

VOICES



United Nations
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Maritime mysteries diving for clues

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10

MONGOLIA

UNESCO-LED PROGRAMME TARGETS TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN MONGOLIA

The project includes literacy training to improve the lives of ethnic groups in the country.

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06

ASIA-PACIFIC

EDUCATION AND THE FINANCIAL CRASH

A UNESCO study aims to help governments understand how the current economic crisis is changing the higher education landscape across the Asia-Pacific region.

07

SOUTH ASIA

ROAD TO LITERACY

Ministers and high-level government officials, representing eight South Asian countries, have pledged to step up efforts to eliminate illiteracy from the region by 2015.

08

CHINA

UNESCO CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF SUCCESS



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09

LAO PDR

LAOS ON THE PATH TO REFORM

UNESCO has helped Laos launch a two-year country wide programme to improve education in all key areas.

12

THAILAND-INTERVIEW

AN OPERA WITH REAL BITE

Director and musician Bruce Gaston reveals the message behind Thailand's children's opera: *A Boy and a Tiger*, which will have its world premiere in Bangkok in Spring 2010.

Movie mirrors UNESCO's message of peace

Hollywood icon Clint Eastwood's new film echoes and amplifies UNESCO's "Sport for Peace and Development" programme by illustrating the power of sport to promote the values of peace, solidarity and tolerance.

Produced and directed by Eastwood, *Invictus* is a biographical drama film

based on Nelson Mandela's life during the 1995 Rugby Union World Cup in South Africa. Against the backdrop of Mandela's release from prison and his election as the president of South Africa, the film follows his efforts to use the 1995 Rugby Union World Cup as a vehicle to unite the nation after the end of apartheid.

The French premiere of *Invictus* was hosted by UNESCO in Paris in January 2010. The objective is to highlight the power of "Sport for Reconciliation" to combat racism and promote peace.

For further information, access:
www.unesco.org/shs/sport/invictus

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Ethics Excellence

The 2009 Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science was awarded recently to Professor Renzong Qiu from the People's Republic of China for his pioneering work in the field of bioethics.

His work on life-sustaining technology, assisted reproduction technology, public health and cloning has been complemented by political initiatives in ethical policy.

Professor Qiu has published over 20 volumes and nearly 280 articles on ethical issues and he has drafted guidelines for researchers and policy-makers.

Established by UNESCO's Executive Board on the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science is bestowed every two years to individuals or groups who have excelled in the field of ethics in science.

For more information, access:
www.unesco.org/shs/

Fears over a 'lost generation'

Millions of children still missing out on education, the power of early learning, literacy and gender equity are some of the crucial issues that will be addressed by UNESCO's education sector in 2010.

UNESCO's authoritative Education for All Global Monitoring Report, launched in January this year, focuses on reaching the marginalised, and examines how poverty, gender, location, ethnicity, disability and

language exclude millions of children from a right to education.

The report argues that the the global financial crisis could create a lost generation of children in the world's poorest countries, whose life chances have been irreparably damaged by a failure to protect their right to education.

For information, access: www.unesco.org



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New Deputy Director at UNESCO Bangkok



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Newly appointed Deputy Director Etienne Clément brings with him extensive knowledge and experience to UNESCO Bangkok and the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Clément, a former law lecturer, joined UNESCO in 1984 in the Dakar Office, Senegal, and was later promoted to a position in the Culture Sector at Headquarters in Paris to develop international standards on the protection of cultural heritage.

In 1998, Mr. Clément was appointed Head of the UNESCO Office in Phnom Penh and Representative to Cambodia. From 2005

to 2009, he was the Deputy Director of the Bureau of Field Coordination at Paris Headquarters. His principle functions as the Deputy Director of UNESCO Bangkok are to provide integrated management and programming services to the office. Mr. Clément is also responsible for the Cluster mandate, providing strategic and operational leadership to the Organization's action in four countries (Lao PDR, Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand) and cooperating with the UNESCO national offices in Hanoi and Phnom Penh.

Mr. Clément is the co-author of several books and the author of many articles, namely on the protection of cultural heritage.

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COVER STORY

Dive team member, Erbprem Vatcharangkul, explores a sunken French vessel.



Underwater detectives

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DIVERS SEARCH FOR CLUES TO THE REGION'S MARITIME HERITAGE

By Collin Piprell

Clownfish, vivid orange and white even in these murky depths, dart in and out among the tentacles of a big pastel sea anemone. Meanwhile, a few long-spined black sea urchins park against the hull of the shipwreck, dangerously close to diver Duang.

I talk to Duang later, on the deck of the Thailand Underwater Archaeology Division diving boat, 20 metres above the wreck site. Duangpond "Duang" Kanya Singhasanee is

not only a scuba instructor and diveshop owner, this vivacious 29-year-old Thai woman graduated from Bangkok's Silpakorn University with a degree in archaeology.

She is one of 15 underwater archaeology trainees from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Each has an interesting background, each of them different, but one thing they share is a passion for discovering and helping to protect the region's underwater cultural heritage.

Under the auspices of UNESCO and the Government of Thailand, with funding from the Royal Norwegian Government, this class is engaged in a six-week intensive programme on the basics of underwater archaeology and cultural heritage management through lectures and field work, including a two-week survey of the "Mannok Site".

The iron steamship Ruea Mail lies in the Gulf of Thailand near Mannok Island, in Thailand's Rayong province. Today, where the boat rests on a mostly sandy bottom at 18-20 metres, underwater visibility extends only about two metres.

The Ruea Mail looms dark and mysterious. It might be easy to imagine shadowy,

half-seen things swaying in the slight current are ghosts. But Duang and the other students have no time for such fantasies just now. They're working.

Not only must they focus on what they're doing, they try to remain alert to sea urchins, stonefish, and moray eels. And there's more, said Erbprem Vatcharangkul, Director of the Underwater Archaeology Division of the Fine Arts Department of Thailand. Other potential concerns include entanglements with abandoned fishing nets, lines, and fish traps; snags on the wreck's superstructure; and air supply.

Some of the trainees are experienced divers; others learned scuba only at the start of this course.

"But these students are professionals, experts in their fields," said course instructor Ross Anderson.

"Some are already managing marine heritage in their home countries. What we're doing here is capacity building, giving them the tools and skills they need to do their jobs better," he said.

Archaeology, whether on land or under the sea, can be fascinating detective work. But marine archaeologists need the range of standard archaeological skills plus

The dive team and support crew pose for a final picture before the journey back to shore.



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Clockwise L-R: The bow and hull of a sunken vessel is visible in the murky depths. Two dive buddies ascend to the surface. Mysteries of the deep: an underwater find. Sunken treasures: an old coin found during the underwater exploration.

all those associated with diving and underwater surveying.

The curriculum includes topics such as the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage and its Annex, underwater archaeological resource protection and management, 3D site survey, *in situ* protection and preservation, significance and assessment, and risk mitigation.

The student surveys, five-person teams assigned to the bow, midships, and stern areas of the wreck respectively, use tape measurements and planning frames together with underwater photography and video to establish what they can about the Ruea Mail. They are concerned primarily with problems of underwater search and survey, team logistics, and data management.

