



UNESCO Regional Bureau  
for Education in the Arab States - Beirut

United Nations  
Educational, Scientific  
and Cultural Organization

Education is the base  
for personal growth

## UNESCO Beirut Newsletter - Issue N° 3

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# Foreword

Education is the priceless investment for the current and future generations. It advances humanity from the dark ages to ages of enlightenment. Within the present circumstances encountered by several Arab States in terms of expanding numbers of excluded children, deteriorating quality and relevance, increasing inequities and inequalities, and shrinking resources, it is appropriate to consider the future direction of education. Through education not only can we improve the skills of our people and their quality of life but also achieve a fairer society and a progressive, productive nation.

Our challenge is to focus on ways to improve the delivery of education to hundreds and thousands of children and adult illiterates excluded from mainstream education in the region through the development of national initiatives that recognize our diverse backgrounds and vastly different needs.

There is an urgent need to explore concrete policy directions leading to mainstreaming the excluded youth, adolescents and adults, to give greater autonomy to schools in running their own affairs, to restructure school councils and parents associations to better represent the needs and wishes of local communities and parents, to determine priorities, programmes and allocation of funds. The region has to look further at the planning and management of literacy and non-formal education programmes and issues of governance; quality management and the wider application of communications and multimedia technology as a means of ensuring schools and literacy delivery mechanisms for establishing a culture of continuous improvement, peace and reconciliation in the region. It should dare to do concrete things in education that are very, very different, and with striking results.

[More](#)

**Abdel Moneim Osman**

Director - UNESCO Beirut Office

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Recently Published

## **Education in Post Conflict Post Disaster Situations (PCPD)**

UNESCO Beirut has played an important role in emergency and early recovery actions in Lebanon and Syria. It has actively participated with the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) in developing the Arabic version of the Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction which is widely used in Arab States.

Due to the unique positioning of the UNESCO Beirut office, the urgent emergency educational needs in the region, and its mandate to support education in the Arab States, the initiative to strengthen the capacity of the UNESCO Beirut Regional Office to deliver technical support and policy advice on the provision of post-conflict or post-disaster education is essential. NRC Secondee Helge Brochmann joined UBO in March 2009 to fulfill a catalytic role in this process. Required to provide technical guidance and to help oversee the implementation of PCPD projects in the region, Helge Brochmann will provide training to Ministries of Education on preparedness and the INEE Minimum Standards, and will play a key role in support of UNESCO Beirut's regional and cluster efforts in post conflict post disaster situations.

A secondee for Gaza, Oyvind Wiestrom, based at UNESCO in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt), nicely complements UNESCO's response in emergency education and clearly indicates that it is getting increasingly serious about its PCPD engagement.

**Contact: Helge Brochmann**

## **Quality of TVET and the Challenges of Sustainable Development**

**Rabat – Morocco 16 - 18 December 2008**

L'Association Marocaine pour l'Amélioration de la Qualité de l'Enseignement (AMAQUEN), ENSET – Rabat (UNEVOC Centre – Morocco) and UNESCO – UNEVOC International Centre for TVET – Bonn organized the 6th Congress on Promotion of Quality in Education and Training Systems (CIMQUSEF 2009) under the title: Quality of TVET and the Challenges of Sustainable Development (Rabat – Morocco 16-18 December 2008). Forty Officials and experts from 20 countries in the Arab Region, Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America participated in the Congress.

The Congress Programme discussed supporting strategies for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and their implementation in TVET Programmes. The supporting strategies are:

- Vision-Building and Advocacy;
- Consultation and Ownership;
- Partnership and Networks;
- Capacity-Building and Training;
- Research and Innovation;
- Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs);
- Monitoring and Evaluation.

The 6th Congress on Quality of TVET Programmes and their relations with ESD Framework (Global and Regional) is part of cooperation between UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for TVET – Bonn and UNEVOC Network.

**Contact: Sulieman Sulieman**



# UNESCO and Italy sign agreement on gender equality

On 13 March 2009 the Director of UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, Dr. Abdel Moneim Osman, and the Ambassador of Italy, H.E. Mr. Gabriele Checchia signed an agreement to implement the project "Supporting Gender Equality in Education in Lebanon", funded by the Italian Government for a total amount of 480,000 Euros. The project will be implemented by UNESCO Beirut in collaboration with the Lebanese Authorities (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Labour and other Departments of the Government and Civil Society Organizations).

The signing ceremony took place at the UNESCO Office in Beirut, in the presence of representatives from the Lebanese Government, Civil Society, UN Organizations and the press.

This project aims to achieve gender equality in education in Lebanon with respect to the fundamental human rights for all by ensuring equal opportunities in access to and through quality education. The objective of the initiative is the promotion of the active and responsible citizenship grounded on the respect for differences and the encouragement of concrete, effective and long-lasting improvements in the lives of the Lebanese women, men and children.



"Gender equality and women's economic, social and political empowerment have increasingly become a horizontal priority of the Italian Development Cooperation programs in Lebanon, as part of our overall assistance to the Lebanese Authorities' effort to provide new and concrete opportunities to the weakest and most vulnerable segment of population" said Ambassador Checchia. The Italian Ambassador added that the project "will contribute to ensure the conditions to grant equal opportunities of access to quality education".

**Contact: Theophania Chavatzia**

**Contact: Italian Cooperation Office in Lebanon**

**Download Project Leaflet**





## **Workshop on the convention for the protection of cultural property in armed conflict**

UNESCO Beirut in close cooperation with the section of museums and cultural objects at UNESCO HQs organized a workshop on the implementation of the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954). The three-day workshop aimed at raising awareness to participants on the convention and to teach its correct implementation in order to preserve and protect the cultural property of Lebanon.

