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UNISIST Newsletter

INFORMATION, INFORMATICS, TELEMATICS

Vol. 32
No. 1
2004

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The Newsletter provides information on the activities of the Information Society Division and other related issues. Published twice a year in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish, the Newsletter is distributed free of charge by the Division.

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WSIS

World Summit on the Information Society

As part of its activities to operationalize UNESCO's concept of "Knowledge Societies" the Organization has launched the "UNESCO WSIS Action Directory", an online platform on contributions to the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society in December 2003. The Directory can be accessed by the categories of the WSIS Action Plan; UNESCO's four principles for knowledge societies; regions and countries; types of actions; and by UNESCO's main fields of competence.

Key activities and recently added entries are highlighted on the homepage of the Directory, and for each activity, detailed information concerning links to the WSIS Action Plan, type, geographical location as well as contact information and a URL for further reading are available.

The Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action adopted at the closing of the Summit expresses an international consensus on the values which should underpin the building of

inclusive and pluralist societies in which all can benefit from the potential of ICTs.

For UNESCO, these texts constitute recognition by the international community of the principles that the Organization has been consistently promoting as the basis for the development of equitable knowledge societies, namely: freedom of expression; universal access to information and knowledge, especially information in the public domain; the preservation and promotion of cultural diversity, multilingualism and local content; and equal access to quality education.

Recognition of these values and principles in the political declaration of the Summit has therefore given more relevance to increasing potential of knowledge for attaining the Millennium Development Goals as well as a means of social transformation and economic development.

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INFORMATION FOR ALL PROGRAMME

Since its establishment in 2000, the Information for All Programme has steadily been consolidated as an international framework of cooperation for building knowledge societies. The third session of its Intergovernmental Council held in May 2004 highlighted the need for UNESCO, through the Information for All Programme in particular, to play a leading role in the preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Session in Tunisia in 2005 and in advancing the transition from structural reflection to action.

Delegates also debated the role and focus of IFAP. While recognizing that IFAP had been formed to improve efficiency, provide

more focus on the emerging information revolution and provide consultative advice to the Communication and Information Sector, greater clarification of the specific roles and programme priorities, was needed especially in the light of the WSIS which must shape and influence the work of IFAP.

There was full consensus that IFAP had to respect the priorities and mandate of UNESCO, but should equally provide an added value to the work of the CI Sector, perhaps by concentrating on initiatives that would provide the greatest leverage in achieving IFAP goals and would be likely to have the greatest impact on peoples and communities.

In this context, many delegates proposed that the major priority area should be on bridging the digital divide and promoting the education of peoples to enable their participation in knowledge societies. Further consideration needed to be given to “how” the issue is going to be solved and who needs to take action.

There was also general support for IFAP to promote best practices in Member States

through practical guidelines and studies to be shared and made available to Member States for translation into national realities.

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LIBRARIES

Iraq – Cultural Emergency Response

THE first activity of the Cultural Emergency Response (CER) has been concluded. Its objective was to help refurbish the Reading Room of the Central Library of the University of Baghdad which had been damaged during the war in Iraq.

The Cultural Emergency Response, a joint initiative of the Prince Claus Fund of the Netherlands and the International Committee of the Blue Shield, allocated funds of €25,000. The decision to help refurbish the reading room followed a report by the “*Inspecteur Général des Bibliothèques*” in France on the damage to archives and libraries caused by the war and the subsequent looting. The expert, who is an authority on archives and libraries in Iraq, took part in the second UNESCO mission last July and made a number of recommendations for action on his return.

The funds were used to buy tables, chairs and computer equipment. These items were identified by a Library Adviser with the Coalition Provisional Administration. He also facilitated the purchase of the furniture and equipment and noted: “Following the collapse of the regime in Iraq last April not only government offices and public buildings were looted and burned but

universities, libraries and museums were not safe from such a barbarous act. Among them was the Central Library of the University of Baghdad. We were desperate and thought that the library would never reopen. However, it was only through the help of some good friends of the Iraqi people and human culture and civilization who showed interest in helping the library, that it became possible to refurbish it once more. Among them was the CER which made a generous donation of €25,000 to be spent on the library’s reading room. On behalf of myself, as a representative of this library and library adviser in the CPA in Baghdad and also on behalf of all the University’s students, its staff and President of the University, I express my sincere gratitude and thanks to CER and the Dutch people”.