Actual excavation and salvage are not part of this course, which aims to leave the site undisturbed.

The significance of the wreck remains to be determined. So far, archaeologists know it was a French vessel from the colonial period and, judging by coins found associated with it, it went down around



Duang, a trainee in maritime archaeology training.

1917, probably en route between Viet Nam and Thailand. No one knows why it sank — finding evidence to decide this is just one task among many for these students.

And the Ruea Mail site is just one of an estimated three million marine heritage sites worldwide, many of these in the Asia-Pacific region, most of them yet to be discovered, let alone surveyed. Recent developments, meanwhile, are exposing sites to such pressures as ever-increasing damage from recreational divers and predation from treasure hunters.

Ricardo Favis, project coordinator at UNESCO Bangkok said: “Modern technology such as subterranean vehicles and better-equipped divers have enabled treasure hunters to pillage the ocean floors of valuable artefacts, and all

countries in the region have had their maritime areas exploited.”

Thus the protection of marine heritage is assuming new urgency. At the same time, underwater archaeology remains a relatively new discipline.

Priorities in landlocked Lao PDR include surveying new river and lake sites; developing an underwater archaeology academic programme; seeking funds for more human resources and for diving and electronic survey equipment; and public education.

More immediate tangible benefits can also follow. “The economic value of shipwrecks doesn’t lie merely in the treasure. These sites can serve as cultural and tourism attractions, while directly or indirectly generating income for local people,” said instructor Anderson.

The Ruea Mail and a number of other wreck sites lie conveniently close to both the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Field Training Centre in Underwater Cultural Heritage, established in early 2009, and the National Maritime Museum, in Chanthaburi.

Read the full article at: www.unescobkk.org

Education and the financial crash

STUDY PROBES ECONOMIC FALLOUT ON ASIA-PACIFIC LEARNING

By Christen Chen

Since the economic crisis began to unravel in 2008, various sectors have felt the impact in different degrees of severity.

Education's relatively inelastic demand has shielded the sector from immediate decline. However, this does not mean that education is spared from financial constraints.

"The economic downturn has direct impact on education access, quality and investment, therefore making education issues a serious concern," said Dr. Gwang-Jo Kim, Director of UNESCO Bangkok.

A 50-country survey was conducted in March last year by UNESCO's headquarters in Paris to understand how governments are reacting to the financial crisis.

The survey suggested that even though some countries have reduced their education budgets due to lower revenues, there was no evidence of widespread education budget cuts in 2009.

Despite initial findings that indicated some countries are protecting education budgets, Mr. Gwang-Chol Chang from UNESCO's Division for Education Strategies and Capacity Building in Paris, expressed his reservations.

"Many countries may reduce public spending in their next budgetary year as the economic crisis continues its toil. Social impacts such as job losses and income reduction created by the financial downturn are also expected

to produce more severe effects on higher education enrolment," he said.

In some countries, the burden from the economic turmoil is increasing. Using Thailand as an example, the government has cut the 2010 education budget by four per cent. It is likely that some government-sponsored higher education programmes will no longer be funded as the Thai government also puts more emphasis on pre-primary to secondary education.

According to Professor Paitoon Sinlarat, Vice-President for Research Affairs at Dhurakij Pundit University, more students are taking out student loans. At the same time, more graduates are failing to return their student loans as they are unable to secure employment.

Unlike Thailand, Dr. Jean Tayag, Director of the Office of Policy, Planning, Research and Information at the Philippines Commission on Higher Education, said the government of the Philippines increased the education budget slightly in the midst of the recent economic downturn.

"While the demand for higher education remains stable, the Philippines is seeing more students shifting from higher cost private institutions to lower cost public institutions," she said.

Examining these different education trends and challenges faced by various countries is essential to national policy-making as well as front-line education practices.

Established by UNESCO Bangkok, the Education Research Institutes Network in the Asia-Pacific (ERI-Net) has initiated a study on the "Impact of the Economic Crisis on Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific" as its first task.

In October 2009, the ERI-Net met for the first time for a consultation meeting to discuss the framework for the study. Twelve experts from research institutions, universities and ministries of education in the Asia-Pacific region, namely, Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, participated in the two-day meeting in Bangkok.

"More graduates are failing to return their student loans as they are unable to secure employment."

"The initial study of this regional collaboration is targeted for completion in June 2010. UNESCO will then present the findings to policy makers with the aim to raise awareness of higher education issues and to encourage evidence-based policy making", said Dr. Molly Lee, Senior Programme Specialist in Higher Education at UNESCO Bangkok.

Higher education is a gateway to economic advancement and global competitiveness. It is important for policy makers to recognise the effect this crisis has on higher education in their countries, and to understand the severe consequences if no actions are taken to cushion the negative impacts.

UNESCO hopes that the result from ERI-Net's research endeavor will help governments understand how this current economic crisis is changing the higher education landscape in each Asia-Pacific country.

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College students in Viet Nam cycle home at the end of the school day.

Road to literacy

SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES PLEDGE EFA COMMITMENT

By Shamim Ahsan

Ministers and high-level government officials representing eight South Asian countries have made a commitment to step up efforts to eliminate illiteracy from the region by 2015.

"We believe that realities of the 21st century demand education for excellence and excellence for all," said Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina.

Around 80 participants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, met at the second ministerial meeting of South Asia EFA Forum in December last year in

Dhaka, Bangladesh to evaluate the state of education in their respective countries and plan the way forward to attain education for all in the region.

Back in 2000 in Dakar, Senegal, representatives from 164 countries set six major goals to achieve EFA by 2015. The six goals include the achievement of universal primary education, the promotion of gender equity and quality education.

"In a global village, under-performance in one corner affects the welfare of individuals in the other corner. Therefore, we have to work together to ensure EFA goals in this region," said Ms Hasina at the opening of the meeting.

The forum meeting came up with a "Dhaka Declaration" specifying the forum's achievements, its challenges and its collective pledges with regard to attaining universal education in the South Asia region by 2015. The Declaration puts particular emphasis on out-of-school children from the most marginalised sections of the society as well as decentralization of the overall education management.

According to the 2010 EFA Global Monitoring Report, in 2007 the literacy rate for adults aged 15 years and above in the eight South Asian countries was: Afghanistan - 28 per cent; Bangladesh - 53 per cent; Bhutan - 53 per cent; India - 66 per cent; Maldives - 97 per cent; Nepal - 57 per cent; Pakistan - 54 per cent; and Sri Lanka - 91 per cent.

Prime Minister Hasina expects to achieve a self-imposed target of 100 per cent enrolment of school-age children by 2011, and 100 per cent literacy in 2014.

Mobilization of resources appears to be the other priority area that demands urgent attention. The eight country reports presented at the meeting revealed that none of the countries could, or did spend four per cent of their GDP, which is a basic measure of a country's overall economic output, as decided when the forum met for the first time in Pakistan in 2003. In the Dhaka Declaration, the forum committed a more ambitious target of six per cent of GDP.

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CAMBODIA

Targeting technical training

By Sideth Dy

For the first time ever in Cambodia, key personnel in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) recently gathered in Phnom Penh to share experiences and discuss their vision for the future.

Cambodia has faced immense challenges to rebuild its socio-cultural and political structures after almost three decades of civil conflict from 1970-1998.

