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Tehran Cluster Office for I.R. Iran, Turkmenistan, Pakistan and Afghanistan

The UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office launches its first e-Newsletter

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Dear readers,

The UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office is proud to present the first edition of its bi-monthly e-newsletter! Through this newsletter we hope to keep you abreast of the activities and issues of importance to our cluster countries.

We have had a number of important events during the months of August and September, such as the International Forum on Environmental Ethics in Tehran; the event, "The World Beyond 2015: Is Higher Education Ready?" in Islamabad; the UNDAF Strategic Planning Retreat in Asghabat; and the UNODC-UNESCO workshop in Tehran on the Role of NGOs and Civil Society in the Prevention and Fight against Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property. We also celebrated International Literacy Day and the International Day of Peace.

I wish you all an enjoyable read! Should you require additional information on any of our activities, please visit the websites for [Tehran](#), [Islamabad](#) and [Kabul](#).

Esther Kuisch-Laroche
Director of UTCO and Representative to I.R. Iran and Turkmenistan



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FEATURE STORIES

Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran win 2014 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation

A total of 14 projects from 10 countries, including Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Zealand and Thailand, have been recognized in this year's UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation. A panel of international conservation experts met in June to review 46 entries from across the Asia-Pacific region.

The Shahzada Hussain Mausoleum in Karez Village, Helmand Province, Afghanistan received an honorable mention. The restoration of the Saryazd Citadel, Yazd, Islamic Republic of Iran received an Award of Distinction.

The impressive restoration of the Saryazd Citadel has rescued an isolated desert complex which had suffered from looting and neglect, returning the landmark to its former prominence. The ambitious scope of the project encompassed caravanserais, bath houses and a castle which comprise the adobe ensemble built over several dynasties. The conception, planning and execution of work were the result of exemplary cooperation between a local foundation and community partners, including local artisans.

A carefully conceived master plan provided step-by-step guidance throughout the project, from evaluation to repair, allowing for maximum retention of both historic fabric as well as later additions deemed of historic significance. The use of traditional construction materials and techniques and the protection of the surrounding landscape have ensured that the citadel and its settings have been conserved with a high degree of authenticity.

The Award recognized the commitment made by private sector partnerships to protect this unique historic desert complex, while providing significant socio-economic benefits for the local community through renewed employment opportunities. [For more information, see our web article.](#)



FEATURE STORIES

Iranian Foreign Minister H.E. Dr. Zarif highlights importance of promoting dialogue between cultures

On 6 September 2014, the Director of the UNESCO Cluster Office in Tehran presented her credentials to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mohammad Javad Zarif.

During the meeting, Mr. Zarif highlighted the longstanding relationship between UNESCO and I.R. Iran, and expressed his appreciation of the Agency's work.

He mentioned the particular importance of promoting dialogue between cultures, peoples and civilizations in the current context of wars and extremism in the world.

In December, Iran will organize a "World Against Violence and Extremism" conference in Tehran and Mr. Zarif expressed the hope that UNESCO would be actively engaged in that initiative.

Referring to UNESCO's activities in Education, Science and Culture, the Minister underlined Iran's commitment to help promote mutual cooperation at bilateral, regional and international levels, and expressed his full support to UNESCO's mission in Iran.

Ms. Kuisch-Laroche thanked the Minister for I.R. Iran's active involvement in UNESCO and expressed the hope to further strengthen the relationship between I.R. Iran and UNESCO in all programme areas.



"Promoting dialogue between cultures, peoples and civilizations is of crucial importance."

FEATURE STORIES

UN Country Team in Turkmenistan starts preparations for new UNDAF

The UN Country Team (UNCT) in Turkmenistan has started the process of formulating the 2016-2020 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) to succeed the current 2010-2015 UNDAF. The UNCT had already completed the UNDAF roadmap stage, which culminated from wide-ranging consultations from 12-13 February 2014 in Ashgabat between the UNCT and around 40 senior technical representatives of ministries, departments, and agencies of the Government of Turkmenistan (GoT), as well as civil society representatives. Results of the consultation were presented to over 30 Deputy Ministers on 13 February.



The Common Country Assessment took place in April and the document has now been completed.

