HAPPY SCHOOLS SEMINAR

4 – 5 June 2015
NIST International School
Bangkok, Thailand.

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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What is UNESCO?

- UNESCO was established in 1945 to promote peace in the post-war era

- Preamble to the UNESCO Constitution: "*Since wars begin in the minds of men [and women], it is in the minds of men [and women] that the defenses of peace must be constructed.*"

- UN specialized agency for education, sciences, culture and communication & information

- Headquarters in Paris

- Bangkok Office is Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

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Four Pillars of Learning

- International Commission on Education for the 21st Century's landmark report of 1996 posited that there are *four pillars of learning*

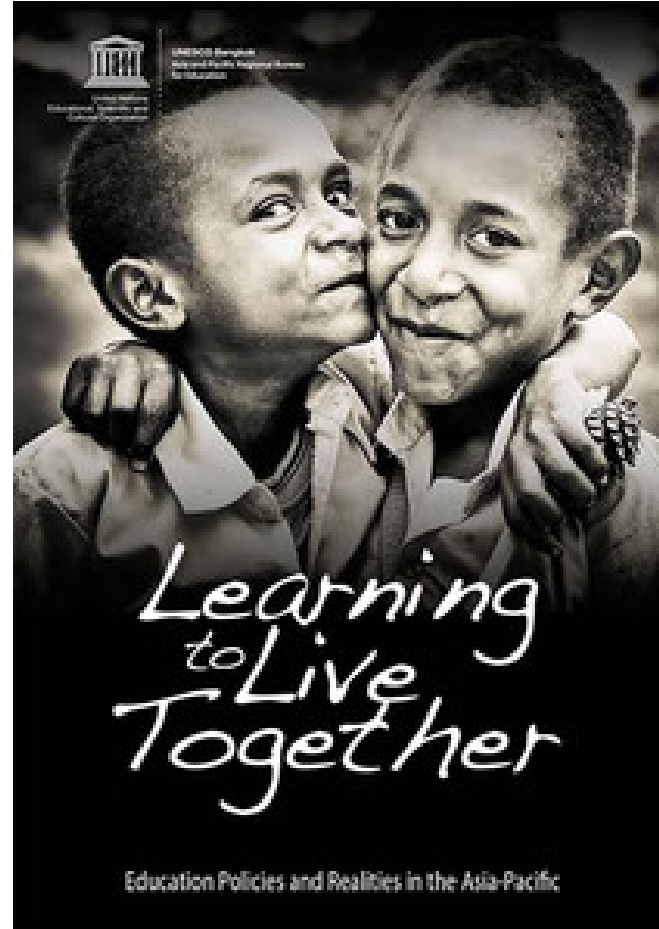Learning to know   Learning to do   Learning to live together   Learning to be

Source: *Learning: The Treasure Within*, Delors et al. (1996)

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Learning to Live Together

- UNESCO Bangkok study on *Learning to Live Together* (published 2014)

- *"Is it possible to devise a form of education which might make it possible to avoid conflicts or resolve them peacefully by developing respect for other people, their cultures and their spiritual values?"*

- 10 countries: Afghanistan, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand

- Focus on policies, curriculum, teaching & assessment

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Global Citizenship Education

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- UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon's Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) puts *global citizenship education* as one of its three priority areas
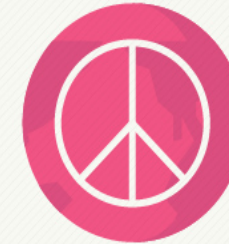

FOSTER GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

The world faces global challenges that require global solutions. Education must cultivate an active care for the world and for those with whom we share it.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO:

Promote peace, tolerance and respect for diversity across cultures through education.

Cultivate a sense of community, active participation and environmental stewardship.

Train teachers to use innovative, participatory and non-formal teaching and learning methods.

"Education gives us a profound understanding that we are tied together as citizens of the global community, and that our challenges are interconnected." —Ban Ki-moon #EducationFirst

LEARN MORE: GLOBALEDUCATIONFIRST.ORG

Happy Schools Project

- Launched in June 2014
- **Aim**: To promote happiness in schools, document and share proven practices, and develop a 'Happy Schools Framework'.
- **Activities**: Framework (based on Desk Study, Survey and Seminar), Advocacy/Awareness-raising, Toolkits, School Network etc.

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Why do we need Happy Schools?