According to the National General Census of the Cambodia's Ministry of Planning, of the current 13.4 million population, 60 per cent are aged between 15 to 30, therefore, there is an urgent need to reform and develop Cambodia's educational system, and TVET is seen as having a crucial role to play in this development.

"Cambodia needs more skilled labourers and TVET programmes must be made known to a majority of our young people" said TVET expert Mr. Im Saroeurn, the director of Cambodia's Krom Ngoy Centre.

Over 100 policy-makers and practitioners

in the TVET sub-sector in Cambodia, including officials from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, NGOs, international organizations including public and private sector training institutions, and employment agencies attended the TVET conference.

TVET is widely considered as a practical tool to improve the individual socio-economic status, as the current number of young people dropping out of the formal education system is at a high and gaining ground. The seminar is seen as the first step towards better cooperation between those involved in the TVET.

Issues raised include closer cooperation between ministries and NGOs to strengthen TVET. A partnership between the public and private sector could encourage professional training, apprenticeships, a greater response to market needs and better employment opportunities, Phnom Penh delegates were told.

The training of teachers was highlighted as an area that needs to be addressed, as well as the standardization of qualifications



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and certifications, and the recognition of both NGOs' diplomas and public institute qualifications.

The event was organized with technical and financial support from UNESCO Phnom Penh.

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UNESCO celebrates 30 years of success in the People's Republic of China

MILESTONE MARKED WITH SPECIAL RECEPTION IN BEIJING

By UNESCO Beijing

Over the past 30 years, China has undergone a great economic transformation, not only sustaining average annual economic growth of nearly 10 per cent and expanding its GDP more than ten-fold, but also successfully lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty.

UNESCO has operated in the country throughout this remarkable era, assisting government and an expanding civil society to develop policies and programmes in its domain.

Since embarking upon its policy of "reform and opening up" in the late 1970s, China's achievements in the area of education have been particularly remarkable, such as free and compulsory education for all children up to the 9th grade and nearly 95 per cent adult literacy and gender parity at all levels of education.

UNESCO has made a substantial contribution to these achievements, assisting the Ministry of Education with the development of policy at the national, as well as at the local level.

UNESCO's contributions in the area of science have been equally impressive. In line with President Hu Jintao's vision of a "scientific concept of development", UNESCO is assisting Chinese authorities and institutions to develop sustainable water management strategies and adapt to climate change. For example, UNESCO has been helping the Yellow River Conservancy Commission to resume the flow of the Yellow River to the Bohai Sea after an interregnum of several years.

In the wake of rapid economic development, the protection and safeguarding of tangible and intangible



Farmers living near Yichang, China

heritage, as well as cultural diversity, have become key concerns of China's governing authorities.

The effective and sustainable safeguarding of tangible heritage has been pursued through a firm commitment to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, with 38 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List. Similarly, China has taken a proactive approach to protecting its intangible cultural heritage, becoming a signatory to the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In recognition of the contribution UNESCO has made to China's development, a special event was held at Beijing's Great Hall of the People in December 2009.

The event marked 30 years since the foundation of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and 25 years since the foundation of the UNESCO Office Beijing. Importantly, this event not only provided an opportunity to outline UNESCO's achievements in China, but also reiterate China's obligations on the international stage.

Describing China as "an important ally for UNESCO", the Director-General of UNESCO Ms. Irina Bokova stressed China's increasing international responsibilities and its capacity to act as a model for other developing countries.



Migrant children working together in Guizhou Province, China

She said: "The importance of China's role is not limited to its seat on the United Nations Security Council. What other country in the last decades has made progress on such an extraordinary scale in contributing to poverty reduction and making education for all a reality for all?"

Director and Representative of the UNESCO Beijing Office Mr. Abhimanyu Singh praised UNESCO national staff "who work tirelessly to ensure that UNESCO meets its numerous and challenging commitments", referring to them as the "backbone" of UNESCO's operations in China.

Madame Liu also presented certificates to five Chinese sites that were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List between 2007 and 2009: Mount Wutai; Fujian Tulou; Mount Sanqingshan National Park; Kaiping Diaolou and Villages; and the South China Karst.

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Lushan National Park World Heritage site, Jiangxi Province, China

Laos on the path to reform

UNIQUE PROGRAMME TARGETS FOUR KEY AREAS

By Nantawan Hinds

Lao PDR is grappling with the crucial task of getting all children into school by 2015, in response to meet the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and its Education for All (EFA) National Plan of Action.

Eighty-six per cent of school age children attended primary school and only 36 per cent went on to secondary school in the 2007 academic year, according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. These comparatively low percentages, in particular the net enrolment rate for secondary students, show that there are still challenges ahead.

The Lao government is committed to improving its education system through ongoing educational reform based on the National Education System Reform Strategy 2006-2015. Additionally, the Ministry of Education has recently developed a 10-year Education Sector Development Framework (ESDF) in close collaboration with development partners. The ESDF identified the principal means to improve access to, and the quality of education.

UNESCO Bangkok has helped Laos to launch a two-year country wide programme last year to implement educational reform aimed at building the expertise of Lao education personnel.

This involves a broad sector-wide approach with the goal to improve education in all key areas: teacher education; secondary education; technical and vocational education and training; and non-formal education, all of which fall under one programme: "Capacity Development for Education for All (CapEFA): Sector-wide Capacity Building Support in Lao PDR".

Lao Minister of Education Professor Dr Somkot Mangnomek expressed his strong support during the launch.

"The Lao Ministry of Education appreciates UNESCO's contribution and strongly believes that the programme will be one of the key factors in helping expand educational opportunities for all. We will actively collaborate with UNESCO to implement the programme," he said.

The programme receives funding from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

In implementing the programme, UNESCO has ensured that the objectives and activities are in line with the priorities of the host nation - in particular the Education Sector Development Framework.

"By closely aligning with the national priorities and communicating with development partners prior to starting the project, it has been possible to ensure activities are linked to government policies and do not duplicate but rather complement the work of other development partners", said Abdul Hakeem, CapEFA Lao Project Coordinator at UNESCO Bangkok.

Teacher education

Almost half (46.5%) of secondary teachers do not meet the formal minimum qualifications to teach at secondary level, according to the Asian Development Bank funded UNESCO study.

In response to a need to improve teacher education, the Faculty of Education, National University of Laos (NUOL) carried out a review on the implementation of the Teacher Education Strategy and Action Plan (TESAP) 2006-2015 which involves areas ranging from improving management of the teacher education system to ensuring sufficient numbers of teachers and improved teacher working conditions.

The review report identified implementation progress, obstacles and recommendations to achieve the planned activities within a set time frame. The content of the teacher training curriculum will be revised to make it more relevant to the current situation.

"Quality assurance in Lao PDR is still in its infancy."

Secondary education

A significant change in educational reform is the addition of one year to lower secondary education, which increases from three to four years. This makes the structure of the school system a 12-year-cycle, consisting of five years of primary, four years of lower secondary and three years of upper secondary education.

"An additional year has been added to increase the length of general education to a standard 12-year cycle to be similar to neighbouring countries such as Thailand and Viet Nam, and to improve the quality of education," said Ly Foug, Director General of the Secondary Education Department.



