Educate individuals about other religions and their fundamental teachings.

• Educate about different languages and provide training on how to converse in those languages.

• Educate about the values and virtues of different religions.

• Provide training on how to interact with people of different faiths.

• Teach them about different meaningful greetings and habits of other religions.

• Teach individuals the difference between what is acceptable and what is not according to different beliefs.

• To promote a positive image of Islam and promote strengthening relationships among other religions to achieve peace in our times.

Expected Outcomes from this adaptation of interfaith Dialogue would help in:

• Attaining culturally accepting and diverse people.

• Promotion of acceptance and tolerance between different religions.

• Learning basic ethics and greetings of different beliefs would promote the message of love and affirmation.

• It would help in forming deeper connections with other faiths. These deeper connections may result in collective advancement.

• It would help in a better understanding of how the other community work.

• It would discourage hatred and violence between different religions.

• Promote the message of peace.

Key Priority Field: would help better assess how to promote the Interfaith Dialogue between people and set up achievable goals within the time span. Four major programs would be held for the Muslim society, which would hold various seminars and webinars. These seminars would be held in International Symposium and online webinars and cover important topics like Tolerance, Orientation, Solidarity, and Integration. It would be beneficial for people who attend the seminars and those who cannot participate in the seminars in person, provided with online access to these because of various restrictions. In addition to this, five books will be published every year, which discuss Civilizational Dialogue in detail. It will further help to raise awareness and teach the different societies' basic ethics and cultural, moral values and their significance for the future.

Strategic Orientation 4:

Connecting the Islamic Communities in Europe with their Origins

ICESCO proposes to hold international conferences, seminars, webinars, and training sessions to promote all four projects more thoroughly and provide more access to people to gain more and more information about the topics these projects disclose. Muslims worldwide have developed a negative image in recent years, and it is vital to bring the Muslim community from all over the world together to overcome the distances, form a strong community, and portray an image of security and safety. ICESCO has developed strategic objectives to achieve this goal and followed it up by extracting expected outcomes to cater to these goals in a more progressive environment.

It aims to provide a strategic objective to increase Muslim involvement in Europe, remind them of their cultural heritage, and connect to their roots. It was a notable historical achievement when the Muslims expanded their territories from Saudi Arabia towards Europe during the rule of the four caliphs, and that was the beginning of the expansion of Islam. This expansion led to the spread of Islam all over the world. The Muslims in Europe have forgotten about their rich historical and cultural background and how they were the basis of current developments in the world varying from mathematics and medicine. If these Muslims are more connected to their European and Arabic origin, they will be motivated to gain their long-lost achievement.

Strategic Objectives of the ICESCO is to:

• Develop better methods of communication.

• Introduce applications and websites which interlink Muslims from all over Europe.

• Explore areas in Europe with rich Muslim historical backgrounds and promote

tourism in those areas, predominantly Muslim.

- Educate people in detail about their historical background in Europe and its significance in the present day.

Expected Outcomes of this project is expected to result in:

- The more interconnected Muslim community in Europe.

- People promote tourism in areas that are still Muslim dominant in Europe.

- Increased communication would help in the growth of the Muslim community all over the world.

- Consolidation of Islam and positive perspective of the religion may be presented to the rest of the world.

- A stronger bond between the Muslim communities in Europe and worldwide so far.

Key Priority Field: would discuss the action plan by the ICESCO to have better interaction with Muslims who do not currently reside in the dominant Muslim communities and how they can be reminded of their origins. Four programs including the international conference and seminars would be held that discuss tolerance, orientation, solidarity and integration. People will be reminded of the importance of living in a unified community with the same core teachings and cultural background. Apart from this, various training programs would be held for the young generation to teach them about the vital Muslim history and its basics.

Priority Fields:

Importance of improving the relationship between China and the Islamic world	Reinforce Cultural Diplomacy
Promote interreligious dialogue between people	Improve interaction with Muslims living in non islamic-majority communities

Key Performance Indicators:

Strategic Orientation	Key Performance Indicator
Enhancing China - Islamic World Relationship	Key Performance Indicators; would help us determine how effective would be the entire process. To accomplish these efforts, ICESCO aims to hold four various programs (including International conference & symposium, seminars and webinars), 10 training workshops and one distinction award to the best participant every year for the youth to educate them about the importance of enhancing the Chinese-Muslim relations and how to make it more beneficial. Moreover, ICESCO will also publish five books every year in the field of Civilizational Dialogue. It would further help discuss the importance of this enhanced relationship and how to achieve this goal. In general: - These activities helped achieve the organization to help people understand the importance of Chinese investments in different projects. - It has helped them accept the Chinese interest in their countries and encouraged them to interact more with the new opportunities brought about by the Chinese government and its people.
Future Leaders of Civilizational Diplomacy	These Key Performance Indicator: would help us deduce how the training of the individual is progressing and what sections require more attention to derive progressive results. - To accomplish these efforts, ICESCO aims to hold four various programs (including International conference & symposium, seminars and webinars), ten training workshops and one distinction award every year to the best participant to help teach young individuals the importance of civilizational diplomacy and engage more people towards this initiative. Moreover, ICESCO will publish five books every year which would further help discuss more about acceptance towards other civilizations and their methods to attain open communication and intermixing of ideas. In general: - It has helped individuals in developing skills that are essential for civilizational diplomacy in the future. - It has taught them different tactics for achieving success in the world for the future so far. - They have started to engage more with different communities to develop self-sustaining diplomacy.

Training in Interfaith Dialogue	- These engagements have helped individuals gain immense knowledge about a different religion and peaked their interest in this area even more. - Individuals have started to interact more and develop new theories on making these relationships better and attaining peace in the world. - It has somehow helped eradicate the hatred between religions on a smaller scale and develop a positive relationship even more. To accomplish these efforts, ICESCO aims to hold four various programs (including international conference and seminars), ten training workshops and one distinction award to the best participant every year for the promotion of acceptance and tolerance between different religions. Moreover, ICESCO will publish five books every year which would further help to promote the message of peace and harmony.
Connecting the Islamic Communities in Europe with their Origins	- It has helped achieve a stronger bond between the Muslim communities in Europe and worldwide so far. - This initiative has revitalized the history and culture of Muslims in Europe and shed light on its importance. - People have started to show more interest in this area and develop. ICESCO aims to hold four various programs (including international conference & symposium, seminar and webinar), ten training workshops and one distinction award to the best participant every year for building

6. Human Resources Department:

Major Strategic Orientations:

Organization, Governance and Management of Competence

Development and Capacity Building

As part of the implementation of ICESCO's strategic vision to become «a forward-looking, strategic and far-sighted organization in its fields of competence», and in order to place it in a sustainable and innovative forward-looking dynamic that will enable it to better shape the future of the Islamic world, the human stakes are a key factor in the successful design and deployment of the organization's strategy for the 2022-2023 horizon.

In this context, it is essential for ICESCO to establish its strategic orientations in terms of human capital and to create the culture of the organization in line with its values, by encouraging creativity and innovation, by sharing ambitions to involve each member of the organization in change management approaches focused on performance in order to create a collective intelligence enabling the organization to meet the challenges it faces and overcome the effects of the Covid-19 crisis, in compliance with international norms and standards and based on feedback and best practices.

In this perspective, the strategic orientations are formalized around 2 strategic axes.

Strategic Orientation 1:

Organization, Governance and Management of Competence

ICESCO has opted for an organizational structure that is evolutionary and future oriented in order to ensure effectiveness and efficiency and to contribute to optimize the current structure and anticipate future needs to better respond to the strategic issues of development of the organization.

Thus, ICESCO's organizational structure is divided into activities around three axes, namely: strategic activities, the main activities, which represent the core business of the organization; and support activities.

Consequently, the deployment of the organization of ICESCO's functions is in line with a logic of sustainable development in

order to accompany ICESCO in its policies of change management and structuring to aim at organizational excellence.

In this sense, ICESCO should initiate a good governance plan for its activities in order to ensure that the principle of division of functions is respected, to delimit the perimeters, responsibilities and roles, to ensure the completeness of the activities and to identify the right mechanisms to facilitate the decision-making processes.

In this context, it is important to set up a strategy for managing competencies through the definition of the organization's vision in terms of implementing a strategy for talent management, performance management and career management within the organization.

Strategic Orientation 2:

Development and capacity building

Human capital is ICESCO's main asset, and a key lever in the success of its development projects. It is therefore essential to have the capacity to understand the potential of each member of the organization, to identify strategies of skills management aiming at developing and strengthening the capacities of the organization's human capital to better meet its development challenges and anticipate the future in a proactive and efficient approach.

In this context, ICESCO should put in place strategies to increase its effectiveness through the development of new skills, the strengthening of leadership, empowerment, involvement, and commitment of its human capital.

Priority Actions:

Create ICESCO's Charter of Values

Repository of jobs and skills

To establish the procedures and process manual of the Organization

Define the responsibility and role matrix

Create the ICESCO training offer (Leadership Manual, ...)