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International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), P.O. Box 95312, (Prins Willem-Alexanderhof 5), 2509 CH The Hague, Netherlands. Tel: +31 70 31 40 884. Fax: +31 70 38 34 827.

AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES

JTS 2004: Preserving the Audiovisual Heritage – Transition and Access

UNDER the auspices of UNESCO, the sixth technical symposium on audiovisual recordings (JTS 2004) on the theme “Preserving the Audiovisual Heritage: Transition and Access” took place in Toronto, Ontario, Canada from 24 to 26 June 2004.

The three-day event was organized by AMIA (Association of Moving Image Archivists) in cooperation with the other members of the CCAAA (Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations), an umbrella group of organizations whose primary objective is the support of professional audiovisual archive activities, and whose membership is primarily institutional and international (worldwide or regional). The other members are:

- FIAPF - International Federation of Film Archives
- FIAT/IFTA - International Federation of Television Archives/Fédération Internationale des Archives de Télévision
- IASA - International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives
- ICA - International Council on Archives
- IFLA - International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
- SEAPAVAA - Southeast Asia-Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association

The Joint Technical Symposium (JTS), which was first held in 1983, is the international gathering of organizations and individuals involved in the preservation of original image and sound materials. Held every three-to-five years, the JTS provides an excellent opportunity for all persons interested and/or involved in audiovisual archiving to meet and share information about original image and sound preservation. Panel discussions along with technical presentations and sessions examined issues relating to preservation and restoration of the world’s moving image and recorded sound heritage.

UNESCO sponsorship enabled the participation of twelve archivists from developing countries from around the world to become more familiar with some of the issues affecting the preservation of the audiovisual heritage in their archives through presentations covering a wide variety of digital, audio, film, broadcast and video related topics concerning restoration of supports, including digital conservation and restoration; disaster avoidance and recovery of tapes; colour separations and mass storage systems for archives, but to list a few of the areas covered.

Vinegar Syndrome Workshop for Caribbean Archivists

AS part of a strategy to conduct targeted workshops for specialists involved in information preservation, UNESCO, in cooperation with the recently created Caribbean Audiovisual Information Network (CAVIN) and the University of the West Indies Learning Resource Centre, sponsored the participation of twenty archivists from the subregion in a three-day workshop on the vinegar syndrome from 30 June to 2 July in Barbados. An Australian Preservation Specialist introduced the archivists to techniques that would contribute to the long-term safeguard of materials in their archive.

This activity is part of UNESCO’s action to preserve the audiovisual heritage comprising film, television and sound recordings and make it recognized as an integral part of the national

cultural heritage, in the same way as textual information has been regarded for years.

UNESCO’s objective is the development of audiovisual archival infrastructure, trained professionals and accepted professional reference points to ensure the safeguard and preservation of the audiovisual heritage of humanity.

Working in close cooperation with the seven NGOs which make up the Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CAAAA), the Organization supports the production of policy statements and position papers on key issues such as copyright, legislation and technical standards; promotes the exchange of information on audiovisual issues and implements projects in support of audiovisual archiving throughout the world.

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No Time, No Money – Moving Image and Sound Archiving under Emergency Conditions

THE 8th SEAPAVAA Conference and General Assembly was held jointly with FIAF's (International Federation of Film Archives) 60th Congress. It was hosted at the Hotel Melia in Hanoi, Viet Nam from 18 to 24 April 2004 by the Vietnam Film Institute and the Ministry of Culture and Information.

The conference theme for this year "No Time, No Money: Moving Image and Sound Archiving in Emergency Conditions" tackled solutions to the pressing problems of audio-visual archives in the region. Topics included a discussion on facing emergencies with insufficient resources and growing an archive's support base to successfully advocate its needs. Dealing with inequalities in resources and skills was also addressed.

The objective of the conference was to develop programmes and strategies and provide advice on how to help archives in need. Publications, funds, raising of profiles and recognition, networks, etc. were all discussed at the symposium.

