

UNESCO Bangkok Newsletter



United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

Issue No. 4, August 2005
www.unescobkk.org



© Marilyn Jeffrey

INSIDE

Globalization in Higher Education: Ensuring Quality Across Borders
[Page 4](#)

Country Focus: EFA in Thailand
[Page 6](#)

UNESCO-L'ORÉAL International Fellowships for Young Women in Life Sciences
[Page 7](#)

Q&A: Interview with Jan Wijngaarden
[Pages 8](#)

In Brief
[Page 10](#)

STU Extends Help to Remote Village
[Pages 12](#)

Staff News
[13](#)

News From HIV/AIDS Coordination and School Health Unit
[Pages 14](#)

Agenda
[Pages 18](#)

Resource Materials
[Pages 19](#)

ICT on the Frontlines of Learning

UNESCO Bangkok Prepares for the World Information Summit

By Ellie Meleisea, ICT Unit

Nine-year-old Kalliyon is excitedly waiting for the bus. Not just any bus - it is called the "e-learning bus" - and it is travelling around Cambodia giving people a chance to experience and learn about various forms of information communication technology (ICT), including computers, digital cameras and VCDs. Kalliyon has heard from her friends in the next town that when the bus visited them, they learned how to take digital photos and download them onto a computer, and how to surf the Internet.

Kalliyon can hardly wait for her turn. She is waiting for the bus with her older brother, Rangsey, who is training to be a teacher. As part of his training, Rangsey has completed a course on ICT use in the classroom. Rangsey's college has only a few computers for a lot of students, so he is looking forward to the visit from the e-learning bus. It will give him a chance to practice his newly-learned computer skills. He also wants to watch some of the Khmer-language VCDs that the e-learning bus



© Marilyn Jeffrey

shows about health issues in order to get information for one of the lesson plans he is preparing as part of his training programme.

Kalliyon and her brother are just some of the many people who have benefited from formal and non-formal information and communication technology (ICT) education projects implemented across the Asia-Pacific region by UNESCO, and largely funded by Japanese Funds-in-Trust (JFIT)

UNESCO Bangkok's projects in this area are being undertaken in recognition of the fact that effective use of ICT can expand learning

Continued on page 2

ICT *From page 1*

opportunities, improve education quality, and be of great value in achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals through reducing disparities in educational access. These programmes and projects are also being implemented with a view to upholding UNESCO's unique mandate to promote the free exchange of ideas and to disseminate knowledge, and as part of UNESCO's role in building inclusive and equitable "Knowledge Societies."

World Summit on the Information Society

There is currently much discussion regarding "Knowledge" and "Information" Societies in the context of the upcoming "World Summit on the Information Society" (WSIS), to be held in Tunisia in November this year. The WSIS aims to find ways to harness ICTs in the service of development goals and to galvanize governments, business and civil society to combat the digital divide and ensure that the emerging Knowledge Societies are inclusive and equitable.

Taking Action

UNESCO's role in the WSIS debates is an important one, but UNESCO is already moving beyond discussion and is taking concrete action to ensure that the benefits of ICTs are harnessed for the good of all. The projects and programmes coordinated by the ICT in Education Unit at UNESCO Bangkok are making a difference in several key areas, including policy development and

UNESCO is already moving beyond discussion and is taking concrete action to ensure that the benefits of ICTs are harnessed for the good of all.

empowerment of teachers and learners. In terms of policy development, UNESCO assists policy-makers by establishing networks, providing platforms for dialogue, developing ICT in Education standards, and providing countries of the region with guidelines for the development of appropriate, country-specific ICT in Education policies and strategies. At the same time, UNESCO builds capacity and empowers teachers, learners, managers and leaders by developing toolkits, models and policies for teacher training, formal schooling and non-formal community education, and by implementing projects that facilitate equitable



access to the various forms of ICT.

Teacher Training

Since the outcome of education-related initiatives depends on teachers, they are at the heart of several UNESCO ICT in Education projects. The organization has implemented a number of teacher training projects across Asia, with a variety of objectives: ensuring teachers are equipped with up-to-date skills in ICT, reforming teacher-training programmes, and even revolutionizing teaching practices.

A teacher training programme recently implemented in China succeeded in improving the capacity of educators to integrate ICTs into teaching, and assisted teachers in developing locally-specific learning materials. The programme also led to the creation of an online resource base and network. At the same time, a cross-cutting, multi-dimensional project carried out in Cambodia provided technical support and teaching materials to the teacher training department; brought about the distribution of well-functioning second-hand computers to teacher-training colleges across Cambodia; and facilitated wider access to ICTs by establishing the "e-learning bus" which travels around Cambodia, enabling a range of people - including orphans, street children, out-of-school youth and other disadvantaged people - to access ICT equipment.

The Schoolnet Project

UNESCO Bangkok has also implemented a number of projects related to developing and supporting the use of ICTs in schools, and building networks between schools and among teachers. The Schoolnet

◀ The Tunis Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) will be held from 16-18 November 2005. One of the three areas of the meeting's focus will be "follow-up and implementation of the Geneva Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action by stakeholders at national, regional and international levels, with particular attention to the challenges facing the Least Developed Countries" (Document WSIS-II/PC-1/DOC/5). This involves taking stock of accomplishments and ICT project implementation activities as identified under the 2003 WSIS Plan of Action.

Project is one such initiative. This project, funded by JFIT and the ASEAN Foundation, has focused on countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and its achievements have included: documenting and promoting successful practices in the use of ICT in schools in South-East Asia; developing ICT-based teaching-learning materials; facilitating Internet connectivity; and building connections between teachers across the ASEAN region.

The NET Project

The most recent initiative of the ICT in Education Unit is the "Next Generation of Teachers" (NET) Project. This project is designed to assist Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) to prepare the next generation of teachers to use technologies effectively. The goal is that by 2008, all



national pre-service teacher training institutions in the Asia-Pacific region will have the capacity to educate teachers in when and how to best use technologies for teaching-learning. Key players in the field of teacher training have applauded this initiative, and have joined workshops to further develop the concept. The

NET Project will link to and build on the achievements made through networks created in other projects. A number of organizations have enquired about how best to contribute to and support this endeavour. The first organization to pledge support for the project so far is Microsoft, which is making a generous commitment through their Partners in Learning (PiL) programme. UNESCO and Microsoft acknowledge that the task is huge and, with the intention of making this a “growing partnership,” have invited other organizations to join hands in this regional initiative. Further information about this and other UNESCO Bangkok ICT in Education programmes and projects can be found on their website at www.unescobkk.org/education/ict

Towards Equitable and Inclusive Knowledge Societies

The various projects and programmes implemented by the ICT in Education Unit, including training workshops and seminars, toolkit and resource material development, and provision of access to ICT equipment and information, are some of the steps that UNESCO has taken so far towards achieving its goals and those expressed at the first World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in 2003. It is clear that UNESCO is well-positioned for the follow-up to the upcoming Summit in Tunisia, and that UNESCO, through its ICT in Education projects, will continue to play a key role in building inclusive and equitable knowledge societies.



© Marilyn Jeffrey

The NET Project: Preparing the Next Generation of Teachers Through ICT

Recognizing that teachers are central to successful learning, UNESCO has supported the professional development of teachers for nearly 60 years. UNESCO's most recent initiative is the Next Generation of Teachers (NET) Project which is designed to assist Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) in the Asia-Pacific region to prepare the next generation of teachers to judiciously use technologies for teaching and learning. The NET project has been guided by the vision of the Director of the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok, Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer, who expressed the goal as follows:

“By 2008, all regional Member States will be in a position to offer teachers an education on how and when to best use technologies for teaching and learning, through training which is integrated in all national pre-service teacher training institutions in the Asia-Pacific region. Learners will directly benefit from this new generation of well-educated teachers, who will be empowered to use technologies and to facilitate the learners' active participation in learning, and in the knowledge societies and economies.”

Key players in the Asia-Pacific ICT in Education field, including EDUCOMP Datamatics Ltd, CISCO, Intel, Internexia and Microsoft, have applauded this initiative and have participated in workshops to further develop the concept and to discuss means of supporting this endeavour. Microsoft was the first key player to pledge support going beyond

the sharing of materials and know-how. Microsoft's Partners in Learning (PiL) programme has made a generous commitment to financially contribute to the success of this initiative.

Where useful, NET will link to and build on the achievements made and networks created in the conceptual phase and in other projects. The intention is to make this a “growing partnership” which includes all key organizations that are active in the field of professional development of teachers and that are concerned with ICT integration in teacher training.

