



# INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

*International School of Knowledge, Innovations, Policies and Territorial Practices  
for the United Nations Millennium Platform*

## The KIP International School

The School is comprised of a network of experiences, organizations, specialized centres and universities of interested countries, who intend to work together to construct new knowledge and develop new tools for planning and managing development processes. It is based on existing structures that are involved in development practice, in research for innovation and in building capacities of development actors.

The School provides support to all actors who are working to achieve the goals and values that the international community agreed on through the principal United Nations summits of the past twenty years (Millennium Platform), recognizing the serious difficulties they encounter. While on one hand, the platform indicates a path towards an equitable, participatory, and environmentally sustainable development, on the other, the reality everywhere continues to be characterized by excessive competition leading to exclusion, poverty, social tensions, pollution, irrational use of natural resources and other dangerous imbalances.

Even those governments and actors most committed to implementing the Millennium Platform find that the ideas and models of action available to them are inadequate, resulting from the very cultural patterns that the Platform wishes to overcome. For these reasons, the International School aims to help identify new tools for understanding the complex and contradictory dynamics of development and new ways to plan and manage it.

The idea of creating a School, involving the best experiences being taken forward by public administrations, institutions, universities, research centres and social actors in different countries, was first put forward in a meeting between Edgar Morin and a group of experts who inspired the human development cooperation programmes that started with the United Nations PRODERE Programme in 1989.

## The strategic value of a territorial approach

The School promotes a territorial approach to development, based on the active role of local communities, on enhancing local natural, human and historical resources, on integrating different sectoral contributions and on the participation, without exception, of all social actors. It is an approach rooted in specific local cultures and realities, but aimed at building a wide network of exchanges for a local, national and international development centred on meeting human needs and peaceful cooperation. The territorial approach not only corrects the fragmentation and dispersion of resources typical of the traditional sector-specific approach, but enhances and harmonizes the qualitative contribution of experiences addressing specific issues.



# The structure of the School

The School has a General Assembly, composed of representatives of national, regional and local governments, international organizations and the public, private and associative structures that support it.

It is guided by its Scientific Committee, chaired by Edgar Morin. The Scientific Committee was created in 2004 by UNESCO in collaboration with UNDP, UNIFEM and UNOPS. Since 2010, it is also linked with ILO, UNEP and WHO. The Committee and the School in general draws on an international network of research and training institutes, benefiting from the advice of experts and personalities from the worlds of science, culture and cooperation.

The operational structure of the School has a Presidency, a General Secretariat, Joint Working Groups with each of the partner organizations and a Technical Committee made up of the coordinators of the projects and activities implemented by the School in collaboration with the respective partner organizations.

The School, established in 2011 following a period of presentations and consultations that included: the President of the United Nations General Assembly, Miguel d'Escoto on September 9, 2009; France's National Assembly in Paris, during a conference given by Edgar Morin on 14 October 2009; the Vice-President and a group of Members of the European Parliament in Brussels on 4 May 2010; the Cairo Forum on territorial knowledge on 4 June 2010; during an international conference on decentralized cooperation in Dakar on 4 and 5 December 2010; during the international meeting on decentralized cooperation and European integration in Tirana on 13 and 14 January 2011; at the plenary meeting of the Poverty Group of the OECD DAC in Paris on 17 and 18 March 2011.



## Activities

The School, beyond working according to the priorities established with its individual partners, promotes the implementation of several activities in interested countries and at the international level.

### Production and dissemination of knowledge

The School supports the organization of conferences, symposia, thematic days, cultural campaigns, exhibitions, international competitions, art events and other events that contribute to enriching the culture of human development. The School also supports the production of documents, publications, periodicals, web sites and electronic libraries. The *International Manual of Human Development* is one of its main products.

### The network of laboratories of change

The laboratories are consolidated experiences of integrated or thematic territorial development. Working in collaboration with universities and research centres, they offer a permanent and structured environment for visitors, students, researchers, experts, teachers and other actors interested in participating in activities and extracting from them indications to disseminate nationally and globally. The School is setting up an international network of these laboratories, which include innovative and strategic projects and offer a terrain for research and knowledge production.

### Training and higher education projects

The School promotes projects which, at the request of national and local governments and social actors, provide professional development and advanced courses for development managers: intensive courses, exchange of experiences, training-of-trainers, study tours and similar activities.

### The International Manual of Human Development

In his book *The Way*, published in 2011, Edgar Morin reflects on and maps out actions for a better future. He notes that in all countries there are already many experiences of change that are little known and which often remain isolated. Morin suggests carrying out an in-depth survey to make them better known, and promote the dissemination of quality innovations. The School aims to implement Morin's suggestions. Its main cultural output is in fact the International Manual of Human Development, produced through a permanent process of consultation with the most advanced experiences in all fields. It is a living handbook because it is systematically enriched by contributions from actors involved in change and because it is used in all the countries participating in the International School network.