On 10-11 September, the UNDAF Strategic Planning Retreat was held in Ashgabat. The forum was attended by 40 national partners at the level of deputy ministers and national experts, public organizations of Turkmenistan, the UN staff in the country and diplomatic corps.

The agenda of the workshop included a review of the results of the final UNDAF evaluation report, and identified the main areas of further increased cooperation. The participants expressed their confidence in successful continuation of joint efforts for sustainable development of the country and wider region.

The workshop identified five key government priority focus areas requiring the support of the UN agencies during the period 2016- 2020. They are as follows:

1. Environment and energy
2. Economic growth, privatization and employment
3. Social services (Health Education and Social Protection)
4. Governance and rule of law
5. Quality data and progress monitoring

Eleven outcomes were developed for these 5 focus areas.

The UNCT met again on Monday 15th September to draft the UNDAF Results Matrix based on all the discussions and written presentations of the previous week. The first draft is now under review by all UN agencies and will be finalized soon.

EDUCATION

Literacy is empowering the people of Afghanistan for sustainable development

Illiteracy poses huge personal and professional problems for people from all walks of life in Afghanistan, from shopkeepers to police officers. Current figures estimate that 39% of the adult population in Afghanistan is unable to read or write. With support from UNESCO the government is taking key steps to increase levels of literacy. UNESCO's literacy programmes focus on providing adult literacy and life skills training through two nationwide programmes: The Enhancement of Literacy for Afghanistan (ELA) and Literacy for Empowering Afghan Police (LEAP). These programmes are crucial to Afghanistan's human resource development and to supporting nation building by enabling a more professional police force.

ELA is implemented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) Literacy Department via technical assistance from UNESCO with total funding of US\$ 54 million. ELA is currently in its third phase and has expanded access to literacy in 30 provinces of the country's 34 provinces. During the first two phases over 600,000 adults, including more than 60% of women, received nine-months training in basic literacy and numeracy with life skills training; a further 630,000 adult learners will benefit from the new phase. In total, approximately 1.2 million Afghan people across 30 provinces will be trained through ELA 3. This will substantially contribute to supporting the Government of Afghanistan meet international Education for All (EFA) targets to increase the level of adult literacy from the current figure of 39% to 59% by 2020.

UNESCO's LEAP programme first started in 2011 providing literacy teacher trainings to the Master Trainers and Volunteer Police Literacy Facilitators to enhance capacity of Ministry of Interior in delivering literacy classes for police patrolmen/women. According to the Ministry of Interior around 30% of the Afghan National Police are illiterate, and this figure dramatically increases to 70% to account for partially literate police officers. LEAP is now in its second phase delivering literacy classes to an estimated 10,000 police officers across 19 of the country's 34 provinces.



To supplement police literacy training, UNESCO also publishes 20,000 Newsletters (monthly) and 20,000 Magazines (quarterly), with contents focusing on topics such as police and the protection of public institutions, justice, elections, human trafficking, riot-control, criminal investigations, traffic rules and regulations. The newsletters also contain sports pages and jokes just to prove that reading can be entertaining as well as educational.

Thousands of men and women from all walks of life in Afghanistan will continue to benefit from literacy training, recognizing that the ability to read and write opens up a world of knowledge and shows that literacy and life skills training can change everyday tasks from the impossible to the possible. Afghanistan will be hosting a two day event from 17th-18th September marking key achievements in literacy and looking at further measures to increase literacy.

EDUCATION

Pakistan: Education is the best investment for sustainable development



To fully tap the potential of higher education institutions to meet the present and future needs of Pakistan and make sure the higher education is on track towards sustainable development, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT) in collaboration with UNESCO Islamabad, British Council Pakistan and the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) organized an event in Islamabad.

The event, “The World Beyond 2015: Is Higher Education Ready?” brought together experts

who shared their opinions and recommendations in regards to the challenges and role of higher education with special reference to the Post-2015 development agenda.

Dr. Junaid Ziadi, Rector of the CIIT, while inaugurating the event, outlined the role and importance of educational institutions and higher education for building a better society.

Keynote speaker, Dr. Sania Nishtar, Founder and President of Heartfil and a former Interim Federal Minister for Education, Health, Science and Information Technology emphasized the need for aligning the research work of academia with policy priorities and industry. She said the potential of Pakistani higher education needs to be tapped to meet upcoming challenges and that after a decade of investment, higher education was ready for new challenges and increased responsibilities, yet was under-funded. Institutional change, governance and oversight were important. The world was much more inter-connected now and the role of technology much bigger, she pointed out. Also, the availability of technical and vocational training could be an incentive for parents to send their children to school.

