
Enhancing and harmonising the strategic management of UNESCO's Goodwill Ambassador Programme

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Executive Summary

UNESCO's Honorary and Goodwill Ambassador Programme (GWAP) has successfully deployed prominent individuals and celebrity advocates to help focus the world's attention on the ideals, goals and work of UNESCO. Since its inception in 1989 the GWAP has grown, with the majority of the Goodwill Ambassadors ("GWA") retaining lifetime designations, to a current total of more than 130 GWA.

Moves to rationalise GWA activity across the UN since 2003 have led to a number of developments for UNESCO's GWAP including an inspection by the UN's Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in 2006, which generated recommendations for best practice, and the inclusion in 2012 of the GWAP in UNESCO's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy. Feedback from GWA indicates a strong need for increased interaction, communication and deployment. In March 2013 UNESCO's Honorary and Goodwill Ambassadors Section prepared an individual strategy for the GWAP, which coincided with the production of this policy brief.

This policy brief offers observations on how the GWAP can move forward in the context of UNESCO's Partnership Strategy, highlighting key challenges that should be addressed for the long-term strategic benefit of the programme and making recommendations for good practice. Building on UNESCO's strategy, this paper recommends that further scrutiny and development of the programme be focused on GWA selection, work structure, terms of reference and programme evaluation. Specifically:

- Implement the JIU 2006 recommendations including use of a single title and two year appointments;
- Rationalise the scale and character of the programme by releasing long-term inactive GWA and strengthen the focus of new appointments according to a defined programme rationale;
- Build robust methodologies for strategic planning and evaluation of the programme against specific objectives and firm indicators, including

individual work plans for each GWA, mid-term reviews and reports to identify successful GWA profiles and activities and focus future developments;

- Align GWA activities with their competencies and create systematic mechanisms and opportunities for deployment across UNESCO work areas.

It is recommended that UNESCO should:

- *In November 2013*, use the new term of the Director-General to review the GWAP and re-instate GWA on a two-year designation.
- *By January 2014*, be operating a system of two-year GWA appointments, work plans and annual reviews.
- *In April 2015*, report progress on implementing these recommendations, and further development of the GWAP Strategy, to the 195th Executive Board.
- *By January 2016*: have established performance indicators for the programme, following the completion of the first cycle of two-year appointments.

1 / Introduction

“Celebrities exist at the core of many of the spaces, experiences and economies of modern life.”¹

Since 1954, Goodwill Ambassadors have been successfully enlisted and deployed by a number of UN agencies. In 1989 UNESCO initiated its Honorary and Goodwill Ambassador Programme (GWAP) which is currently administered by four members of staff within the Director-General’s Office. The GWAP is an important feature of UNESCO’s work, bringing visibility for the organisation and increased opportunities for genuine impact in the field.

UNESCO now has more than 130 Honorary and Goodwill Ambassadors, from a wide diversity of countries, bringing a variety of expertise and designated with a number of different titles.² For the purposes of this policy brief they will be referred to collectively as “GWA”.

The role of GWA is to utilise their talent and status to help focus the world’s attention on the work of UNESCO. A meeting of GWA is held annually at UNESCO. In 2010, the last meeting for which documentation has been made available, a total of 23 GWA attended and reported on their activities.³

In 2003, UN Guidelines for Designation of Goodwill Ambassadors were issued to ensure consistency and the maintenance of a high standard in the selection, designation and involvement of prominent individuals in the work of the UN. These Guidelines were not adopted at the time by UNESCO but since 2010 have been used to inform the GWAP.⁴ In 2006 the UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) conducted an evaluation of the Goodwill Ambassadors’ Programmes across the UN system which included recommendations for UNESCO’s programme. In the context of UN- wide activities, several aspects of UNESCO’s programme were praised (principally the practice of convening an annual meeting) while others were highlighted for improvement including:

1 Holmes & Redmond 2010, p7

2 Current titles in use include Goodwill Ambassador, Artist for Peace, Champion for Sport and Special Envoy.

3 UNESCO 2010a, Annual Meeting of UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors

4 UNESCO (2013) 191 EX/16.INF.3, section 2, p2

- Rationalisation of the number of designations, titles and duration of term of office (recommendations 2 & 3);
- The need for high calibre, culturally sensitive/diverse and non-partisan personalities (recommendation 6);
- Introduction of rigorous terms of reference, due diligence, planning, monitoring, evaluation and success indicators (recommendations 7 & 8);
- Decentralisation of implementation of the programme to regional/country offices (recommendation 9); and
- Co-operation in joint activities with other UN organisations in order to maximise output and efficiency (recommendation 11).⁵

The JIU findings from 2006 are also echoed in concerns expressed by a number of Member States as well as observations made by GWA themselves documented at their 2010 annual meeting.