One hundred and twenty-nine participants representing approximately forty countries from around the world took part in the symposium, which was opened by the Minister of Culture and Information who noted that cooperation with FIAF and SEAPAVAA was a useful process for the future good of society.

Participants were encouraged to support each other as a means of strengthening the archives worldwide mission since archiving is an expensive field and all archives seem to work within varying degrees of poverty. At the same time, greater opportunities for training were becoming available for AV archivists. During the last decade, the establishment of the first formal university level courses and other courses attest to a growing international demand for skills training, to meet the rapidly technological evolution.

For additional information please contact Ms Susanne Ornager, Adviser for Communication and Information in Asia and the Pacific region, 8 Poorvi Marg, Vasan Vihar, New Delhi 110057, India. Email: s.ornager@unesco.org

DIGITAL HERITAGE

THE growth of digital heritage and the various problems involved in ensuring its preservation is of deep concern to UNESCO which has launched a campaign for the preservation of this heritage. The campaign has, to date, resulted in the development of technical guidelines, the adoption of a UNESCO Charter and awareness-raising among a range of stakeholders. It has also led to the development of a strategy for the promotion of digital preservation.

This strategy has centred on:

- (a) a wide consultation process with governments, policy-makers, producers of information, heritage institutions and experts, the software industry;
- (b) dissemination of technical guidelines;
- (c) implementation of pilot projects;

(d) adoption of an international charter on the preservation of digital heritage;

(e) training workshops.

Technical guidelines on the preservation of digital heritage were prepared by the National Library of Australia and regional consultations on the theme were held in 2002 and 2003 with partners involved in the development of a conceptual framework for digital preservation.

The Guidelines form a central part of the campaign to improve access to digital heritage for all the world's peoples, and to ensure that the means of preserving their digital heritage are in the hands of every community. Regional training workshops based on the Guidelines are planned in various regions. The first such workshop

took place in December 2003 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and was attended by some fifty experts from Latin America. One other workshop was held in Beijing in June 2004, with two more scheduled for Seoul, Republic of Korea in September 2004 and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in December 2004.

Building on the existing Internet Archive programme of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, UNESCO Cairo is currently preparing a pilot project in which digital content in Arabic language is to be preserved, sorted and indexed. Another project, Quito Digital, for the promo-

tion of Latin American digital heritage is being prepared.

At the national level, the draft Brazilian Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Heritage prepared by the Brazilian National Council on Archives (CONARQ), inspired by the UNESCO Charter, was prepared for approval by the Council in June 2004.

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MEMORY OF THE WORLD

UNESCO/Jikji Memory of the World Prize

A PRIZE has been set up to further promote the objectives of the Memory of the World Programme and to commemorate the inscription of the Jikji, the oldest known book produced by movable metal print. The Prize consisting of an award of US \$30,000 will be granted every two years to individuals or institutions that have made significant contributions to the preservation and accessibility of documentary heritage. The award itself, operating expenses of the Prize as well as all costs related to the award ceremony will be funded by the Republic of Korea. The Jikji is one of ninety-one collections

from forty-five Member States inscribed on the Register which lists documentary heritage that has been identified by the International Advisory Committee as corresponding to the selection criteria for world significance and endorsed by UNESCO's Director-General. The "Buljo jikji simche yojeol", also called Jikji contains the essentials of Zen Buddhism compiled by priest Baegun in the late Goryeo period. The book was printed in two volumes; the first has not yet been located while the second volume is held by the Bibliothèque Nationale of France.

Traditional Chinese Music Digitization Project

RECORDINGS of traditional Chinese music held by the Music Research Institute (MRI) of the Chinese Academy of Arts in Beijing will soon be digitally available. The collections, which were included in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register in 1997, contain unique field recordings from the 1950s onward, which are in frequent demand.

The Music Research Institute is the most important institution of its kind in China for the collect and study of Chinese traditional music. Its archives holds 40,000 gramophone records and a collection of several thousand tapes or 7,000 hours of traditional music recordings collected from different nationalities all over the country.

Experts from the Austrian Research Sound Archives (Phonogrammarchiv), who have gained

considerable experience in digital archiving over the past years, provided technical assistance to the project, based on the principles of IASA TC-03 (International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives, Standards, Recommended Practices and Strategies: The Safeguarding of the Audio Heritage: Ethics, Principles, and Preservation Strategy).