The NET Project has four main objectives, namely to:

- i. Assess and meet the needs of the TEIs in terms of technology integration.
- ii. Create a network of TEIs.
- iii. Receive, adapt and/or develop the materials needed: an assessment tool, curriculum framework, start-up kit, and training modules meeting the diverse needs of future teachers in the ASP region.
- iv. Document and consolidate lessons learned to be used as feedback for policymaking and recommendations for institutional change in TEIs.

The NET Project will have five types of beneficiaries and partners, as follows:

- a. The pupils who will benefit from the improved skills of teachers who facilitate students' learning

and prepare them for knowledge societies and economies.

- b. The future teachers (those enrolled in the TEIs), who are the direct beneficiaries of the project since they are the targeted participants of the training modules to help integrate ICT in teaching.
- c. The participating TEIs (including the teacher trainers – a priority group – the administrators of the institutions and their selected faculty), who are also direct beneficiaries as the project will deal with countries and institutions that will collaborate and implement the training modules in their teacher education courses. The selection of the countries and TEIs will be based on an agreed set of criteria (willingness to integrate ICT in teacher education courses, institutional leadership etc.). The exact number of targeted TEI will only be decided after the detailed needs assessment, after the fine-tuning of the strategies.
- d. The policymakers and other TEI administrators, who will be the target audience when the lessons learned are documented and disseminated.
- e. National Governments who will be beneficiaries and partners in this project. This initiative will assist governments in their objectives of capacity building as they reform and re-align their national education systems, and in their drive to improve the quality of curriculum practices.

For further information on the NET Project, and to find out how to become a partner organization, please contact the Chief of the ICT in Education Unit, UNESCO Bangkok: c.wachholz@unescobkk.org.

Globalization in Higher Education: Ensuring Quality Across Borders

By Stella Antony, APEID Unit

Globalization in education has led to a marked increase in the mobility of people, programmes and institutions across national borders. Consequently, the portability of qualifications - especially in higher education - is becoming an issue of concern to all countries. Through UNESCO initiatives, six regional conventions establishing working committees and focusing on mutual recognition of studies, diplomas and degrees in higher education have been adopted since 1973. For its part, UNESCO Bangkok has long been working closely with the Regional Committee for Asia and the Pacific to facilitate dialogue among state parties in order to address emerging challenges and issues facing the region. As part of these efforts, plans are now underway at the office's Asia and Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) to launch a series of workshops and develop a toolkit to guide policy makers on issues related to handling cross border higher education and strengthening quality assurance of academic qualifications.

Developments in Quality Assurance (QA)

APEID's current activities are, indeed, at the cusp of developments in Higher Education. In most of the countries of the region, external quality assurance is of relatively recent origin (with about two-thirds of these initiatives having been established in the last decade), and the process is gaining momentum. In some countries, quality assurance is equivalent to ministerial recognition of institutions belonging to the national system. In a few other countries, it is a process over and above regulatory or recognition mechanisms. In some cases, the outcome of quality assurance has serious implications for funding and, hence, survival of the institutions; in other cases, the direct impact is much less. The variations are mainly due to differing national contexts and the objectives for which quality assurance is exercised.

Actually, the term "quality assurance" is used to denote different practices. The



generic operational definition from the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) encompasses many different models of quality assurance and is as follows: "...quality assurance may relate to a program, an institution or a whole higher education system. In each case, quality assurance is all of those attitudes, objects, actions, and procedures, which through their existence and use, and together with the quality control activities, ensure that appropriate academic standards are being maintained and enhanced in and by each program." Yet, whatever the approach to quality assurance, the frameworks in place within the Asia-Pacific region have a critical core element: evaluation about the quality of the institution/programme based on self-study and peer review. This "assurance of quality of qualifications and institutions that offer those qualifications" is an important factor in strengthening regional academic mobility.

There is another reason for examining regional QA developments in the context of promoting academic mobility: the challenges brought by the new providers of education, new forms of educational delivery and new qualifications. Academic mobility of students, scholars, teachers and knowledge workers has been an integral aspect of higher education for

centuries. But recent developments in cross-border education indicate that institutions and programmes that cross borders are on the increase. They defy traditional ways of understanding providers of education, educational delivery and educational qualifications. This poses challenges to both quality assurance agencies and academic mobility initiatives, and demands that the two work in close collaboration.

Emerging Challenges

Quality assurance in cross-border educational operations is still in the initial stages of development. As cross-border educational operations increase in the Asia-Pacific region, the safeguard of national values and the increasing amount of student fees that go into offerings by foreign providers (that are below minimum standards) are emerging as issues of concern. At the same time, the national quality assurance mechanisms that are oriented to an individual country's context may not be able to deal with these issues effectively.

A survey conducted by the Asia Pacific Quality Network indicates that only a few countries have some mechanism in place to ensure the quality of imported educational services. Still fewer countries

have a quality assurance policy for exported services. Even in countries where there is a QA mechanism for cross-border education, the extent to which the quality assurance agencies have a significant role in these mechanisms is not very clear. In many countries, it is the trade and commerce ministries that have a regulatory role in cross-border educational services, and not the Ministry of Education or the quality assurance agencies.

Thus, while QA frameworks within the Asia-Pacific region (with respect to traditional operations of traditional providers) are reasonably well-developed, quality assurance of cross-border education warrants serious attention in most of the countries. The situation

...only a few countries have some mechanism in place to ensure the quality of imported educational services. Still fewer countries have a quality assurance policy for exported services.

is the same with respect to mutual recognition of qualifications being promoted by the Regional Convention.

Eighth Session of the Regional Committee

The need to make parallel and cooperative efforts in quality assurance and mutually recognize qualifications was the focus of the most recent Eighth Session of the Regional Committee for the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific, which was held in conjunction with a seminar on the “Establishment of Cross-Border Assessment Mechanisms” in Kunming, People’s Republic of China in late May 2005. The meeting of the Regional Committee and the seminar were jointly organized by APEID, the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council (ADCSC) People’s Republic of China and the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. The major objectives of the Eighth Session were to facilitate dialogue among state parties to address new challenges and issues facing the region and to initiate the process of revising the regional convention

in view of these new challenges.

The meeting was attended by around fifteen participants from eleven state parties, around twenty five observers from non-state parties and networks of the region, and invited experts. There were country reports from eleven state parties to the regional convention - Australia, China, Holy See, India, Korea, Laos PDR, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines and Sri Lanka – highlighting the developments made in implementing the regional convention and the difficulties faced in the process, especially with reference to the emergence of cross-border education and new providers of higher education. Difficulties faced by countries in view of these new providers were taken up for discussion, and the seminar provided guidance about tackling some of those challenges.

The Chair of the Regional Bureau, Korea extended an invitation to the Regional Bureau to have the next session of the Regional Committee meeting in 2007. In the meantime, it is expected that the developments in QA and application of the regional convention will develop in parallel and complement mutual efforts.

Eighth Session Recommendations

As an outcome of the discussions, the following Action Plan was developed:

1. All signatories to the Regional Convention and the Networks will convince the governments to establish a National Quality Assurance Mechanism and a National Information System to facilitate the implementation of the Regional Convention in National Qualifications Framework.
2. All participants will contribute to successful information networking through APARNET, the regional network established for information sharing among the Asia-Pacific countries.
3. The participants will disseminate advantages of the Diploma Supplement in promoting mutual understanding and recognition of qualifications.
4. Assessment Mechanism for Foreign Qualifications. All countries will give attention to the context of new education providers.
5. A working group comprising the Bureau of the Regional Committee and a few co-opted members such as New Zealand, Malaysia and China will work on revisions needed in the Regional Convention and the legal implications of the same.
6. Based on the recent experiences of the Philippines and Lao PDR, a document highlighting the steps to be taken to ratify the Convention will be developed.
7. UNESCO Bangkok will develop a toolkit to guide policy makers on issues related to handling cross-border higher education.

COUNTRY FOCUS: EFA in Thailand

Thailand to Focus on Excluded, Disadvantaged Groups and Improved Access

By Leotes Marie Lugo, AIMS Unit



© Leotes Marie Lugo

Getting disadvantaged groups - including children with disabilities, children of migrants and ethnic minorities, working children, children affected by HIV/AIDS, and children of other excluded groups - into school will be one of the priorities of the Thai Government under its soon to be finalized four-year plan for education.

The plan is anchored in the Government's proposed Master Plan, which will be the Thaksin Administration's roadmap for 2005-2008. Every Ministry has drafted its own four-year plan, which is set to be reviewed by the Cabinet, based on the same targets and vision set in the Master Plan.