Concerns articulated by delegations and National Commissions include:

- Reputational risk associated with the programme;
- Confusion of multiple titles and inconsistency in the duration of designations;
- Varying levels of GWA commitment;
- Infrequent and unsubstantive communication; and
- Inconsistent planning, management, monitoring and evaluation for the programme.⁶

GWA themselves have requested improved communication between:

- UNESCO and GWA;
- GWA themselves; and
- UNESCO and the outside world.⁷

They also highlighted a need for stronger Strategic Planning⁸ and increased utilisation of and involvement with GWA and their non-UNESCO activities.⁹

5 UN (2006) JIU/NOTE/2006/1

6 Consultation, UNESCO 22–23 January 2013

7 Jean Michel Jarre, HRH Princess Firyal of Jordan and Miguel Angel Estrella, cited in the report of the Annual Meeting of UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors (UNESCO 2010a).

8 Cheikh Modibo Diarra and Vitaly Ignatenko, cited in UNESCO 2010a.

9 Pierre Berge, Omer Zulfu Livanelli, Vitaly Ignatenko cited in UNESCO 2010a.

2 / Current situation

While a number of GWA are seen to be engaged with important, high quality and successful initiatives in relation to UNESCO's core values and principles, it has been noted by a number of delegations, including the UK, that the programme as a whole would benefit from enhancement and harmonisation in the context of UNESCO's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy and the overarching reform and effectiveness agenda. UNESCO itself has acknowledged that the programme could support its GWA better.¹⁰

Existing resources that can be used to underpin reform are:

- UN Guidelines for Designation of Goodwill Ambassadors (2003);
- UN Joint Inspection Unit evaluation of Goodwill Ambassadors' Programmes (2006);
- UNESCO's Policy Framework for Strategic Partnerships (PFSP): A Comprehensive Partnership Strategy; and
- UNICEF's Guide to Working with Goodwill Ambassadors (2010).

The broader context of academic research exploring the accelerating changes in the political economy of different sectors of the celebrity industry, humanitarianism, development aid and charitable causes may also provide valuable insights for refining UNESCO's GWAP as it moves forward.

In October 2012 at UNESCO's 190th Executive Board, during discussions around the Comprehensive Partnership Strategy, it was requested that the GWAP be explicitly included within the Strategy and that specific targets and expected results be developed for the programme. It was requested that the programme be steered by the UN Guidelines from 2003.¹¹

10 Comments recorded from the Director-General of UNESCO in (2010a) Annual Meeting of the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors, p20

11 UNESCO (2012c) 190 EX/DECISIONS II:10

The production of this policy brief coincided with the production of a Draft Strategy by UNESCO's Office of Honorary and Goodwill Ambassadors responding to requests that the programme move towards Results-Based Management (RBM). As GWA themselves have requested mechanisms to use them more, the move to RBM is therefore to be welcomed.

The Draft Strategy was released in mid-March 2013, along with a separate strategy for engagement specific to GWA (191 EX/16.INF.3), to be presented at the 191st Executive Board in April 2013. This policy brief welcomes proposed strategic reform of the GWAP by incorporating JIU recommendations, adhering to the Comprehensive Partnership Strategy's Policy Framework, reflecting the views of the GWA and drawing on 21st Century academic thinking on the role of GWA. We believe it presents an apt opportunity for UNESCO to demonstrate progress within the effectiveness agenda.

UNESCO's GWAP includes an impressive range of GWA and generates activities that are undoubtedly significant and which have an impact. There are many highly committed GWA contributing in ways that link visibly to UNESCO's principles. However, it seems that this is a missed opportunity to fine tune, harmonise and replicate good practice, demonstrate the effectiveness of the programme and maximise the successful elements of the programme through strategic monitoring and evaluation of activities.

3 / Key challenges for the Goodwill Ambassador Programme

With a view to contributing to strategic thinking for this reform, this section highlights aspects of the programme that UKNC feels should be the focus of particular attention in order to consolidate the direction of the programme and create a more defined structure for GWA.

The UKNC perceives three key challenges facing the GWAP in its current form: (a) the size and characteristics of the programme which continues to steadily increase in numbers whilst retaining a number of both long-term inactive GWA and some who do not fit the UNESCO brand; (b) a lack of strategic planning or evaluation against firm indicators; and (c) creating systematic opportunities for GWA deployment.

a) Rationalising the scale of the programme and characteristics of GWA

It is recognised that introducing more oversight and documentation for the programme will place pressure on staff and resourcing. A small team already manages many GWA across the whole UNESCO remit. When the regulations, systems and frameworks inherent in the PFSP structure have been introduced, the programme will become more efficient and rigorous but will require on-going evaluation and management. It is therefore recommended that UNESCO assess the optimum size of the programme that can be delivered with existing resources and streamline the programme as necessary to focus on fewer, more active and brand appropriate participants whose activities are most focused for the purpose and rationale of GWAP and UNESCO.