UNESCO provided the bulk of the funding for the project which included the purchase and installation of equipment, digitization and the creation of a website providing access to the collections.

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SOFTWARE

Regional Training Seminar - Introduction to WinIDAMS

WITHIN the framework of the cooperation agreement between ALECSO and UNESCO regarding dissemination, Arabization and training in the use of the IDAMS package in the Arab region, ALECSO in cooperation with the Egyptian National Commission for Education, Science and Culture, and the College of Computer and Information, Cairo University, organized the second Regional Training Seminar "Introduction to WinIDAMS".

Sixteen representatives of IDAMS distribution networks from thirteen countries, along with eight specialists from various Egyptian institutions attended the presentation and individual work sessions. Most participants demonstrated high level and excellent knowledge of numerical data processing and statistical analysis which enabled them to very quickly acquire an understanding of basic IDAMS concepts and perform the exercises.

The training material in English was prepared by UNESCO and reproduced at the Egyptian National Commission. It was completed by hard copies of various presentations.

The success of the Seminar is largely attributable to the abilities of the participants and an excellent working climate. Participants expressed their great interest in IDAMS software and noted its importance not only for their professional activities but also for that of various institutions in their countries.

Progress was also achieved concerning the Arabization of WinIDAMS. The outstanding issues to be solved relate to the:



- Finalization of the Arabic version of WinIDAMS release 1.1
- Adaptation of the current Arabic version of WinIDAMS to release 1.2
- Translation of IDAMS standard teaching material and self-teaching module into Arabic

With the Arabic version of WinIDAMS, the dissemination and training activities will be broader and far more intensive since IDAMS will be the only statistical software available in Arabic.

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Greenstone Training of Trainers Workshop

A TWO-DAY UNESCO sponsored training of trainers workshop on the development and sharing of digital library collections using the freely available Greenstone Digital Library software was recently held at the Kazakh State Scientific Research Institute of the Scientific Technical Information in Kazakhstan's capital Almaty.

Greenstone, a suite of software for building and distributing digital library collections, provides a new way of organizing information and publishing it on the Internet or on CD-ROM. Produced by the New Zealand Digital Library Project at the University of Waikato, and developed and distributed in cooperation with UNESCO and the Human Info NGO, it integrates functions such as metadata, full text search and retrieval, multilingual support, support for multiple document formats and management of digital collections. Greenstone is open-source software, issued under the terms of the GNU General Public License.

Greenstone is available on the Internet (<http://www.greenstone.org>), and on a quadrilingual (English, French, Russian, Spanish) CD-ROM soon to be available from UNESCO. UNESCO aims through its sponsorship of Greenstone to empower users, particularly in universities, libraries, and other public service institutions, to build and share their own digital libraries.

The workshop in Almaty is the latest in a series of UNESCO regional Greenstone training workshops being conducted in Asia (Bangalore, India, August 2003), Africa (Dakar,



Senegal, September 2003) and the Pacific (Suva, Fiji, November 2003).

For further information on the training in Almaty please contact Mr Sergey Karpov, National Professional Officer, Communication and Information Unit, UNESCO Office in Almaty, UNESCO Office, 67, Tole Bi Street 4th Floor, Almaty 480091, Kazakhstan. Tel: 7 3272 58 26 37/3859. Fax: 7 3272 58 45. Email: s.karpov@unesco.org

For more information on Greenstone Digital Library software please contact Mr Davide Storti, UNESCO, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France. Tel: (33 1) 45.68.37.91. Fax: (33 1) 45.68.55.83. Email: d.storti@unesco.org

INFOYOUTH

DURING the first half of 2004, the INFOYOUTH Programme concentrated on implementing activities in Africa. These included the training of young African journalists in information management in conflict situations at the University of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso. The workshop, held from 25 to 27 May 2004, was organized by the « Réseau Afrique Jeunesse », a member of UNESCO's INFOYOUTH network, in cooperation with the Network of West African Journalists for Integration and Peace to provide





young journalists from Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali with the capacity to cope with information management in conflict situations.