© T.Sriboodhi

Secondary school students in front of their classroom in Houaphan Province, Lao PDR.

"The reason we did not add another year to primary education stems from a lack of funds due to the condition of the Lao economy. Many more children would be involved and the costs would be prohibitive."

In order to ensure the effectiveness of this ambitious reform of secondary education, which has been a rather neglected sub-sector until recently, there is an urgent need for an action plan for the secondary education sub-sector.

Two training sessions were organized for ministry officers to develop a secondary education action plan. The plan spells out implementation strategies for the development of secondary education.

Technical and vocational education and training

Participation in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is quite low, with only 18,055 students enrolled in the 2008 academic year and 20,072 students in 2009, according to the Lao Education Statistics and Information Technology Center.

The Education Sector Development Framework has set up TVET targets; for example, a minimum of 50,000 students enrolled in different types of technical-vocational schools and colleges by 2015. The Government of Laos is determined to increase the gross enrollment rate in TVET programmes.

With the help of UNESCO, the Ministry of Education conducted an investigation into the current status of TVET in Laos last year. The findings have contributed to the establishment of a task force which will be

trained to monitor, every three months, the activities of an existing "TVET Master Plan 2008-2015".

Additionally, a working team has been established to develop educational quality assurance standards, and guidelines and manuals for technical and vocational education institutions.

Non-formal education

Regarding non-formal education, outside of the formal schooling system, a structured form of education exists as another option

for children, youth and adults, especially in disadvantaged communities.

An analysis of current non-formal education (NFE) systems has provided information that has helped in the design of detailed plans, strategies and literacy activities and NFE programmes. The situation analysis pointed out that the lack of a proper database hindered the development of appropriate literacy and NFE activities.

Following the findings, an NFE management information system was developed with user

friendly tools. This information will be utilized to develop new policies. The CapEFA programme also helped Laos in setting up its very first education quality assurance system.

"Quality assurance in Lao PDR is still in its infancy and lacks a clear legal framework. It also lacks personnel with appropriate knowledge and skills on quality assurance," said Lytou Bouapao, Vice Minister of Education, Lao PDR.

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MONGOLIA

Ethnic lifestyle and literacy boost

UNESCO-LED PROJECT TARGETS DISADVANTAGED TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

By UNESCO Beijing



Fourteen year-old Kazakh girl Auken

© UNESCO/Orgilmaa Luvsandash

Auken is a fourteen year-old Kazakh girl who lives in Khovd province, Mongolia. Her parents are semi-literate in the Kazakh language, but Auken can read and write basic Kazakh and Mongolian. For generations, Auken's family has lived throughout the western provinces of Mongolia herding livestock for a living. Auken's family is currently based in a remote region, far from medical care and schools. Unfortunately for Auken, she has not attended school since she was 12 years old. Auken's classroom experiences were not always good; her family often lived far away and many of her teachers spoke Mongolian, and as Auken's mother tongue is Kazakh, it was difficult for her to learn. In addition, if one of her parents became ill or income was scarce, she had to stay at home to help tend the herd.

Ethnic minorities in Mongolia

Auken's situation is not unique. Mongolia

has a small population of 2.6 million people spread over a vast area and the majority of its diverse cultures are deeply rooted in nomadic or semi-pastoral traditions.

Mongolia's population consists of 20 ethnic groups largely living in rural areas. The Khalkh Mongols are the dominant ethnic group (85%), followed by the Kazakhs (7%) and other ethnic minorities (8%). Non-Mongolian communities, including Kazakhs inhabiting the western regions, comprise a number of ethnic divisions, all of which have distinct languages and dialects.

In 2008, the Government of Mongolia approved a "Comprehensive National Development Strategy based on the Millennium Development Goals". The United Nations Goals range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education by 2015.

Mongolia's strategy includes a plan to assess the needs of ethnic minorities and improve implementation of cultural rights reforms, needs which have largely been unmet in Mongolia since the country's transition to a market economy in the 1990s. To complement the strategy, the government sought UN support to improve the living conditions of Mongolia's remote rural populations, in particular, ethnic and linguistic minorities in the western provinces where a large percentage of these minorities reside.

Now that a joint UN project is being implemented in the Khovd province of Mongolia, Auken and other children can expect to learn literacy and life skills in their respective languages.

Joint UN human security project

To heed the call of the government, four UN agencies namely UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO

and UNDP are implementing the joint UN project for "Comprehensive Community Services to Improve Human Security for the Rural Disadvantaged Populations in Mongolia".

With financial support of USD\$2,989,000 from the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, UNESCO is establishing community radio stations in rural areas to improve access to information; UNESCO and UNICEF have united to develop culturally and linguistically appropriate learning materials to enhance literacy and life skills for school drop-outs and adult herders; WHO is conducting training to improve knowledge of health among ethnic minorities; and UNDP is improving the quality of local business support services by training support staff.

According to project coordinator Bujin Tserensodnom: "The project enables ethnic and linguistic minorities living in rural areas to have better access to information in their own languages, including information on primary health care. Literacy and life skills activities are also expected to increase citizens' access and engagement in various income generating opportunities."

The main goal of the project is to reduce poverty and improve the security of Mongolia's remote rural population through the provision of comprehensive social services.

Project partnerships

A major strength of the project lies in the prominent role of the government as a key partner. The project is overseen by the deputy prime minister who highlights the importance of joint UN efforts in providing comprehensive social services to remote rural populations within Mongolia.

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Young Pakistani artists learn the ancient art of fresco painting.

© UNESCO Islamabad

Al-fresco art instills civic pride in the young

By Amber Junaid and Farhat Gul

A UNESCO-sponsored workshop on the ancient art of fresco painting was recently held at the World Heritage listed Shalamar Gardens in Lahore, Pakistan, to teach local school children their cultural identity.

The project also aimed to impart traditional artistic skills in the young participants so that they will value the art form and its identity.

“Fresco” is a form of mural painting in which earth pigments are applied directly to wet lime plaster. It dates back to ancient civilizations, but came to prominence during the Renaissance.

With financial support from the Getty Foundation, UNESCO Islamabad recently concluded a conservation project in Shalamar Gardens, which was declared a World Heritage Site in 1981. The gardens are enclosed by high perimeter walls punctuated by elaborate and imposing gateways, which provide both protection and exclusivity.

However, exposure to environmental pollution is causing deterioration of the structures within the gardens at a steady pace.

Therefore, the UNESCO project focused on the conservation of three structures within the site, namely: the Eastern Gateway; the Western Gateway; and the Shahi Hamaam, or Royal Bath.

To sustain the initiative and engender a sense of belonging and pride among local communities, a participatory approach was considered essential.

This led to the workshop which involved 36 school children who prepared small sections of frescos, one of the main decorative features of the historical Mughal Monuments, which includes the Shalamar Gardens.

The event involved students aged 12 to 15 years from two government schools in Lahore who were selected on the basis of their aptitude and understanding of the fresco art form.

The 12-day workshop was conducted by Professor Lala Rukh, with support from master craftsmen Ustaad Saif ur Rehman.

“The children were very excited to attend such a unique kind of art workshop and responded enthusiastically by not missing

out on a single lesson,” said Ustaad Saif-ur-Rehman.