Key to this will be releasing inactive/long term GWA. It is understood that UNESCO protocol is lacking on how to reclassify long term and/or inactive GWA or those who may wish to opt-out from active service. The current work to develop the GWAP presents an opportunity for UNESCO to define such a protocol. This could be inspired by the precedent set by the UN at the installation of the latest Secretary-General when every Messenger of Peace was reclassified onto a two-year designation. The forthcoming new term for the Director-General, late 2013, provides a perfect opportunity to replicate this.

UNESCO's 2010 move to a two-year contract period for GWA provides a context for this proposed protocol and contributes to systematic review and strategic management. This defined term furthermore validates evidence that longevity is important in the credibility of the celebrity/cause relationship.¹² Prior to renewing the designation, the GWA relationship should be evaluated in line with JIU recommendation 7.

It is for UNESCO to determine the rationale and meaning of the GWAP but all appointments should be clearly linked to defined strategic objectives and driven by a clear rationale, recognising that celebrities help to shape contemporary images of development work in a celebrity world. Crucially, UNESCO needs to consider the implications of such a programme, ensuring that it remains aligned to UNESCO's core values and principles.

In the past GWA have been selected for different strengths. UNESCO's separate strategy for engagement classifies these as: 1) promoting UNESCO's core values through public advocacy and awareness-raising; and 2) contributing to the implementation of specific programmes, projects or activities through financial support or aid in kind.¹³ UNESCO needs to be clear about what purpose GWA fulfil and create defined strands for the programme with separate indicators that are managed and evaluated accordingly.

The selection process should be driven by UNESCO requirements rather than by approaches from eminent personalities or their representatives. Often the greatest beneficiary of endorsement is the celebrity themselves and in negotiating with celebrities UNESCO should use this trade off to their

12 Fenyoe, A (2012)

13 UNESCO (2013) 191 EX/16.INF.3 p2

advantage to underpin their selection process.¹⁴ By incorporating the existing Strategic Partnerships Framework as outlined in the PFSP, it will be easier to justify selection and will allow for a formalised and consistent approach. GWA brand and target audience fit should underpin the appointment. Research shows that an authentic connection is crucial to the success of the celebrity/cause partnership.¹⁵ Selection should continue to reflect cultural and geographical diversity. Nominations of active political figures and their spouses should be declined in accordance with JIU recommendation 6 (2006).

UNESCO's separate strategy for GWA states that respective programme sectors and field offices are closely involved in the definition of strategic, mutually beneficial partnerships and relationships.¹⁶ It also acknowledges that National Commissions have a role to play.¹⁷ However, since National Commissions are major stakeholders and natural interlocutors for UNESCO at country level, as with partnerships developed under the Comprehensive Partnership Strategy, it is of critical importance that any action should be consulted, coordinated, sustained and embedded with national development. National Commissions should therefore be part of the proposal, vetting, endorsement and management process, as proposed in JIU recommendation 9 (2006), and consistent with the broader Comprehensive Partnership Strategy guidelines.

b) Strategic Planning and Evaluation

While all current activities broadly contribute to UNESCO values and principles, their implementation should be more systematic and strategic. In accordance with the Comprehensive Partnership Strategy, any partnership process should include mechanisms and a consultation arrangement which ensures the engagement has mutually beneficial outcomes, including visibility and communication, to ensure avoidance of reputational risk.

Annual reporting and evaluation are crucial for achieving a clear picture that maps what activities have taken place and where; what was successful and what was not; and what approaches or new ideas have been tested that

14 Fenyoe, A (2012)

15 Fenyoe, A (2012)

16 UNESCO (2013) 191 EX/16.INF.3 p2

17 UNESCO (2013) 191 EX/16.INF.3 p5

can be replicated elsewhere in the programme. UNESCO's separate strategy for GWA affirms that efforts are being made to appropriately map evolving areas of interests of the GWA so as to spot thematic areas of mutual interest.¹⁸ This supports the JIU's recommendation that such periodic evaluations of the relationship will improve efficiency and impact. It is through systematic evaluation that the GWAP can be refined and over time be able to identify particularly successful GWA profiles and activities which should be used to focus future appointments.

An interview with a GWA revealed that a strategic approach would be welcomed, particularly one which draws on GWAs' own proposed activities.¹⁹

With each appointment assessed and renewed on a two-year cycle, annual reporting will provide a useful mid-term review. Systems should be developed to track and report annually the impact of each GWA's activities using the various pre-defined indicators. A mid-term review for GWA would help maintain focus and communication and could feed into annual monitoring of the programme.