Key Performance Indicators:

Major Strategic Orientation	Key Performance Indicators
Organization, Governance and Management of competence	- Internal mobility rate promotion - Performance Rate
Development and capacity building	- Budget and Training Rate - Supervision Rate

VI. General Conclusion

1. Summary of Strategic Orientations of ICESCO:

The present ICESCO's Medium-Term Strategic Orientations for the period 2022 – 2025 is indeed adapted to the challenges brought by the COVID-19 crisis. The purpose of the document is to identify, explore, and analyze future trends, chiefly amid the new global framework, so as to optimize ICESCO's efficiency in its continuous endeavours to pursue sustainable and prosperous development for its Member States and the Islamic world as a whole.

Under the same vision, ICESCO strives to achieve important milestones in the fields of education, science and culture, from which the importance to establish its strategic orientations for the period of 2022-2025 on the Medium Term. The respective ICESCO sectors and departments have identified desirable milestones in order to ensure proper fulfilment of the major strategic orientations within their key priority fields through the relevant key performance indicators, as well as the objectives, required development steps, measures and course of action needed to reinforce the position of ICESCO as a pioneering international organization.

This document aims to provide a framework for all stakeholders in ICESCO State Members and in the Islamic world as a whole, to enable them to actively anticipate and foresee future risks. And therefore, to become fully prepared to provide relevant responses through proactive measures to meet the challenges that the uncertain future brings.

The Strategic Orientations of education sector of ICESCO is based on a comprehensive and integrated perspective considering education as a basic human right and a key factor for eradicating poverty, achieving development, peace, democracy, and common knowledge. It seeks to benefit every child and every citizen from good education chiefly women and girls. Drawing on its extensive expertise, the Education Sector is working to implement the human right to quality education. It also aims to improve the skills and capacities of learners to meet the requirement of the 21st century job market.

The Education sector of ICESCO is according a huge importance to the information and communication technologies and artificial intelligence techniques, being an important emerging trend in the field currently. It also promotes the literacy of youth and adults, especially girls and women, and enhancing their capacities. All in all, it engages in a forward-looking and proactive approach in planning based on scientific foundations to meet the educational needs and priorities of Member States.

The Scientific and Technological vision of ICESCO aims to enhance the use of disruptive technologies in its Member States, enhance their visibility and competitiveness on the international scene. The Strategic Orientations of the Scientific and Technological sector aim to

make the Islamic World a sparkling model in the field of Sciences and Technology to overcome the 21st century challenges facing the Islamic world, by promoting the use of new technologies in Member States, for a more inclusive, prosperous, dynamic, and sustainable development through the improvement of knowledge and skills in STI and development and Promotion of emerging technologies. Its purpose is to promote of Technopoles to develop cooperation between companies, universities, and research centers, and greening the future and fostering a positive climate action plan. The Science and Technologies sector of ICESCO is also strengthening cooperation amongst member states through Science Diplomacy and boosts Space Sciences and its applications given their importance in the making of the future.

The Strategic Orientations of the Human and Social Science Sector of ICESCO embrace reasserting human and social legislation, policies, or programs in the international agenda for more inclusive, prosperous, resilient, and sustainable development. It is pioneering in peacebuilding and positioning peace security and citizenship in policies and programs. It also addresses humanitarian needs of vulnerable populations and promotes the leadership, protection and empowerment of children, youth, and women. It gives a special attention to the mental health mental health and psychosocial support for resilience in the context of crisis and vulnerability. Finally, it promotes sport for social for social cohesion and builds vibrant research and knowledge systems on social transformation to guide policies and programs.

The Strategic Orientations of the Cultural and Communication Sector aim to support the development of cultural and communication policies in the Islamic world, support cultural production and build strong networks with local communities and civil societies organizations. Besides, it also aims to encounter the challenges of cultural digitalization, digital cultural economy, cultural social and solidarity economy, and innovative industries through the promotion of new digital frameworks. The sector is also involved in protecting the cultural heritage and invest its elements in developing traditional industries and develop tourism. It also promotes the importance of culture, communication, heritage, the arts, and creativity in the Organization's efforts to achieve sustainable development and peaceful coexistence among peoples. It examines human civilization in relation to that of the Islamic world, with the goal of establishing communication, cooperation, respect, cohabitation, and partnership in all sectors.

The aim of the Culture Sector of ICESCO is to strengthen ICESCO's position at the international and domestic levels by adopting several essential structural milestones as well as cultural and artistic programs.