The workshop which was opened under the patronage of the Minister of Culture and was attended by Mr. Frederic Hussein, Director General of Antiquities, representing the minister, Mr. Georges Comninos, Head of Delegation ICRC, and Mr. Joseph Kreidi, Culture Programme Officer from UNESCO Beirut, representing the Director. Each delivered a speech at the opening to address this issue, and they all highlighted the importance



of cooperation among the different entities, countries and organizations to help implement this agreement and protect cultural properties during armed conflict and even during times of peace. The three-day event (10-12 February 2009) focused on the convention and its protocols and the implementing measures in Lebanon, as well as administrative, legal and security measures related to its implementation.

The sessions of the workshop were animated by 5 international experts on the different subject matters of the workshop. At the end, several recommendations were issued by the participants. The workshop adopted some recommendations, the main ones were: considering the Lebanese legislation and accommodating the 1999 protocol for the agreement so that Lebanon can ratify it, and establishing a coordination unit with decision-making power to devise an emergency plan that can be implemented at times of conflict or during other emergencies.

**Contact: Joseph Kreidi**

**[Link to the Convention for protection of cultural property](#)**

## Lebanese President at UNESCO book launch on inter-religious dialogue

*On the 4th of February 2009, UNESCO Beirut in cooperation with the Lebanese National Commission for UNESCO (NATCOM), launched the book "Cultural Aspects in Christian and Islamic Religions", under the patronage of the Lebanese President Michel Suleiman who was presented with a copy of the book in the morning of the day of the launch. The President praised the efforts of UNESCO and said that it was a step forward in the inter-religious dialogue for Lebanon.*



Later in the afternoon, UNESCO held a seminar to review the book under the patronage of the President who was represented by Lebanese Minister of Culture, H.E. Mr. Tamam Salam. UNESCO invited 6 religious figures to review and critique the book in the special seminar. The speakers praised the effort and called upon educational authorities in Lebanon to consider and adopt teaching this book in schools, as a joint religious book for all faiths in Lebanon.

The master of ceremony was Mr. Joseph Kreidi, UNESCO Beirut Programme Officer for Culture, who was behind the conception and idea of this book that was produced in close cooperation with the UNESCO Chair on inter-religious comparative studies at St. Joseph University in Lebanon, with the assistance of a consultative committee representing both religions and all confessions.

Speaking at the opening was Dr. Abdel Moneim Osman, Director of UNESCO Beirut, Secretary General of the Lebanese NATCOM, Ms. Salwa Baasiri, and Minister of Culture, Mr. Tamam Salam.

It is hoped that this book dedicated for the young generation, will improve mutual knowledge and respect and that dialogue will be fostered and awareness increased especially among youth, thus contributing to the prevention of inter-community conflicts, as no progress can be achieved in any dialogue among individuals or groups without understanding each others' different culture. The book will be distributed to schools, universities, and NGOs.

**[Download the book in Arabic \(15.3 MB PDF\)](#)**

**Contact : Joseph Kreidi**



# ***Youth Empowerment & Participation in Lebanon***

## ***Consensus building among stakeholders on youth issues in Lebanon***

Within the framework of the UN joint project on the Lebanese Youth Participation and Empowerment, 5 regional workshops have been organized in the months of February and March 2009 in Baalbeck and Hermel, Saida, Zahle, Ebl el Saki and Sin el-Fil, in partnership with local NGOs. As a total, 129 stakeholders from youth related organizations, Development and International organizations, Political and religious institutions gathered and debate lively policy research and recommendations on different aspects of the life of the youth in Lebanon (demography, culture, education, employment, health, youth organizations, political participation and social integration) through group and plenary discussions.

The consensus building will continue in April, May and June with 7 more regional workshops, 3 workshops in Beirut together with 7 expert roundtables.

**Contact: Seiko Sugita**

**[Link to project website](#)**



## **Coordination meeting for Free Open Source Software Center in the Arab Region**



A two-day meeting took place at Balamand University, 4-5 Feb. 2009, to endorse a plan of action for the free open source software (FOSS) center in the Arab Region among the partners, mainly UNESCO, IKTIDAR program from UNDP and Balamand University with 19 other Arab universities.

The aim of the meeting was to draw up an action plan for the launching of the Arab Center that will open soon. The meeting, which brought together specialists from many Arab Universities and from several countries, discussed possible plans of action and operational models for the center in order to make it functional and running very soon.

Each university gave a presentation of its experience in the field of FOSS and their know-how in this field, most of the universities participating were science and technology based. The two-day meeting held group discussions and sharing of information and knowledge among the participants. The Arab Center is expected to open within the next month hosted by the Balamand University in Lebanon and supported by UNESCO Communication Information programme and the UNDP.

**Contact: George Awad**

**[Link UNESCO open source software](#)**



# Announcements, Upcoming Events

## *April*

### **20 - 26 April 2009**

Global Action Week Education for All Celebrations

### **30 April 2009**

World Press Freedom Day Celebration: Seminar focusing on elections in Lebanon

### **30 April 2009**

Training young writers and editors on writing for cultural diversity and dialogue

### **April 2009**

Sub-Regional Seminar in Arab States with participants from LIFE countries in Africa and Asia

## *May*

### **5 - 7 May 2009**

ARCHE10 Higher Education meeting,  
Cairo -  
Egypt.

Website: [www.arche10.org](http://www.arche10.org)

### **6 - 9 May 2009**

Regional training workshop on Education Management Information System and Education Statistics for Monitoring EFA Progress.

### **22 May 2009**

Workshop for Associated Schools Programme network on the application of the book «*Cultural Aspects in Christian and Islamic Religions*»

[Link to UN Days](#)



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