The School also promotes university programmes for future professionals of development and education (degrees, masters' courses, etc.) in collaboration with universities interested in developing curricula in line with the Millennium Platform and linked to concrete territorial development experiences. Such university programmes would link the specific realities and cultures where they are located with the international debate on the future of everyone.

### Innovative strategic projects

To satisfy requests from national and local governments, the School develops projects to support reforms in line with the Millennium Platform, fine-tuning solutions and working methods which can then be disseminated. These projects enhance partnerships between public and private actors and associations, in particular at regional and local level. In this framework, action-research is also encouraged to systematize practices, so that they may be disseminated nationally and internationally, and so that innovative methodologies and technologies of human development are enhanced. An example of these strategic projects is the Mediterranean University of Trades, which the International School is promoting to enhance the traditional and local knowledge of the Mediterranean countries by supporting their networking and the organizing specialized training courses.



## Working tools

Several Programmes, implemented in collaboration with the United Nations, are part of the School. Given their long experience, these programmes constitute its essential working tools.

**The ILS LEDA programme**, set up in 1998 with the collaboration of ILO, UNDP and UNOPS, provides technical assistance related to local economic development. In particular, it supports the creation, functioning and networking of Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs).

#### Local Economic Development Agencies

LEDAs are territorial services, managed by associations of local public, private and non-profit actors, whose mission is to support businesses, enhancing local resources and capacities and integrating vulnerable groups into economic activity. More than 60 LEDAs are operating in different countries, supported by ILSLEDA ([www.ilsleda.org](http://www.ilsleda.org)).

**The IDEASS programme**, set up in 2001 with the collaboration of ILO, UNDP, UNIFEM and UNOPS, identifies and disseminates innovations that can contribute to high quality territorial development. It helps establish partnerships between the authors of innovations and interested interlocutors in different countries.

#### IDEASS and its website

To learn about the innovations promoted by IDEASS and its current activities, please visit the website [www.ideassonline.org](http://www.ideassonline.org). This site, with visitors from over 140 countries, is an important instrument of the International School's permanent cultural campaign.

**The SIP service**, set up in 1991 with the collaboration of UNDP and UNOPS, promotes and supports decentralized cooperation partnerships between regional and local communities in Europe and interested countries. More than 400 such international partnerships have been established, mobilizing thousands of public and private actors.

**The UNIVERSITAS programme**, launched in 2001 with the collaboration of ILO, UNDP and UNOPS, supports research and training for human development. It organizes intensive international courses for development actors, in collaboration with universities of different countries and interested public administrations. It promotes research for the systematization of innovative practice and publishes such work in its electronic journal *Universitas Forum*.

#### Tools for knowledge dissemination

UNIVERSITAS publishes the electronic journal *Universitas Forum* ([www.universitasforum.org](http://www.universitasforum.org)) and administers an electronic library of texts on human development: [www.hdrnet.org](http://www.hdrnet.org)

## The School and its partners

All development and international cooperation actors can be part of the School system: national governments, local governments, international organizations, foundations, universities, research centres, NGOs, associations, social economy actors.

The School also wants to be a point of reference for universities wishing to critically renew their teaching, contributing to the construction of an organic body of development knowledge that goes beyond the specialized and fragmentary knowledge that currently prevails, and linking their theoretical work more closely with practical experiences in the field and the prospects for insertion in the labour market.

Each interested organization may establish agreements with the School. These agreements define the activities that each partner will implement in its respective territory or at the international level: strategic projects, projects for the identification and dissemination of innovations, laboratories of change, publications or other cultural productions, professional development activities, university programmes, action-research activities, meetings, seminars and other events.

In the agreements, the financial sources of the agreed activities are usually specified. Agreed activities can be implemented either by the partner organization, by the School through one of the Programmes that constitute its General Secretariat, or by an executing agency chosen by mutual agreement.

To be part of the School system, the interested organizations can contact the General Secretariat, enter into a specific agreement, be represented in its General Assembly, set up a Joint Working Group to identify and formulate activities and monitor their performance following agreed modalities.

### Country branches of the School

The school provides support to set up branches in interested countries, especially countries where cooperation programmes for territorial development are being implemented.

The School's branches provide technical assistance, identify innovations in the country, organize training activities, produce documentation, publications and other forms of knowledge dissemination on a permanent basis. They mobilize the most reputable institutions in the country, capitalize on the most qualitative contributions of international cooperation and support their sustainability.

While the School's country branches are linked to its international structure, they have their own legal status that allows them to operate in the country and to have administrative autonomy. Each branch is led by its General Assembly made up of representatives of the Government, institutions, universities, public structures and private associations, international organizations working in the country, etc..

At an operational level, each branch of the School has a permanent technical structure with a group of experts and support services. In this way, they are in constant dialogue with the authorities and social actors, are able to adapt to political and cultural changes, but also have the opportunity to ensure necessary operational continuity.



## Contacts

The School website, containing further information, is: [www.kipschool.org](http://www.kipschool.org)

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