Additionally, given that ICESCO's Medium-Term Strategic Orientations 2022-2025 encompass the strategic objectives of each ICESCO department and sector to implement ICESCO's strategic vision that will enhance ICESCO's effectiveness and visibility, a range of other important strategic orientations have also been defined. For example, the Strategic

Foresight Center of ICESCO aims to reinforce strategic diplomacy at all institutional levels. It also aims to play the role of a laboratory of ideas and a think tank through the organization of international forums and conferences and the production of futuristic reports and studies. Artificial Intelligence is also at the heart of the Strategic Foresight Center's interests, allowing it to adopt a different approach to this emerging trend to reinforce its use in the state members of ICESCO.

On the Media and Institutional Communication Department is working to reinforce outreach to media and social networking site users and assisting sectors in maximizing the benefits of ICESCO's programs and activities. It addresses poor digital content and fake news and trains and builds the capacity of journalists and media professionals in the Member States as to how to take advantage of modern technologies in their field of work.

As for the cooperation and Partnership Sector, it aims to develop the resources through the consolidation and diversification of ICESCO's funding sources and financial mechanisms. It also aims to partner with the private sector and corporate social responsibility

and promotes ICESCO's roles and contributions in the implementation of regional and international Development Agendas, Goals and Frameworks, through global partnerships.

The Arabic Center for non-Arabic speakers offers technical advice, knowledge expertise and building national educational capacities by pproviding programs and activities to serve the teaching of the Arabic language.

The Civilizational Dialogue Center aims to enhance China-Islamic World Relations and trains future leaders of Civilizational Diplomacy and interfaith dialogue.

As for the legal department of ICESCO, it aims to draft a recommendation on the prohibition of illicit trafficking in cultural property in the Islamic world, setting the fundamental rights to be protected and respected in Artificial Intelligence Field in the Islamic World, and elaborating the legal and good use guide of the digital space to increase awareness of the risks and dangers emanating from the digital space.

Finally, the Human Resources Department is an exclusive expertise to organize, govern and manage competence and develop capacity building.

2. Interaction between the Strategic Orientations of ICESCO:

Examining the strategic orientations of each department at ICESCO, it is noticeable that the Organization has had created a common ground on which all the sectors and departments are operating under it. Under the same framework, the Organization has established several priorities that defined the urgent activities to be taken, chiefly in the context of the current global situation. As such, the common work ground is translated through the following similarities between the departments and the sectors, of which:

1. Focus on Women and Youth

Under its new vision, ICESCO has placed women' empowerment at the heart of its interests, of which the declaration of 2021' year of Women at ICESCO. Besides, ICESCO is also involved in training properly skilled young men and women able to adapt to the quick changes of the 21st century, enabled by new trends such as disruptive technologies and artificial intelligence. Today's youth face constantly unique challenges, hindering their opportunities to join a rapidly changing market. Therefore, ICESCO, through several programs initiated by the different sectors, is focusing all its efforts to develop the capacities of young people.

2. Focus on Research and New Technologies

Research and new technologies have become one of the most important axes amid the global situation to build a resilient development. Therefore, all sectors and departments of ICESCO are aware of the importance of launching major studies to encourage the use of new technologies in the fields of education sciences and culture.

3. Focus on Innovative and Forward-looking Strategies

Under the new vision of ICESCO, innovation and foresight are one of the main pillars in all its activities. ICESCO fosters the culture of innovation and strives to present unique and forward-looking projects that will help achieve development and prosperity.

3. Placing ICESCO' at its International Environment:

The Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) is operating on three main layers:

The Internal Environment (Specific Environment):

The Specific Environment of ICESCO is the various sectors and departments that are carrying out different activities in which some of them are related to its fields of specialization and others are related to administration.

In the assessment of ICESCO's internal environment, the focus is solely on the organization and its main priorities identified in the various good practices that must be undertaken, to ascertain the extent to which the organization can adapt to eminent challenges and to harness the opportunities offered by its external environment.

With a view to upholding its role as a pioneering International Organization operating in the Islamic World region as well as a leader in its fields of expertise, notably Education, Sciences and Culture, ICESCO sought to ground its internal functioning in a set of good practices.

- **Rational Approaches** which are based on systematic practices ensuring sustainable decision-making processes, particularly in terms of resource management.

- **Transparent Governance** which are based on the efforts of ICESCO to ensure transparency in its activities through meticulous and clear processes. The organization is set to increase its accountability by improving transparency and altering its practices regarding all of its internal processes.