The journalists took part in practical exercises as well as exchanges and debates on the four principal topics "NICT and conflict prevention", "Traditional ways of prevention and management of conflicts", "Press freedom" and "Information management in cases of crisis or conflict".

The workshop was organized within the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and produced a practical guide for young journalists from radio and television broadcasting and newspapers.

Participants recommended the creation of a website on conflict prevention, the setting up of an Internet discussion forum, the organization of exchange visits of young journalists from the three countries to enable them to make documentaries on the promotion of peace and non-violence, as well as the production of a CD-ROM on the contribution of African culture to the prevention and management of conflicts.



Workshop on HIV/AIDS Prevention in Bamako

Youth leaders from some ten African countries met at a three-day workshop entitled "AIDS Concerns Us All" in Mali's capital Bamako in July 2004. The event was organized by INFOYOUTH in partnership with the "Mouvement de Réflexion et d'Action pour le Développement" (MARD).

The meeting, the first INFOYOUTH event in Bamako, came at the end of

a project that produced two educational tools to be used in the fight against the HIV/AIDS: an educational CD-ROM and a paper publication. Both tools are free of charge for educators to help them in their work to make young people

in rural areas better understand AIDS and to learn about AIDS prevention.

The meeting consisted of workshops, presentations, interviews and interactive educational games for participants from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Mali, Mauritius, Niger, Senegal and Togo. It was a major plank in activities strengthening HIV/AIDS preventive education undertaken under the INFOYOUTH Programme.

In June 2004, the National Institute of Youth and Popular Education (INJEP), held a training session for eighteen Network members from fifteen countries representing institutional or associative structures mem-



bers of INFOYOUTH. Participants came from Armenia, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, China, Colombia, the Czech Republic, India, Mali, Palestine, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Tunisia and Uruguay.

The meeting allowed very constructive exchanges among experienced and new members and was instrumental in identifying common concerns and priorities in order to encourage the design and implementation of transborder projects by members.

The training programme was designed in response to expressed needs and covered the following areas:

- Internet from A to Web or how to build and animate an Internet site at lower cost and to use it as effective platform of communication;
- Project methodology or how to encourage the initiatives and the participation of the young people in humanitarian, ecological and professional projects.

At the closing plenary session the rapporteurs of the working groups made several recommendations concerning long-term projects and expressed their readiness to continue reinforcing the network dynamism by more regular and sustained communication among members.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

ALMATY – Training on Strategic Planning and Creative Thinking

A ONE-DAY workshop providing training for librarians on strategic planning and creative thinking was organized at the National Library of the Republic of Kazakhstan for heads of the fourteen main Kazakh libraries. The sessions involved brain storming on the development of a rural libraries network and improvement of services for readers. Access to the huge information collections contained in the libraries and archives of the Central Asian countries is one of the key factors needed to build information

society in these countries and enable them to join the Global Knowledge Society. ICT training for capacity-building will be conducted to raise the ability of rural librarians to facilitate access of users to collections.

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BRASILIA

Low Cost ICT Literacy Programme in Brazil Sponsored by UNESCO

EIGHT Brazilian cents. This is the fee paid for one lesson of the “Computers for the Community” Programme, under the “Open School” project which include one-hour free access to the Internet and courses in computer applications and Internet browsing. The project was initiated last year by UNESCO, in partnership with the Government of the State of Pernambuco and with the support of Interdata Microinformática Ltd and the Diário de Pernambuco.

More than 5,000 people have already participated in the programme, attending courses mainly during weekends in school buildings that are put at the disposal of the programme.

The low fee of R\$ 6.50 (ca US \$2.50) for an 80-hour course is made possible through volunteers, the production of the course books by the Diário de Pernambuco and the use of the public schools infrastructure. The Open School project

coordinates the programme and pays the fees of two technicians who are available during weekends for support.

By the end of 2004, The Open School project will have conducted training programmes in 300 schools for more than 13,000 people. Interviews of the participants of the courses show that 86% of them consider that the knowledge acquired in the courses will be useful for their professional careers, and UNESCO believes that this type of programme could be recommended as a low cost solution for advancing digital inclusion with a high social impact.

