



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Associated Schools



UNESCO
Associated
Schools

First Collection of **Good Practices** for Quality Education





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UNESCO Associated Schools
2008

Acknowledgements

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In most Member States of UNESCO, ASPnet is co-ordinated under the auspices of the National Commission for UNESCO or the Ministry of Education. They offer intellectual and material support (policy making, staffing, resources, funding, etc.) to enable the ASP Network to assume its role as “a Quality Network for Quality Education in the 21st Century” as defined at the UNESCO ASPnet International Consultation of Experts (Berlin, 2004). Thanks to their long standing commitment and to the ASPnet International Co-ordination ensured by UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and thanks to the support of UNESCO Field Offices, Associated Schools continue to forge ahead on the path to improving Education For All (EFA) for present and future generations.

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Explanatory Note

This Collection of UNESCO Associated School Good Practices was prepared in response to the UNESCO Associated Schools (ASPnet) Strategy and Plan of Action 2004-2009. It reports on recent projects and initiatives conducted in support of quality education and it takes a brief look at how ASPnet ensures networking from local to global levels.

Associated Schools were invited in 2007 to complete a new ASPnet School Project Report Form which was designed by UNESCO. They were asked to report on their recent projects relating to one of the following **four major priority areas** in the field of education today:

- **Inclusive Education** identified by the Education for All (EFA) Dakar Framework for Action (2000) as one of the main strategies to address the crucial question of marginalisation and exclusion of children and young people and to serve as an input to the International Conference of Education (ICE) on Inclusive education: the way of the future (Geneva, Switzerland, November 2008)
- **Education for Sustainable Development** in line with the objectives of the International Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) declared by the United Nations General Assembly and for which UNESCO is the lead agency
- **Human Rights Education** in support of the World Programme for Human Rights Education and its first phase 2005-2007
- **Education in support of Intercultural dialogue** in favour of unity in diversity and the dialogue among civilizations.

It is obvious that there are many linkages and interrelations between these four topics and thereby the projects presented often deal with several of them.

Each school project has been presented in accordance with the following format:

- **Country, School, City, Project Title and Project Co-ordinator** (most often the teacher but not always specified)
- **Background:** information explaining why this particular project was conducted
- **Project objective(s):** its aims
- **Project implementation:** description of how the project was conducted and examples of activities carried out
- **Project results:** presentation of the main concrete and tangible results achieved
- **Impact of the project:** time and means did not allow for an in-depth analysis and measurement of actual impact but schools were asked to provide feedback on how students viewed their participation in the projects thereby providing some indication of how the projects impacted on them

- **You can do it too!** It is hoped that the projects presented will serve as a source of inspiration and lead to the conduct of similar initiatives, thereby ensuring a multiplier effect in support of quality education.

It is often said that an image or picture is worth a thousand words. Schools were therefore invited to send photographic material along with their project report forms. Hence, a selection of photographs received was made in an effort to better illustrate the implementation of the projects.

Since so many ASPnet Good Practices were received by UNESCO and only a sampling could be retained for this first collection, three main criteria were used for the present selection:

- relevance to the four themes mentioned above
- innovativeness of the project
- representation of all major world regions.

Submissions of Good Practices varied considerably in length. Some schools sent very detailed contributions whilst others were much more succinct and which explains sometimes the discrepancy in the length of the presentations.

Teachers were invited to submit good practices from their schools in one of the two working languages of UNESCO, English or French. Many of them made enormous efforts in order to comply with this request and all deserve special congratulations for their much appreciated contributions.

One of the unique characteristics of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network is that it operates at various levels. Hence, this collection includes the presentation of ASPnet Good Practices:

- at the **grassroots level** i.e. by individual Associated Schools in different countries
- at the **national level**, involving most, if not all, Associated Schools in a given country (Haiti)
- at the **regional level**, benefiting from the participation of Associated Schools from the same major geographical region (Asia/Pacific)
- at the **inter-regional level** reflecting the networking of Associated Schools from two different regions (Europe and Central Asia) and
- at the **international level**, involving Associated Schools in all parts of the world.

Acronyms

ASPnet	UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network, commonly called UNESCO Associated Schools
DESD	Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014)
EFA	Education For All
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GA	General Assembly
GVRP	Great Volga River Route Project: "Uniting the Seas (Baltic, Black and Caspian)"
IBE	International Bureau of Education
ICE	International Conference on Education
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
ILO	International Labor Organization
MDGs	(United Nations) Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
TST	"Breaking the Silence" – teaching about the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UN DCPCW	United Nations Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNLD	United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012)
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

Introduction

In the early 1950s, UNESCO set out to invite schools, around the world, to become associated with the Organization in a major effort to strengthen the humanistic, ethical, cultural and international dimensions of education. In the aftermath of the Second World War, it was obvious that education had a vital role to play if mentalities were to change and evolve so that the “force of reason” would overcome the “reason of force”.

The UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) was created in 1953. What started out as a small initiative, of some 30 schools in 15 Member States, has become one of the world’s most unique and largest networks consisting of an enormous variety of more than 8,000 institutions (public and private, urban and rural, big and small, academic and technical, high-tech and low-tech, ranging from pre-schools and primary to secondary schools and teacher training institutions) in 177 countries covering all parts of the world.

Over the past five decades and a half, UNESCO Associated Schools have proven to be a formidable vehicle for putting into practice resolutions adopted by the UNESCO General Conference and the UN General Assembly. ASPnet schools are ready and willing to embark on new projects which will help children and young people to tackle effectively current challenges identified by the United Nations system. Ever since it was launched the Network has remained pro-active. Associated Schools strive to be in the forefront of what is happening in the world and to pioneer and explore new frontiers of education rather than to remain in the back seat.

Although UNESCO Associated Schools vary considerably with regard to size, infrastructure and location, all of them share the same commitment to build peace in the minds of children and young people enabling them to become responsible and caring citizens from local to global levels.

However, UNESCO Associated Schools are less renowned for their numbers but rather for their capacity to reinforce the ethical and international dimensions of education thereby improving the quality of education for all. Associated School projects are multi-faceted and take into account such essential dimensions as:

- improving the content of education by making it more relevant and pertinent
- enhancing the learning process whereby students are the main actors and teachers the facilitators
- developing life skills and competencies which enable children and young people to succeed in a fast changing world of challenges and opportunities
- emphasizing creativity and imagination as well as developing the many talents to be found in each learner
- introducing cross-curricular and interdisciplinary approaches as well as team teaching and hence fostering a holistic approach to education
- improving the climate of the school
- reinforcing democratic principles

- involving parents and the local community
- benefiting and promoting a positive use of globalization for the enhancement of Education For All.

International Days, Years and Decades are declared by the UN GA in order to mobilize action in support of issues of international concern. Schools have an important contribution to make to ensure the observance of such proclamations and once again UNESCO Associated Schools are often amongst the first to take action. The same is true for the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, see Annexes, p. 62). If they are to be achieved, it is important that young people become aware of them and ASPnet can do much in this respect.

Furthermore, UNESCO's Geneva based Institute, the International Bureau of Education (IBE) will host (in November 2008) the International Conference on Education (ICE) on the issue of inclusive education to be attended by Ministers of Education from all continents.

Hence, this first collection of ASPnet Good Practices has been produced in order to:

- shed some valuable new light on how the Network is involved in striving to meet major educational challenges facing us today, such as inclusive education; and
- illustrate the benefits of globalization in support of quality education through local national, regional and international networking.

ASPnet was designed to have a multiplier effect through a wide and systematic diffusion of results achieved for the benefit of many other schools, teachers, students and community members. It is hoped that this selection of ASPnet Good Practices will serve as a source of inspiration to educators everywhere and encourage more efforts in support of quality education and a sustainable future for the survival of humanity.

In a world witnessing not only rapid changes but massive transformations, upheavals, and constant threats to peace and to security, urgent action is still required if education is to play the role that the founding fathers of UNESCO had envisaged *"That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfill in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern"*, Preamble, UNESCO Constitution.

The UNESCO Associated Schools Network was set up for this purpose and takes into account the four pillars of learning for the 21st Century: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, learning to live together. Let us take a look at some of their most recent innovations and achievements around the world.

1. UNESCO Associated Schools Good Practices for Quality Education at the **School Level**



> Inclusive Education

- Education for Sustainable Development
- Education in Support of Intercultural dialogue
- Human Rights Education

> Inclusive Education

One of the most serious issues facing many societies today is the large number of people who are excluded from meaningful participation in the economic, cultural, social, and political life of their communities. Such exclusion can derive from a number of factors such as poverty, age, gender, ethnicity, religion, special needs, etc. Many of these people are children and young people, who, from the very start, are deprived of the basic necessities and respect from others required for a decent life. Despite real progress since 2000 towards universal primary education, 72 million children are still not enrolled at all in school. More than half are girls. Seven out of ten live in sub-Saharan Africa or South and West Asia. Poverty and marginalization are major causes of exclusion. Households in rural or remote communities and children in urban slums have less access to education. Disabled children suffer from blatant educational exclusion – they account for one third of all out-of-school children. Working children, those belonging to indigenous peoples and linguistic minorities, nomadic children and those affected by HIV/AIDS are among the vulnerable groups. Some 37% of out-of-school children live in 35 states defined as fragile by the OECD, but these do not include all places facing conflict and post-conflict situations. In every case children are at enormous risk of missing out on an education.