- **Competence Recruitment**, the world is rapidly changing, to the extent that international organizations are regarded as key agents of change through their investment in human capital. Accordingly, ICESCO sought to include competent personnel within the organization by bringing in experienced resource persons to guide this change and to train the youth. The latter are the most affected and are the ones who effectively sense these changes, their involvement in the organization as Ambassadors of ICESCO is intended to bring a new dynamism and innovative touch to the organization.

The Intermediate Environment:

- ICESCO strives to be held in higher esteem and be in an interrelated relationship with its State Members in order to benefit from each other, which implies the organization of a wide range of consultations, workshops and interactions with National Commissions in the Islamic world.

- The Organization seeks to be fully **inclusive of all its State Members**, representing a wide range of backgrounds, including countries in the Mena region, African countries, and Asian countries. It should be noted that ICESCO's scope is primarily within the African and MENA regions, and in order to gain more outreach to the rest of its State Members, notably the Asian region, ICESCO sought to launch further initiatives there, for instance ICESCO may consider proclaiming 2022 **as the Year of Asia**.

- Another important factor to consider is that the intermediate scale is strongly influenced by the country in which the headquarters is located. ICESCO's headquarters is situated in Rabat, the capital of the Kingdom of Morocco, renowned for its general stability, thus allowing ICESCO to organize a wide-range of events inside Morocco and outside in the Islamic World.

The External Environment (global scale):

The External Environment is an encompassing concept that involves all the external factors that influences an organization's functioning to increase its visibility among other international organization.

- To operate successfully and thrive, ICESCO must adapt, harness and **align itself to other International Organizations** chiefly those with the same interests and specialization of ICESCO. Under the same framework, ICESCO has adopted a new

vision, allowing it to become more open on its external environment and thus, reinforcing partnerships and cooperation in various sectors.

- On another level, ICESCO is also involved in the external environment by encouraging other **States to have the Observatory status**, in aims of reinforcing the strategic diplomacy that is influencing the position of ICESCO on the global level.

- Moreover, ICESCO must harness partnerships with multi-international companies that have entrusted its will to foster the development of the Islamic World and supports its different activities and projects, intended for the same purpose.

The link between the three Environments of ICESCO:

- A variety of factors drive the adjustment and/or shift of ICESCO's Directorate General's strategic objectives, such as the influence of external and intermediary environments. Therefore, the Organization's response to external environments must occur not only through its structures, including its sectors and departments, but also through the internal dimensions and capacities that it needs to alter in order to better respond to the change factors induced by the other environments.

- While ICESCO defines itself and its niche through its internal environment and the various choices regarding its intermediate environment, the need to fully embrace external factors will position the organization as a beacon among other international organisations.

The ICESCO's biennium Action Plan for the period of 2022-2023 comes to complete the efforts established by the Organization in translating these Strategic Orientations to concrete actions on the ground. The activities elaborated in the ICESCO's biennium Action Plan for the period of 2022-2023 are inspired from the Strategic Orientations of ICESCO on the Medium-Term for the period of 2022-2025. ICESCO, under its vision of the rationalization and transparent management of resources, has elaborated on both documents in a synchronized way for a better and more efficient results.

All in all, ICESCO is fulfilling its role as an inspiring leader in the Islamic world through adopting a multi-dimensional approach by embraced a proactive and forward-looking strategy based on the revised vision, to lead innovative and pioneering changes in the fields of education, science, technology, culture, and communication, thereby enabling an enhanced future for the Islamic world region, achieving sustainable development, and building prosperous societies.

VII. Annex

List of Abbreviations

AI Artificial Intelligence

AR Augmented Reality

AZERTAC Azerbaijan National News Agency

CCI Cultural and Creative Industries

CONFEJES Conference of Ministers of Youth and Sports of the Francophony

CONFEMEN Conference of Ministers of Education of the States and Governments of the Francophony

EDUC8 An Innovative Training Network (ITN) funded by the European Union Horizon 2020 Program

ESPAS European Strategy and Policy Analysis System

FIFA International Football Federation

G5 Five Sahel Countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GRPS Global Risk Perception Survey

HSS Human and Social Sciences

ICESCO Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

ICOM International Council of Museums

ICT Information and Communication Technologies

ILO International Labor Organization

INNOV8 Group, leader in the 2.0 distribution of connected products and services

IoT Internet of Things

LTIPS Leadership Training for Peace and Security

MENA Middle East North Africa

MOU Memorandums of Understanding

NGOs Non-Governmental Organizations

OECD Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

OIC Organization for Islamic Cooperation

R4R Marathon Run for Resilience

S&T Science and Technology

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

SEO Electronic Search Engines

SFC The Strategic Foresight Center of ICESCO

SME Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

SSE Social and Solidarity Economy

STEM Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

STI Science, Technology, and Innovation

SWW Societies We Want

UN United Nations

UNESCO The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

UNWTO United Nations World Tourism Organization

VR Virtual Reality

WHO World Health Organization.