For the Education sector, improving access to basic education, which means reaching out to excluded groups, is a fundamental focus. Khunying Kasama Varavarn, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education (MoE), noted that although Thailand has a high gross enrolment rate (the total number of enrolled children regardless of age), there are still a number of children who do not attend primary school.

"There are still pockets of children in the educational age group who are outside [the education system]. They are not many, but they are more difficult to reach and it requires more intervention to reach them, not only from the Education

sector," Khunying Kasama said. "We in the Education sector may have to be more flexible, but assistance in other areas will also be needed," she added.

Ensuring that all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to compulsory primary education is part of Thailand's commitment under the Education for All (EFA) initiative.

As the lead UN agency for education, UNESCO is the main coordinator for EFA. Sheldon Shaeffer, Director of UNESCO Bangkok, noted that Thailand has made considerable achievement in meeting the six EFA goals related to early childhood care and education, universal primary education, life skills, literacy, gender equality, and quality education over the past ten years.

But Shaeffer also stressed that more needs to be done to deliver quality education for all in Thailand, including improving primary enrolment rates. According to UNESCO's 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, over 800,000 children, or 15% of primary school age children are not in school in Thailand (a figure considerably higher than that reported by the Ministry of Education). Of this number, 54% are girls. Mr. Shaeffer pointed out "This means looking more carefully at the national and even at the

As the lead UN agency for education, UNESCO is the main coordinator for EFA. Sheldon Shaeffer, Director of UNESCO Bangkok, noted that Thailand has made considerable achievement in meeting the six EFA goals related to early childhood care and education, universal primary education, life skills, literacy, gender equality, and quality education over the past ten years.

community level for groups of children who are not in school, such as girls, minorities, migrant and unregistered children, working children, children with disabilities, children affected by HIV/AIDS, and children who speak a language different from that of the school."

Khunying Kasama is optimistic that Thailand can provide primary education in accordance with EFA targets, adding that "I think more or less [the EFA target of] universal primary education has been achieved."

This view was shared by Dr. Chinnapat Bhumirat, Deputy Secretary General of the Basic Education Commission. "I think we can reach the goal before the end of the specified period [by 2015] since right now, we have almost reached the goal." He noted, however, that the challenge is making sure everyone has access to education, which involves focusing on the groups that need special attention and improving the quality of education in Thailand.

The Commission has lined up several projects and is asking for a 400-million baht budget for 2006 to improve access to basic education. It is also studying the use of information communication technology to improve the quality of education, as

Continued on page 9

UNESCO-L'ORÉAL

International Fellowships for Young Women in Life Sciences

By Anuje Sirikit, IKM Unit

Dr. Ketsiri Kueseng was awarded one of the 15 UNESCO-L'Oréal 2005 Fellowships in Life Sciences. Tragically, however, she was reported missing from Khao Lak, Pang Nga Province in the aftermath of the tsunami disaster two months prior to her trip to attend the fellowship presentation ceremony in Paris (March 2005).

UNESCO and L'Oréal have, therefore, granted the US \$20,000 award to her younger brother and sister in support of their education in scientific fields.

Dr. Kueseng was the first Thai to be awarded this prize, representing the Asia and Pacific region, along with two researchers from Australia and North Korea. A lecturer at Walailuck University, Dr. Kueseng was selected for the Fellowship based on her research, "Plasma Treatment for Thai Silk." The work aimed to improve the surface quality of silk, including its hydrophobicity, adhesion, wettability, printability, durability and dimensional stability to result in easier wear, care and longer durability of the fabric. The inspiration behind this project was research she had read about related to the invention of bullet-proof fabrics. At that time, she was preparing to write her thesis on the synthesis of pineapple fibre.

UNESCO and L'Oréal exceptionally decided to award the Fellowship grant of US \$20,000 to Dr. Kueseng's brother,

Pattana, and to her sister, Pamornrat, to enable them to complete, respectively, a MS and a PhD in the years to come. The UNESCO Bangkok office will administer this assistance according to a plan approved by UNESCO and L'Oréal.

"It is with great pleasure, but also great seriousness that UNESCO joins L'Oréal in trying in some small way to soften the impact of this tragedy by transferring Dr. Kueseng's award to her sister and brother who were no doubt inspired by the achievements of their older sister," says Sheldon Shaeffer, Director of the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education.

"We look forward very much to the success of Pamornrat and Pattana in their studies, and to even stronger collaboration between UNESCO and L'Oréal," added Shaeffer. The presentation of the education fund took place recently in Bangkok at the ceremony of the "For Women in Science" Thailand programme.

L'Oréal and UNESCO began their partnership in 1998 to improve the situation of women internationally, particularly in the scientific realm. Each year, five leading women researchers, one from each continent, are identified as Laureates and presented the L'Oréal-

UNESCO Award, which includes a cash prize of \$100,000 each.

As an extension of the L'Oréal-UNESCO Awards given to exceptional women scientists, a UNESCO-L'Oréal Fellowship Programme was founded to encourage young women researchers in the Life Sciences. Fifteen women, three from each continent, are awarded the Fellowships - a grant of \$20,000 - in support of their research projects, which are usually undertaken outside their home country. The International Fellowships for Young Women in Life Sciences Programme has given fellowships to 75 young researchers from around the world since its creation.



© kraisng Boonyarangkavorn

© Janya Petchana

© kraisng Boonyarangkavorn

Interview with Jan Wijngaarden

By Gordon Johnston, IKM Unit

Jan Willem de Lind van Wijngaarden is leaving UNESCO Bangkok next month after more than three years. During this time, he established and managed the HIV/AIDS Coordination and School Health Unit. He previously worked in East Timor for UNICEF and in Cambodia for UNAIDS and for Family Health International. Jan has a Master's Degree in Development Studies with a minor in Anthropology, and begins a Master's in Public Health in October.

What is the scale of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Asia?

Some of the fastest growing epidemics are in central Asia (Uzbekistan), as well as in certain areas of China and India. Also in South East Asia, the epidemic is still progressing rapidly. Because some countries in our region, such as India and China, have such big populations, certain areas and sub-populations with high HIV prevalence rates remain nearly invisible. But in terms of number of people infected, Asia is set to overtake Africa within the coming five years.

“
UNESCO's view is that it is the duty of teachers to see that their students are well-prepared for life – not only in the labor market, but also in other areas of life. The reality is that most young people have learned in school only that HIV/AIDS is a deadly virus and that they should not go to see sex workers or use drugs. But what is lacking are frank discussions in school about vulnerability of young people to HIV.
”

Therefore, in terms of prevention, the most work needs to be done in Asia. There are billions of people not yet infected in Asia – many more than in Africa or any other part of the world. More donor attention for prevention activities should therefore be on Asia.

What is the situation in Thailand?

Thailand is often considered a success story because of its effective, open-minded HIV/AIDS prevention programmes with sex workers and drug users during the 1990s. However, many of these successful policies have now been discontinued and forgotten, and as a result the epidemic appears to be preparing for a come-back in certain groups. Among men who have sex with men (MSM), for example, a 2003 study showed an HIV prevalence rate of nearly 18%, compared with a prevalence rate in the general population of less than 2%. Furthermore, there is evidence that unsafe sex among teenagers is significant. In 2003, 10% of new infections in Thailand were teenagers; in 2004, that number rose to 17% of newly infected people. There is already anecdotal evidence of a repeat of the upswing of new HIV infections that we saw at the end of the 1980's – where the infection rate among drug users shot up from 0% to 40% within a year.

What is needed in Thailand in terms of HIV/AIDS related policies?

That is an easy question. More humane, open-minded prevention strategies for certain groups with high risk behaviors, including MSM, drug users and teenagers, based on engagement of these groups and not on repression. This means that Thai schools need to be mobilized to provide HIV prevention and sex education to all young people in Thailand.

What is the biggest barrier to moving ahead with prevention and sex education for young people in schools?

It is unwillingness on the part of Ministries of Education in this region, but also on the part of teachers and many parents, to face reality – which is that young people are sexual beings, and that they are having sex at a younger age than in the past.

EFA in Thailand *From page 6*

UNESCO's view is that it is the duty of teachers to see that their students are well-prepared for life – not only in the labor market, but also in other areas of life, including dating, romance and sex. The reality is that most young people have learned in school only that HIV/AIDS is a deadly virus and that they should not go to see sex workers or use drugs. But what is lacking are frank discussions in school about vulnerability of young people to HIV.

What do you mean by vulnerability of young people to HIV/AIDS?