However, the face of exclusion is different in every country: this is why governments urgently need to identify children unlikely to enrol in school. They also need to identify those who drop out early and those who are not reaching minimum mastery of the curriculum. Data that reflects the different profiles of the excluded send a powerful signal: being counted shows that each individual matters and has the right to an education.

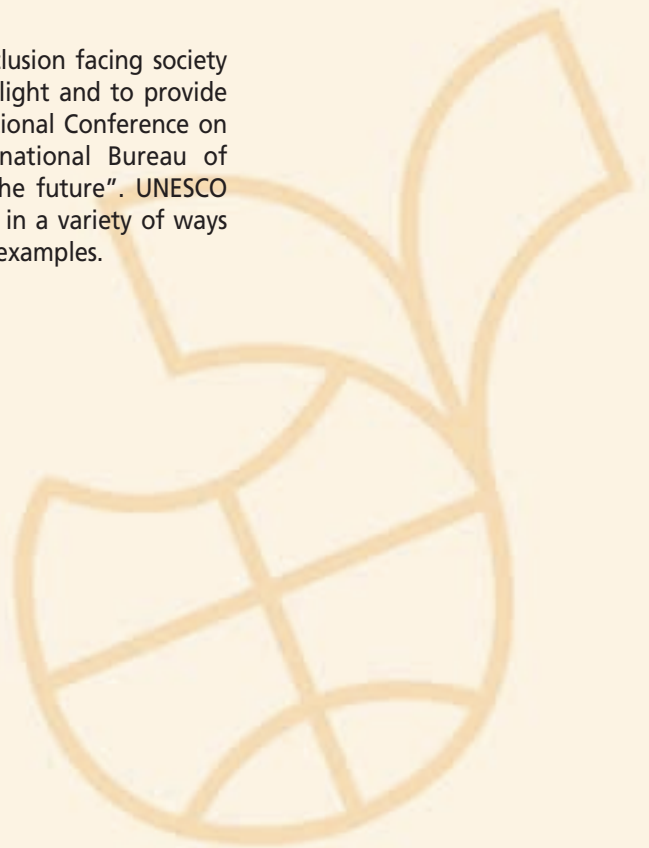
Inclusion is rooted in the right to education as enshrined in Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A number of treaties and normative instruments have since reaffirmed this right. Three deserve specific mention. *UNESCO's 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education* stipulates that States have the obligation to expand educational opportunities for all who remain deprived of primary education. The *1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* reaffirms the right to education for all and highlights the principle of free compulsory education. Finally, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the most widely ratified human rights treaty, spells out the right of children not to be discriminated against. It also expresses commitments about the aims of education, recognizing that the learner is at the center of the learning experience. This affects content and pedagogy, and – more broadly – how schools are managed.

The principle of inclusive education was adopted by the UNESCO World Conference on Special Needs Education (Salamanca, Spain, 1994) and was restated at the Dakar World Education Forum (Senegal, 2000). Inclusive education means that “...schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations...” (Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, 1994).

UNESCO's Guidelines for Inclusion (2005) define inclusion as *"a process of responding to the diversity of all learners by increasing participation and reducing exclusion within and from education. Inclusive education involves changes in content, approaches, structures and strategies and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children"*. From a policy perspective, it means taking a holistic approach to educational change and reforming the educational system's way of addressing exclusion. This implies a multi-sectoral approach to education and ensuring coherent strategies to achieve sustainable change at three key levels: a) policy and legislation, b) attitudes within society and communities and c) teaching and learning practice, management and assessment. It is an overarching strategy to address previously compartmentalized yet inter-linked sources of exclusion, such as poverty, cultural and social marginalization and discrimination due to gender, linguistic and ethnic background, disabilities and HIV-AIDS.

UNESCO affirms that promoting inclusive education systems is the key to reaching out to all of those who are excluded within and from education. Education Systems must meet diverse needs of all learners, so that each of them can exercise his/her human right to satisfy his/her learning needs and achieve his/her human development. Within the framework of its mandate, UNESCO is committed to supporting Member States in providing education to all citizens, but particularly marginalized and excluded groups, to ensure an end to discrimination in their access to as well as active participation and success in all forms of education.

Conscious of the many ramifications of marginalisation and exclusion facing society today, UNESCO Associated Schools are helping to reverse this plight and to provide Education For All. Furthermore, the 48th session of the International Conference on Education (Geneva, 2008, organised by the UNESCO's International Bureau of Education – IBE) focuses on *"Inclusive education: the way of the future"*. UNESCO Associated Schools are engaged in fostering inclusive education in a variety of ways and in different parts of the world as described in the following examples.



Lebanon

School:
Al-Ahliah School

City:
Beirut

Project title:
Including students with learning
disabilities in regular classrooms

Project co-ordinator:
Ms Heba Dasuk



Including students with learning disabilities in regular classrooms

Background

The school opened its doors to children with learning disabilities in an attempt to eliminate stigmas of discrimination and further exclusion and to provide them with a safe and inspiring learning environment.

Project objective

- to offer psychological, social and academic support to students with learning disabilities
- to enhance their insertion into the mainstream of education and society
- to sensitize the entire school community to the needs of children with learning disabilities.

Project implementation

This school was one of the first in the country to offer inclusive education to children with learning disabilities. The teaching methods used were mainly based on the multi-sensory approach as well as a variety of other learning techniques. The valuable experience gained by this school over the past few years can be very useful to other schools (both public and private) as well as to non-governmental organizations.

Project results

- students with learning disabilities were able to cope with the regular academic curriculum and became independent learners
- effective insertion at school of students with learning disabilities.

Impact of the project

Students without learning disabilities became more aware of this phenomenon and offered help, assistance and friendship which made a positive impact on students with learning disabilities. Families began to consider the school more as a partner willing to offer special support for their children with special needs.

You can do it too!

You can also open your doors to children with learning disabilities by working closely with teachers and specialists for students with special needs. Such integration facilitates social inclusion and cohesion and reinforces the role of the school to provide Education For All and a more caring and considerate environment for all learners.

"I am very happy with the support teacher and I am able to finish my work."

*Karim Osman
(Asperger's Syndrome student)*

"I now have friends and am more accepted in class."

*Mohammed Zein
(ADHD student)*

Education and integration of street children

Background

Even today there are still more than 72 million children who are not enrolled in school. Many of them can be found working at home, in fields, factories, mines and in the street. Plagued by crime, theft, drugs and violence, street children are particularly vulnerable. This school was determined to do something about their plight.

Project objectives

- to provide an elementary education to street children,
- to orient street children towards professional training to enable them to learn a trade and earn a living
- to reintegrate street children into their families.

Project implementation

Fifty-three street children were identified and forty-nine of them, aged between 7 and 16 years old, were involved in this two-year project along with six teachers and the Youth Association attached to the “Venez-Voir” school. This project not only aimed to reintegrate street children back into school but also to reunite them with their families who had rejected them. This was a very important dimension of the project. The giving up of parents, the dropping out of school and the abandonment of children by their families, undermines society and leads to more poverty and to insecurity.

This project proved to be a major innovation for the school. It was conducted through team work and with the assistance of a social worker. It shed valuable light on the motivation of the children, the negative feelings developed by the parents concerning their children and the lack of communication between them. The street children had several interviews with the social worker and the pedagogical advisor who helped them to understand the reasons for their difficulties and motivated them to reintegrate society.

Project results

- 49 out of 50 children came back to school
- 10 out of 15 children went back to live with their families
- of the 9 students enrolled in fourth grade, five were admitted into sixth grade
- 49 students were glad to be back in school
- parents became more attentive towards their children.

Impact of the project

The street children welcomed this project and they felt that it had given them a second chance. Teachers were convinced that it was very worthwhile and should be multiplied. The Head of the School was pleased with the results achieved.

You can do it too!

This example from Gabon shows that much can be achieved with limited means by mobilizing the entire school community including parents and experienced street children specialists. It would be helpful if many more schools could address the issue of street children and take appropriate action to eliminate their plight.

Gabon

School:
Ecole publique « Venez-voir »

City:
Libreville

Project title:
Education and integration of street children

Project co-ordinator:
Mr Alain Biboutou Lipobo



“Before I became involved in this project I was feeling lost and without a future. I started to drink and smoke like my other friends in the street. This project gave me new faith in the future and I am thankful to UNESCO and to the “Venez-Voir” school.”

*Landoyi
(student and former street child)*

Rwanda

School:
Lycée Notre-Dame de Cîteaux

City:
Kigali

Project title:
Promoting a Culture of Peace in
support of inclusive education

Project co-ordinator:
Ms Chantal Mukarutabana



Promoting a Culture of Peace in support of inclusive education

Background

This project was set up to deal with the aftermath of the genocide which raged through the country, killing some 800,000 persons. By propagating a culture of peace, the main idea was to enable each student to feel well integrated in both the school and the community. The point of departure of this project was embedded in the tragic experience endured by everyone during the genocide.

Project objectives

- to reinforce the notion of belonging to the school and to the community
- to promote a culture of peace
- to contribute to the well-being of all.