“The world is changing quickly and we need to be prepared for the new era of global promises”, she added while speaking about Pakistan’s progress on the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development goals to be adopted by the United Nations General Assembly next year.

UNESCO Islamabad Officer in Charge, Abdul Hameed A. Hakeem stressed the need for reducing the number of out-of-school children, increasing literacy and investment in education. He stated that education was at the heart of sustainable development and had the power to contribute to greatly reducing poverty, inequality, violence and conflict. He encouraged the audience to harness the transformative power of higher education for the post-2015 development agenda, highlighting the ways in which education was a foundation for sustainable economic, environmental and social development.



[Read the full story on our website](#)

EDUCATION

Enhancement of literacy in Afghanistan (ELA) program

With financial assistance from the Government of Japan during the first and second phases of the programme, UNESCO's ELA programme has remained the largest literacy intervention in the Education Sector. The programme enabled graduation of 600,000 (60% female) youth and adults from literacy provisions under ELA.

Since 2008, the programme has been implemented in three phases. The first phase (2008-2010) commenced with a pilot in the capital city of Bamiyan province and expanded to nine provinces in 2009. The second phase of programme (2011-2013) was implemented in an additional nine provinces. The programme not only resulted in an increased number of people becoming literate, but also expanded the livelihood opportunities to targeted literacy graduates by training them in 34 locally market-demanded vocational skills.

The third phase of the programme began in 2014 and will continue to 2016, aiming to provide literacy to 600,000 learners across 30 provinces. This phase is supported with generous grants from the Government of Japan, 20m USD approximately, Swedish International Cooperation Agency (SIDA), 9.3m USD approximately, and Government of Finland, 3m USD approximately.

Jointly programmed with the Deputy Ministry of Education for Literacy, the programme shall provide literacy services including embedded skills-based literacy through demand-driven and learner-centred approaches, while building the national capacity in literacy sector.

One of the key outcomes of the ELA III is the revision of curriculum for adult's literacy and development of curriculum for skills-based literacy, both to be used throughout the country.

Coverage:

Target province and districts			
Phase	No. of provinces	No. of districts	Name of provinces
ELA I	09	47	Japan -Badakhshan, Balkh, Bamiyan, Daikundi, Ghor, Nangarhar, Paktika, Samangan, Wardak
ELA II	18	99*	Japan -Badghis, Faryab, Ghazni, Khost, Kunar, Nimroz, Nooristan, Urozgan, Zabul Badakhshan, Balkh, Bamiyan, Daikundi, Ghor, Nangarhar, Paktika, Samangan, Urzgan
ELA III	30	83	Japan - Nangarhar, Balkh, Ghazni, Faryab, Badakhshan, Ghor, Maydan-Wardak, Khost, Badghis, Daykundi, Kunar, Bamiyan, Samangan, Uruzgan, Zabul, Nimroz, Nurista, Paktika Sweden - Baghlan, Helmand, Hirat, Jawzjan, Kandahar, Kapisa, Kunduz, Laghman, Takhar Finland : Kabul, Paktya and Sar-e-pul

EDUCATION

I.R. Iran issues its National Education for All Report 2000-2015

The Islamic Republic of Iran issued its National Education for All Report, covering the period of 2000-2015. The main conclusions of the report are as follows:

Pre-Primary Education

The rate of the coverage of five-year-old children in pre-primary education is hugely distant from the set goals: the gross enrollment rate is around 55 percent which is not acceptable. The same rate has dropped to 49.6 percent in rural areas.

Basic Education

In basic education (which entails primary and junior high schools), the net enrollment rate is lower than what was set in the National EFA Document for both stages: two percent lower in primary and 17 percent lower in junior high. Students' dropout from basic education and out-of-school children are two issues which need to be monitored and traced by the education system always.

Secondary Education

Despite the improvements of some indicators in secondary education, a large proportion of the population aged 14-17 (who should be at high school) are out of school. In addition, girls and those in rural areas are in poorer conditions compared to boys and those in urban areas.