UNESCO's separate strategy for the GWAP states that a strategy and a flexible action plan for the two-year period developed jointly with the programme sector and field office will facilitate the management, follow-up and evaluation of relationships. This is a welcome commitment and supports the recommendation of the JIU report that, "an annual plan of activities and indicators of success defined in line with programmatic priorities should be agreed upon prior to the nomination/renewal of contracts with the participation of the GWA and substantive offices."²⁰

Currently, the main reporting of activities seems to be centred on the Annual Meeting of GWA. A brief but formal Annual Output report should be issued and shared for each of the GWA, creating a recorded process that is more visible in the organisation. GWA should be consulted regularly regarding satisfaction with their role and their ideas for developing it further.

18 UNESCO (2013) 191 EX/16.INF.3 p3

19 Goodwill Ambassador Bibi Russell, 8th March 2013

20 UN (2006) JIU/NOTE/2006/1 Recommendation 7

c) Creating systematic opportunities for Goodwill Ambassador deployment

To address calls from existing GWA of wanting to be utilised more and to ensure ownership and total buy-in, it is recommended that GWA should be proactively involved in the creation of their biennial work plan, with help from the Goodwill Ambassador Office in identifying suitable opportunities in UNESCO work areas. GWA profiles should be systematically shared with departments relevant to the GWA's expertise, as well as National Commissions and country offices, to enable more joined up development of deployment opportunities.

UNESCO's separate strategy commits to enhancing its communication strategy, and increasing its coordination with programme sectors and field offices to optimise the impact of GWA contributions.²¹ This is a welcome advancement and as a minimum this could be accomplished through a monthly email bulletin stating GWA activity and actively calling for project proposals. UNESCO's suggestion to develop web-based and social media tools would be a constructive improvement.²²

Attention should also be given to aligning GWAs' interventions on behalf of UNESCO with their professional activities to enable deeper engagement with issues and promotional opportunities for UNESCO. This extra authentic dimension deepens impact of the work and answers feedback from GWA who have indicated a desire to be able to better connect their own work with UNESCO and increase their impact.²³

Suggested milestones

November 2013

At the beginning of the new term of the Director-General, UNESCO protocol should be devised and implemented to re-instate all GWA on a two-year designation.

21 UNESCO (2013) 191 EX/16.INF.3 p3

22 UNESCO (2013) 191 EX/16.INF.3 p3

23 Pierre Berge, Omer Zulfu Livaneli, *UNESCO 2010 Annual Meeting of UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors Report*

January 2014

The GWAP should be operating a system of two-year appointments, work plans and annual reviews.

April 2015

Progress on implementing these recommendations, and further development of the GWAP Strategy, should be reported to the 195th Executive Board.

January 2016

Performance indicators for the programme should be established, following the completion of the first cycle of two-year appointments.

4 / Recommendations

Ongoing reform is needed of the GWAP to address JIU recommendations, respond to GWA issues and enable the programme to develop more robust systems of Results-Based Management. UNESCO's separate strategy for engagement with GWA (191 EX/16.INF.3) is welcomed as a first step.

UNESCO should seek to use strategic monitoring and evaluation to continually fine tune the GWAP; and identify and replicate good practice with a view to maximising successful elements of the programme. Specific recommendations to focus the programme are below.

Selection of Goodwill Ambassadors:

- The selection process should be driven by the rationale/requirements of UNESCO's workplan rather than by approaches from eminent personalities or their representatives.
- Selection should reflect UNESCO's 'brand' and cultural and geographical diversity. Nominations of active political figures and their spouses should be declined in line with JIU recommendations.
- National Commissions should be part of the proposal, vetting, endorsement and management process, as proposed by the JIU report and implied in UNESCO's 2013 separate strategy (paragraphs 9 and 16).
- UNESCO should conform to UN protocols for a single agreed title across the UN system, utilising only the title of Goodwill Ambassador.

The work of Goodwill Ambassadors:

- Attention should be given to aligning GWAs' interventions on behalf of UNESCO with their professional activities to enable deeper engagement with issues and promotional opportunities for UNESCO.

- Individual work plans for GWA should be universally adopted across the programme. GWA should be proactively involved in the creation of their own work plan every two years (with a mid-term annual review).

Terms of reference:

- The move to a two-year appointment for GWA should be retrospectively applied to existing 'life' GWA.
- Prior to renewing designations every two years, the GWA relationship should be evaluated in line with JIU recommendations.
- In line with UNESCO's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy, a standard clause should be included in all terms of contract which relates to what GWA are, and are **not**, permitted to do within the scope of the agreement.
- The GWAP is encouraged to take the lead in developing protocols on releasing GWA at the end of their active service.

Evaluation:

- A formal Annual Output report should be issued for each of the GWA, creating a recorded process that is more visible within UNESCO and can be used for strategic review and forward planning for programme impact.
- GWA should be consulted regularly regarding satisfaction with their role and their ideas for developing it further.
- UNESCO should assess the optimum size of the GWAP that can be delivered with existing resources and streamline it as necessary to comprise fewer, more active participants.

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