Project implementation

Launched in 2004, this project will have a duration of a minimum of ten years. Each year it involves some 700 students aged between 11 and 19 years old, 30 teachers and some 500 parents. Through discussions and creative activities students were given the opportunity to express themselves and to exchange their views and concerns in accordance with the proverb “The more heads, the more ideas, the more solutions to the various problems”.

This culture of peace project enables each student to feel well integrated at school and within the community. All stigmas and any notion of exclusion (on account of origin, region, religion, colour, ethnicity, etc.) are eliminated. The activities are based on establishing and ensuring mutual respect, promoting rights and assuming duties. Such an approach opens horizons and facilitates exchanges between students.

Project results

- tolerance and impartiality
- largely improved school results at all levels (intellectual, moral, school climate etc.)
- mutual respect amongst students
- increased solidarity and helping each other

Impact of the project

This project is improving the mentality of the students. They are getting along well with each other and help one another without prejudice. In addition to learning to know, learning to do and learning to be, they are learning to live TOGETHER. Such a process facilitates their acceptance which in turn enables them to study serenely and to succeed. This project develops also capacity building for teachers. The local media cover it regularly.

You can do it too!

There are many forms of exclusion – some quite subtle like group exclusion or school bullying and others very obvious. By introducing a culture of peace project in support of social inclusion, the overall climate of the school and all types of relationships can be greatly improved as well as the learning process within the classroom. Due to a demanding curriculum in secondary school education, there is often little time for discussion and an exchange of views and opinions

“This culture of peace project makes us feel good about school. When you feel at ease, you study more seriously and get better results. This project has also given us hope for the future and more patience with our school mates and families.”

*Béata Kamayirese
(student)*

on such crucial matters as exclusion, discrimination and stigmas. However, by planning some creative and interdisciplinary activities to discourage and eliminate all forms of intolerance, your school can improve its climate and success rate as well as make a formidable contribution to learning to live together in peace and in harmony.

“Mixed Voices” creative writing and translation workshops for students from abroad

Background

The city of Belfort is located in the Eastern part of France. Like many other communities in the country, it receives immigrants, particularly from North Africa with many Arabic-speaking families. A sound and effective insertion of children and young people from abroad is an urgent social and educational priority. Hence, special care was taken to develop a new approach to enhance social inclusion, at school and in the community.

Project objectives

- to develop an innovative approach to facilitate the integration of recently arrived immigrant children and youngsters into the French school system and society
- to develop a better awareness and appreciation of the language and culture of both the host country and the country of origin.

Project implementation

The teachers of French and Arabic decided to set up a special creative writing and translation workshop for some 20 Arabic-speaking students aged between 12 and 16 years old. The first workshop comprised: explanations of literal translations, bilingual (French/Arabic) writing exercises based on texts studied and the reading of the original works. This first session was deemed successful with regard to the translations and cultural exchanges made. It proved empowering for the students who were proud of their new abilities. However, the organisers felt that it was necessary to develop new methods to facilitate and improve French language learning.

Consequently, the two teachers decided to emphasize interactive learning between the mother tongue, Arabic, and French, the language of the host country. During each lesson, priority was given to consolidating the mother tongue whilst drawing attention to some of the similarities as well as differences with regard to the second language. The students broadened their linguistic capacity in both Arabic and French and fully realized and appreciated the importance of both languages in pursuing their education. At the same time, they became more conscious of the cultural richness of Arabic and French literature and literary texts. In this respect, the objective was to sensitize students to the universal humanistic dimension of literary works. Such a comparative and interactive approach proved to be effective and the students,

“I liked to translate the texts, to learn how to read and recite them in my mother tongue and in French. Sometimes I showed my work to my parents and we discussed it together. I progressed well in French.”

*Ilhem Hassaine
(student)*

France

School:
Collège Simone Signoret

City:
Belfort

Project title:
“Mixed Voices” creative writing and translation workshops for students from abroad

Project co-ordinator:
Mr Gérard Oustric



who took part in subsequent workshops, benefited from a net improvement in their scholastic results. The next session was scheduled for January 2008.

Project results

- improved adaptation of newly arrived students into the school community and in regular classes
- increased self-confidence and higher school motivation of Arabic-speaking students
- overall improvement of school results, due to participation in the workshops.

Impact of the project

There was a high level of satisfaction among the students due to the positive results achieved as well as the revalorization of their language and culture of origin. During the annual end-of-school celebration the families of the Arabic-speaking students were proud of the presentation of the literary texts made by their children. The school Principal as well as other teachers recognized the worth and value of this initiative and the regional authorities (Conseil Général) provided some financial support. The activities and results were also presented to the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, France) and several teams of experts from research institutes visited the workshops.

You can do it too!

Many societies in the world are becoming multi-cultural which offer opportunities for enriching exchanges and cultural creativity. However, unfortunately this trend sometimes leads to tensions, discrimination and prejudice. Hence, the school has a vital role to play to facilitate the inclusion in society of children and young people (and their parents) from different cultures and linguistic backgrounds. It is essential for students from abroad to learn the language of the host country as quickly as possible. It is equally important to valorize their own language and to make meaningful linkages between both cultures. As revealed by this project, team teaching (involving teachers from both cultures) and an interactive approach can lead to excellent results.

"It was interesting to compare the two cultures from texts in the two languages. I understood better the value of French literature and I also understood better certain aspects found in Arabic poetry and writings. It became obvious to me that all human beings have similar feelings."

*Manele Charik
(student)*



> Education for Sustainable Development

Education for sustainable development (ESD) has its roots in the history of two distinct areas of concern of the United Nations system – education and sustainable development. ESD is a lifelong endeavour which challenges individuals, institutions and societies to view tomorrow as a day that belongs to all of us, or it will not belong to anyone.

The concept of sustainable development emerged from the United Nations early involvement in the environmental movement. Much of today's work in sustainable development can be traced back several decades. Many milestones have marked the journey towards sustainable development including the landmark 1972 United Nations Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, which led to the setting up of many environmental protection agencies and in particular the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Within 10 years of the Stockholm conference, the international community started to realize that treating environmental concerns in isolation of development needs, such as grinding poverty for a large part of humanity, was not going to serve either the environment or people. Hence, by the mid 1980s the United Nations launched a search for a larger strategy to address both the needs of society and the environment. In 1987 with its report "Our Common Future", the Brundtland Commission (chaired by Ms. Gro Brundtland, former Prime Minister of Norway) defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Twenty years after the Stockholm Conference, the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1992, also called the "Earth Summit", gave high priority in its Agenda 21 to the role of education in pursuing the kind of development that would respect and nurture the natural environment. It focused on the process of orienting and re-orienting education in order to foster values and attitudes of respect for the environment and envisaged ways and means of doing so. Thus the main points of the sustainable development concept are defined by Agenda 21, the Action Programme for the 21st Century adopted by governments at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. By the time of the Johannesburg (South Africa) World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002, the vision broadened to encompass social justice and the struggle against poverty as key principles of development that is sustainable. The human and social aspects of sustainable development meant that solidarity, equity, partnership and cooperation were as crucial as scientific approaches to environmental protection. In addition to re-affirming the educational objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (2000) and the Education for All Dakar Framework for Action (2000), the Summit proposed a "Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" (DESD) as a way of signalling that education and learning lie at the heart of approaches to sustainable development.

The 2002 Johannesburg Summit helped in deepening the commitments towards sustainable development at all levels, from the local to the global. The Summit

- Inclusive Education
- > Education for Sustainable Development
- Education in Support of Intercultural dialogue
- Human Rights Education

affirmed its collective determination to promote the pillars of sustainable development – economic development, social development and safeguarding the environment – as interdependent and mutually reinforcing whilst taking into account cultural contexts. Resolution 59/237, declaring the ESD Decade for 2005-2014, was adopted in December 2002 by the UN GA. UNESCO has the task of promoting the Decade, which aims to enhance sustainable skills and behaviour, inspired by creative and critical ways of thinking, in order to encourage the resolution and management of challenges that stand in the way of sustainable development.

The DESD is the latest step in the long United Nations history of supporting both education and sustainable development. This Decade represents a major milestone in worldwide efforts to integrate the principles, values and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning. The environmental, social, cultural and economic implications are enormous and call for a transformation of mentalities, behaviour, ways of living and ways of caring.

Thus, ESD lies at the heart of the quest to solve the problems threatening our collective future – such as poverty, nutrition, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation, global warming, urban decay, inordinate population growth, gender inequality, health-related issues, armed conflict, violence and the violation of human rights.

ESD is a vision of education that seeks to balance human and economic well-being with cultural traditions and respect for the earth's natural resources. Moreover, it is closely linked to the eight UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (see Annex).

Thus, ESD has come to be seen as a process of learning how to make decisions that consider the long-term future of the economy, ecology and equity of all communities. Mid-way into the DESD, a major World Conference on ESD – “Moving into the Second Half of the UN Decade” is due to take place in Bonn, Germany, in March 2009 in order to review results achieved and define remaining challenges to be overcome.

It is relevant to recall the pioneering role of ASPnet. In the mid 1970s the fourth theme to be added to its main topics of study was “man and the environment”, which became ESD in 2002. Hence, it is only natural to find Associated Schools in the forefront to make sure that this Decade will serve as a major turning point in integrating sustainable development throughout the curriculum and throughout life, and thereby contributing to a better future for all.