For example, how peer pressure works, how alcohol contributes to becoming at risk for HIV/AIDS, how things get out of control and how you can anticipate that when you go on a date. This is also known as skills-based education, where the context of the lives of young people in urban areas (going out and having fun) is taken into account in preparing people for situations that can put them at risk.

Wouldn't you say there is some truth in the statement that HIV/AIDS is a health problem, so let the health sector deal with it?

I just don't see how Health Ministries can reach out to young people as effectively as the Ministries of Education, with their huge networks of schools. The network of the Ministry of Education in most countries can reach out to 95% of the age groups that are not yet infected with HIV/AIDS. It is at these ages, between 5 and 15, that you find almost zero prevalence of HIV/AIDS infection among young people in every country, and from the age of 15 onwards, it starts to rise. It is in this age group where you have a captive audience in classrooms, where you can actually prepare them for the real world and for a life in which HIV/AIDS is a reality, not a far away nightmare which affects only 'others.'

Besides, the health sector can not cure or prevent HIV. We need to change vulnerabilities and behaviors – we are talking about socialization and changing behavior here, and that is the task of the Education sector, not the Ministry of Health!

well as increasing the number of teachers and giving them proper training. The Commission is also working on reducing dropout rates in basic education, which covers six years of primary education and six years of secondary education.

Chinnapat said reducing dropout rates is part of the Government's goal of raising the average number of years of education for Thais aged 15-59 to 9.5 years in the next four years from the current 8.1 years. "This is a very challenging, ambitious target and it will make everyone work hard to achieve it," he added.

Literacy

"One project that will be launched within the year involves educating and upgrading the level of education from lower to upper secondary level of some 10 million Thais", Khunying Kasama said. "It will also improve functional literacy in Thailand", she added.

Thailand has one of the highest literacy rates in South-East Asia, although the Global Monitoring Report indicates over three million Thais are still illiterate, two-thirds of whom are women. Functional literacy, or the ability to comprehend what one reads to function in a complex society, is also still low. This is true even of school students. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) annual assessment of the performance of 15-year-old students in various countries, 37% of Thailand's 15-year-olds performed to a level indicative of very low reading abilities. The results came from the 2000 Programme for International Student Assessment, or PISA, which also showed that Thailand ranked in the middle of 43 countries surveyed in terms of achievement or quality. One of the reasons for this could be that standard Thai is not actually the first language of many people.

Statistics from SIL International, an organization devoted to language-based social development, show that around half of primary school-age children in Thailand study in a language that is not their mother tongue. "In other words, they are studying in standard Thai at school, but they do not speak it at home. Many understand the Thai language, of course, but this still creates difficulties early on during crucial learning years," Shaeffer added.

This is why UNESCO is also supporting the use of mother tongue education in Thailand.

Gender

Another concern is the gap between male and female literacy rates. Although Thailand has high literacy rates, national data shows more males aged 15 and up are literate than females in the same age group, with a difference of over 4%.

Overall, though, education officials assert that Thailand has no gender problem, particularly in terms of the number of girls going to school in relation to the number of boys, as measured by the Gender Parity Index (GPI). Indeed, the Monitoring Report confirms Thailand's high gender parity at the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels compared with neighboring countries.

However, Thailand's GPI has remained stagnant over the last decade, hovering at 0.95 since 1990, which means only 95 girls attend school for every 100 boys. Based on the past trend, the EFA Monitoring Team estimates the index to inch up to .96 in 10 years, lower than the ideal 0.97 to 1.03 index countries should reach by 2015.

Moreover, gender issues are not limited to only numbers and access to education. They also include gender equality (including the treatment of girls and women in textbooks and classrooms), educational achievement, and better career and income opportunities for women compared to men.

UNESCO's Shaeffer said government officials must continue to look more carefully at the statistics to see who is not in school and who is not completing their education, and continue to be concerned with issues related to gender equality - not only with disparity in enrolment, but also with the larger issue of gender inequality within the society.

"I think that serious achievements have been made in Thailand and that there is a serious commitment towards expanding and improving education," Shaeffer noted. "But that doesn't mean Thailand should become too satisfied with its achievements. We must try much harder to look for these children and find ways to get them into school. Look for the excluded, make them visible, make them obvious and get them into school. A child-friendly school should above all be a child-seeking school."

Innovative Workshop on Including Disabled



How can governments and society in general ensure that children with disabilities are integrated into regular schools and given a chance to have a normal life?

UNESCO Bangkok's Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Unit has brought together experts and stakeholders on the subject to develop a set of guidelines for including children with disabilities in schools and in the Education for All (EFA) monitoring process.

Case studies were conducted in Brunei, Cambodia, Samoa, Thailand and Viet Nam late last year to document experiences and best practices that show how children and young people with disabilities are included in school systems.

To integrate the results and findings of the case studies, AIMS hosted an expert writers' workshop from 6 to 10 June in Bangkok. The workshop brought together around 50 experts, representatives from government, schools, parents of children with disabilities, NGOs, and disabled people's organizations from the five countries that took part in the case studies.

Participants shared their experiences, best practices they have observed, and ideas about what they think can be done to improve education and training of children with disabilities.

All the participants' inputs, along with the results of the case studies,

were incorporated into a set of recommendations that identifies what governments, schools, and society must do to ensure that children with disabilities have access to mainstream education.

Ko-Chih Tung, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) Regional Advisor and head of the AIMS Unit, noted that barriers to the full participation of children with disabilities in education are many, and national data on persons with disabilities is limited, especially for children with disabilities. "The lack of information, combined with discriminatory attitudes towards persons with disabilities at all levels of society, contributes to the continued neglect of their right to education," Tung said.

In initiating the project and as the office for the UIS Regional Advisor, the AIMS Unit intends to document and analyze the processes, problems, solutions and outcomes of education policies for children with disabilities in the five countries where the case studies were conducted. Other countries in the region and beyond can also learn from the practices and use the guidelines to improve access for children with disabilities in their respective educational systems. The guidelines manual and case study monograph are expected to be completed within the year.

Contact: Jon F. Kapp
E-mail: j.kapp@unesco.org
Website: www.unesco.org/education/aims

ESD-Asia-Pacific Regional Launch of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014)

UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura opened the regional launch on 28 June at Nagoya University, Japan. "Through Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)," said Mr Matsuura, "we should acquire a better understanding of the complex interdependence between human needs and the natural environment, between economics and culture, and between the local and the global. Ultimately, the Decade's goal is to integrate the values inherent in sustainable development into all aspects of learning to encourage changes in attitudes and behaviour that allow for a more sustainable and just society for all." The Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy for ESD was adopted at the meeting. The Launch took place during the International Conference on "Sustaining the Future - Globalization and Education for Sustainable Development," which was jointly organized by the United Nations University and UNESCO and supported by Japanese Funds-in-Trust.

E-mail: esd@unesco.org

Website: www.unesco.org/esd

EIU Regional Workshop

The 5th Expert Planning Meeting for the training workshop on Education for International Understanding (EIU) in the Asia-Pacific Region was held at UNESCO Bangkok from 17 to 19 May 2005 to prepare and design "training of trainers" workshops. The meeting was co-organized and co-sponsored by UNESCO Bangkok and the Asia Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU). The major themes covered during the workshop included Globalization and Social Justice, Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Understanding, Peace and Equity, Human Rights, and Sustainable Development. As a follow-up, a "training of trainers" workshop will be held on 19-29 September 2005 in Chiangmai, Thailand. The workshop will encompass three main themes - namely peace and equity, cultural respect and solidarity, and sustainability - and will include field trips and group activities.

Contact: Molly Lee
E-mail: apeid@unesco.org
Website: www.unesco.org/education/apeid

AIMS Collaborates with Thai Education Ministry Planners

Workshop Launches Multimedia Training Module for Statistics

UNESCO Bangkok's Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Unit helped train Thai Ministry of Education (MoE) officials on indicators for education planning. The MoE conducted a five-day training workshop for close to 50 staff from 27 June to 1 July in Pattaya. Workshop participants came from the MoE's main office in Bangkok and several provinces.

The workshop was aimed at training MoE officials on methods and techniques in collecting, calculating, analyzing and

presenting education indicators. It was also meant to encourage participants to utilize education data for planning and decision-making purposes, as well as for Education for All (EFA) planning - both at the national and provincial levels. A newly-developed multimedia training module on education statistics and indicators, which will be translated into Thai in the future, was also presented.

The AIMS staff participation in the workshop also helped forge a closer relationship between UNESCO Bangkok

and the Thai MoE, paving the way for possible collaboration on special projects, particularly on education statistics. The AIMS Unit and the Thai MoE are also looking into the possibility of developing university-level courses on education statistics and capacity-building in conjunction with Thai learning institutions.