Adult Literacy

Adult literacy and the pace of the reduction of the number of illiterates was very low during 2000-2013. The existence of 9.8 million illiterates aged six and above and the invariability of this figure throughout the period demonstrates that the methods and means of literacy were inefficient thus inducing a return to illiteracy, on the one hand, and a number of students – especially in the early years of primary education – were leaving school, on the other. The combination of the above two trends has led to the current unfavorable circumstances.

Gender Equality

Gender equality has improved in most educational indicators including gross and net enrollment rates of primary, junior high, and high schools. Furthermore, the ratio of girls to the total number of students has risen in all educational levels and girls' conditions in access to education have improved. Yet, there is a long way to go before complete gender equality is maintained in many indicators particularly as rural areas lack gender equality and there is a gap between girls and boys in access to education especially in higher levels.

[Read the full report on our website.](#)



CULTURE

UNODC and UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office team up to support the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property



On 9 September, UNODC and UNESCO organized a workshop in Tehran on the role of civil society in counter trafficking of cultural property. The workshop was attended by 80 representatives of NGOs and civil society, experts from Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicraft and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO), law enforcement officials and government representatives.

The UNODC Iran Representative, Mr. Leik Boonwaat, highlighted the fact that despite continued efforts by the international community, trafficking in cultural property, arts and antiquities has been increasingly growing both as a form of organized crime as well as an important source for laundering the proceeds of crime. Mr. Boonwaat stated that in response to this growing threat, UNODC works to harness the potential of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. In line with this convention, UNODC has piloted an innovative initiative in Iran with the objective of enhancing national capacity in countering trafficking in cultural property, art and antiquities.

Ms. Esther Kuisch Laroche, Director of the UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office, spoke about the 1970 Convention and the responsibility of State Parties to take preventive measures, ensure appropriate steps to recover and return stolen cultural property, and to foster international cooperation among and between State Parties. She highlighted the importance of prioritizing prevention and the important role that civil society can play in that regard. Ms. Kuisch-Laroche mentioned that experience has shown that the preparedness of local professionals and communities is the best guarantee to keep cultural heritage safe. She called for strengthening of national and local capacities and increased efforts to raise awareness at the community level of the importance and protection of cultural heritage.

The speeches were followed by three panel discussions. [Read more about it on our website.](#)

CULTURE

UNESCO Afghanistan announces launch of the bidding process for the design of 'The Bamiyan Museum and Cultural Centre'



On 28 August 2014, the bidding process for the design of The Bamiyan Museum and Cultural Centre was officially announced at the opening of Bamiyan's 6th Silk Road Festival, celebrating Bamiyan's unique cultural heritage. This was an opportune moment to launch the bidding process for The Bamiyan Museum and Cultural Centre, which will be a space for exhibitions and training, bringing together the history of Afghanistan showcasing a crossroads of different civilizations, from the historical Silk Road.

Culture represents an essential element of nation building in every country, and as such has an important role to play in Afghanistan. Culture also makes a valuable contribution to socio-economic development, and in the case of Bamiyan it paves the way towards future tourism opportunities and the participation of local communities here, in not only protecting and preserving their own cultural heritage, but also sharing it.

The site is located on the plateau of Chawni Mountain and the picture shows the flat elevation of the site at approximately 26,000 metres squared. The north and west side of the site overlook expansive views of the Buddha cliffs and niches. Tourists and the local community already enjoy spectacular paramount views of the Bamiyan valley from this vantage point. It's northern and western boundary lines are defined by the Foladi river at the base of the mountain and the eastern and southern part of the site border local municipality buildings with a main entrance road approaching into the site from the south.

The design competition will be open for plans towards the end of the year and bids are welcome from qualified and experienced organisations with a vision for sharing the importance of cultural identity of the Bamiyan Valley from the past, present and into the future.

UNESCO thanked key stakeholders and partners involved in the protection and preservation of The World Heritage and Cultural Landscape of The Bamiyan Valley and in particular The Government of Korea for providing the \$5.4 million for the building of The Museum and Cultural Centre.

CULTURE

Integrating ICH into Teaching & Learning to Reinforce Education for Sustainable Development Initiatives of Heritage Education in Pakistan

“Oh there are so many numbers in the *Chunri*, the number of knots multiplied by the number of folds, so how many does that make?” was the response of a Class 6 student, Irfan when a *chunri* (traditional resist dyeing through tie & dye method) bedspread was opened in the class room of boys and girls from 5 to 7th grades at a school in Islamabad.