The following good practices give an indication of ASPnet's contributions to the UN DESD at both primary and secondary school levels of education.

A Field for the School

Background

A field near the school was used as a nature trail on the occasion of the “Dorfkulturtag” (village cultural celebrations) and afterwards it was donated to the school. For several years, the students have been using this field of some 3,000 square meters, for a variety of activities connected to the concept of sustainability. For example, all of the students participate in practicing organic farming. They learn how to sow seeds, cultivate and reap the harvests which consist of potatoes, corn, sunflowers, sugar beets and herbs as well as endemic grains such as einkorn and emmer (which are usually no longer planted). Machine work in the field is done by parents and the seedlings are provided by the community. With the goods of the harvest, the children bake bread and cook meals as part of their curriculum. During the winter season, when the field lies dormant, the pupils work on different projects related to sustainable development and in accordance with the special theme of the year.

Project objectives

- to learn and practice the concept of sustainability
- to become familiar with organic farming through hands-on activities
- to develop self-reliance
- to reflect on sustainability with regard to other continents

Project implementation

In 2007, the main theme of the Field Project was devoted to “Africa”. By selecting a different continent or country, young children understand better notions such as global interdependence, fair trade and sustainable development. They also gain the feeling of belonging to one world and develop attitudes of caring and sharing.

In small working groups, children discussed living conditions in different African geographical zones – desert, savannah, rain forest, etc. Pupils made a comparative study on what grows in Africa and not in Europe and vice-versa. They observed that millet, sweet potatoes and sweet corn were common in both continents. Another important topic was water and its many related vital issues. Students learned about food production and processing, nature conservation, sustainability and living conditions in Africa.

Project results

- acquisition of knowledge and practical skills conducive to practising sustainability
- good co-operation between children, parents, teachers and community members in support of sustainability
- exhibition, play and publication about “Africa” and a better understanding and appreciation of this continent
- good media coverage by the company “Fenster zur Welt” (“Window on the World”) helpful in raising funds for the future development of the project

Impact of the project

Students realized that cultivating a field touches on many topics and that it is indeed an interdisciplinary project cutting across many school subjects such as biology, geography, ecology, history, language and even music! All pillars of sustainability – economic, ecological, social and the cultural dimensions were covered. The project focused on experience-based learning methods which enable students to learn by doing and to put into practice the values of sustainable development and fair trade. Creativity was another essential component of the

Germany

School:
Josef-Guggenmos-Grundschule

City:
Irsee

Project title:
A Field for the School

Project co-ordinator:
Ms Waltraud Schümann





project. At the end of each year the pupils write and perform a play taking into account the various topics covered.

This Project seemed to attain its objective of promoting ESD with the following impacts:

- pupils practice sustainable development in their everyday life and develop a better understanding of global interdependence
- children take pride in living in a sustainable way and develop empathy for people in other parts of the world
- students' comprehension of somewhat complex and theoretical issues is facilitated through learning by doing
- the project promotes effective interaction between pupils, parents, teachers and community members and provides mutual benefits
- the Project is the recipient of several regional and national awards (e.g. Zötler-Umweltpreis 2006)
- the UN DESD has given recognition to this Project.

You can do it too!

It is not always easy to sensitize young children to such complex notions as sustainability, fair trade, interdependence and the global sharing of resources. Furthermore, your school might be located far away from fields and the countryside. However, this does not prevent you, the pupils, teachers or parents from creating your own "field" by bringing seedlings to school which can be planted and cared for in the classroom and serve as a point of departure for introducing young children to a wide range of issues related to sustainable development, optimum use of resources and the need for solidarity, locally and globally.

Japan

School:
National IKEDA
Senior High School attached
to Osaka Kyoiku University

City:
Ikeda

Project Title:
Ikeda Global Studies
for the 21st Century

Project Co-ordinator:
Mr Naohiro Ii

Global Studies for the 21st Century

Background

In many schools in Japan, the goal of education is mainly cognitive i.e. to acquire knowledge and capacity building for solving problems. However, ESD requires changes in attitudes and behaviour. Hence, this project was conceptualized and launched in order to enhance the overall learning process in support of new attitudes and action for sustainable development.

Project objective

- to enable students to understand the concept of sustainable development, in a practical way, and to become actively involved in contributing to it.

Project implementation

Many teachers from various subjects took part in this interdisciplinary project which involved the acquisition of new ideas, values, attitudes and behaviour. It consisted of five main components:

- learning about the environment, poverty, human rights and World Heritage
 - participatory learning through workshops and hands-on activities
 - research and discussion
 - preparation of presentations of learning outcomes
 - exchanges with other countries (China, Republic of Korea, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam).
- These areas were covered in study groups. Students and teachers worked closely together.

Students took a real interest in the learning process and not only grasped many of the issues of sustainable development facing the world today but began to understand, on their own, how to deal effectively with them.

Project results

The school developed its own evaluation system to measure effectively and objectively what the students had learned and which can be summarized as follows:

- greater understanding of the many linkages and factors related to achieving sustainable development
- increased interest in society
- heightened capacity to study independently
- a shift from being an onlooker to a concerned and caring person
- a feeling of togetherness and elimination of prejudice
- acquisition of values of truth, respect, faith and interest in pursuing such attributes in the future
- improved English proficiency

“Through Education for Sustainable Development, I learned that there are many children in the world who are denied their human rights. They are forced to live in terrible conditions, extreme poverty, poor health, no access to education, the risk of HIV infection, etc. I want to open people’s eyes to the world and encourage them to assume their responsibilities.”

*Minami Takada
(student)*



Impact of the project

This project was evaluated by the community. Some of the local schools asked the students to present their achievements and their roles in contributing to sustainable development. The project helped the students to develop attitudes in support of sustainable development and a sustainable future. Their motivation to study English increased as shown by a special evaluation conducted by the Super English Language High School (a project conducted by the Japanese Ministry of Education).

You can do it too!

In planning and conducting new projects, special attention should be given to evaluation. Specific assessment instruments can be developed for each project. Good use can also be made of existing tools and methodologies in order to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes, outlooks and behaviour. Further assistance can often be obtained from local educational personnel, universities and/or research centres.

Responsible Consumerism for Sustainable Development

Background

As a UNESCO Associated School, teachers take part in annual meetings of the Spanish ASP network which provides a forum for the presentation of activities conducted. Having decided to contribute to ESD, this school focussed its attention on concrete facets of it, relevant to their community as well as to countries with fewer resources.

Project objectives

- To sensitize young people to the need to ensure sustainable development and to take concrete action in three main areas:

Spain

School:
Centro Escolar Balder

City:
Los Rozas de Madrid

Project Title:
Responsible consumerism
for sustainable development

Project Co-ordinator:
Science Department
of the School

- to become aware that it is possible to achieve sustainable development
- to learn to become responsible consumers
- to seek alternative sources of energy and improve the use of land



Project implementation

The main emphasis of this project was placed on enabling students to reflect on the advantages and challenges of sustainable development, responsible consumerism and an equal sharing of the world's resources. It comprised a number of hands-on activities. With a view to promoting responsible purchasing habits, students made observations in supermarkets and in their families. They used the motto "SOS" (Solidarity, economic Order and Sustainability) and paid special attention to perishable food products and the consumption of antibiotics. Research was conducted on alternative energy sources which are effective in helping to preserve the environment, especially the benefits of solar energy and its economic, ecological and financial ramifications. Students made two maquettes – a solar panel and a solar kitchen – which worked perfectly. Discussions were held on the impact of tourism on the environment, the economic and social aspects of globalization and the increasing gap between the rich and the poor nations. They also made plans to recuperate some small urban lots and render them more ecological and user friendly.

The project benefited from the participation of the following experts: a promoter of solar energy, a representative from the Town Hall of Las Rozas, a representative from the non-governmental organization "Pharmacists without Borders", a UN expert in sustainable development and a local journalist.

"This project, undertaken throughout the year, was very interesting. From a scientific and cultural standpoint, it enabled me to deepen my knowledge about areas which I knew little about. This project was great and unforgettable."

*Carlos Hervás
(student)*

Project results

After the project, the students agreed that:

- sustainable development is possible but it must be based on equality and take into account cultural contexts
 - responsible consumerism is a must and one has to be aware of the notion of supply and demand and the needs of other countries
 - the use of solar energy is beneficial and economical in the medium-term
 - recuperation and a good use of waste land around the school can enhance the environment
- The results of the project were reported on in the press.

Impact of the project

The project resulted in the students' firm commitment in support of sustainable development. They realized that they could do something immediately to improve their consumer behaviour.

You can do it too!

The need to consume wisely and to seek and apply environmentally-friendly sources of energy are essential features of responsible behaviour and of ESD. By conducting activities in the community and in the family, students can observe and collect data which will help them to become more conscious and responsible consumers and to demonstrate solidarity in favour of those with fewer resources. By building maquettes, students can learn how solar panels are made and to understand better the ecological and medium-term economic benefits of such natural energy sources, thereby contributing to capacity building in support of a sustainable future. The involvement of local specialists and resource persons can also enhance the project and make it more interesting and stimulating for students.