Contact: Nyi Nyi Thaung or Michael Koronkiewicz

E-mail: nn.thaung@unescothkk.org or m.koronkiewicz@unescothkk.org

Website: www.unescothkk.org/education/aims

Website Database Supports Distance Education Activities



Pacific, and the CIS and Baltic States. APEID-UNESCO Bangkok is responsible for the development of the Asia-Pacific information and website for this project.

APEID's main activities involve collecting data and information on ODL, creating a website, and capacity-building. One capacity-building activity is a post conference workshop in conjunction with the 19th Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) Annual Conference, to be held in Jakarta from 15-16 September 2005. The theme of the post conference workshop is "A Community Approach to ODL: Sharing Knowledge, Experience and Practice." The objectives of the workshop are to familiarize participants with the web-based resources on the HEODLKB Asia-Pacific website, and to demonstrate the use of a decision support tool to make first-level assessments about the viability and quality of distance education. To collect data for the HEODLKB portal, a survey has been distributed to 27 ODL institutions in Asia and the Pacific to identify innovative and good practices.

The HEODLKB website is currently hosted and maintained by the Open University Malaysia (OUM) in Kuala Lumpur. The website contains a searchable database of information relevant to ODL, including information on regional experts, best practices and policies.

Contact: Ju-Hui Lee

E-mail: jh.lee@unescothkk.org

Website: <http://asiapacific-odl.oum.edu.my>

In an era of decreasing state funding for higher education and increasing demand for enrollments, particularly in developing countries, there is growing interest in the use of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) to extend access and increase flexible learning opportunities. At the same time, however, there is a lack of understanding of how ODL functions, as well as concerns regarding quality assurance.

The ODL concept embraces open learning (learning with no or minimum barriers with respect to age, gender or time constraints and with recognition of prior learning), distance education (for learners who are separated mostly by time and space from those who are teaching or training), flexible learning (learning opportunities that can be accessed at any place and time), online learning

and e-learning, and virtual education (involving multimedia and a high level of interaction among learners, content, teacher, peers and administration, both synchronously and asynchronously).

In short, ODL offers one of the most promising means of truly achieving Education for All. Recognizing this, UNESCO has set up a Higher Education ODL Knowledge Base project to support decision-makers and practitioners with ready access to information and tools that will assist them in more effective policy planning, development and management of ODL in higher education programmes. UNESCO and partners are currently developing, testing and making available support tools and regional information resources targeted at decision-makers in three regions: Africa, Asia and the

UNESCO Bangkok Staff Union

Extends Help to a Remote Village



The second school receiving STU assistance was developed through a project begun by Her Royal Highness Princess Mother (Somdej Phra Srinagarindra Boromarajajonani), who gave support in setting up non-formal education for people living in isolated and remote places. In order to provide equal opportunity in education for people of all ages, Mae Fah Luang School, a learning centre for adults, was established for Teen Tok villagers who want to learn vocational skills. Local knowledge in areas such as plantations and fisheries has been used to develop a needs-specific curriculum. Nowadays, this adult school is supported by Tambon Kao Jod local administration. There is currently one teacher with 30 students who encompass many levels.

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, visited the schools twice in 1993 and 2004. She initiated the project on education for hill tribe children and youth, which includes basic education, nutrition, health services, vocational training, and natural resources/environmental education.

Contact: Vipa Haetrakul
Chairperson STU, Local Section,
UNESCO Bangkok
E-mail: stu@unesco Bangkok.org

Situated in Thailand's mountainous region, Teen Tok Village, Kanchanaburi Province has no easy way to connect to the outside world. The inhabitants of Teen Tok, mostly Karen, have to walk through the jungle for more than 40 kilometres to go to the nearest town.

The Staff Union of UNESCO Bangkok, however, has helped to open a door to the world for these villagers. On June 21, 2005, the STU granted a set of satellites, televisions, DVD players, educational materials and sports equipment to two needy village schools. Through its support of tele-education, the STU has sought to promote "education for all people" and to correct the lack of opportunity in education that fuels illiteracy and poverty.

Indeed, educational provision for the Teen Tok villagers has been evolving over the last 30 years. The first school

started in the early 1970s to hedge off the Communist Party's growing influence (which had expanded into the neighboring Umpang District, Tak Province) and to address illiteracy among the hill tribe residents. At this time, the Thai Government sent border patrol police teams to look after the village and set up the small school, which primarily taught Thai language to Karen children.

In 1973, the Mae Fah Luang Foundation became involved by funding the construction of a unique building for the school, henceforth named 'The Border Patrol Police School Mitr Muanchon II.' The school officially began providing primary education from grades 1-6. At present, there are 5 teachers with 58 students. Twenty-eight students stay in school accommodation because their homes are very far away.

ARRIVALS

Maki Hayashikawa
Programme Specialist

Maki joins the APPEAL Unit to work on the Gender in Education and Basic Education programmes. She began her UNESCO career at Paris Headquarters in 1993, where her main focus was on the promotion of basic education (NFE/literacy, gender, and rural education). She continued this field of work at UNESCO Beijing, and then took a special 2-year leave to work with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Tokyo. While there, Maki contributed to developing new cooperative efforts between JICA and UNESCO.

Contact: m.hayashikawa@unesco-bkk.org

Kenjiro Jin
Associate Expert
Non-Formal Education

Ken joins UNESCO APPEAL as the Associate Expert in Non-formal Education. His main duties involve working on CLC projects, with a special emphasis on CLC and ARTC networking programmes. During the past four years, Ken worked with the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) in Tokyo, Japan. He was actively involved in non-formal education and literacy programmes, as well as in fundraising and public relations activities.

Contact: k.jin@unesco-bkk.org

Benjamin Vergel De Dios
Assistant Programme Officer

Benjamin Vergel De Dios joins UNESCO to assist in the implementation of the ICT in Education Policy Project, which is now developing a policy-maker toolkit that will be used to train Ministry of Education officials. He formerly worked as a Senior Economic Development Specialist at the National Economic and Development Authority, NEDA, Philippines doing policy analysis/development and evaluation of education projects.

Contact: b.vergelledios@unesco-bkk.org

DEPARTURES

Lucille Gregorio
Science and Technology
Education Specialist

Lucille retires after 15 years at UNESCO Bangkok. Focusing on Science Education, Lucille coordinated a variety of pioneering programmes during her tenure, including activities related to HIV/AIDS, the environment and population (the forerunner of UNESCO's current programme for Education for Sustainable Development), and curriculum development. During the latter, Lucille oversaw regional capacity-building efforts for educational reform targeted at curriculum specialists, and was instrumental in the 2002 publication of what continues to be UNESCO's defining report on that issue for South-East Asia. Lucille also took on overall coordination of publication and public information activities, and most recently, acted as a specialist with APEID.

Though Lucille departs, she will not be leaving UNESCO far behind. She is set to begin a new post as Deputy Director of the UNESCO National Commission in Manila. In addition, she plans to return to her academic roots at the University of the Philippines, Quezon City, where she had previously taught in the Department of Education.

Mari Takano
Associate Expert in Literacy
and Continuing Education

Mari served as an Associate Expert in Literacy and Continuing Education in APPEAL for two years, concentrating on non-formal education. She also worked for post-tsunami operations in Sri Lanka for three months. Mari leaves Bangkok to work at the Asia/Pacific Culture Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) in Tokyo, Japan as the Education Programme Specialist, focusing particularly on literacy issues in Asia.

Annelene Ror
Associate Expert in Early Childhood Care
and Education/Children and HIV/AIDS

During her three years at UNESCO's APPEAL Unit, Annelene worked as an Associate Expert in Early Childhood Care and Education. She also worked with children affected by HIV/AIDS and was involved in projects aiming to stop violence against children. She will now return to Norway as Dean, Sogndal Folk College.

Lifang Wang
Programme Officer

Lifang assisted in implementing and coordinating APPEAL's regional projects on literacy and non-formal education programmes to promote lifelong learning. On secondment from UNESCO's International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education (INRULED), she plans to return to China and finish her Master's degree in Education. She will then continue her work at INRULED as a Programme Officer in education for rural development projects.

Tee Wee Ang
Consultant, RUSHSAP

Tee Wee Ang joined UNESCO Bangkok in July 2004 to assist in the implementation of regional Ethics of Science and Technology Programme activities. He was part of the organizing committee for the 4th Session of COMEST held in Bangkok, March 2005. He will be leaving the Bangkok office to work in UNESCO Paris with the Division of Ethics of Science and Technology on the Global Ethics Observatory.