Prof. Lala Rukh highlighted the importance of a participatory approach in all kinds of work, including an arts workshop.

Talking about the various steps involved in fresco painting, she said: “I believe that children learn most effectively through a process to achieve a desired outcome.”

Ali, one of the students, said: “It was a lot of physical work. The hardest part is that if you mess up your brush work, it stays there. It is permanent.”

Art teachers from the two schools also participated. The fresco style was new to the teachers as well and many said they would teach other students about it so that it will flourish.

All of the paintings were displayed at an exhibition at the end of the workshop and students were awarded with certificates of participation.

Contact: amber.junaid@un.org.pk

OPERA WITH REAL BITE

THE DIRECTOR OF
THAILAND'S CHILDREN'S
OPERA *A BOY AND A TIGER*
REVEALS HOW THE SHOW
DELIVERS A MORE CUTTING
EDGE MESSAGE THAN
TRADITIONAL OPERAS

By Dieter Schlenker



THAILAND

Partnered with UNESCO Bangkok, Thailand's children's opera, *A Boy and a Tiger*, will have its world premiere in Bangkok in April, 2010.

Selected to perform are 30 children from the Baan Gerda home for orphans living with, or affected by HIV in Lopburi province, the Bangkok Mercy Centre for street children, the Children's Rights Foundation, and students from international schools in Bangkok.

The aim of the opera is to create a better understanding of HIV and of ways to overcome the prejudice and stigmatization experienced by the majority of people who live with the condition.

Dieter Schlenker of UNESCO Bangkok talked to *A Boy and a Tiger's* composer and director Bruce Gaston about his life, music and the show.

Mr. Gaston, a US born musician and composer, has lived in Thailand for more than 40 years, and was one of two founders of the band *Fong Nam* in 1979 that brought Siam classical music to a mainstream international audience. Last year, he was awarded the distinguished Thai Silpathorn award for his contribution to music, notably blending classical Western and traditional Thai music.

Mr. Gaston's *A Boy and a Tiger* opera has been three years in preparation. The performance is inspired by Yann Martel's Booker Award-winning novel *Life of Pi*, with the threat of a tiger in Martel's book producing an allegory to the challenges of those living with HIV.

Mr. Gaston, as a US born musician and composer, how come you reside in Thailand and have lived here for more than 40 years?

The reason I came to Thailand was that I was a conscientious objector during the Vietnamese war, and so I came to teach music in Thailand rather than to shoot people in Viet Nam. I didn't choose this; I was a professional musician in America, in Los Angeles. I didn't want to come but there was something called the "draft" at that time. But since I took my degree in philosophy, it was very simple for me to explain and to articulate to the board why I had a serious objection to the war — not just that I was afraid to go to the field, but I had a serious philosophical objection to the war.

With your band Fong Naam, back in the 1980s, you raised an international awareness about Siamese classical music, and your own compositions also have a strong Siamese musical influence.

When I first came to Thailand, I lived next to a cemetery and during the funeral ceremonies they played traditional Thai music. I heard this every single day from my apartment and I was so impressed with the complexity of the rhythms and the vitality and energy of music.

I went down to watch and I saw these young boys and young children — nobody was over 18 years old, just playing away with brilliant virtuosity. So I was really attracted by the power of these rhythms and this heterophonic approach to music rather than the Western thing which is homophonic — we have harmonies accompanying a major or central melody.

And this was something completely different for the way of thinking, the way the music was composed and it was so strong. I have been very influenced by the composer Charles Ives, who is maybe the only great genius America has ever seen up until this moment. Ives was always talking about strong music and what that meant. And this was a strong music. I was really attracted to it.

My music went along these lines when I began. When I first started the music I met Khun Boonyong Ketkhong (who is considered one of the greatest masters of the Thai Renart or soprano xylophone). He is my great teacher, my great master. I studied with him so much and learnt so many things from him. I learnt about how Thais think. It is the logic of the music, not just the songs, because Thai music is an old tradition, so you spend a long time memorizing songs.

In the West, we don't believe in memory and the ear enough. We trust too much on our eyes, not enough on our ears and our hearts. And the Thai tradition is very much involved with the ears and the heart.

Your latest opera *A Boy and a Tiger* is not just a classical Siamese style opera, but it conveys a strong, and at the same time sensitive socio-political message. Can you explain?

The thing about opera, serious opera, is the exciting new era. The era of fat rich women with their husbands in tuxedos and dropping with diamonds, showing off and listening to Wagner or Puccini, is over. The influence of electronics and multimedia has now made the possibility that opera can — if we keep the idea of opera as a total theatre, we stand in the tradition of Wagner, of the Wagner thing — mean so much more than Puccini and Wagner ever dreamed of.

People like Robert Wilson, (works like) *Einstein on the Beach* (an opera by Philip Glass) and other works like this, have shown the way clearly that opera can be provocative. It must not be pop. It must not be music theatre. As strong and powerful as *Phantom of the Opera* or *Moulin Rouge* are, they still stand squarely and profoundly on the capitalist way of looking at the world. The best that operas such as these can achieve is sentimentality, but opera can still have a chance to create a true reality and true passion.



Bruce Gaston



© UNESCO/B. Vathanathanakul

This is what we wish to give to the children in *A Boy and a Tiger*. The opportunity to do something that's fantastic, that's incredible, that's invincible, that's beyond reality but it is reality.

***A Boy and a Tiger* is about a life threat allegorized by the tiger. It is about how to cope with the threat and continue to live and survive, which seems to link strongly to the children of Baan Gerda performing in this opera?**

The question of *A Boy and a Tiger* is so essential. This is a boy. He has life. He has a future. I've lost many of my students here as they were children, not as young as Pi, but certainly, way before they should go, they die. Why is this happening?

Here he is called to face death himself. He not only faces death. He learns to discover the fact that he must face it himself. The tiger is Pi. This is revealed in the end of the opera that there is in fact no tiger. The tiger is Pi; Pi killed the cook on the boat.

In the story, it turns out that the tiger was the one who ate. It was all set up precisely about territory and so forth. But in the end, it's not true. There is no territory. The tiger can be a "bug" in your body. It can be that in your brain you decide to destroy yourself. Everybody has this character, this tiger that would destroy us. And it's "us". It doesn't matter if it's a bug or your own psychological game that you play yourself. It is equally destructive. The only way that you can survive is to learn to survive with it.

The main motive of the play is a phrase in Thai which I translate from Thai that "life and death live, exist in the same small boat". This is what Pi learns.

This little boy "Pi" who was the hero, when I first met him I didn't choose him. I chose other people and changed my mind later on. Only after a long time, he was standing in the dark corners, a doubtful and nervous kid. Somehow you figure these things out after you have a relationship with these children after teaching them for a long time.

I decided to go with these two guys because there were two people who performed "Pi". There's a desperate Pi who is dyslectic. He's out of school, cannot read and write and tried to run out of Baan Gerda five times. When I saw him at the beginning as I met him, he was just a completely dysfunctional person.