The small 11 year old saw a math puzzle in a traditional craft piece when the tradition bearer or Ustad, as we call them in Pakistan, was sharing her craft making with a group of 30 students in a class room setting. The school teachers asked Ustad Nusrat Saleem, the *chunri* expert from a small village, Abbass Nagar in South Punjab, where UNESCO Islamabad had earlier carried out an ICH safeguarding project, whether she too looks at the *chunri* in the same manner?



While the teachers watched and learnt the intricacies of the craft making, they continuously made notes and jotted down ideas on what aspect of this well-known craft could be used to develop lesson plans for their students.

This school, Al-Khulduonia, along with 8 others are participating in a pilot project “Integrating ICH/ESD in Education and Learning in Asia Pacific Region” spearheaded by UNESCO Bangkok office. Pakistan is one of the four countries where the pilot is being tested and executed through UNESCO Office Islamabad, the others being Palau, Vietnam and Uzbekistan. The project is in two stages, the first was a preliminary research report that had to be prepared. UNESCO Islamabad contracted THAAP Consultancy and Advisory services to prepare the report in collaboration with the Ministry of Information Broadcasting and National Heritage, which was later presented in a plenary of the 4 countries in Bangkok and the framework for the implementation developed. As the research report showed Pakistan had little experience in this area although a few schools had been attempting to enrich their curriculum through extra-curricular activities harnessing ICH elements. At the end of the Pilot Bangkok proposed that each country would develop its own guidelines for the purpose.

[Read the full story on our website](#)

CULTURE

Art as a tool for social inclusion and peace-building



In line with UNESCO's programme for Management of Social Transformations (MOST) and the topic of social inclusion, the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO organized an exhibition of drawings and handicrafts by disabled children, which took place on 12-13 August.

The Director and Representative of UNESCO's Cluster Office in Tehran delivered the key note speech at the opening event on 12 August.

In her remarks, Ms. Kuisch Laroche mentioned that social inclusion has always been at the heart of UNESCO's mandate and work. She talked about UNESCO's work to promote inclusive education policies, programmes and practices to ensure equal education opportunities for persons with disabilities. She also highlighted the importance of arts education, and the singular role that culture and arts can play in promoting dialogue and greater understanding and appreciation of others. The event was attended by a number of prominent personalities and national celebrities, as well as by disabled children and their parents and teachers.



The Museum of Fine Arts in Tehran, in cooperation with the UNESCO Cluster Office, organized an art exhibition featuring works of 80 self-taught Iranian artists, entitled "Season of Peace". The opening of the exhibition coincided with International Peace Day. During the inauguration, the Director of UTCO underlined the important link between arts and peace.

SCIENCES

International Forum on Ethics in Environment

On 6 September, Tehran hosted the International Forum on Environmental Ethics organized jointly by the Iranian Department of Environment (DoE), the University of Environment (UoE) and ECO Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ECO-IEST).

Dr. Sarinya Sophia from the Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific (UNESCO Bangkok office,) represented UNESCO in the expert panel discussions.



In her opening remarks, Vice President and Head of the Department of Environment, H.E. Dr. Ebtekar, highlighted the importance of ethics in environment. She said that Environmental ethics build on scientific understanding by bringing human values and moral principles into light and giving us the understanding that we need to take from that scientific backing. She underlined it was important to adhere to moral and ethical principles to make sure that we make correct decisions. Sometimes we need to make sacrifices for long-term benefits and for the collective benefit of human society, she stated. In this context, Dr. Ebtekar also talked about the intrinsic value of life and the right of all living beings to dignity and a healthy environment.

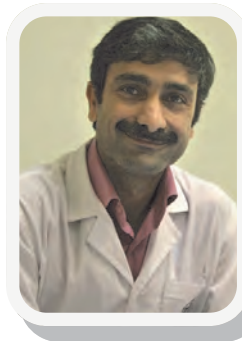
The speeches were followed by a panel discussion with international experts from different countries.