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BEIRUT

UNESCO Beirut Distributes PCs to Lebanese Schools

AS part of its “Bridging the Digital Divide” project, the UNESCO Office in Beirut in cooperation with the Safadi Foundation recently distributed more than 130 refurbished personal computers to twenty-one schools in Northern Lebanon. Each school received eight to twelve computers depending on the number of students and teachers trained in the use of the new equipment.

The Bridging the Digital Divide Project was launched almost three years ago to meet computer needs in public schools after the Lebanese Ministry of Education introduced information technology in intermediate and secondary classes.

In response to a perceived lack of PCs in rural public schools, UNESCO started a project to donate PCs after refurbishing and installa-

tion of software. PCs were donated by banks, private companies and some ministries as well as embassies.

Training was provided to selected teachers from schools that acquired the donated PCs, with follow-up activities conducted to ensure that the equipment is being used efficiently.

A global strategy for a more efficient use of recycled IT equipment was developed by donor organizations and potential recipients at an

international meeting held at UNESCO's Paris Headquarters in March 2003. This meeting entitled "New Synergies for Recycling Information Technology Equipment" was triggered by a UNESCO working group set up to study the area of transfer of used technology.

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INITIATIVE BABEL

Cooperation with the CLIPS Laboratory within the framework of Initiative B@bel

THE CLIPS laboratory in Grenoble France is and has been working extensively in the area of natural language processing (NLP). NLP covers many specializations, its goal however is to make it possible for human beings and machines to interact in the same way that human beings are able to communicate with each other.

One area of focus in this field is machine translation. CLIPS is currently working on several projects such as Papillon, a multilingual lexical database which aims to support automatic translation in English, French, Japanese, Malay, Laotian, Thai and Vietnamese. The project is part of an international cooperative effort which allows researchers in various parts of the world to contribute their lexical resources to

the database and in turn gain access to resources contributed by other users. The system utilizes the Universal Networking Language (UNL), developed by the United Nations University's Institute of Advanced studies in Japan and now directed by the UNDL Foundation in Geneva.

Agreement has been reached on providing automated translation of content on the Initiative B@bel website. The focus would be on providing support for Spanish and Russian, however there is the possibility that another two languages (Arabic and Hindi) could be included.

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REGIONAL OFFICES

AFRICA – Tourism and Handicrafts project

IN cooperation with the World Bank and the Ethiopian Cultural Heritage Project, UNESCO is exploring the establishment of an artist craft development project. The project is intended to provide training with emphasis on marketing, design, creativity training and a general understanding of what national and international tourists are looking for in towns with cultural heritage sites.

It will be similar to the exercise carried out in Lalibela and will entail the establishment of

a community multimedia based telecentre in Harar in support of artisan craft development. The CMC, where in addition tourists could have access to Internet, would support exchanges with other artisan craft centres in Ethiopia and perhaps in Eastern Africa – especially on basketry, metal and wood work, traditional leather book binding, jewelry, embroidery. It would also be in a better position to negotiate with handicrafts traders and shop owners in Addis Ababa.

Expert Meeting on Free Open Source Software for Education (FOSS)

IN March 2004, a group of eighteen experts from Africa and UNESCO met to get a better understanding of how developing countries can benefit from FOSS solutions. It is important to note that FOSS is not simply software, it is also a community that is composed, at its core, of programmers. The meeting identified key issues for the economic evaluation of the use of proprietary software (PS) and FOSS in education, shaping the economic model by identification of economic parameters. The evaluation of FOSS software for education in Africa is part of a joint UNESCO – Imfundo project. Based on the outlines and the methodology developed by this meeting, a study will be elaborated by the University of Dakar UCAD.

In three working groups the following themes and questions were discussed: Is education the right arena for FOSS? Experience with awareness at Ministries of Education, international support for developing countries, the link between public and private sector, technical issues, FOSS and its role for strengthening a national software industry, cost of FOSS as investment in future software engineering capacity, capacity-building for design and maintenance, user friendliness and man-machine-interaction, blended model of PS and FOSS, interoperability by open standard were also topics discussed. Based on this more general discussion, ten themes were identified for education in Africa: Strategic issues, indicators

for success, quality and efficiency, sustainability and capacity-building, economic and technical questions, ethical and normative questions, open standards and open educational content, and a holistic development process.