Then, there's this innocent, iridescent, little boy [the second "Pi" actor]. So, I took these two. These were to be my "Pi". They have not disappointed me at all. They have transformed into real "people". Really, there is "somebody", which you could see that today — that little boy just takes the stage wherever it is, and he takes it and it's his place, his territory. It's touching.

For more information about the performance dates and times, access:
www.bangkokopera.com



© UNV/At First Sight UN Volunteers.

IMAGES TO INSPIRE CHANGE

A young boy plays on a swing outside his home in the Saphan Phut area of Bangkok. The daily hardships faced by residents of the deprived neighbourhood were first brought to light through a photography development project titled "At First Sight".

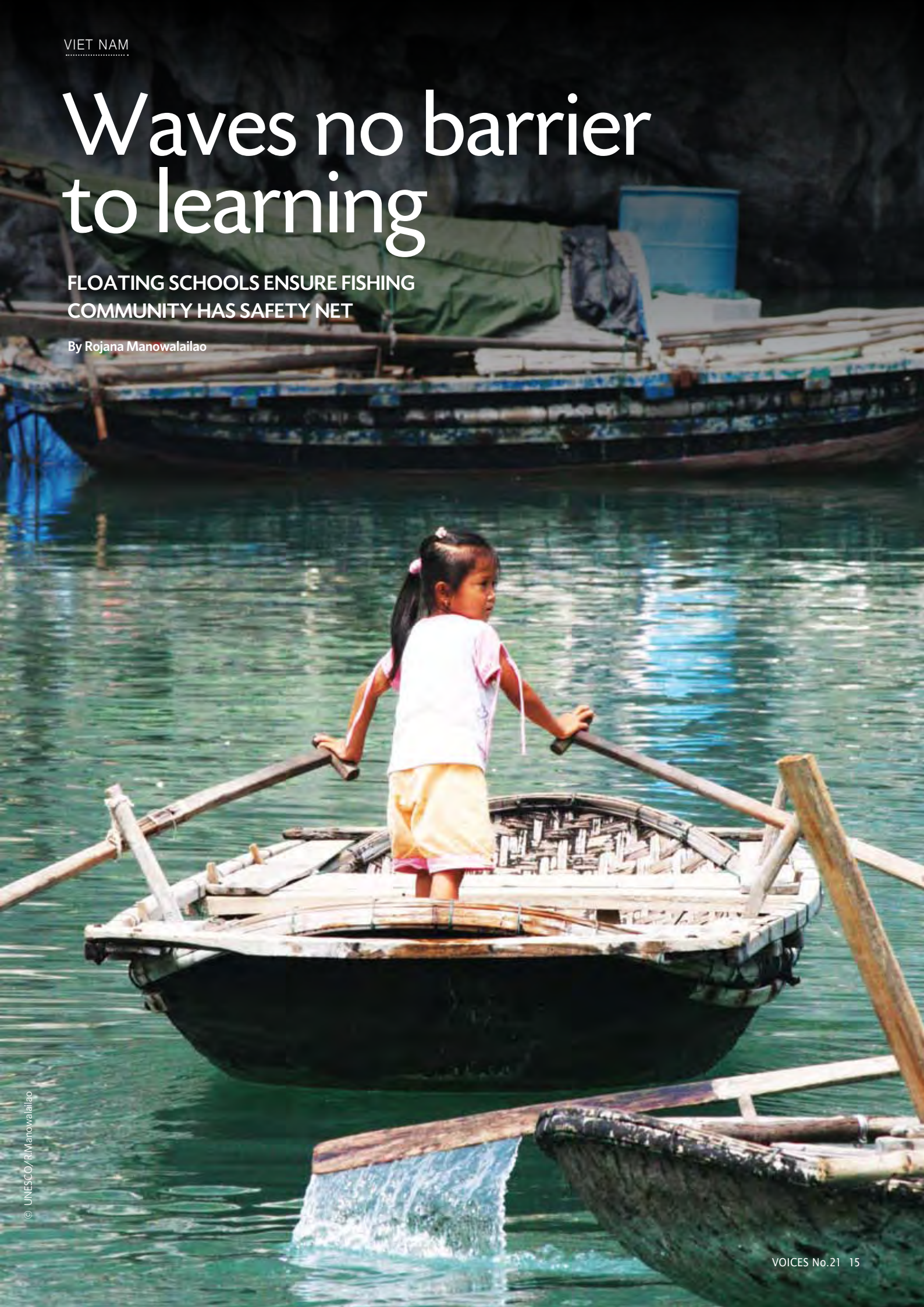
The initiative aims to encourage residents in Saphan Phut to use photography to record their daily experiences and challenges in order to encourage more people to get involved in volunteering at the grassroots level. The initiative is involving volunteers from different organizations, namely UNESCO Bangkok, the International Movement ATD Fourth World and the Friends of ATD Foundation.

For further information contact:
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Waves no barrier to learning

FLOATING SCHOOLS ENSURE FISHING
COMMUNITY HAS SAFETY NET

By Rojana Manowalailao



Nguyen Khac Hung (left) pictured with his students in a floating classroom.



© UNESCO/R.Manowalalao

Nguyen Khac Hung receives a 1,500,000 dong (USD\$83) salary per month.

He has to travel about two to three hours from shore to where he works, so he stays over at his floating workplace where the space is divided into two classrooms and one teacher's room.

His two female teaching colleagues convert the teacher's room into their bedroom at night, while Mr. Nguyen uses a student's desk in one of the classrooms for his bed.

Mr. Nguyen is a teacher at the floating Hung Thang School in Quang Ninh province, Viet Nam.

The school has no conventional source of electricity - a single source of power comes from a solar cell dish funded by the project

"Improving the quality of life of children and youth in the Asia-Pacific region", an initiative of UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand.

Mr. Nguyen said: "Teaching and learning is difficult at the floating classrooms. The space is very small. There are 21 students from Grade one to five sharing two classrooms.

"Each grade can only study for half a day, for three hours per day, due to the limitations. They have to take turns to use the classroom, and there's one class where students from two different grades share the room and the teacher," he said.

A cooking and washing space exists by one of the classrooms with no wall divider, and there's only one toilet.

Floating classrooms exist in four locations in Ha Long Bay, all of which are under the supervision of the main land-based Hung Thang School.

The school provides both primary and secondary education to 587 students, with 51 teachers assigned to teach in the differing locations. The furthest sea classrooms are 60 km from shore.

Headmistress Nguyen Thi Thuy Anh said scarce resources made learning conditions in the sea classrooms particularly tough.

"[At this] school in particular, the children's education relies very much on the weather. Many of these students' parents are fishermen and if the weather is not good, their income will be affected and so does the chance for [the] school," she said.

The 29-year-old teacher has been assigned to Hung Thang School in Ha Long Bay for two years to teach children from a fishing community who live on floating homes.

Mr. Nguyen said: "These children are smart and enthusiastic to learn. Their learning abilities are no different from those on land but of course their performances cannot be comparable due to limited resources and access to study,"

Grade five student Vu Thi Thom said: "I love to read and write and I want to finish secondary school. But I don't think it's possible because my family does not

Floating schools dot Ha Long Bay.



© UNESCO/R.Manowalalao

have much money. Also I don't want to live far from them because I'll have to go to school on land to complete my secondary education," she said.