Glossary

3D Printing : a process of making three dimensional solid objects from a digital file.

Action Plan : a detailed plan with specified actions that are needed to achieve a goal. An Action Plan can also consist of a series of steps that must be taken to successfully complete a certain strategy

Agenda 2030 : an action plan for people, planet and prosperity. It also aims to strengthen peace around the world and recognizes that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions remains the sine qua non of sustainable development.

Agenda 2063 : Africa's continent's strategic framework for achieving its goal of inclusive and sustainable development. It is a concrete manifestation of the Pan-African will for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress, and collective prosperity pursued within the framework of Pan-Africanism and the African renaissance.

Agility : the ability to think and draw conclusions quickly, intellectual acuity.

Alternative futures : an approach to sorting futures into possible, plausible, probable, and preferable futures. Futures arise from three main sources: unfolding patterns, emergent events for which it is impossible to plan, and decisions made today. Informed decision making about possible, plausible, and probable futures can help shape the preferable future.

Anticipation : refers to the practice or process of looking forward to an event. Anticipation is a synonym for foresight in the context of planning.

Artificial Intelligence : the theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages.

Augmented Reality (AR) : a technology that superimposes a computer-generated image on a user's view of the real world, thus providing a composite view.

Best Practices : a set of guidelines, ethics, or ideas that represent the most efficient or prudent course of action, serve as a general framework for a variety of situations.

Big Data : extremely large data sets that may be analysed computationally to reveal patterns, trends, and associations, especially relating to human behaviour and interactions.

Biotechnology : the exploitation of biological processes for industrial and other purposes, especially the genetic manipulation of microorganisms for the production of antibiotics, hormones, etc.

Blockchain Technology : a system of recording information in a way that makes it difficult or impossible to change, hack, or cheat the system. A blockchain is essentially a digital ledger of transactions that is duplicated and distributed across the entire network of computer systems on the blockchain.

Blue Economy : the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem.

Capacity Building : the improvement in an individual or organization's facility (or capability) to produce, perform or deploy.

Charter : a formal document that is like a road map for what an organization that includes its internal regulations. It is not a law, but a guide to good practice for an organization and its members.

Climate Crisis : a term describing global warming and climate change, and their consequences. The term has been used to describe the threat of global warming to the planet, and to urge aggressive climate change mitigation.

Cloud Computing : a general term used to refer to the delivery of resources and services on demand over the Internet. It refers to the storage and access of data via the Internet rather than via a computer's hard drive.

Cohort : refers to a set of subjects sharing a common characteristic - usually an age group.

Complexity: used to characterize a complex arrangement of many components.

Crisis Management : the process whereby an organization copes with major occurrences that poses a threat of harm to the organization, its stakeholders or the general public. Three components are common to a crisis: threat to the organization, the element of surprise, and the brief time frame for decision. In a crisis, it is extremely important that decisions be made quickly.

Cultural Policies : the government actions, laws and programs that regulate, protect, encourage and financially (or otherwise) support activities related to the arts and creative sectors, such as painting, sculpture, music, dance, literature, and filmmaking, among others and culture, which may involve activities related to language, heritage, and diversity.

Decision-Making : the process of making choices by identifying a decision, gathering information, and assessing alternative resolutions. Using a step-by-step decision-making process can help you make more deliberate, thoughtful decisions by organizing relevant information and defining alternatives.

Demographic Shifts : a phenomenon and theory which refers to the historical shift from high birth rates and high infant death rates in societies with minimal technology, education (especially of women) and economic development, to low birth rates and low death rates in societies with advanced technology, education, and economic development, as well as the stages between these two scenarios.

Digital Content : goods or services which are produced and supplied in digital form provided to end users in the form of digital data, including video content, motion and/or still pictures, TV programs or other broadcasting content and products consisting of character text, pictures, photographic images, graphic symbols.

Digital Divide : the gulf between those who have ready access to computers and the internet, and those who do not.

Digital Revolution : the advancement of technology from analog electronic and mechanical devices to the digital technology

Digitalization : the conversion of text, pictures, or sound into a digital form that can be processed by a computer.