SCIENCES

Iranian among UNESCO Prize-winners for Research in the Life Sciences

In line with UNESCO's goals to encourage research; mobilize science knowledge and policy for sustainable development and fostering capacity-building in science and innovation, the purpose of the UNESCO–Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences is to reward projects and activities of individuals, institutions, other entities or non-governmental organizations for scientific research in the life sciences with a view to improving the quality of human life.



Professor Hossein Baharvand, Professor of Stem Cells and Developmental Biology at the Royan Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Technology and the Head of Department of developmental biology at the University of Science and Culture, was among the laureates this year.

In 2003, he established the first mouse and human induced pluripotent stem cells in Iran. His contribution to the development of stem cell resource and translational research has led to numerous applications in regenerative medicine.

[Read more on our website.](#)

Irina Bokova congratulates Professor Maryam Mirzakhani, first female mathematician to win the Fields Medal

"The Fields Medal awarded to Iranian mathematician Maryam Mirzakhani, professor at Stanford University (USA), is an important day for mathematics, for women and sciences. It is an immense source of encouragement for all those who intend to pursue a career in sciences or mathematics. It is a call to further recognize the talents of women on equal terms with men at all stages of their journey," declared the Director-General.

"Today women represent less than 30% of scientists in the world. Most often this is due to persistent and unfounded stereotypes. Girls are not being sufficiently encouraged to pursue math and science education in school. They are often prevented from advancing in their careers. Exclusion of girls and women signifies an enormous waste of talent that penalizes us and limits our common intellectual potential. This has a particularly damaging effect on the field of mathematics, which serves as the foundation for many other disciplines and is indispensable in everyday life, from the economy to the running of trains. Everyone should have the same opportunities to market their skills," she added.

UNESCO is committed to supporting scientific cooperation and science education for all as a motor for equality and scientific excellence. The Organization supports exhibitions, workshops and initiatives with a view to cultivate the interest of students, girls and boys alike, in mathematics, and takes part in continuous teacher training in the field of mathematics.

[Read more on our website.](#)

SCIENCES

International workshop on flood mitigation in Pakistan



On 25-26 September, UNESCO organized the international workshop “*Capacity building of community elders and media towards flood vigilance and disaster reporting*” in partnership with the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) in Islamabad, aimed at strengthening the role of community elders and improving media reporting on floods.

The recent floods in Pakistan highlighted the workshop’s significance, building on UNESCO’s efforts to strengthen flood forecasting, early warning systems and information dissemination through media to

local communities to reduce the human and socioeconomic impacts of floods.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Dr. Tariq Mehmood, Principal SCEE, NUST, acknowledged the collaborative support made available by UNESCO and the guidance and patronage provided by Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST). He highlighted the importance of community vigilance for better disaster management.

“An organized and well-prepared community could bring a new synergy in the flood management activities and now the time has come to change the perspective of disaster coverage. Besides reporting on disasters there is need to report on the lines of disaster risk reduction (DRR), so the vulnerability and risk factors can be reduced to some extent if the communities are well informed and individual initiatives are pooled together to be carried out in an organized way”, Dr. Tariq added.

The workshop recognized the important role the media played in Pakistan’s 2005 devastating earthquake and the floods of 2010-2014. Speaking on behalf of UNESCO, Zafar Hayat Malik explained that UNESCO’s flood warning and management capacity project helped in achieving better capacity to mitigate floods in the country and stressed the role of media in reaching local communities with timely warnings and alerts to minimize the human and property losses due to natural disasters, particularly floods. He extended his gratitude to the Governments of Pakistan, and Japan, PMD, SUPARCO, NDMA, FFC, national institutions and organizations for supporting the project on Flood Warning and Management Capacity.

National and international experts attending the workshop shared their expertise and experiences to help strengthen flood early warning systems and disaster management capacity of key government institutions and other relevant stakeholders. Participants were also trained on the use of hand crank radios.

At the concluding session of the second day, UNESCO handed over 1565 radio sets to NDMA for distribution to local communities residing in the flood plains in order to receive flood warnings and information during the monsoon season.

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

ERTV Afghanistan receives dubbing training and equipment



UNESCO Kabul office with technical cooperation from Daf Records Multimedia Production Company, provided dubbing equipment and organized 30 days related workshop training to facilitate Education Radio Television of Afghanistan start its first dubbing studio, with a 2-months project.