Wil Forum for Sustainable Development

Background

This Project was initiated within the framework of the UN DESD (2005-2014) and was planned for a ten-year period. It is based on the concept of organizing a series of fora on specific facets of sustainable development for the school, the wider community and for other local schools thereby ensuring a multiplier effect. The planning of each Forum calls for an interdisciplinary approach, research, reflection, organizational skills and strategy.

Project objectives

- to sensitize students and the general public to the concept of sustainable development
- to become actively involved in promoting sustainable development

Project implementation

The first Forum dealt with responding to the question – “A sustainable energy policy – what is it?” The Swiss Minister of Energy, Moritz Leuenberger, accepted to take part in the Forum which led to even more intensive preparations across the curriculum. However, since the Forum dealt with the energy question, the teachers of physics were particularly involved.

Every two years another Forum is scheduled to take place, thereby giving ample time to prepare each one adequately. The next Forum in 2008 will focus on responding to the question “A policy of economic sustainability – What is it?” and it will involve mainly teachers of social studies, economics and civics.

A series of conferences is foreseen prior to each Forum. The first one will focus on “Sustainable development – an economic option to be taken seriously”, to be followed up by a conference on “Sustainable development at the international level – what does it mean and what does it signify for Switzerland?” On the day before the Second Forum, a lecture will be given on “Ecological and economic aspects of sustainable development”.

In 2010 the main topic will be devoted to “A policy of environmental sustainability – What is it?” with many contributions from biology and chemistry classes. The last two fora foreseen will concentrate on “A policy for development and sustainable peace – What is it?” (2012) and the last one (2014) “A retrospective and prospective review of the DESD 2005-2014” involving respectively mainly history and geography teachers and teachers of philosophy and pedagogy.

“The Forum gave students the possibility of asking questions directly to the Minister which broadened our perspectives and gave us an unforgettable political experience.”

*Sonja Enz,
(student)*

Project results

- sensitization of students, teachers and parents to sustainable development
- involvement of politicians, economists, decision makers and those responsible for culture
- enhanced reputation of the school due to its dynamic commitment to ESD through WIFONA and other interdisciplinary activities
- good television, radio and press coverage
- a more dynamic UNESCO Associated School

Impact of the project

Some 1,000 students (aged between 16 and 20 years old), teachers and community members took part in the 2006 Forum and it is expected that an even higher number will participate in the next one which will also include parents, journalists and business people.

Switzerland

School:
Kantonschule Wil

City:
Wil

Project Title:
WIFONA (Wil Forum for Sustainable Development)

Project Co-ordinator:
Mr Beat Steiger





This Project is of long-term duration, involving many teachers and it targets the incorporation of sustainable development across the curriculum. It has also been designed to have an impact on other schools (whose teachers and students are invited to attend the Forum) and on the local community. As the Project develops the WIFONA (Wil Forum for Sustainable Development) foresees other types of action as well, in support of sustainable development.

In preparing the first Forum some of the students and teachers met with the President of the Swiss Confederation and the fact that the Minister of Energy attended the Forum proved to be empowering to the young people.

You can do it too!

There is still time! We are only in the fourth year of the UN DESD. If you have not yet scheduled events and activities to support it with a view to integrating this vital dimension of education into the curriculum, you can start now! Since sustainable development touches on such a wide range of issues, a special theme could be selected for each remaining year of the Decade. Youth empowerment is also an important feature of ASPnet action and the involvement of policy makers and other important and responsible people can be very effective, although not always easy to ensure.

> Education in Support of Intercultural Dialogue

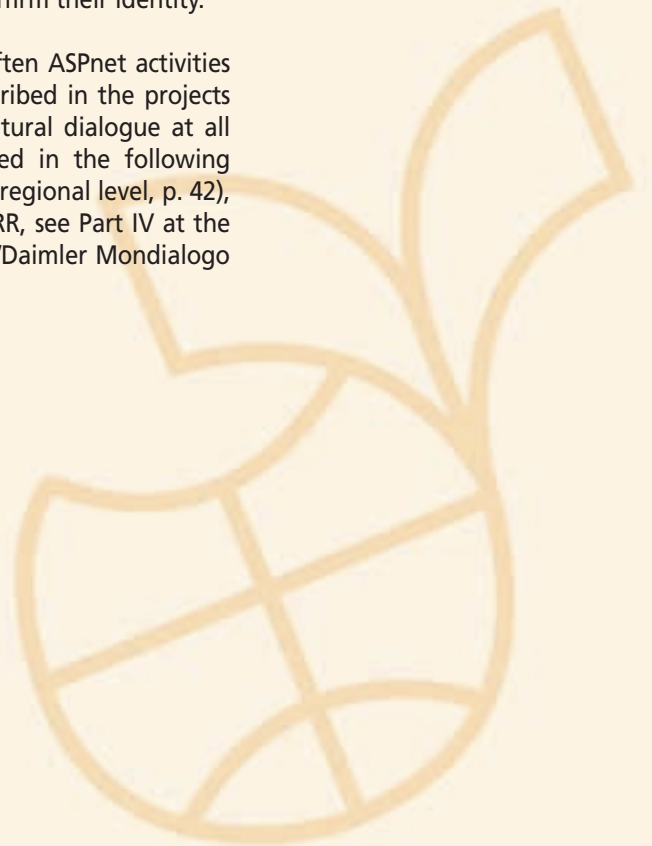
As we entered the 21st Century there was much hope for real and lasting peace. The year 2001 was declared as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations. In September of that same year, the International Bureau of Education (IBE, Geneva) devoted its International Conference on Education to the topic of "Learning to Live Together" at which some of the valuable work undertaken by UNESCO Associated Schools was presented. Two months later the UNESCO General Conference adopted the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity which proclaimed that "...cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature".

However, before the end of 2001, new and unprecedented waves and forms of violence, armed conflict and intolerance broke out. And it became all the more necessary and urgent to establish and re-establish a true and meaningful intercultural dialogue at all levels and in all parts of the world.

Once again, ASPnet teachers and students are rising to the challenge of entering into contact with each other, transcending borders, cultures, and languages in a sincere effort to get to know each other better. Whilst learning about other lifestyles, intercultural dialogue enables young people to learn more about their own culture, traditions and customs, to deepen their cultural roots and to reaffirm their identity.

Furthermore, many societies are becoming multi-cultural and often ASPnet activities focus on local situations advocating "unity in diversity" as described in the projects below. In view of the urgency to intensify and ensure intercultural dialogue at all levels, further examples of ASPnet contributions are presented in the following sections devoted to World Heritage Education (see Part III at the regional level, p. 42), the launching and conduct of the Great Volga River Route (GVRR, see Part IV at the inter-regional level, p. 46) and the three rounds of the UNESCO/Daimler Mondialogo School Contest (see Part V at the international level, p. 50).

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Democratic Republic of Congo

School:
Ecole Eureka

City:
Kinshasa

Project Title:
"Tell me who you are"

Project Co-ordinator:
Mr Kally



"Tell me who you are"

Background

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, there are many ethnic groups and some 200 different languages are spoken in this vast country, the third biggest in Africa. The largest pygmy population, an indigeneous people (known also for their small size) lives in this country. They are basically nomadic hunters.

Project objectives

- to foster respect, among young people, for the pygmies – their culture and dignity
- to facilitate contacts and dialogue between the majority ethnic group in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the pygmy young people

Project implementation

A series of cultural and solidarity activities were undertaken. Pygmy children were invited to the school to present their songs and dances. The students collected various items such as soap, clothing, food, etc. to present to the pygmies who in return offered small gifts as well. The entire school, some 500 students (aged between 6 and 18 years old), teachers and parents took part in the project which was conducted during two school years.

Project results

- a better appreciation of the pygmy culture
- an effective intercultural dialogue with pygmy youngsters
- a more harmonious integration of pygmies in society

Impact of the project

The concrete activities conducted enabled the students to internalize two of the four pillars of education for the 21st Century, i.e. learning to be and learning to live together. The young people developed a deep appreciation of the pygmies and their culture.

You can do it too!

So many indigenous peoples have either become extinct or have been reduced to a small minority. Over the past centuries they have been victims of prejudice, discrimination and isolation and their rights to land, mother tongue, traditions, names, etc. have often been violated. Indigenous people have acquired century-old traditional knowledge, wisdom, rich cultures and often a deep respect for the balance between nature and humankind. By reaching out to them and learning from them, we can gain much from their traditional knowledge and hopefully contribute to improving their plight.

Learning for the present and the future

Background

This project derived from a larger one launched a few years ago by ASPnet Germany entitled "Learning for the future" which aimed to link UNESCO Associated Schools in several countries in order to foster intercultural learning, language proficiency in Spanish and a more effective use of Internet and the electronic media. Germany provided computer equipment to enhance participation in the project which the school put to good use.

Project objectives

- to promote intercultural exchanges and twinning with schools abroad
- to encourage research in various fields to enhance learning for the present and the future
- to intensify cooperative learning in international teams
- to improve the use of new technologies, and
- to develop educational resource materials

Project implementation

The project dealt mainly with intercultural dialogue. It was based on team teaching i.e. involving a number of teachers from various subjects. Issues covered included health, climate change, energy reduction, peace, the life of José Martí (Cuban writer and patriot), etc. Each topic involved cognitive and attitudinal approaches. The four pillars of learning for the 21st Century – learning to know, learning to be, learning to do and learning to live together were taken into account. The Cuban students conducted research and shared their ideas and findings with their partnered schools in France, Germany, Portugal and Spain.