Mr. Nguyen graduated from the Dai Hoc Su Pham teacher training college in Viet Nam and he fully acknowledged that teaching in Viet Nam does not pay well.

"Money is not everything in life," he said.

"Being a teacher is an ideology. It's a human building career. However, I may have to find an extra job in the future when I go back to live on land," he added.

Hung Thang School was selected as one of the three pilot schools in Vietnam for Her Royal Highness's project in the Mekong sub-region which aims to help improve the quality of life of disadvantaged children and youth in the Asia-Pacific region.

Launched in 2006, the project uses models that Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn has developed in rural schools in Thailand, based on the philosophy that children should be in good health as the first step to getting a good education.

In addition to the Vietnamese schools, the project also includes three pilot schools in Cambodia and seven pilot schools in Lao PDR. The schools were selected on the basis of being located in remote areas and serving minority children.

Study visits to Thailand and training workshops were organized by the Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and UNESCO Bangkok to introduce teachers to the various projects and to equip them with the right skills. Funds and other additional support such as agricultural tools and health equipment were also provided to implement school activities.

Many schools grow vegetables and raise livestock, such as fish or chickens, to be used for school meals, which for some students, may be their main meal of the day.

Teachers keep track of the children's nutritional status and health by measuring their weight and height and by giving advice to parents. Other projects include the preservation of local cultures and setting up school cooperatives to teach children entrepreneurial and life skills.

The project has received support from the Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency and the Canadian International Development Agency.

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"Thais read nine lines a year"

By Kim Chongsatitwatana

When I first heard this comment a few years ago, I was very shocked.

How could it be? With the country's literacy rate being so high (93 per cent according to the Thai National Statistical Office), who would have thought that as a nation we read so few books!

So when I started my job as a publisher, I promised to do whatever it takes to make Thai people read, especially children. There is no better age to start this habit, right?

So why don't Thai children like to read?

I find the library situation very odd. Over the past few years, there were various attempts to promote reading by making libraries look nice and modern. If you have visited a library lately, you would see some really nice buildings, but sadly, very few books.

Surprisingly (or not), those books are often old and unwanted, with most being donated, so children do not get the opportunity to select what kind of books they want to read in their local libraries.

Another odd thing is that over half of the budget allocated to buy books is used on computers and multimedia. Although learning can be done through many media, wouldn't you agree that in a country in which people only "read nine lines per year", our focus should be on encouraging children to read more books?

I think a big reason most children do not like to read is because they have not found their right kind of books yet. It pains me to find librarians choosing tutorial books and exam guides over great literature and educational reference books.

Or when a librarian refuses to buy translated literature just because they think their students are not worldly enough to understand the stories, or because they only want their students to read works by Thai writers.

I feel so strongly about world literature and translations. My passion for books started when I read *The Famous Five* by Enid Blyton. When I stopped reading in junior high school, it was the Harry Potter series that enticed me back to reading again.

Now, how many kids are not reading today because no one introduced great literature to them? Don't get me wrong, I support Thai writers five hundred per cent. The problem is that we don't have enough of them yet, especially children's authors.

With support from UNESCO Bangkok, Nanmeebooks, a Thai publisher specializing in education and literacy, recently hosted a two-day conference and workshop under the theme: "Enter the World of Reading through World Literature".

More than 1,100 teachers from over 800 schools across the country attended the workshop. The event covered both fiction and non-fiction written by Thai and foreign writers.

We showed teachers and school principals that it is possible and is in fact very easy to organize activities that will attract children to read knowledge and non-fiction books as well.

We had over 20 speakers from many industries, ranging from a fellow teacher, to a successful businessman, to a writer and even a scientist whose collective feedback has hopefully inspired teachers to go back to their schools and open the door to the world of reading, through world literature, to their students.

Children do not get the opportunity to select what kind of books they want to read in their local libraries.

Participants also took part in a ten-station rally workshop. Each station had examples of reading activities for each category of books, so those present got many ideas on how to lure children to read certain types of books, including science reference books!

It was a wonder to see such enthusiasm from the teachers and school principals, and even better, from many levels of education, ranging from kindergartens to middle schools, to vocational schools, to public libraries!

There were plenty of "oohs" and "aahs" and many exchanges of ideas. Such positive feedback from this event is proof that Thai people are ready to push "Reading as a National Agenda" to the next level.

And with a united national effort from both the public and private sectors, we are certain that there will be no more "x lines of books per year".

Kim Chongsatitwatana is Assistant Managing Director of Nanmeebooks Co. Ltd.

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GLOBAL

Global Action Week 2010

19-25 April 2010

This year's Global Action Week (GAW) focuses on education financing and will serve as a precursor to the larger "1 GOAL: Education for All Campaign". Led by the Global Campaign for Education since 2003, global participation of national educational coalitions has increased from two million people to over 14 million in 2009. Preparations have been underway for nine months to ensure GAW makes a deep impact on decision makers.

Where: Global

Info: bkk.efa@unesco.org



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AFGHANISTAN

The 8th Expert Working Group meeting for the preservation of the Bamiyan historical site

16-17 March 2010

Under the auspices of the Bamiyan Working Group on Development, UNESCO provides advice to Afghan authorities to ensure that the development of the Bamiyan Valley does not adversely affect rich cultural resources in the Valley area.

Where: Munich, Germany.

Info: a.sadiqi@unesco.org

BANGLADESH

Celebration of International Mother Language Day

21 February 2010

The main objective of observing the International Mother Language Day is to create awareness about the importance of the use of the Mother Language, literacy movements and Education for All. UNESCO will celebrate this day with relevant cultural organizations within Bangladesh.

Where: Dhaka (venue to be confirmed), Bangladesh.

Info: s.khanom@unesco.org

LAO PDR

UNESCO-LNTA Cultural Heritage Specialist Guides Training

23-28 February 2010

The training will raise the professional capacity of guides at the Luang Prabang World Heritage sites.

Trained guides are expected to provide a higher level of visitor experience through improved site interpretation, raise awareness about conservation issues and help foster the long-term sustainability of the site. Practical sessions will include sample guide exercises at Luang Prabang World Heritage sites, on-site orientation on "do's" and "don'ts" and meetings with local communities.

Where: Luang Prabang World Heritage sites, Lao PDR.

Info: mh.unakul@unesco.org

KYRGYZSTAN

Workshop on HIV Preventive Education with Presentation of the CD for Educators: "Building knowledge about HIV and AIDS", interactive course

March 2010

Workshop participants will give feedback and recommendations for the adaptation of the interactive course.

Where: Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Info: valentina@edu.gov.kg; g.li@unesco.org

KAZAKHSTAN

AIBD/IPDC UNESCO Regional Workshop on Capacity Building of TV News Reporters for Environmental Sustainability

22-26 February 2010

The workshop is designed for TV news reporters and producers from TV broadcast stations in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. It intends to upgrade their knowledge and skills in order to help them "understand and impart knowledge that is essential for the survival, growth, protection and development of Planet Earth".

Where: Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Info: s.karpov@unesco.org

THAILAND

Second Foundation Course of the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Field Training Centre on Underwater Cultural Heritage

1 March-11 April 2010

Participants will be trained in the basics of underwater archaeology and cultural heritage management through lectures and field work. For the practical sessions, trainees will survey

shipwreck sites in Rayong, Thailand that have a high archaeological value.