UNESCO Bangkok's HIV/AIDS Coordination and School Health Unit was established in 2003, after the development of a regional strategy on HIV/AIDS. The aim of this Unit is to work across all sectors and at all levels to strengthen UNESCO's efforts in the area of HIV/AIDS and school health. We do this by providing advocacy and informational, technical and financial assistance to field offices and National Commissions in the Member states.

Over the past years, following our regional strategy, two training workshops for country-level HIV/AIDS focal points have been organized (in Hanoi in 2003 and Dhaka in 2005), supported with UNAIDS funding. The Unit has grown from two to five full-time staff. Funding levels have increased significantly. The number of full-time staff working on HIV/AIDS at the various country level offices has increased from one in 2002 to six in 2005. UNESCO has become more visible and more active in the response to HIV/AIDS at all levels.

Several regional initiatives have been undertaken, including the development of advocacy and teacher training materials for a stronger and better school response to HIV/AIDS, supported by UNAIDS and the Japanese Funds in Trust (JFIT). Recently, the arrival

of OPEC funding has boosted these efforts at the country level. Following grants from UNAIDS and CDC, UNESCO initiated work in the Mekong region in 2003 on reducing the vulnerability of one of its target groups, namely men who have sex with men (MSM), and is working with ethnic minority groups in the region with funds received from the ADB, DFID and UNAIDS. Activities have also been undertaken with UNICEF to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS on children and to ensure their access to education.

A lot has been achieved in the past years, but so much more needs to be done. Ministries of Education, teachers and parents in most countries are still not taking HIV/AIDS seriously enough. Collaboration with other agencies at the country level remains challenging in many places. I wish my successor all the best to continue the work of this Unit after my departure this September.

Jan Wijngaarden

Chief, HIV/AIDS Coordination
and School Health Unit

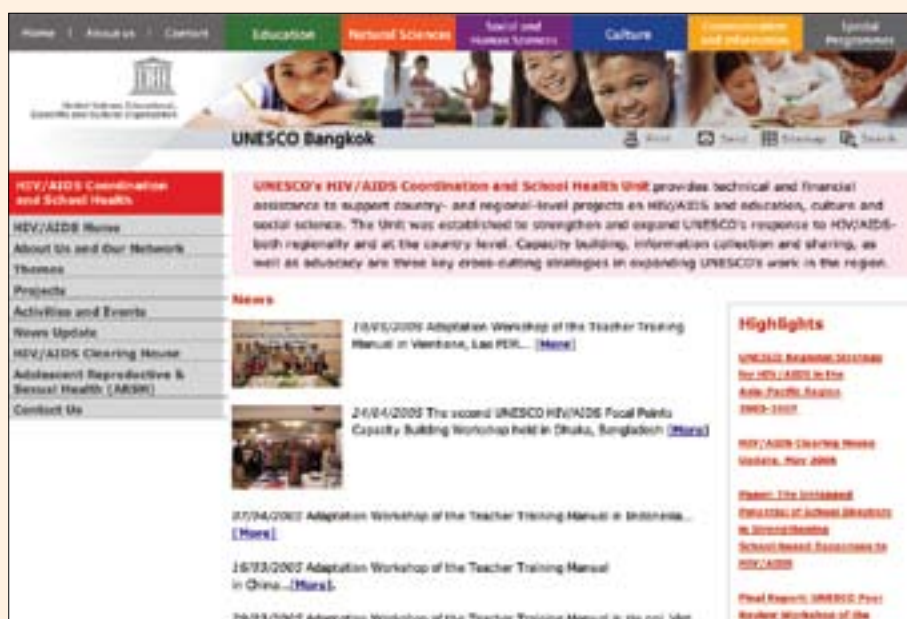
Combating HIV/AIDS through Information

Lack of knowledge, inaccurate information, and public ignorance about HIV/AIDS are reported as major obstacles faced by organizations or individuals working in HIV/AIDS prevention education in Asia and the Pacific. In addition, the spread of HIV/AIDS is combined with a high illiteracy rate in some countries, making prevention through education a rather challenging task.

In 2003, the HIV/AIDS Clearing House (CH) was set up to provide better access to information resources produced by UNESCO and its partners. By supplying both online and conventional information services, the CH aims to facilitate the flow of information between well-connected and hard-to-reach areas.

Meeting needs in well-connected areas

Online access to resources is the most cost-effective way to share or disseminate information. However, information overload becomes a growing and emerging problem to online users in well-connected Internet areas. Users in these areas need access to qualified and filtered information more than ever, since they may not have the time or



the skill to find needed information.

In response to this need, the Clearing House produces a quarterly "Calendar" of HIV/AIDS-related events in Asia and the Pacific, as well as a bi-monthly "Update" that alerts users about the latest information resources. It also publishes an annual bulletin on HIV/AIDS prevention in the Greater Mekong area.

At the Clearing House website (www.unescobkk.org/hiv aids), online users

can access searchable bibliographic databases, one on general HIV/AIDS issues and the other on teaching/learning materials. In addition, the site covers a database containing about 200 full text documents. It also leads users to other UNESCO HIV/AIDS clearing houses, such as the International Bureau of Education (IBE) International Clearing House on Curriculum for HIV/AIDS Preventive Education, and the IIEP Impact on Education Clearing House.

Reaching non-connected areas

For users in hard-to-reach areas, including poor urban communities that are deprived of access to the Internet or computers, the Clearing House maintains conventional library services, such as photocopying and referral, as well as literature searches. This ensures that all groups of users can benefit from UNESCO's facilities.

The Clearing House manages a collection of more than 2500 hard copy documents that cover a wide range of topics on HIV/AIDS and children, HIV/AIDS and education, human rights, and women. These materials were collected and classified based on an understanding of users' information needs and their preferred methods of acquiring references.

In addition, for those without English reading skills, the Clearing House also holds a collection of audiovisual materials in local languages. Through its network, the CH actively contacts other information producers to acquire these materials upon request.

Contact: Ngo Thanh Loan

E-mail: nt.loan@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/hivaids

Iran Adapts Regional HIV/AIDS Toolkit

The Islamic Republic of Iran has become the latest country to adapt UNESCO's "Toolkit for Ministries of Education on HIV/AIDS and Education." The Toolkit is designed to encourage and assist mid-level and senior officials in reinforcing commitment to HIV prevention education, raising awareness about the impact of HIV/AIDS on the education system, and collaborating to take action against the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Iran's Ministry of Education, UNESCO Tehran, and UNESCO Bangkok carried out the adaptation of the toolkit during a national workshop on 'Strengthening the Education Sector in the Islamic Republic of Iran.' As in other countries, the Iranian Government recognizes that the education system is a key actor in working to prevent HIV/AIDS from spreading further. Towards this aim, the Toolkit includes several information sheets on issues surrounding the relationship between HIV/AIDS and education, as well as a set of corresponding PowerPoint slides that enable MoE officials to present the information. The kit also contains references to additional sources of information and to other tools that might be helpful for advocacy. Yet officials must still ensure that the adaptation conforms to the context of the country.



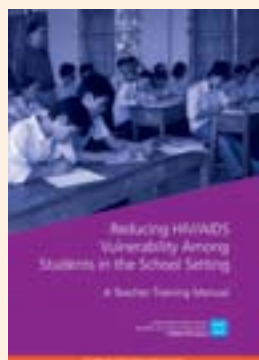
Since the Toolkit was created in late 2002, UNESCO Bangkok has collaborated with the Ministries of Education in 12 countries to adapt the kit: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Laos, Pakistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and Viet Nam. More countries (Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan) are in the pipeline. The adaptation process includes pre-workshop translation of the materials in the national language, adaptation of contents during 'in-country adaptation workshops,' printing, launching and distributing. Finally, the Toolkit is put to use to guide stronger Education sector responses.

Contact: Arun Mallik

E-mail: a.mallik@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/hivaids

New Teacher Training Manual Being Adapted Across Asia



After an extensive regional evaluatory process of teacher training needs in HIV/AIDS prevention education, UNESCO Bangkok has published a unique training

manual, *Reducing Vulnerability Among Students in the School Setting*. The manual, which has benefited from reviews by several experts in this region, is one of the first of its kind aimed at equipping teachers (pre-service and in-service) with knowledge, skills and methods for teaching about HIV/AIDS and related health topics. A number of Ministries of

Education (MOE) in the Asia and Pacific region are now adapting the manual to their country context for use in teacher training colleges.

