

Results of the Wenhui Award for Educational Innovation 2018

Shortlisted applications

- **School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA): An Innovative Boarding School Model for Girls in Afghanistan**
School of Leadership, Afghanistan
- **UNIQUE Multi-Grade Teaching-Learning (MGTL) Model in Non-Formal Primary Education: Innovations in School, Family and Community Collaboration for Quality Education**
Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Bangladesh
- **Project Galaxy Bazaar**
Bijal Damani, SN Kansagra School, India
- **PVR NEST – Childscapes**
PVR, India
- **Intensive English and Career Bridging Program (IECBP)**
Mehm Kan Kyi Education Network, Myanmar
- **4P's Parent Leaders as Tutors: A School and Community Partnership in Reading Tutorial**
Ella Fabella, Maasin Learning Centre, Zamboanga City
- **Reading Program PROJECT HEARTS (Harnessing and Empowering the Art of Reading and Thinking Skills)**
Gen. Artemio Ricarte Memorial School, Philippines
- **The Knowledge Channel Educational Intervention for the Marginalized and Underserved Filipino Children**
Knowledge Channel Foundation, Inc., Philippines
- **IPEd REACH (Reaching All Children)**
New Little Baguio Elementary School, Philippines
- **Organic Agriculture Integration in Basic Education through Student Field School**
Julito Contado Aligaen, Iloilo Science and Technology University, Philippines
- **Creating Code Wizards for the Future**
National Institute of Business Management, Sri Lanka
- **Open School Programme**
National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka
- **Integrated Multicultural Education for Disadvantaged Youth along the Thai-Myanmar Border in Mae Hong Son**
Ban Nai Soi Community Learning Centre, Thailand

Winners

- **Organic Agriculture Integration in Basic Education through Student Field School**
Julito Contado Aligaen, Iloilo Science and Technology University, Philippines
- **Integrated Multicultural Education for Disadvantaged Youth along the Thai-Myanmar Border in Mae Hong Son**
Ban Nai Soi Community Learning Centre, Thailand

Honourable Commendations

- **School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA): An Innovative Boarding School Model for Girls in Afghanistan**
School of Leadership, Afghanistan
- **UNIQUE Multi-Grade Teaching-Learning (MGTL) Model in Non-Formal Primary Education: Innovations in School, Family and Community Collaboration for Quality Education**
Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Bangladesh
- **Open School Programme**
National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka

Overviews of shortlisted applications

- **School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA): An Innovative Boarding School Model for Girls in Afghanistan**

School of Leadership, Afghanistan

The School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA) was founded to give young Afghan girls the opportunity to receive quality education. As Afghanistan's first and only private boarding school for girls, SOLA provides a safe and nurturing environment for them to learn and to develop their leadership and life skills. The boarding school model is unique in a country that traditionally limits women's visibility in public. The students who come from 23 provinces stay on the campus in Kabul during the academic year, thus mitigating the risks inherent in traveling to and from school. It also gives each girl the opportunity to live with, and learn from, a diverse community of classmates. The strategic decision to start the boarding school from 6th grade onwards ensures that the girls can stay in school longer and delay their marriages until they are older.

- **Unique Intervention for Quality Primary Education (UNIQUE): Innovations in School, Family and Community Collaboration for Quality Education**

Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Bangladesh

The Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), an NGO in Bangladesh, has implemented multi-dimensional programmes to improve the quality of life of the disadvantaged, poor and socially excluded people by working with communities, government, NGOs and corporate entities both at the national and international levels. They include the Unique Intervention for Quality Primary Education (UNIQUE) Multi-Grade Teaching-Learning, Unique Intervention for Quality Primary Education (UNIQUE II), Family Life Education, and Community Collaboration for participatory monitoring of school activities. These innovations at school, family and community levels have created many opportunities for out-of-school children to have access to education, improve their learning and enhance their self-esteem.

- **Project Galaxy Bazaar**

Bijal Damani, SN Kansagra School, India

Project Galaxy Bazaar is a social entrepreneurship project undertaken by Commerce students of Grades 11-12 of SN Kansagra School to sell goods before Diwali. The Bazaar helps the students to connect the theory taught in the classroom to the real life situations, enhancing their collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills. The profits from the Bazaar are used to provide equal quality education to underprivileged girls, thus teaching the students the importance of corporate social responsibility and business ethics. To bridge the opportunity gap, the school has also created a separate unit for 300 underprivileged girls to provide them with the same private school education the regular students are receiving.