Where: Chanthaburi (theory sessions) and Rayong (diving sessions), Thailand.

Info: r.favis@unesco.org

UZBEKISTAN

2nd UNESCO Sub-Regional Workshop on the Central Asian Rock Art Serial Nomination

12-14 February 2010

UNESCO and international experts will present to State Parties a concept paper on the serial trans-boundary nomination of rock art sites in Central Asia.

Where: Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Info: y.peshkov@unesco.org,

s.allayarov@unesco.org

VIET NAM

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD): Orientation Training for Senior Managers

March 2010

As part of an ongoing effort to implement the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and integrate Education for Sustainable Development principles into education programmes within Viet Nam, UNESCO together with the National Institute for Educational Management will organize the ESD-Orientation Training programme for senior education managers from the Ministry of Education and Training and provincial Departments of Education and Training.

Where: Hanoi, Viet Nam.

Info: s.khatri@unesco.org



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Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme

April 2010

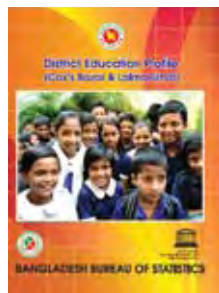
The UNESCO Institute of Statistics, together with UNESCO Hanoi, will provide data analysis training to the country's Ministry of Education and Training and General Statistics Office.

Where: Hanoi, Viet Nam.

Info: ntt.ngan@unesco.org

RESOURCES

This list provides recent publications from UNESCO in the Asia-Pacific Region. The online catalogue of all UNESCO publications can be accessed at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org>. **For further information, please contact:** d.schlenker@unesco.org



District Education Profile (Cox's Bazar and Lalmonirhat)

With support from UNESCO's Dhaka Office, the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics has prepared a district education profile for two selected districts in Bangladesh: Cox's Bazar; and Lalmonirhat. The profile includes mapping of all educational institutions, teachers, teaching and non-teaching staff and other facilities available in the institutions. The exercise also provides an online database integrated with Google Maps showing the locations of each institute, which is accessible at: <http://dep.unescodhaka.org>



Manual for media-trainers: HIV and AIDS coverage

This is an updated version of a manual that was developed by a team of Kazakh media trainers for a Central Asia sub-regional Training of media-trainers.

The manual has been designed for media-trainers to help them to develop an agenda, with a focus on the trainee's needs and a participatory approach to learning.



Media Guide: HIV and AIDS coverage

This is the third version of a multimedia material package developed for Kazakh journalists. It consists of several items including basic information and statistics as well as terminology guidance, ethical, stigmatization and discrimination issues, analysis of media materials, etc. The Media Guide has been distributed for use as a training manual for journalists during media courses.



UNESCO Country Programming Document (TL-UCPD) 2009–2013, Timor-Leste

TL-UCPD is UNESCO's blueprint of action when working with the Timor-Leste government and other sectors, such as civil society and the private sector, in the pursuit of national development goals and objectives along UNESCO's areas of competence — education, natural and human sciences, culture, communication and information.

UNESCO Country Programming Document 2009-2011, The Philippines

The PH-UCPD, a systematic approach to programme planning and development, will serve as the overall framework in defining areas of partnership between UNESCO and various sectors of Philippine society.



Secondary Teacher Policy Research: Case studies on Malaysia and Lao PDR

The Secondary Teacher Policy Research in Asia series is a regional comparative study to assess how countries in the region are responding to the increasing demand of expanding access to quality secondary education, with a focus on opportunities and challenges related to secondary teachers. Five countries were selected to participate in the study: Lao PDR; Malaysia; the People's Republic of China; the Republic of Korea; and Thailand.

Following the first case study on the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Lao PDR studies are now available in print and electronic versions.



Secondary Education: Mongolia and Pakistan country profiles

Each profile describes the institutional context of secondary education in the country, the operation of both public and private systems, technical vocational education, teachers and staffing, recent reforms, and development agency involvement in secondary education. Statistics from national and international sources are also presented in a user-friendly format.

The Mongolia and Pakistan country profiles are now available in print and electronic versions.



Gender Issues in Counselling and Guidance in Post-Primary Education - Advocacy Brief

This brief highlights that establishing counselling and guidance programmes in schools, and incorporating gender responsiveness in the context of counselling and guidance programmes in post-primary education are vital to the achievement of larger key education objectives.



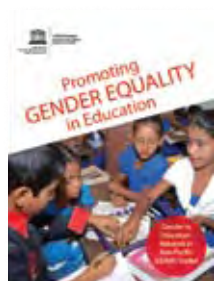
Training and Employment Opportunities to Address Poverty Among Rural Youth: A Synthesis Report

This report is a synthesis of three case studies conducted in the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam and aims to enhance understanding on training and employment opportunities and challenges for rural youth. The findings from the three country studies suggest the need for enhanced policy coordination to address limited human and financial resources, particularly in terms of reaching the local and community levels, and to allow broad participation in the efforts to improve employment and training prospects of the rural youth.



UNESCO-UNGEI Asia-Pacific 2010 Gender in Education Calendar

Thirteen winning entries from the UNESCO-UNGEI Asia-Pacific photo contest are featured in this calendar, which will be distributed throughout the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. This photo contest was organized jointly by UNESCO Bangkok, along with the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) East Asia and Pacific and South Asia (EAP & SA)



Gender in Education Network in Asia-Pacific (GENIA) Toolkit: Promoting Gender

The toolkit has been designed to be used at different times, depending on the users' needs; when more information is needed about gender equality in education, when there is a need to analyze the gender sensitivity of a project the users are working on, when the users want to advocate for more gender equality in their respective organization, when they visit a school and wish to assess the gender responsiveness of its staff, or when they want to organize a gender training session to sensitize staff, etc.



2008 UNESCO Publications: Asia-Pacific Region

To bring the broad variety and expertise publications produced by UNESCO in the Asia-Pacific region to a wider audience, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education has compiled this catalogue of titles published in 2008. The range of subjects is unique, from adult literacy and HIV prevention, to the conservation of ancient forts and water management.

To reach a wide audience, the publications are predominantly published in English, however UNESCO field offices are publishing increasingly more titles in the languages of the countries they serve.

In addition to the traditional printed book, most publications also have an electronic version. Their URLs are noted so that you may browse them online or download them for private use.

UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok) is the regional office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization whose work in the fields of education, natural science, social and human science, culture and communication has a bearing on the lives of almost two-thirds of the world's population in 47 member countries across the Asia-Pacific region.

The UNESCO office in Bangkok assumes two roles. As the Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, it is the technical advisory body to all field offices and Member States of the region and the site of regional programmes in most areas covered by the education sector.

As a cluster office, the UNESCO office in Bangkok is also the principal coordinator of UNESCO

activities, across sectors, in the Mekong region - directly in Thailand, Myanmar, Lao PDR and Singapore and indirectly in support of UNESCO country offices in Viet Nam and Cambodia.

UNESCO Bangkok also houses regional advisory units in Culture and Social and Human Sciences and staff from the Communication and Information Sector and the Science Sector.