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Drivers / Driving Forces : Major trends, discernible in the present, that are likely to persist into the future. A driver of change is any physical or societal factor external to the particular system under analysis. A distinction is usually made between driving forces that are «predetermined» and those that are «critical uncertainties.» Examples of drivers of change are trends, megatrends, and wild cards.

Empowerment : the granting of more power to individuals or groups to act on the social, economic, political or ecological conditions they face.

Fake news : misleading information, intentionally manipulated to mislead the public.

Forecasting : A forward-looking approach intended to explore and predict a future devoid of any unexpected events. Based on assumed continuity or projected events, trends are projected and extrapolated from the past into the future. It is also a process for making substantiated statements about future events to establish a range of possible trajectories.

Foresight : envisioning and planning for the future, a forward-looking approach designed to assist decision-making processes to explore and anticipate in a participatory way what might happen, as well as to prepare for, influence, and shape a range of possible future scenarios. Rather than predicting the future, foresight tends to involve systematic and participatory processes of gathering information about the future and developing a medium- to long-term vision to uncover a range of possible alternative futures.

Formal Education : a structured and systematic form of learning. This is the education of a certain standard delivered to students by trained teachers. To make sure formal learning is standardized and all learning institutions (e.g. Schools, colleges, universities, etc.) Comply with these standards, formal education in a country is governed by organizations.

Futures : A concept indicating the occurrence of possible alternatives that may occur, and the need to consider them.

Gender Equality : the state in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender.

Gender Gap : the difference between women and men as reflected in social, political, intellectual, cultural, or economic attainments or attitudes.

Genomic Editing, a group of technologies that give scientists the ability to change an organism's DNA. These technologies allow genetic material to be added, removed, or altered at particular locations in the genome.

Genomic Medicine : an emerging medical discipline that involves using genomic information about an individual as part of their clinical care (e.g. For diagnostic or therapeutic decision-making) and the health outcomes and policy implications of that clinical use.

Green Technology : technology whose use is intended to mitigate or reverse the effects of human activity on the environment.

Hyper Connectivity : the use of many systems and devices so that you are always connected to social networks and other sources of information.

Informal Learning : characterized "by a low degree of planning and organizing in terms

of the learning context, learning support, learning time, and learning objectives".

Interfaith Dialogue : cooperative, constructive, and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions (i.e. «faiths») and/or spiritual or humanistic beliefs, at both the individual and institutional levels. It is distinct from syncretism or alternative religion, in that dialogue often involves promoting understanding between different religions or beliefs to increase acceptance of others, rather than to synthesize new beliefs.

Intergenerational Conflict : stresses and disagreements between generations in the family and in society.

International Organizations : (also known as an international institution or intergovernmental organization) a stable set of norms and rules meant to govern the behavior of states and other actors in the international system.

Internet of Things (iot) : the interconnection via the internet of computing devices embedded in everyday objects, enabling them to send and receive data.

Key Performance Indicators : Key performance indicators (kpis) are measurable values which demonstrate how proficiently an organization is achieving its stated targets. Thus, kpis are an integral part of effective development of any program or project. They can be used to monitor the process shaping the Strategic Orientations including the inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts .

Leadership : defines the ability of an individual to lead or direct other individuals or organizations to achieve certain goals.

Management of competence : the practice of identifying the key skills necessary for an employee to reach target performance in their specific role, and then developing and optimizing those skills to best align with the business strategy of an organization.

Mass Migration : the migration of large groups of people from one geographical area to another. Mass migration is distinguished from individual or small scale migration; and also from seasonal migration, which may occur on a regular basis.

Megatrend : refers to broad, far-reaching, and long-term social, economic, environmental, political, or technological change that takes time to form but has a major impact once it is underway. The megatrend, as a transformative process, consists of subtrends that are themselves capable of having major impacts.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) : a document describing the broad outlines of an agreement that two or more parties have reached.

Multilingualism : the ability of an individual speaker or a community of speakers to communicate effectively in three or more languages.

Multimedia : All the techniques and products that allow the simultaneous and interactive use of several modes of information representation (text, sound, still or animated images).

Nanotechnology : the branch of technology that deals with dimensions and tolerances of less than 100 nanometres, especially the manipulation of individual atoms and molecules.

Neurosciences : All disciplines studying the nervous system.

Non-formal Education : education that occurs outside the formal school system. Non-formal education is often used interchangeably with terms such as community education, adult education, lifelong education and second-chance education. It refers to a wide range of educational initiatives in the community, ranging from home-based learning to government schemes and community initiatives.