- **PVR NEST – Childscapes**

PVR, India

PVR Nest (Network of Enablement and Social Transformation), the CSR arm of PVR Ltd., has adopted an integrated outreach strategy focusing on social change and empowerment of disadvantaged societies through public health, sanitation and education programmes. Its tradition of community engagement encompasses financial and in-kind support to worthy causes. *Childscapes* is a non-formal education and rehabilitation programme specifically designed to identify, engage, educate and rehabilitate children-at-risk through community-owned learning centres to bridge their learning gaps and prepare them for mainstream school education.

- **Intensive English and Career Bridging Program (IECBP)**

Mehm Kan Kyi Education Network, Myanmar

Recognizing the challenges of new graduates and university students in finding suitable employment in their communities near the Thai-Burma border, the Mehm Kan Kyi Education Network has developed the Intensive English and Career Bridging Programme (IECBP) to improve the students' professional prospects as well as to develop their appreciation of their cultural backgrounds and leadership roles in their communities. Through the training, the students are expected to have the skills and knowledge for careers with community-based organizations and non-government organizations in their communities.

- **4P's Parent Leaders as Tutors: A School and Community Partnership in Reading Tutorial**

Ella Fabella, Maasin Learning Centre, Zamboanga City

Studies have shown that poor readers, who are reading at a grade level or more behind, are likely to be disruptive in the classroom, play truant in school and at risk of dropping out. The project aimed to improve the reading and writing skills of slow readers in Grades 4-6 to prepare them for high school. Tapping the Pantawid Pamilya Pilipino Program (or 4Ps) Parent Leaders to be tutors or parent aides led to a significant increase in the reading levels of the students. The partnership also improved the Parent Leaders' reading skills and confidence through the coaching sessions.

- **Reading Program PROJECT HEARTS (Harnessing and Empowering the Art of Reading and Thinking Skills)**

Gen. Artemio Ricarte Memorial School, Philippines

The Project HEARTS (Harnessing and Empowering the Art of Reading and Thinking Skills) was designed to improve student performances and their lifelong learning skills through a variety of programmes. The school involved families and the community to create and implement a school reading programme for Kindergarten to Grade 6 students. Two clubs – Parent Reading Club and Book Lovers' Club – were also established, and the officers and club members also provided services to the reading hub and library. The most significant result of the reading interventions was the improvement in the students' academic performance.

- **The Knowledge Channel Educational Intervention for the Marginalized and Underserved Filipino Children**

Knowledge Channel Foundation, Inc., Philippines

Almost 27 million learners are enrolled in schools in the Philippines. Collectively, they performed poorly in most standardized examinations at every level. The Department of Education acknowledged that a lack of learning materials and the low quality of teachers are major problems. The Knowledge Channel Foundation, Inc. (KCFI), a not-for-profit organization, has harnessed the power of media and emerging technologies in collaboration with the government and like-minded non-government institutions to provide access to multimedia learning resources, such as curriculum-based videos, games and other materials, for students in kindergarten to high school, and also in the Alternative Learning System.

- **IPEd REACH (Reaching All Children)**

New Little Baguio Elementary School, Philippines

Indigenous cultures are unique and vulnerable to changes and eradication overtime due to economic and social development. The New Little Baguio Elementary School in the Philippines shelters 43 indigenous children. Its IPEd REACH (Indigenous People Education Program Reach All Children) includes the *Sitio Kamagong: Life and Culture of the Natives*, a book assisting the smooth transfer of culture from one generation to another, to help the indigenous people realize the vital role they

play in society. Another is the *Teach One, Each One and Learn One* programme that stresses the need for the indigenous people to enjoy their rights for basic and free compulsory education.

- **Organic Agriculture Integration in Basic Education through Student Field School**

Julito Contado Aligaen, Iloilo Science and Technology University, Philippines

The project involves primary and secondary school students, teachers, parents and communities in the learning process and activities of organic agriculture in Sciences, Mathematics and Languages. Utilizing the Student Field School platform, the project emphasizes a discovery-based and experimental learning approach to engage learners in real world socio-scientific issues. The integration of organic agriculture into the curriculum will strengthen the understanding of the principles of sustainable development and practice of lifelong learning.