The project is supported by the government of Italy to support “Expansion and Consolidation of Educational Radio and TV (ERTV) Production and Broadcast Capacities for Distance Education in Afghanistan”.

During the graduation ceremony, ERTV director thanked UNESCO and the government of Italy for their support that enabled and enhanced the capacity of their staff who are producing high quality dubbing programmes. During a presentation of the dubbing work Mr. Zeer said that “I am proud to see such high quality production by ERTV staff.”

Mr. Sayed Habibullah, UNESCO’s Programme Officer for Communication and Information said that “it gives us hope that ERTV with limited resources and less experience produces such high quality programmes dubbed in a very short time. Now that ERTV staff are trained and equipped with a dubbing studio it’s our duty to offer support for the provision of educational materials from all partners to be used for dubbing.”

Explaining the importance of the training Ms. Rohina Hameedi said that “ In the past we were not able to dub programmes from other languages into local languages while now we are able to dub the educational materials from different languages though the issue of the translation and material ready for dubbing remains a challenge”.

The training gathered around 20 participants including female ERTV staff members and focused on topics such as Pro Tool Learning, How to dub a vocal on a movie, Importing Media, Transferring and converting projects, Mixing, Editing sound, Adding Effects, Mastering Audio, and Exporting projects, with practical sessions and open discussions, followed by questions and answers.

To benefit from international standard education resources, ERTV, as Afghanistan’s first Education Radio Television, has to be equipped with dubbing materials and enable to utilize those materials available in different languages to translate and dub educational resources into local language.

In order to support the undergoing process of transition towards a digital transmission system from the current analogue system; this project aims to enhance capacity of ERTV staff as well as the quality of its contents and broadcasts to expand its outreach to a vast and verity of viewers.

EVENTS

UTCO marks International Literacy Day

On Sunday 7 September, the UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office and the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO jointly organized a Forum on Literacy and Sustainable Development with the participation of Mr. Ali Bagher Zadeh, Vice-Minister for Education and Head of the Literacy Movement Organisation.

The event was attended by many experts in the field of Education and several organisations working on literacy programmes.

During the opening session, Mr. Bagher Zadeh provided an overview of Iran's literacy activities to date and spoke of the challenges that the country faces in achieving higher literacy rates.

Ms. Esther Kuisch-Laroche, Director of the UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office, talked about the importance of literacy for sustainable development and UNESCO's efforts in that regard.

Dr. Mohebhosseini, Head of the Education Department at the Iranian NatCom explained the changing concept of literacy - which now focuses more on functional literacy- and UNESCO's agenda for Education in the post 2015 era.

Mr. Balasubramanian Murali, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Iran, and UNICEF Representative, Mr. Mohamed El Munir Safieldin, highlighted the importance of education for poverty alleviation and child survival.

Their speeches were followed by a panel discussion, during which several of the participants talked about the challenges they face in tackling illiteracy. The Vice-Minister for Education called for increased UNESCO support with regard to education policies and planning. Other participants asked UNESCO for practical support in the forms of tools and lessons learned from other countries.

The Director of the UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office welcomed this opportunity to exchange ideas and hear about the important achievements as well as the challenges of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the field of literacy. She reiterated UNESCO's full support to the Iranian Government and said she looked forward to working closely together with the Ministry of Education and the Literacy Movement Organisation.



EVENTS

UTCO celebrates International Day of Peace with a variety of events



On 21 September, UNESCO Tehran and the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO commemorated the International Day of Peace in a joint event held at the Cinema Hall of the Mellat Palace Museum in Sa'adabad Historical and Cultural Complex, Tehran.

Members of international organizations, representatives of the international diplomatic corps based in Tehran, scholars, academia, artists and civil society members participated in the programme, which included musical performances. The event ended with the release of white balloons with peace messages attached to them.

[Read more about the event and see the video here.](#)

UTCO also supported the organization of an art exhibition entitled “Season of Peace” in the Museum of Fine Arts, which coincided with World Peace Day.

In addition, the Director of UTCO delivered a speech at a commemoration organized by the [Tehran Peace Museum](#) to mark International Day of Peace.

Other speakers included former Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, and Mr. Gary Lewis, UN Resident Coordinator for the Islamic Republic of Iran.