Since it was published in March 2005, in-country adaptation workshops have taken place in China, Indonesia, Laos and Viet Nam. The adaptation process includes a pre-workshop translation of the manual in the national language, in-country adaptation workshops and a final editing in the national language. UNESCO plans to assist the MOEs of 9 more countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan and Thailand) with their adaptation process during the coming months. Links will be ensured to existing teaching-learning materials that have been developed by Ministries of Education and/or other organizations.

Contact: Arun Mallik

E-mail: a.mallik@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/hivaids



▲ The UNESCO/Indonesian MOE adaptation team

Sex Education: a Social Vaccine Against HIV/AIDS for Young People in Lao PDR

The Lao PDR Ministry of Education's response to HIV/AIDS is a good example of the proverb, 'Prevention is better than cure.' Although HIV/AIDS prevalence is low, with an estimated adult HIV prevalence rate in 2000 of only 0.05-0.06% (www.unlao.org/team/UNAIDS/page.htm), the Ministry of Education is working with its teachers to ensure that it remains this way.

The Ministry believes that in a multi-ethnic society such as Lao PDR, sex education can be a social vaccine to ensure that students avoid premarital and unsafe sex. The Ministry is promoting HIV/AIDS and sex education by training school principals and teachers, who will transfer their knowledge to students. By reducing risk behaviors, the Ministry expects to help keep the number of new HIV infections in Lao PDR low. These teacher training sessions, funded by the Japanese Funds-in-Trust and UNAIDS/UBW and managed by the Lao National Commission for UNESCO and UNESCO Bangkok, took place for three days each in Xiengkhouang, Luang Prabang and Bokeo provinces.

These provinces are characterized by a mix of poverty, strong outward migration and large concentrations of ethnic minorities. This, coupled with a general lack of HIV awareness (little or no media in their local language provide information about the disease), means there is a large potential for HIV to spread.

The training focused on interactive teaching methods, such as demonstrations, games, videos, and quizzes. Posters, brochures, pamphlets, CD-ROMs, VCDs, and cassettes were given to the participants as well. A

pre- and post-training questionnaire measured the participants' knowledge and awareness about HIV/AIDS, indicating a marked improvement in each of the three provinces. This means that 92 principals and teachers who reach up to 30,131 students now have a better understanding of HIV/AIDS, and are equipped with better skills to teach about HIV/AIDS and sexuality.

During the training, participants drew up a plan of action for their schools, which included:

1. To have HIV/AIDS training for students in rural schools;
2. To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of future training;
3. To produce and distribute HIV/AIDS materials throughout the country, and
4. To work closely with officials from health, information (radio), women and youth unions so to ensure that the dissemination of HIV/AIDS information is effective.

In conclusion, the Lao experience shows that using the education system can be an effective way of enhancing knowledge, perception and awareness on HIV/AIDS for large numbers of people.

Prepared by Heng Daovannary, General Secretary, Lao National Commission for UNESCO and Srisuman Sartsara, National Consultant for HIV/AIDS and School Health Programme in Thailand and Lao PDR, UNESCO Bangkok

E-mail: s.srisuman@unesco-bkk.org
Website: www.unesco-bkk.org/hivaids



▲ Picture showing school principals and teaching 'exchanging water' as a demonstration on how HIV is spread.

District	Number of secondary schools	Number of Teachers	Number of principals/ teachers who attended the training	Number of students whose teachers attended the training	Pre-test (%)	Post-test (%)	Percentage of positive change
Xiengkhouang	42	720	30	11,087	78.0	87.0	9.0
Luang Prabang	43	864	32	12,258	73.0	94.0	21.0
Bokeo	24	261	30	6,786	81.0	94.0	13.0
Total	109	1,845	92	30,131	77.3	91.6	14.3

Promoting Research Standards on HIV/AIDS and Trafficking

Both HIV/AIDS and trafficking in persons continue to pose serious problems in Asia. The enormous ethnic diversity of the region and social factors such as globalization, gender inequality, increasing population mobility and changes in the social fabric - especially of ethnic minority and rural cultures and societies - play important roles in increasing the vulnerability of certain groups to HIV/AIDS and trafficking.

Many ongoing interventions are not based on a sound understanding of the context and culture in which trafficking of persons or the transmission of HIV/AIDS occurs. Interventions are often based on individualistic medical theories about adopting healthier behaviors or preventing risk, ignoring constraints posed by, for example, traditional gender roles or poverty. Socio-cultural research has the potential to inform culturally appropriate and context-

sensitive interventions, yet significant gaps exist both in the research itself, and in its use in the design and delivery of HIV/AIDS and trafficking programmes.

For this reason, UNESCO Bangkok will convene an expert consultation from 19-21 September 2005 to explore the role socio-cultural research can and should play in the response to the epidemics of HIV/AIDS and trafficking in persons in Asia. This consultation is a joint effort of the HIV/AIDS Coordination and School Health Unit, the Regional Unit for the Social and Human Sciences and the Office of the Regional Adviser on Culture.

The consultation will bring to Bangkok experienced socio-cultural researchers from universities, research institutes and NGOs working in both the Asia-Pacific region and internationally. It aims to identify research priorities and ways to engender collaboration

between researchers and those involved in policy and programme development by discussing standards for ethics, methodology, collaboration and data utilization in the area of socio-cultural research related to HIV/AIDS and trafficking.

It is hoped the consultation will result in an agreed set of research priorities for both HIV/AIDS and trafficking, standards on the conduct of socio-cultural research in these areas and guidelines for governments, NGOs and donor agencies regarding the use of this research. Outcomes from the consultation will further be used by UNESCO Bangkok in advocating for more culturally appropriate interventions on HIV/AIDS and trafficking in the Asia region.

Contact: Praveena Gunaratnam

E-mail: g.praveena@unesco.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/hiv aids

Countries Finalize National Workplans to Combat HIV/AIDS

Twelve UNESCO offices in Asia and the Pacific have completed two-year national workplans to combat HIV/AIDS through education. The workplans feature activities such as the development of advocacy materials for senior policy-makers; capacity-building to implement effective education programmes; public awareness-raising through HIV prevention education; and strengthening of tools to measure the impact of prevention education.

The workplans were finalized as part of a capacity-building workshop that was co-organized by the Dhaka and Bangkok UNESCO offices. Thirty-two participants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Lao PDR, Pakistan, the Pacific, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam - as well as representatives from UNESCO Headquarters - attended the workshop, which was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 24-28 April 2005.

As a follow-up activity to the first workshop held in Hanoi in 2003, participants in this event were updated on UNESCO's responses to HIV/AIDS at global, regional and country levels, and briefed on the activities of each country's National

Commission. Participants were also apprised of the successes, challenges and failures of other countries' programmes.

The workshop was presented by several resource persons from affiliate UNESCO offices such as IBE, PEQ, IIEP and UNESCO Bangkok. Speakers from other organizations, including UNAIDS Bangladesh and CARE, also participated.

The last day of the workshop was spent discussing the implementation of the country workplans, which will be

supported via the OPEC Fund/UNESCO "Project on Mitigation of the HIV/AIDS Crisis in Asia through Education" (approved in March 2005). Covering twelve Asian and Arab countries, this joint initiative seeks to develop and scale up HIV prevention and stigma reduction programmes through the education sector, in partnership with other organizations.

Contact: Jan Wijngaarden

E-mail: j.wijngaarden@unesco.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/hiv aids





8-12 August 2005
Hanoi, Viet Nam

Capacity-building Workshop on Education Statistics and Indicators

Organized by UNESCO Bangkok's AIMS Unit in collaboration with UNESCO Hanoi and the Ministry of Education and Training, the workshop will focus on concepts of education statistics and indicators and their use in education planning. It aims to improve participants' skills in the preparation and implementation of educational development plans and their monitoring.

Contact: aims@unesco Bangkok.org

10-11 August 2005
Bangkok, Thailand

Quality Assurance Workshop

This workshop will focus on external quality assurance, with major implications for national governments in Asia. It will be based on the successful "Symposium on Strategic Choices for Higher Education Reform and Quality Assurance" organized by the World Bank and the Council in Bangkok in February 2004, and include perspectives on secondary and adult education as well.

Contact: g.johnston@unesco Bangkok.org

15-19 August 2005
Bangkok, Thailand

Regional Education Week

Organized by UNESCO Bangkok, the meeting will focus on capacity-building and information sharing with regard to new programmes, approaches and coordination mechanisms for education programme managers, as well as on more technical inputs for all education staff.

Contact: m.gupta@unesco Bangkok.org

23-24 August 2005
Kanchanaburi, Thailand

UNESCO Bangkok Cluster Staff Retreat

The objective of the retreat is to review the current focus and nature of work plans for the next biennium across sectors.