- **Creating Code Wizards for the Future**

National Institute of Business Management, Sri Lanka

One reason for the high unemployment rate among the educated citizens and youth aged 15-24 years in Sri Lanka is the mismatch of their skills and the demands of the workplace. To enhance their employability and enable them to become entrepreneurs, the National Institute of Business Management's educational strategy focuses on three attributes – 'Thinker/Initiator', 'Doer' and 'Finisher'. Financial and technical support are also provided for start-ups to contribute to a culture of job creation rather than job seeking, thus benefiting society and community in the long term.

- **Open School Programme**

National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka

Significant attention has been given to education in Sri Lanka since its independence. However, the increasing number of school dropouts is a concern. The rigid nature of the formal school system was seen to be a reason for why so many students dropped out of school. In response, the National Institute of Education established the Open School Programme to provide an alternative access to education for those who have not attained a recognized basic qualification in order to further their education. The programme also enhances the students' professional knowledge and helps them to find jobs.

- **Integrated Multicultural Education for Disadvantaged Youth along the Thai-Myanmar Border in Mae Hong Son**

Ban Nai Soi Community Learning Centre, Thailand

The Ban Nai Soi Community Learning Centre assists 16-25 years old youth as well as families and communities from diverse backgrounds, cultures and religions to break the cycle of poverty and disadvantages. Working with diverse partners and stakeholders, including non-formal education agencies, student-parent committees and alumni, organizations and communities along Thai-Myanmar border, the Learning Centre offers an integrated multicultural education by teaching languages, basic computer skills, vocational training, as well as ethics and other subject areas.

Winners

- **Organic Agriculture Integration in Basic Education through Student Field School**

Julito Contado Aligaen, Iloilo Science and Technology University, Philippines

Some scientists think that the *science through education* approach has failed to address sustainable environment issues. Instead, they believe that the *education through science* pedagogy is more effective because it emphasizes experiential and discovery learning based on real-world socio-scientific issues.

With support from governmental agencies, organizations and university, the project, *Organic Agriculture Integration in Basic Education through Student Field School*, chose to integrate organic agriculture – which covers a broad range of topics including economy, environment, food safety and social justice – in three basic education subjects: Science, Mathematics and Languages. Developed by Mr. Julito Contado Aligaen from the Iloilo Science and Technology University in the Philippines, the project involved about 600 primary and secondary school students, 300 parents and 50 teachers in the Province of Davao del Norte in the Philippines.

Adopting the Student Field School platform, the team of facilitators comprised one parent-farmer, one teacher and one technical staff from the Department of Agriculture. The learning approach was highly interactive as students carried out organic composting, observed the relationship between prey and predators, used the Agro-ecosystem Analysis for monitoring, conducted action research on the issues encountered. They discussed and decided how to resolve problems such as pest management, plant growth deficiency and social issues within their groups.

It was evident that learning had taken place when the students, teachers and parents agreed that synthetic fertilizers and toxic pesticides are not necessary in agriculture – a significant turnabout of opinions. To scale up the results, the lesson plans that were developed for Science, Mathematics and Languages can also be used and adapted by teachers who were not trained by the project.

The project aimed to prepare a generation of youth who are capable of producing nutritious and clean food using safe and sustainable farming practices, and therefore fosters a vibrant, resilient and sustainable society. School administrators had recommended further integration of the Student Field School approach in Science, Mathematics and English or Mother Tongue Language in primary and secondary schools. Integration in higher education subjects in the context of Outcome-Based Education had also been proposed.

- **Integrated Multicultural Education for Disadvantaged Youth along the Thai-Myanmar Border in Mae Hong Son**

Ban Nai Soi Community Learning Centre, Thailand

Many children of migrants and refugees living along the Thai-Myanmar border could not afford to attend school, and had to leave their families and villages in search of work in the cities. Some of them married early, worked as domestic help, construction workers, waiters and waitresses, and even ended up in the sex trade. Incidences of drug abuse and HIV/AIDs increased and affected many people in the communities.

Believing that if the children were able to receive more education, particularly to the high school level, they could have a better future, the Ban Nai Soi Community Learning Centre established the *Integrated Multicultural Education for Disadvantaged Youth along the Thai-Myanmar Border in Mae Hong Son* programme. It provided educational activities such as classes for languages,

computer skills, vocational training as well as ethics and other subject areas to disadvantaged youth aged 16-25 years as well as their families and communities.