1. To make sure all students feel included – students of all different cultures, religions and ethnicities.

2. To help students with special needs.

3. Reduce competition, bullying and stress with exams.

4. Promote collaboration, support and personalized learning.

5. Provide complete and fun learning within schools.

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Initial Criteria for Happy Schools

People	Process	Place
Friendship with other students (of the same or across grades)	Teamwork learning (help and support from other students)	Outdoor playing and green spaces
Good relationship between students and teachers	Learning content is useful for daily life	Creative visual displays
All students of different backgrounds feel included	Reasonable workload (homework and exams)	A warm and friendly learning environment
Helping students with special needs	Freedom to express opinion in school and in the classroom	Comfortable for students with different needs and backgrounds
Support from local community	Interesting and engaging learning activities	Good nutrition
Parental encouragement	Frequent feedback from teachers	School is safe and free from bullying, stress and competition
School Leadership	Extra-curricular activities	
	Learning outside the classroom	

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Happy Schools Survey

Timeline: January – May 2015

Languages: English, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian and Thai.

Objective: Find out what makes schools happier places, through creating a positive atmosphere and allowing learners to reach their full potential.

Target groups: Students, teachers, parents, school management, education professionals/officers, general public.

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How can we make schools happier places? Take our survey at surveymonkey.com/s/happyschools

Survey Results: What makes school a _happy_ place?

- **Teachers**: kind, supportive, enthusiastic, caring, fair, passionate, creative, inspiring and happy.

- **Relationships**: friendship, respect, tolerance, trust, equality, recognition, inclusive of diverse backgrounds.

- **Learning process and environment**: positive atmosphere, fun, creative, engaging, interactive and practical activities.

- **Student freedom**: can express opinion and learn freely, dream, be curious and develop talents - "learning without worrying".

- **School environment**: safe, clean, green spaces, visual displays, playgrounds, sports grounds and music rooms.

- **Nutrition**: Safe, healthy, free and delicious school meals!

Survey Results: What makes school an <u>unhappy</u> place?

- **School violence:** bullying, fear, anxiety, jealousy, no friends, fights, lack of respect, punishment from teachers (physical, mental), threat to self-esteem.

- **Teachers**: Negative, uncaring, strict, lecturing, scary, treat students unequally, don't have the right personality.

- **Student workload**: stress and pressure from exams, homework, memorization, grades, standards, benchmarks. Imbalance between students' lifestyle (study-life balance).

- **Teaching conditions**: Conflict among teachers, low attendance, low salary, lack of recognition and support.

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Survey Results: What makes teaching and learning fun and enjoyable?

- **Teachers**: work together with students in creating a goal or journey, listen to students, act as mentor, don't punish students if they make a mistake.

- **Learning process**: positive classroom atmosphere with use of audiovisuals, media, music, displays, creative and practical projects, discussions, learning by doing, playing, "learning instead of just passing a test".

- **Curriculum**: content is relevant to daily life, different cultures/religions, extracurricular activities, arts, sports, community service.

Survey Results: What can be done to <u>make all students feel included</u> in schools?

"Empathy, compassion, understanding and interaction"

- **Shared experiences**: Common hobbies, beliefs and activities - "sharing something created together".

- **Relationships**: sense of belonging for students, teachers and whole school community. Understanding of diversity and acceptance of differences.

- **Freedom**: in learning, thinking and expressing oneself, valuing differences and positive behaviour.

- **Stress-free environment**: warm, friendly and positive. Support students to reduce exam stress.

Introduction to the Programme

Day One: Thursday 4th June 2015	
AM	Welcome, presentation of UNESCO's concept of 'Happy Schools'.
PM	Schools share their best practices based on the initial criteria.
Day Two: Friday 5th June 2015	
AM	Review of day one and individual/group reflection to identify of the criteria based on school presentations and UNESCO's initial criteria.
PM	Discussion on strategies, the ways and means each of the criteria can be measured and implemented in schools in a diversity of contexts, with consensus reached on an initial framework.

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Seminar Objective

The seminar aims to build a **'Happy Schools Framework'** that can facilitate the implementation of the concept of 'Happy Schools' in a diversity of contexts through:

1. Discussion and shared understanding on the **criteria** that promote the concept of 'Happy Schools', and

2. Discussion on the strategies, as well as identifying **ways and means** for schools to meet each criteria.

Expectations

- **Share** school and country perspectives.

- **Express** opinion and ideas from each stakeholder perspective.

- **Build** our understanding together of what a happy school is and how to go about it at school level.

- **Consider** different situations in our country or region (e.g. different social/economic contexts, religious and cultural diversity etc.)

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Thank You!

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