Case studies from Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mauritius and Senegal were presented and analysed. As a further example the African Virtual Open Initiatives and Resources (AVOIR) project was presented by University of Western Cape in South Africa. AVOIR has as one of its outputs a next-generation e-learning management system. This is based to a large extent on the existing e-learning system called KEWL (Knowledge Environment for Web-based Learning), which is open source but on a windows server platform. It is being rewritten to be cross platform on both server and user system, and taking into consideration the experience of the computing environment of Africa gained through working in more than twenty African countries. The software development is being done by collaborators at twelve institutions in Africa.

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ASIA - New Delhi

Networking Multipurpose Community Telecentres in South Asia

ONE hundred and twenty-five participants from the South Asian Association for Regional Corporation (SAAARC) countries (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) and resource persons from Asia and the Pacific attended a two-day international seminar on «Multipurpose Community Telecentre: Networking and Future Aims» which was held in the Nepalese capital Kathmandu on 15 and 16 January 2004.

The seminar which was jointly organized by the Nepal Library Association (NLA) and the Nepal National Library (NNL) in cooperation with UNESCO New Delhi, was inaugurated by Crown Prince Paras Bir Bikram Shah Dev and Crown Princess Himani Rajya Laxmi Devi Shah.

In his welcoming remarks, the Chief Librarian of NNL noted that Multipurpose Community Telecentres (MCTs) can contribute to the development of a country by providing government access to IT services. This had been seen in many countries of the world, including some from the SAAARC countries, which have succeeded in implementing MCTs and thereby meeting the information needs of local communities.

The major factor that seems to have prevented many rural regions from benefiting fully from the potential of ICTs has been the low penetration and quality of telecommunication services. Although recent developments and cost reductions in wireless communication technologies permit the availability of telecommunication services at any spot on

the globe, there is still a cost barrier that Asian rural communities will not easily be able to overcome. This suggests the viability of providing a sustainable and cost-effective facility, capable of servicing most of the requirements of the local population. Such a centre could be seen as the community library of the future, supporting the goal of universal access to the emerging knowledge society.

Information is one of the important economic commodities for development. However, access of rural communities to development support information service remains very limited. The rapid change in information processing has further intensified the problem.

MCTs can facilitate access to library and information services, portals in support of literacy campaigns, e-learning, government programmes, and other public service activity.

By offering basic telecommunication and office administration services along with all needed user support and training MCTs can link to "traditional" rural media for outreach activities, and can facilitate access to radio and television production.

There are many models for, and approaches to, empowering local communities through ICTs, including for example, the development of rural telephony, community radio or computer literacy in the schools. MCTs represent one approach, which is very promising, but still experimental in Asia.

UNESCO has worked with the International Telecommunication Union and other partners to promote the participation of MCTs in development through a range of public library, educational, informatics and telecommunication services, including pilot projects in five least developed African countries and in Rajkot District, India. MCTs are one of several successful organization models for empowerment of local communities through information, communication and ICT promoted by UNESCO.

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LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN Online courses in Telework for Telecentre Managers

HIGH levels of unemployment in Latin America, with almost 20% of the population unemployed and 40% in borderline employment opportunities, have led to the use of ICT to promote self employment and to improve skills to increase chances of finding employment.

In 2003, a Telework pilot project for Youth was developed in cooperation with the Universidad Tecnológica Nacional (Buenos Aires, Argentina), proposing an online methodology for the training of 250 young people in three different courses:

- Introduction to distance working
- Preparing personal project and telework tools
- Telework for entrepreneurs.

The courses were supported by online tutors who provided assistance and helped to find solutions when required. An evaluation showed the success of this project with the creation of new small business offering services worldwide through the Internet. A new course will be developed using the same methodology to improve teaching in ICTs and online employment capacities for Latin America and Caribbean Telecentre managers.

Latin America and Caribbean Heritage Portal

THE establishment of a Latin America and Caribbean Heritage Portal took a step closer to completion through a regional workshop for editors of the Portal held in Cartagena in February. The Portal will provide a new web service on regional cultural heritage and is scheduled to be launched around September 2004.