Close relationships with various partners were built, including the Thai governmental departments, Karenni government officials, non-governmental organizations, as well communities in Thailand, Myanmar and other countries. These connections were useful for creating opportunities to enable the students participate in community activities and work on community development projects.

As a nationally certified high school, the Learning Centre helped to keep about 70 youth – who would otherwise have dropped out – in school. Students from 14 different ethnic groups have attended the Centre and had gained valuable community development skills; some of these students have founded their own community-based organizations.

In providing education to marginalized youth, including Myanmar migrants and refugees, residing in Thailand, the programme's aim was to break the cycle of poverty and disadvantage through education, enabling the communities to build a better future.

Honourable Commendations

- **School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA): An Innovative Boarding School Model for Girls in Afghanistan**

School of Leadership, Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, society traditionally limits women's visibility in the public sphere, and as a result, girls' education is often not a priority. Many families, particularly those in rural areas, ban their daughters from being educated by men, but Afghanistan's female teaching force is largely underqualified. The School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA) was founded to give young Afghan girls the opportunity to receive a quality education and is the first and only private boarding school for girls in the country.

SOLA enrolls 70 students from 23 provinces in Afghanistan, and representing all of the country's major ethnic and religious groups. The majority of the students are in grades 6-8; a small number are older girls who attend high school in Kabul city but live on the SOLA campus. SOLA also supports a study abroad programme with 23 students attending high school and/or university in several foreign nations, including Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

SOLA's mission to provide the students with an educational experience in a safe environment is unprecedented in Afghanistan. Its boarding school model for girls is unique in the country. The students live on the campus in Kabul throughout the March to December academic year, thus mitigating the risks inherent in traveling to and from school daily while also giving each girl the opportunity to live with, and learn from, a diverse community of classmates. A residential faculty provides round-the-clock guidance and supervision, and the students are exposed to rich extracurricular and leadership opportunities that are unavailable at home.

- **Unique Intervention for Quality Primary Education (UNIQUE): Innovations in School, Family and Community Collaboration for Quality Education**

Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Bangladesh

The Dhaka Ahsania Mission is a non-profit organization in Bangladesh with multi-dimensional programmes for improving the quality of life of the disadvantaged, poor and socially excluded

people. It has developed close relationship working with communities, government, NGOs and corporate entities both at national and international levels.

The Unique Intervention for Quality Primary Education (UNIQUE) Multi-Grade Teaching-Learning initiative emphasizes a pedagogic approach that offers opportunities to improve the teaching-learning practices, particularly in small, scattered and remote rural schools. For a small village community or a remote rural area, grouping children of different grades together, with a single teacher, means it is possible to fund a small school. Children, who might otherwise be unable to travel to distant schools, are given the opportunity of an education.

The Unique Intervention for Quality Primary Education (UNIQUE II) programme provides quality non-formal primary education to out-of-school children and dropouts, widening their access to quality education through multi-grade classes. UNIQUE-II also promotes, facilitates and manages community involvement and participation at all stages of the project cycle. The Family Life Education for parents have helped mothers improve their knowledge on family issues and enhanced their life skills. UNIQUE schools are monitored by local community using specific indicators developed by them under the Community Collaboration umbrella, hence increasing the communities' ownership of school activities.

- **Open School Programme**

National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka

The National Institute of Education in Sri Lanka is mandated to design and develop curricula for general and teacher education, provide professional development of educational community, spearhead change through research and innovation. Although education has received significant attention since independence, the high number of school dropouts is a concern. These dropouts are likely to become the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups of society. The rigid nature of the formal school system at present has not helped to transform this group to creative and productive members of society.

The Open and Distance Learning (ODL) offers an alternative path to increase access to education for those who have not benefited from formal schooling, giving them the choice and freedom to learn. The National Institute of Education believes that the Open School Programme is a viable option using modern communication technologies and multi-channels of learning, operating parallel to the formal system at all levels, particularly for those who have not attained a recognized basic qualification, a crucial factor for furthering their education. It also helps learners to find jobs and enhance their professional knowledge.

The Open School is promoted through provincial awareness-raising programmes. Most of the participants are drawn from marginalized groups, for example women who have difficulties in accessing education, people with special needs, learners who dropped out of formal school and people who need vocational training.