Contact: d.padilla@unesco Bangkok.org

14-16 September and 19-21 September
Bangkok, Thailand

Results-Based Management (RBM) Training

As part of its training throughout the region, the Bureau of Strategic Planning is organizing two three-day training sessions in results-based management for the Bangkok field office. These sessions offer further reinforcement of priorities to be identified during the August staff trainings and, as such, are not to be missed! They will also provide staff with an opportunity to expand upon previous RBM training and gather even more hands-on, practical experience. Contact: d.padilla@unesco Bangkok.org to reserve a spot at one of the sessions.

Contact: d.padilla@unesco Bangkok.org

5-10 September 2005
Chiangmai, Thailand

ICT in Education Toolkit Workshop

This 6-day workshop will offer Member State policy makers from Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand a first opportunity to use the new ICT in Education Toolkit. The innovative kit is designed to provide a systematic approach to integrating ICT into education. Updates on this workshop will be posted on the UNESCO website: www.unesco Bangkok.org/education/ict

Contact: b.vergeldedios@unesco Bangkok.org

October 27-29 2005
Bangkok, Thailand

Coalition of Cities Against Racism and Discrimination in Asia and the Pacific

Experts are meeting to finalize the Declaration and Ten-Point Plan of Action for the emerging "Coalition of Cities Against Racism and Discrimination in Asia and the Pacific." The formal launching of this important UNESCO initiative will take place in early 2006. The Bangkok Municipal Authority (BMA) plans to work with UNESCO to host the 2006 meeting, and thereafter act as Secretariat of the Coalition for the region. Associated public events may also take place during the October Experts' Meeting.

Contact: rushsap@unesco Bangkok.org

23-25 November 2005
Jakarta, Indonesia

Education for Sustainable Development Workshop at the Asia-Europe Environment Forum

Entitled "1/3 of Our Planet: What Can Asia and Europe Do for Sustainable Development?"

Contact: esd@unesco Bangkok.org

23 – 25 November 2005
Seoul, Republic of Korea

UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Conference in preparation for the 'World Conference on Arts Education'

High-level representatives of Ministries of Education and of Culture from the region, along with experts and representatives of NGOs working in this field, will take part in this preparatory regional conference for the March 2006 global conference to promote and strengthen arts education.

Contact: culture@unesco Bangkok.org

Selected recent publications and other resource materials. For a full list, visit www.unescobkk.org/e-library/publications

Regional Guidelines on Teacher Development for Pedagogy-Technology Integration



Advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have created unprecedented opportunities in the education field, and have had a profound effect on the way teachers teach and how learners learn. This publication presents a set of draft guidelines that highlights the new visions and guiding principles of pedagogy-ICT integration, and proposes a curriculum framework for professional development of teachers

towards ICT-pedagogy integration. Performance standards for teacher competency in ICT-pedagogy integration are featured. Implementation issues, with adequate emphasis on systems approaches and support structures, are also discussed.

Contact: m.lee@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/education/apeid

Mother Tongue-based Teaching and Education for Girls



A linguistic mismatch between school and community creates problems in both access to school services and the quality of those services. This advocacy brief argues that one of the principal mechanisms through which inequality is reproduced is language, specifically the language used as the medium of instruction. It urges policy-makers to consider how the learner's mother tongue holds the key to making schools more inclusive

for disadvantaged groups, especially for girls and women.

Contact: o.gankhuyag@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/gender

Evaluation of the Mobile Training Team Projects (1996-2003)



This final report provides a detailed examination of the mobile training team modality, which has been used by UNESCO for capacity-building within education over the last thirty years. The study looks at the effectiveness of the approach, and assesses how the training methodology can be put to best use in the future.

Contact: m.uemura@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/education/apeid

First Language First: Community-based Literacy Programmes for Minority Language Contexts in Asia



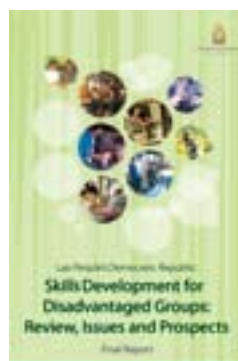
This publication provides policy makers, planners and practitioners with ideas for planning and organizing quality literacy programmes for minority people. It addresses education programmes that use learners' "first language first" as a medium of instruction for adults and children in various Asian contexts. The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 focuses on planning and strategies for implementing a sustainable multilingual literacy programme, while Part II contains

resource papers and examples of good practices from five countries, as well as issue papers written by specialists in the field.

Contact: r.darunee@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/education/appeal

Skills Development for Disadvantaged Groups: Review, Issues and Prospects



This report provides a comprehensive review of vocational skills development in Lao PDR. It gives particular attention to the specific needs of socially and economically excluded groups such as out-of-school youth and the rural poor. The work is a final report of the Lao Ministry of Education 2003-2004 study on the UNESCO Bangkok - IIEP supported project "Assisting the Design and Implementation of EFA Skills Development Plans: Skills Development to Meet the Learning Needs of the Excluded,"

which has shaped the skills development programme component of the Lao PDR National Plan of Action for Education for All.

Contact: m.nozawa@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/education/epi

United Nations Literacy Decade in Asia and the Pacific: Progress to Date



To promote the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) that was launched in 2003, UNESCO Bangkok has published a promotion kit on the UNLD that includes a regional progress report, a brochure, postcards, posters and a promotion video. The progress report examines topics to be addressed during the Decade, including gender, disability, mother tongue literacy, and community participation. Profiles of UNLD regional resource team members are also included.

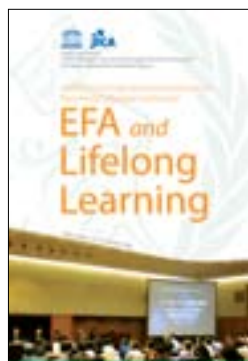
Contact: k.oyasu@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/education/appeal

RESOURCE MATERIALS

Selected recent publications and other resource materials. For a full list, visit www.unescobkk.org/e-library/publications

JICA Symposium Report



APPEAL and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) jointly organized an international symposium on non-formal education (NFE) in Tokyo on 13-14 October 2004. The overall objective was the promotion of EFA and the UNLD through NFE within the context of lifelong learning. This report documents the main outputs of the meeting. Specific attention is given to the role of NFE for lifelong learning, health and HIV/AIDS, income generation for rural development and environmental education for sustainable development.

Contact: k.oyasu@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/education/appeal

EFA Asia and the Pacific Resource Centre



A wealth of EFA-related documents and materials are now available online through the resource centre. Users can draw on regional expertise to aid in research, sound policy-making and implementation of education programming. This interactive database also allows users to access an extensive database

with an option to upload their own publications, contact details and other relevant materials. The Resource Centre and the EFA Website are managed by the Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Unit, which is the programming unit of the Asia-Pacific Office of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics Regional Advisor. Visit the resource center at www2.unescobkk.org/aims/EFADatabase/ResourceMain.htm

Contact: efa@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/efa

Community Radio Handbook



This Thai translation is now available to community radio practitioners and NGOs promoting community media throughout Thailand. The Handbook is a good source of information that helps to clarify various issues regarding community radio, from definition to financing to programming. Free copies are available upon request from the Communication and Information Unit.

Contact: c.lapapan@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=28

A Survey Report on Information Needs Assessment on ARH



As UNESCO enters its second cycle of Adolescent Reproductive health (ARH) programme support, this report presents findings from an assessment survey on current information needs for ARH education throughout the Asia and Pacific region. Topics examined include: important ARH issues requiring information, methods of disseminating information, Internet usage for ARH knowledge-sharing, production of teaching/learning

materials and other mechanisms for exchanging/discussing ARH information. This resource is an important tool for those involved in the planning and implementation of ARH programmes.

Contact: f.roque@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/arsh

A Situational Analysis of Education for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific Region and the Working Paper: Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development



With UNESCO's recent launch of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), the Situational Analysis provides a snapshot view of the extent to which ESD has been integrated across various educational settings. Moving from Environmental

Education to ESD will be a key challenge for the Decade. Youth, rural and indigenous communities, civil society, media and the private sector are all important stakeholders in meeting this challenge. The Strategy serves to help guide

the implementation of ESD throughout the Asia-Pacific region. It is an open document that is adaptable for revision according to the changing needs of stakeholders and emerging issues throughout the Decade of ESD. Both documents are available for download online at www.unescobkk.org/esd

Contact: d.elias@unescobkk.org

Website: www.unescobkk.org/esd