



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

**Address by Irina Bokova,**

**Director-General of UNESCO**

**on the occasion of the Seventh Award Ceremony of the UNESCO King  
Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and  
Communication Technologies in Education**

**UNESCO, 13 January 2016**

His Highness Shaikh Muhammad Bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Vice Prime Minister of  
the Kingdom of Bahrain,

His Excellency Dr Majed Bin Ali Al-Noaimi, Minister of Education of the Kingdom of  
Bahrain, Chairman of the Bahrain National Commission for UNESCO,

His Excellency Dr Muhammad Abdul Ghaffar, Ambassador Extraordinary and  
Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Bahrain to France and Permanent Delegate,

Dr Dorothy Gordon, President of the International Jury,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to welcome you to UNESCO for this 7<sup>th</sup> award ceremony of the  
*UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and  
Communication Technologies in Education*.

This Prize was established in 2005 thanks to a generous donation by His Majesty  
the King of Bahrain, to reward the outstanding and creative use of information and  
communication technologies (ICTs), to enhance learning, teaching and educational  
performance.

This ceremony is an opportunity for us to celebrate together the vision at the heart  
of the Prize, which seeks to promote more inclusive quality education and lifelong  
learning opportunities for all.

We are honoured today by the presence of His Highness Shaikh Muhammad Bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Vice Prime Minister and President of the Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology, representing His Majesty the King of Bahrain.

Thank you, Mr Deputy Prime Minister for coming.

It is a pleasure to welcome Dr Majed Bin Ali Al-Noaimi, Minister of Education of the Kingdom of Bahrain, a great friend of UNESCO, a great champion of all our work.

2015 was a turning point year for education, marked by the *Incheon Declaration* and taken forward by the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, setting an ambitious and comprehensive vision in Sustainable Development Goal 4.

All this builds on the achievements of Education for All since 2000.

There has been tremendous progress across the world, but still only one third of countries have achieved all goals.

Some 57 million children remain out of primary school.

There are still 781 million illiterate adults today.

Girls and women continue to shoulder the heaviest burden of exclusion – along with children in conflict zones.

In this context, our starting point remains firm and clear.

Education is a fundamental human right.

Education is a powerful development multiplier.

This is why we must make the most of every driver for enhanced access and quality.

Information and communication technologies have a special role here.

UNESCO's *Education 2030 Framework for Action* sets an ambitious agenda – calling on Governments and partners to harness the full potential of ICTs as drivers for quality, to ensure gender equity in access to and training in ICT, to leverage ICT to promote literacy, to make ICT resources and online learning essential elements of lifelong learning.

This builds also on the *Qingdao Declaration* -- from the *International Conference on ICT and Post-2015 Education* that was held in Qingdao, China, last May, in cooperation with the Chinese Government and the Wei Dong Group.

In all this, we need a special focus on bridging the gender divide, to leverage technology to empower girls and women.

This was the theme of the *2015 Mobile Learning Week*, co-organized by UN Women.

This year, the UNESCO Mobile Learning Week will take this forward by exploring how mobile technologies can provide answers to current challenges.

We know ICTs cannot be bolted onto learning.

They must be built in from the outset.

They must be assessed, monitored and reviewed.

This is why this edition of the *UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize* focusses on pedagogical innovation in the use of ICTs in teaching and learning.

In all, the International Jury reviewed 112 projects from 57 countries and 9 NGOs – this represents an extraordinary variety of innovations for the cause of education – and I wish to take this opportunity to thank Dr Dorothy Gordon, who chaired the Jury, as well as all its members for their commitment and dedication.

In this spirit, I am honoured to reward two prize-winners today.

The first laureate is *Open Source Physics*, a remarkable project developed by the Educational Technology Division of the Ministry of Education, Republic of Singapore.

This project works to provide students and teachers the freedom to learn from, build on and share well-designed ICT resources for the teaching and learning of physics.

This is an outstanding innovative tool for learning physics, using an open platform, including open source code and open content, where students and teachers work collaboratively with adaptable resources.

*Open Source Physics* can also be easily scaled to a larger community.

Our second laureate is the *Omar Dengo Foundation* for its National Programme of Educational Informatics, submitted by the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Costa Rica, and I am happy that the Minister of Education of Costa Rica is with us today.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

A travers ce programme, l'UNESCO vise l'amélioration de la qualité et de l'équité des apprentissages, en s'appuyant sur les technologies numériques, en donnant la priorité aux enfants et aux jeunes qui sont loin du chemin de l'école.

Notre objectif, c'est de renforcer les capacités des élèves, de renforcer la formation continue des enseignants, d'améliorer le suivi des apprentissages.

Au nom de l'UNESCO, je tiens à féliciter les deux lauréats, pour leur vision, leur leadership, pour leur travail acharné pour la grande cause de l'éducation, notre bien public mondial le plus précieux.

Ce prix est un appel à s'engager, alors que les Nations Unies viennent d'adopter l'agenda pour le développement durable d'ici 2030.

L'UNESCO s'est engagé de toutes ces forces pour définir l'objectif d'une éducation de qualité pour tous, qui a finalement été adopté.

Nous avons lancé le Plan d'Action pour l'éducation 2030, afin de fédérer tous les efforts pour atteindre cet objectif.

*Le Prix de l'UNESCO - Roi Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa pour l'utilisation des nouvelles technologies dans l'éducation* est une pièce importante de ce dispositif.

Aussi j'exprime mes sincères remerciements au Royaume de Bahreïn pour son généreux soutien, et je vous remercie de votre engagement.