For each topic a series of activities was conducted. For example with regard to promoting intercultural learning and peace, students translated and sang "Imagine" by John Lennon as a hymn to peace. Posters and mural paintings were made of famous personalities in different parts of the world who had struggled for independence and fundamental freedoms such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and Mother Theresa. The International Day of Peace (21 September) was celebrated and a group of students with guitars sang songs related to peace in English.

Project results

- the project won a national scientific award for its achievements
- as a UNESCO Associated School, the Instituto IPVCE was granted the status of a "national reference centre"
- with the funds raised from the sale of the educational materials produced, the school improved its library
- the project was incorporated into the curriculum
- the IPVCE received international recognition from the other schools taking part in the project

Impact of the project

The project led to an enormous development of good contacts and exchanges with teachers and students in several countries (e.g. France, Germany, Spain, etc.) and contributed to improving the scientific programme of the school. An increasing number of students and teachers benefited from the project which will be pursued with new targets.

In observance of the International Day of Peace the students of the school declared:

"We believe that intercultural exchanges are very important in order to get to know one another, promote mutual respect and preserve the heritage of humanity. We believe that

Cuba

School:
Instituto Preuniversitario Vocacional
de Ciencias Exactas (IPVCE) Ernesto
Guevara

City:
Santa Clara

Project Title:
Learning for the present
and the future

Project Co-ordinator:
Mr Daniel Bulgado





environmental issues are of great importance. We know that such problems affect profoundly our world, our quality of life and our health. We have understood that if humanity cannot live in peace with nature, it cannot live in peace all together."

You can do it too!

One of the major advantages of ASPnet is that UNESCO Associated Schools can be found in all parts of the world. They are keen to embark on new projects with members of the ASP Network in different countries. Intercultural dialogue means getting to know more about each other's country and culture. Furthermore, it provides a platform for exchanging views on a wide range of topics of interest to young people today – from protecting the environment to providing good health care and from studying about the slave trade in the past to building peace for today and tomorrow.

Poland

School:
Stefan Zeromski II Liceum
Ogolinkosztalcece

City:
Tomarszow

Project title:
The Day of the Nations

Project Co-ordinator:
Ms Renata Radsikowska

The Day of the Nations

Background

For the past 30 years, the "Day of the Nations" has been observed by the school. It was the idea of Roman Grabowski, the late headmaster of the school, who was keen to promote intercultural learning in spite of the cold war and relatively few available means of communication. The celebration of "Day of the Nations" can also culminate to coincide with the observance of an important international day such as 21 March, 21 May (World Day for Cultural Diversity) or 16 November (International Day of Tolerance).

Project objectives

- to learn about different countries and cultures
- to eliminate stereotypes
- to develop tolerant attitudes towards the world

Project implementation

In September, at the start of every school year, students select a country which they want to learn more about. For seven months they conduct research, collect information about the nation selected and display their findings on bulletin boards around the school for the benefit of all. Preparations are then made for the "Day of the Nations", held on 21 March, a date chosen to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. On that day, the students present, to the teaching staff, what they have learned about the country and culture in question and they are graded for their achievements. Each class makes a presentation, often using a creative approach, such as musical performances and even the tasting of traditional food from the country under study, prepared and served by students. The Day concludes each year with a contest on who knows the most about UNESCO.

Project results

- learning in-depth about another country and its culture and sharing this knowledge with the entire school
- successful preparation and conduct of an annual "Day of the Nations"
- gaining fuller knowledge of UNESCO
- awareness building in the community about the achievements of a UNESCO Associated School

Impact of the project

About 500 students (aged between 15 and 19) and 30 teachers took part in the project (including students from other local schools) with considerable interest and enthusiasm. The students gained valuable knowledge about the country studied. They also acquired useful skills and competencies such as collecting data and presenting it in front of an audience. The local television and press were invited to cover the Day, and thereby the local community was informed about the valuable work undertaken by a UNESCO Associated School.

You can do it too!

Not all schools are heavily equipped with information and communication technologies (ICTs), Internet, extensive libraries and documentation centres. However, such a lack of infrastructure should not prevent them from conducting an intercultural project like this one. By selecting a different country to study each year, students can seek information from local resources such as the media, their parents, travel agencies, the Embassy or Consulate, community members who have travelled to the country, etc. Each class can work on a different feature of the country (e.g. its history, geography, language, culture, economy, architecture, heritage sites including World Heritage, traditions and customs), which enables the entire school to take part in the project and to benefit from it.

"Every year we want to be better and that means the preparations start long before the event. This year (2007) we presented Japan and prepared original sushi. Some people ate wasabi for the first time in their lives. We showed the teachers that we may be a little behind in learning but in other aspects of school life we are the best."

Andrzej Korpiniski
(student)

Intercultural dialogue through language learning camps for young people

Background

Östra is a small town in Northern Sweden which started, some 20 years ago, to receive refugees from several continents. In an effort to avoid or diminish possible cultural clashes, Tom Rutschman sought to find a solution by organizing annual English language camps to enable students to develop respect for diversity, tolerance and empathy-building in a fun, yet intensive way. The camps are held in Kvikkjokk, an old mining town nestled in the mountains on the way to two national parks. Students are housed in cabins and there is a main lodge for meals and activities as well as lots of land for sports and outdoor events.

Project objectives

The language camps are designed to:

- enable students to better understand the world with which they are faced
- better appreciate one's own culture, history and values as well as those of others
- become better aware of injustices, xenophobia and racism and take action to eliminate and prevent prejudice and discrimination
- improve English learning proficiency

Project implementation

There are two levels of English learning camps – one for students aged between 13 and 14 and another one for 15 to 16 year olds. Both camps are held for three days and are based on the

Sweden

School:
Östra Skolan

City:
Jokkmokk

Project Title:
Intercultural dialogue through language learning camps for young people

Project Co-ordinator:
Mr Tom Rutschman





concept of “learning by doing” and that “students learn best when having fun”. One of the unique features of the camps is that students from Canada or the United States of America (USA) actually come to Sweden to serve as voluntary language facilitators and animators. In addition, other speakers and resource persons, e.g. refugees, immigrants, etc. are invited. Young people take part in discussion groups, games, role-play, simulation exercises, team work, and hands-on activities. Students exchange their views on vital issues such as eliminating racism and discrimination, what it feels like to become a refugee, etc.

In order to understand others, we have to know ourselves better and one start up activity is to ask students to reflect on their names. Where do they come from and why? Empathy is created by listening to the accounts of refugees who have come to Sweden from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe and by taking part in discussions. Students learn more about political and religious persecutions, cultural differences and misunderstandings and the need to eliminate stereotypes, myths and generalizations. Young people often see the world through the lenses of their culture, putting themselves at the centre. The challenge during the camp is to allow the students to see things through the eyes of another culture.

In an attempt to internalize the concept of injustice and of an uneven distribution of wealth and resources, one activity consists of a special meal. One-fifth of the students eat a very elaborate meal, served by a waiter, whilst one-fifth sits on the floor with a bowl of rice. The rest of the students represent the “middle world” and they serve themselves a meal of rice and beans. Several hours later students discuss their feelings during this exercise and notions of fairness versus unfairness and justice versus injustice.

Throughout the three-day camp the only spoken language allowed is English which is not always so easy for the younger Swedish students. However, after only three days progress is remarkable. Swedish students are able to improve their English by conversing with mother tongue English speakers and the latter gain a valuable insight into the Swedish way of life.

Project results

- a deeper understanding of one’s own culture and traditions
- a better appreciation of people from other countries, feelings of empathy and solidarity
- increased awareness of cultural differences and issues of injustice
- acquisition of skills to deal with conflict resolution
- improved English proficiency

Impact of the project

As students look at differences between cultures and peoples, they discover that similarities are actually much more common than differences. People worldwide have the same basic human needs and are affected by the same realities of environmental degradations, dwindling natural resources, fears of insecurity, conflicts, hunger, unemployment, etc.

Intensive camp life enables students to gain a new perspective of themselves and of the world. The camps have helped students to become more tolerant and understanding towards others. They became more open and willing to learn from each other. Deep change cannot occur overnight. It involves a step by step process, generated by the languages camps.

“I remember many thought-provoking insights from the sessions, especially ethical issues such as those raised by the three different meals.

This exercise is something my friends and I recall well and have discussed it every so often. I also felt that the English Camp helped me to begin working on not being a loner – a process helped by interaction with my cabin group and the English-speaking young people. The days were so intensive that even less motivated students became involved and learned new things.”

Anders Franklin (student)

You can do it too!

One of the reasons why UNESCO set up the Associated Schools Network was to enable schools to contact each other directly in support of joint projects of mutual interest and concern. Setting up such a language camp does not require too many resources – mainly ideas, imagination, organizational skills and good ASPnet partners!