Peacebuilding : seeks to address the underlying causes of conflict, helping people to resolve their differences peacefully and lay the foundations to prevent future violence.

Policy Making : the process of formulating policies

Psychosocial Support : the term psychosocial refers to the close relationship between the individual and the collective aspects of any social entity. Psychosocial support can be adapted in particular situations to respond to the psychological and physical needs of the people concerned, by helping them to accept the situation and cope with it.

Qualitative Approach : involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It can be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research.

Quantitative Approach : the process of collecting and analyzing numerical data. It can be used to find patterns and averages,

make predictions, test causal relationships, and generalize results to wider populations.

Resilience : A measure of the ability of a given system to recover from a disruption or disturbance. This recovery process may not consist of restoring the status quo; resilient systems can cope with a strategic shock by transforming to adapt to new realities. It is the collective capacity of organizations, society, and value systems to recover from a crisis, integrate learned lessons and adapt to a post-crisis environment.

Risk : defined as the combination of the probability, or frequency, of occurrence of a defined hazard and the magnitude of the consequences of that occurrence. It is also the impact of uncertainty on outcomes. Risk is usually estimated by combining a measure of the probability that the hazard will actually cause harm, and a measure of the severity of the harm in terms of its impact on people and/or the environment.

Risk assessment can be supported by forward-looking approaches such as forecasting and foresight.

Robotics : the branch of technology that deals with the design, construction, operation, and application of robots.

Scenarios : are plausible and imaginative narratives of the ways in which the future may unfold, based on a coherent set of assumptions about key driving forces, Scenarios are not projections or predictions that explore a future that is considered most likely or probable. Rather, scenarios are simulations of alternative futures.

Science Diplomacy : the use of scientific collaborations among nations to address

the common problems facing 21st century humanity and to build constructive international partnerships.

Social Cohesion : involves building shared values and communities of interpretation, reducing disparities in wealth and income, and generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges, and that they are members of the same community.

Social Justice : justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society.

Social Media : online communication tools that enable the development of exchanges, collaboration and interaction within virtual communities.

Social Networking : the use of Internet-based social media sites to stay connected with friends, family, colleagues, customers, or clients. Social networking can have a social purpose, a business purpose, or both, through sites like Facebook, Twitter, linkedin, and Instagram.

Strategic Diplomacy : the process by which state and non-state actors socially construct and frame their view of the world; set their agendas; and communicate, contest and negotiate diverging core interests and goals.

Strategic foresight : Forward planning, which is the result of applying future thinking to actual real-world occurrences

Strategic Orientations : the way in which an organization adapts its strategies to its external environment. In other words, it is the pattern of responses that the organization makes to its operating

environment to anticipate and respond to future changes and to improve its efficiency on a global scale.

Strategic Planning : the process of developing strategies to achieve a set goal.

Sustainable Development Goals : a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

Sustainable Development : economic development that is conducted without depletion of natural resources.

Synthetic Biology : a field of science that involves redesigning organisms for useful purposes by engineering them to have new abilities.

Technological Advances : attempt at extending or further understanding the underlying science used to develop current materials, devices, products or processes.

Time horizon : is a point in the future where visions, scenarios, projections or predictions are set. The time horizon of foresight is usually medium to long term, from 5 to 50 years.

Transparent Governance : The right and the means to examine the process of decision making is known as transparency. In politics, transparency is used as a means of holding public officials accountable and fighting corruption.

Uncertainty : is defined as the state of indeterminacy about future developments and the limited knowledge of future outcomes that cannot be accurately described.

The main determinants of deep uncertainty in foresight are the complexity and/or

dynamism of societal and physical systems and the dependence of knowledge and observations on the outlook. Foresight practitioners assume that uncertainty can be reduced sufficiently to predict and control the future.

Virtual reality (VR) : the computer-generated simulation of a three-dimensional image or environment that can be interacted with in a seemingly real or physical way by a person using special electronic equipment, such as a helmet with a screen inside or gloves fitted with sensors.

Vision : the organization's purpose, what it is striving for, and what it wants to achieve in the long-run, generally in a time frame of five to ten years.

Visioning : is a method for constructing one or more visions of probable, possible, plausible, and/or desirable futures in order to inform or alert decision-makers.

Weak signal analysis : It is a method of identifying early and imprecise indicators of an upcoming event or development that could have a significant impact. By informing decision makers, they help to better manage uncertainty and Wildcards.