Ms. Kuisch-Laroche remarked that ‘World Peace Day 2014 is commemorated while both human lives and identities are under attack in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere, in violence that aims to strike at the cultural and religious values of peoples.’ She referred to the theme of the World Peace Day 2014, the Rights of Peoples to Peace and said ‘This year’s theme belongs to all nations.’

[Read the full speech of Ms. Esther Kuisch Laroche here.](#)



EVENTS

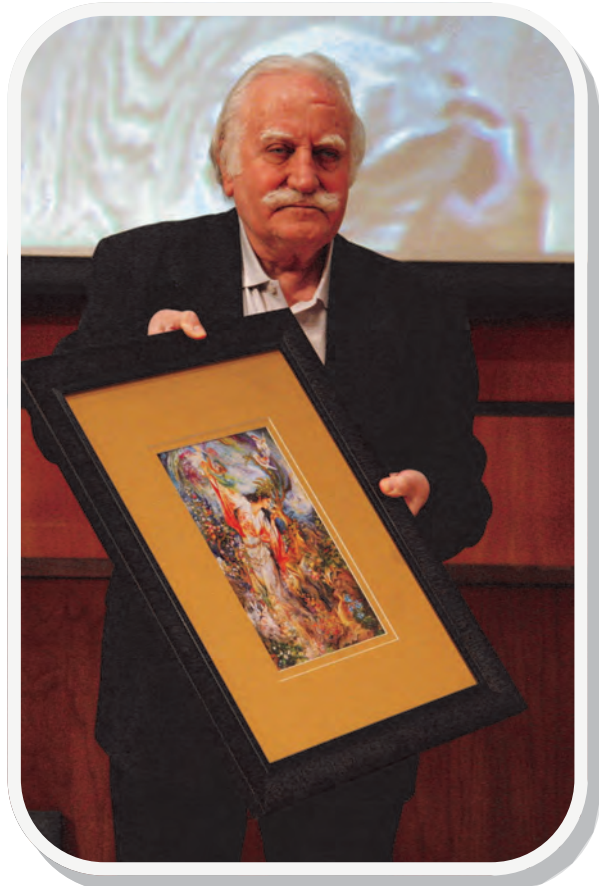
UNESCO pays tribute to renowned Iranian artist Mahmoud Farshchian

On 28 September the Department of Environment, under the patronage of Vice President Dr. Ebtekar, organized a conference on the works of renowned Iranian artist, Mahmoud Farshchian and its impact on the Environment.

In her remarks, the Director of UNESCO's Tehran Cluster Office paid tribute to the work of the Maestro. "Your work is of great importance to us. Not just for its artistic value and cultural significance, but also because of the important lessons that we can learn from it today", she said.

UNESCO has published two books on the works of Mr. Farshchian.

Ms. Kuisch-Laroche talked about arts as a means of expressing and communicating the conditions surrounding us, which is a powerful means of raising awareness and making us reflect upon our attitudes and behavior. She stated that safeguarding the environment and raising awareness of the grave problems we are currently facing is the responsibility and duty of each and every one of us. But, she said, artists have a unique way of conveying messages that go beyond ethnic, linguistic or national barriers. Art helps feel and understand that which unites humanity in its diversity of cultures and expressions.



Environmental art is often defined as art that helps improve our relationship with the natural world. Through it, artists sometimes seek to interpret nature or educate us about environmental problems. At other times, their works re-envision our relationship to nature.

Master Farshchian's beautiful paintings often show us a perfect synergy between mankind, animals and the nature that surrounds them. His works demonstrate how these are interlinked, inter-dependent and united with each other.

Ms. Kuisch-Laroche stated that this was a great source of inspiration. "I believe that through his magnificent works, Mr. Farshchian shows us a new way – a better way- to co-exist in harmony with our environment. It is my wish today that we will follow his example and try to make it a reality", she said.

At the end of the conference, Mr. Farshchian unveiled his new book and was presented with gifts from the organizers of the event.

EVENTS

Upcoming events in October-November in which UNESCO will participate:

- World Teachers' Day (5 Oct)
- International Day for Disaster Reduction (second Wednesday in October)
- International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 Oct)
- World Science Day for Peace and Development (10 Nov)
- World Philosophy Day (third Thursday in Nov)
- International Day for Tolerance (16 Nov)