It is obvious that students learn best when stimulated through interesting and innovative activities. In planning a language camp, emphasis is therefore placed on a wide range of activities, lively debates, and creative workshops. Students develop outlooks and attitudes rather than learning just facts and figures. Having the camp in a foreign language makes it special and enables students to quickly improve their linguistic proficiency whilst learning more about the culture and values of their peers from another country. It also prompts students to reflect more on their own life style. Group leaders are often older and supportive of young people e.g. former camp students!

Being able to speak several languages is definitely a major advantage for succeeding and communicating in the 21st Century. Language camps do not only enable students to develop a keener interest in language learning and strengthen their linguistic abilities, but such encounters also permit students to exchange their views and ideas on issues of vital concern whilst making new friendships.

"The different exercises and discussions forced me to think in new ways and widen my views of the world. It gave me the opportunity to use my English in a more natural way than in a regular classroom and not to worry about making mistakes. For me the English Camp was a very fun experience in which I also learned a lot, one of the best experiences during junior high school!"

Anita Lindmark (student)



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- > **Human Rights Education**

> Human Rights Education

According to many jurists, parliamentarians and pedagogues, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one of the most significant instruments ever agreed upon by the United Nations General Assembly. Ever since its adoption in 1948, it has served as a source of inspiration and guidance for the elaboration of Constitutions in newly independent nations. It represents a framework for “human rights for all” which is at the foundation of peace and well-being for the peoples of the world.

Since its establishment in 1953, UNESCO Associated Schools have been carrying out activities for the promotion of human rights, especially through education. Human rights education implies the learning and practice of human rights by using a combination of cognitive, creative and innovative approaches. Human rights education promotes a rights-based approach to education and should be understood as a process that includes ‘human rights through education’ and ‘human rights in education’. In line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), UNESCO Associated Schools conduct projects aimed at integrating human rights education in the learning process. Human Rights Day (10 December) is commemorated by many ASPnet schools.

The UN has been making efforts to encourage Member States and other concerned partners to further integrate human rights education in the school system: in following up the Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), the World Programme for Human Rights Education was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2004. The currently on-going first phase (2005-2009) of this World Programme is dedicated to the integration of human rights education into the primary and secondary school systems. This phase aims at strengthening the child’s capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights and to promoting a culture which is infused by human rights values. UNESCO takes active part in the UN Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee specifically created for the Programme. In each country, Ministries of Education are responsible for the implementation of the World Programme.

The 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be celebrated on 10 December 2008 by many UNESCO Associated Schools who will continue to conduct projects in this vital area and within the framework of UN sponsored programmes and initiatives, as illustrated by the following ASPnet Good Practices.



The Rights of the Child

Background

The idea for this project stemmed from the topics proposed by the Greek ASPnet National Co-ordinator following a meeting and seminar for ASPnet teachers in the country. Since young people are not always aware of their rights, duties and responsibilities, it was felt that the time had come to do something about this discrepancy.

Project objectives

- to enable students to learn about and respect the rights of the child
- to develop students' capacity to ascertain if children's rights are respected and if not, how to react in cases of violation
- to involve more parents and teachers in providing education in support of the rights of the child
- to develop team work, acquire research, analytical and decision making skills and to be able to communicate in front of an audience

Project implementation

The project was conducted in four parts:

- students learned about their rights through discussions, reading books and examining documents (provided by the Greek National Commission for UNESCO) and conducting research on the Internet
- students took part in some special briefings on the current status of respect for the rights of the child which were arranged for them and presented by the Greek Ombudsman, Mr. Moschos and Dr. Sueref (Ph.D on Children's Rights in Education)
- a questionnaire designed by students was distributed to their peers in order to learn more about their views and opinions concerning respect for human rights
- students also produced and displayed human rights posters throughout the school

Project results

The students learned:

- to appreciate human rights and how to react in cases of violation
- how to work well in teams and to become more sociable, cooperative and aware of one's rights and responsibilities
- to think in a more scientific way thanks to a process whereby they produced a questionnaire, collected information and data, analyzed it and shared it with their peers
- to speak in front of an audience
- to make better use of computer technology and the resources offered by Internet

Impact of the project

- the impact on students was enormous. There seemed to be a real change in the behavior of the young people, in their way of thinking and in reacting to many aspects of their every day life
- the school staff and the Principal were briefed by the Greek Ombudsman on the rights of the child and on ways to make them widely respected

Greece

School:
5th Junior High School of Stavroupoli

City:
Thessaloniki

Project Title:
The rights of the child

Project Co-ordinator:
Mr Pascalis Senteris



"...I was impressed by the sensitivity and general behavior of Mr Moschos, the Greek Ombudsman. I felt that I must respect other peoples' rights and that I should help other kids who are facing problems. I have learned many things while participating in this project...".

Georgia Chatzigeorgiou
(student)



- parents offered their full support by working with their children at home. They were informed periodically about the implementation of the project
- the Greek Ombudsman sent a letter of congratulation to the school and encouraged it to pursue participating in similar projects
- the municipality of Stavroupoli planned to produce an article about this project for the local magazine entitled “Dimotis”.

Here is what students had to say about the project’s impact:

“ ... to learn about children's rights was a stunning experience which made me change my behavior towards my schoolmates. I feel more responsible, I can understand and view things from different perspectives and I am more careful not to violate other people's rights. Our class reacted positively to this interesting project and to the research conducted. It would have been better to have had more time available for this project and I wish it could be continued ”.

Catherine Chriskikou (student)

You can do it too!

In an effort to reinforce human rights education and to make it more effective, well experienced resource persons can be invited to come to the school to brief teachers and to share their experience and views with students. Furthermore, by designing questionnaires, students are obliged to reflect on the issues at stake which, in turn, helps them to gain a better insight into how their peers view the rights of the child.

Kuwait

School:
Al-Raja School
for Handicapped Girls

City:
Hawalli

Project Title:
Continued Slavery
in the Present World

Project Co-ordinator:
Ms Nuga Al-Otaibi

Continued Slavery in the Present World

Background

The idea for this project on contemporary slavery originated from a lecture given by Dr. Ghanim Alnajjar, a Political Science Professor at Kuwait University and a United Nations Independent Expert for Human Rights in Somalia.

Project objective

- to raise awareness on issues concerning slavery, poverty, the violation of human rights and the role of the community in preventing such violations from occurring.

Project implementation

In an effort to observe the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (2 December) declared by the UN GA, the school invited Professor Dr. Ghanim Alnajjar to give a lecture on slavery in the world today. The lecture was followed up by discussions on a number of topics dealing with slavery, both past and present, and human rights violations. Taking into account the students’ concerns and aspirations, the teacher wrote a short play on the issues at stake which the students readily performed.

Project results

- better understanding of human rights and modern forms of slavery today
- increased self-esteem and confidence
- enhanced knowledge about international organizations
- contacts and communication with relevant organizations and sharing of experiences

Impact of the project

All of the students, school staff, the school principal and the local community still remember the project and continue to speak highly of it. Students are requesting more such activities and the issue of human rights has become part of their every day concerns. This project also helped the girls with special needs to appreciate their contributions to society which they had previously not taken very seriously.

You can do it too!

Over the ages, enslavement has been one of the most tragic and devastating forms of oppression. Both the trans-Saharan slave trade and the transatlantic slave trade involving millions of captured men, women and children over centuries still have enormous ramifications. Modern forms of enslavement persist such as child labour. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that more than 200 million children worldwide are forced to work.

Inviting an expert to come to the school to give a lecture on such topics as “slavery – yesterday and today” can pave the way to an interdisciplinary approach which facilitates learning about this unacceptable violation of basic human rights and to take a strong stand to eliminate all forms of enslavement and the stigma associated with it. The observance of both 23 August, the International Day of Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition and 2 December, the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, can provide an excellent forum for involving students, parents and the local community in debates on this vital issue.

“I did not think that slavery was still so widespread in the world today and thought that it was something of the past. I realize that we, as handicapped people, might be enslaving ourselves.”

Mariam Abaal-Keil
and Ayesh. H. (students)



Youth for Transparency

Background

Corruption, at all levels, is a very serious problem today in many countries. Therefore, this school decided to raise awareness about the need to tackle the issue of eliminating corruption, which is in accordance with the top priorities of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and local municipalities. This project was inspired and facilitated by the work of the Centre for Raising Civic Motivation in Warsaw, Poland and the Centre of Modern Didactics in Vilnius.

Project objectives

- to prepare students to become active members of civil society
- to raise students’ awareness about the importance of transparent public policies and action by local authorities
- to enhance students’ civic motivation and capacity to combat corruption at all levels
- to encourage local authorities to introduce this project in other institutions

Project implementation

Teachers devoted a series of classes to civics and religious education which helped students to identify root causes of corruption and ways to eliminate them. In order to put their newly gained knowledge into practice, it was decided to conduct some public polls to find out how much people actually knew about public expenditures and the use of the people’s annual income tax funds. Students analyzed the data gathered and presented it in a clear and attractive

Lithuania

School:
Anyksciai Antanas Baranuskas
Secondary School

City:
Anyksciai

Project Title:
Youth for Transparency

Project Co-ordinator:
Ms Daiva Trucinskiene

way in the form of a brochure. A number of innovative methods were used such as surveys, polls, setting up of task forces and a special meeting between students and staff from the city's Service of Special Investigation, which was the first encounter of this kind ever held at the school. In art classes students made posters announcing the project's aspirations. Over 60 students, the Principal and 4 teachers across the curriculum (art, history, English and religious education) took part in the project, as well as city employees, including the inspector of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports and the Vice-Director for Administration.