The workshop, which was organized by the UNESCO Office in Quito, trained thirty-eight

experts from eighteen countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to become portal editors capable of researching, compiling and publishing information pertaining to the tangible and intangible heritage of their countries. The editors will also be promoting the project in their countries by creating a network of partners.

The new web-based service is intended to provide a regional vision of heritage in Latin

America and the Caribbean through a single entry point to information on all types of heritage which up to now, can only be found, in isolation, on different websites. The computing platform will support Spanish, Portuguese and English versions of the website.

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Montevideo

Electronic Theses and Dissertations Project in Latin America

“Towards Digital Libraries – Production of Electronic Theses in XML” was the title of a workshop organized with UNESCO’s support in Buenos Aires, Argentina in March 2004 marking the end of UNESCO’s two year “Electronic Thesis and Dissertation” project in Latin America.

Project activities included the training of 165 specialists from nine Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela), through eight training courses carried out in Universidad de los Andes (Colombia), UNESCO Montevideo Office (Uruguay), Universidade Católica de Pernambuco (Brazil), Universidade Federal do Ceará (Brazil), Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (México) and the Universidad de los Andes (Venezuela). In addition, twelve pilot projects are being carried out in Latin American Universities.

The ETD project was funded by UNESCO within the framework of its efforts to enhance the production, access and archiving of scientific information, particularly theses and dissertations, by using the opportunities offered by ICT. It is based on the principles, guidelines, workflow models and best practices described in the “UNESCO Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) Guide” (Paris: UNESCO, 2002) and concentrated on networking, human capacity-building and awareness-raising.

The voluntary contribution of a staff member of the Pontificia Universidade Católica de Rio de Janeiro, who delivered the eight training courses, and the input of the Universidad de Chile and the Brazilian Institute for Information in Science and Technology (IBICT), which disseminated ETD methodologies and technologies, all contributed to the success of the project.

The University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa) and Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia) with the involvement of the Association of African Universities are also hosting an ETD pilot project enabling the two universities to establish sustainable ETD programmes, while sensitizing other universities in the African region to the importance of such programmes. In a longer-term perspective, it would improve graduate education by allowing students to produce electronic documents, use digital libraries, and understand issues in publishing.

A similar project to improve management and access to theses and dissertations prepared at universities in the Baltic States commenced in December 2003, under the lead of the Kaunas University, Lithuania.

For further information please contact Mr Claudio Menezes, Adviser for Communication and Information in Latin America and the Caribbean region, UNESCO Office, Avenida Brasil 2697, P.O. Box 859, 11300 Montevideo, Uruguay. Tel: (59-82) 707 20 23. Fax: (59-82) 707 21 40. Email: cmenezes@unesco.org.uy

NEW PUBLICATIONS

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documents and a full text selection of these can be consulted at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ulis/index.html>

Below is a list of new publications:

- EDMONDSON, Ray. *Audiovisual Archiving: Philosophy and Principles*. Paris: UNESCO, 2004. 83 pp. CI.2004/WS/2 (English, French, Spanish).
- LOCKWOOD, David. *Evaluation of Virtual Reality in Africa, an Educational Perspective*. Paris: UNESCO, 2004. 46 pp. CI.2004/WS/1 (English, French, Spanish).
- *Diversité culturelle et linguistique dans la société de l'information*. French edition of Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in the Information Society. Paris: UNESCO, 2003. WSIS publication series.
- *La Science dans la société de l'information*. French edition of Science in the Information Society. Paris: UNESCO, 2003. WSIS publication series.

CD-ROMs

- *Caribbean Slave Trade Archives Project*. Barbados Museum and Historical Society. Memory of the World. Paris: UNESCO, 2004.
- *Lithuanian Classic Literature: Anthology*. Paris: UNESCO, 2004.
- *Parchment's Digital Images Archive*. Paris: UNESCO, 2004.
- *Preserving Documentary Heritage, a tutorial*. Memory of the World. Paris: UNESCO, 2004.
- *Virtual Library of Polish Literature*. Implemented within the framework of the UNESCO flagship project. Paris: UNESCO, 2004.
- *Slave Trade. Trafico de Escravos no Brasil*. Paris: UNESCO, 2004.