Project results

This Project proved to be beneficial, from both moral and pedagogical standpoints, to all concerned.

Teachers

The valuable experience gained from the Project prompted teachers to continue to plan and give lessons to raise the moral standards of students and to prepare them to help to prevent corruption, intolerance, lying, hypocrisy, and dishonesty in society. Co-operation among teachers was largely enhanced through the sharing of experience and by giving open lessons and seminars to each other. They worked with other schools both in their local community and in other municipalities of the Republic as well as with their counterparts in Poland. During this project task groups were formed and 14 similar projects were carried out and 17 open lessons were given. This project, or a similar one, might even be taken up in another country, since guests from Azerbaijan visited the school and expressed interest in it.

Students

Young people acquired new skills and competencies to help combat corrupt practices and to reduce civilian indifference. Useful exchanges were made between students and civil servants responsible for ensuring good and transparent administration of public institutions and funds. The knowledge and competencies acquired through the project will also be useful to young people in pursuing and conducting other important projects.

Local authorities

In view of the successfulness of this project, local authorities are keen to have it introduced in other institutions and schools.

Impact of the project

In the course of this project students became acquainted with standards for and examples of anti-corruption behaviour which is essential for responsible citizenship. They were motivated to combat corruption at all levels. They came to know and use methods of social control in public institutions, particularly at the municipal level. Finally, students helped to increase public awareness of the local community by carrying out public polls and publishing leaflets. This increased the overall impact of the project.

"I had never realized the extent to which the problem of corruption was rooted in our society. Besides, I could never have told you before how I and other members of our local community could contribute to fighting against corruption. It appeared quite simple and easy to take action that can help to increase social control in offices of local authorities. As for the experience gained, I must admit it is easier for me now to take part in other projects."

Milda Kaklauskaitė
(student)

"I can't stand passiveness of members of our civil society. It sometimes seems to me that no one cares about what's going on in our country. Anti-corruption activities and increasing public awareness of local authorities and administrators help to raise civic motivation and are a good means through which anyone can assume an active role as a citizen. This is exactly what the project helped me to do. I also liked sharing our experience with students from other schools in Lithuania and Poland."

Edvardas Gindrenas
(student)



You can do it too!

Awareness raising projects dealing with concerns such as corruption, the violation of human rights, lack of transparency, etc. can be enhanced and strengthened by working closely with non-governmental organizations. Such NGOs can provide useful information, documentation and practical experience as well as competent resource persons.

Empowering girls and women

Background

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights all people are born equal. Yet in many societies today women still do not benefit from the same rights as men. In most places women gained the right to vote years after men. In government, parliaments and public offices, women remain a minority and they often do not benefit from equal work equal pay. Hence, much remains to be accomplished if girls and women are to accede to their rights and benefit from true equality.

Project objective

– to sensitize the school and the community to the need for the emancipation and empowerment of women

Project implementation

Drama and music were used to reinforce awareness within the school and in the community of the need to ensure equal rights for girls and boys, men and women. The students wrote and enacted sketches drawing attention to cultural traditions and tendencies that inhibit the development of girls and their access to equal rights as spelled out in clear constitutional provisions on gender equality.

Project results

- Girls gained confidence and self esteem
- The concept of equality between boys and girls was recognized and supported
- Young people improved their communication skills

You can do it too!

There is often a gap between theory and practice when it comes to gender equality. According to law in many countries, women have equal rights with men but in reality they do not always benefit from these rights to the same degree. Through discussions and drama, students can become more conscious of the obstacles girls and women encounter in striving to have access to equal rights and to learn how such obstacles can be overcome. If changes are to occur, it is obvious that it requires the participation of boys and girls, men and women.

Uganda

School:
Bombo Army Secondary School

City:
Kampala

Project Title:
Empowering girls and women

Project Co-ordinator:
Ms Sarah Musoke



"Girls became aware of their capacity to work hard and their ability to surpass the boys".

Frank Tibamanya (student)

2. UNESCO Associated Schools Good Practices for Quality Education at the **National Level**



“From the slave route to the road of the brave”

Haitian ASPnet Students embark on a National Youth Rally

The UNESCO Associated Schools Network plays an instrumental role in bringing together students and teachers from many parts of any given country in quest of improving quality education. Each country has its own educational priorities, goals and expectations and UNESCO Associated Schools are often considered to be pioneers in conducting innovative and meaningful projects and activities to enhance learning in the 21st Century.

By organizing a unique national youth encounter, particularly for ASPnet students and teachers, the Haitian National Commission for UNESCO and the Haitian ASPnet National Co-ordinator sought to take young people on a historical tour “back to the past” of their country with the hope of succeeding in bringing them forward to construct a brighter future.

Background

Haitians have certainly suffered tremendously since the creation of their nation: what was once a very wealthy and prosperous island in the Caribbean was conquered and enslaved. Finally, the uprising of 22 August 1791 led to the declaration of the first free enslaved nation in the Americas but resulted in a long lasting boycott and the reimbursement of millions of gold francs to gain recognition from their former colonizer and other imperial powers of the times.

Over two hundred years later, on 23 August 1998, UNESCO launched a new ASPnet Flagship Project entitled “Breaking the Silence” – teaching about the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (TST). On that historical date the first Meeting of the TST International Task Force took place in Haiti’s capital, Port-au-Prince. It consisted of intellectuals, historians and pedagogues from Africa, Europe and the Americas as well as experts from UNESCO and other resource persons.

For seven years, this pilot project brought together over one hundred schools in over twenty countries on all sides of the Atlantic in order to develop new educational approaches to reinforce teaching about the TST in school curricula and to foster intercultural dialogue among students and teachers throughout the Atlantic slave trade triangle. The Project resulted in the production of new and innovative educational resource materials, major transatlantic youth encounters (in Oslo (Norway), Gorée Island (Senegal), Trinidad and Tobago, etc.), and annual meetings of the TST Task Force and regional seminars and workshops for teachers. Appropriate linkages were also made with another ASPnet Flagship Project entitled “World Heritage in Young Hands” (launched by UNESCO in 1995). The TST project was funded by Norway (from 1998 to 2004).

Haitian Youth Rally

The TST project generated considerable interest in all countries taking part in it and the Haitian Youth Rally is an extraordinary example. In spite of so many persisting problems facing the country, Haiti had a firm intention to pursue the TST Project. The Haitian National Commission for UNESCO submitted a request under the UNESCO Participation Programme in order to organize a meaningful youth encounter.

The Youth Rally was planned for some 100 students from UNESCO Associated Schools as well as from some other schools throughout the country and it took place from 1 to 5 April 2007. The main destination was the Cape (Northern part of the country) where the Palace Sans Souci and the Citadel stand as a symbol of freedom, liberty and dignity. It took the young Haitian

Haiti



nation some 14 years (from the beginning of the construction in 1806) and 20,000 men to build the Citadel which was inscribed in 1982 on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Objectives

The Haitian Youth Rally aimed to:

- mobilize students to pursue participation in two ASPnet Flagship Projects – the TST and “World Heritage in Young Hands”
- strengthen young people’s commitment to preserving the National Historical Park (the Palace Sans Souci, the Citadel and surrounding area) and enable them to become stakeholders of their national heritage
- establish bonds between young people from UNESCO Associated Schools and their peers from other schools in the country
- convey the ideals of UNESCO to young people
- enable students to make proposals for the Haiti of tomorrow



Project implementation

The very organization of such a Youth Rally in a country with limited infrastructure – difficult roads, few facilities for accommodations, etc. was a major challenge and accomplishment. Coming from ten different districts throughout the country, the young people assembled in Port-au-Prince for the departure of the Rally, in four buses. They were accompanied by specialists and teachers and met with a number of local leaders, historians and experts throughout their expedition.

Haiti is a country with a rich natural and cultural heritage. Students were able to admire the natural beauty of the country including the Valley of the Artibonite with its river and rice fields, Tozia with its micro-climate and endemic species (cocoa, vanilla and coffee) and the beach in Labadie with its white sand and fishing village. The cultural sites visited included Marchand Dessalines (the first capital of the country), the Palace Sans Souci and its Citadel, Fort Picolet, etc. Throughout their travels many explanations and historical briefs were given to the students, on the bus, in places of memory and during discussions with municipal authorities.

Project results

- successful completion of the Youth Rally and increased awareness of Haiti’s past, present and possible future
- collective reflexion and adoption of a Youth Manifesto (see below)
- participation in an essay contest about the Rally and the nomination of three winners
- proposals and recommendations for the future (see below)

Impact of the project

The Rally seemed to have had an enormous impact on the young people. The Manifesto which they wrote and agreed upon speaks for itself. They declared:

“The birth of the nation of Haiti marked the modern world proving that men and women, even in a situation of bondage, could ensure proudness, honour, dignity and geniusness. The Citadel is a perfect example. During this period, we built an extraordinary Haiti, proud and free... Today... Haiti is dying. The country shows no sign of any organization...a spirit of unity is lacking in our relationships...The collective concern or even more the notion of common well-being escapes us...Fortified from our past and masters of our present, we should ask ourselves the question – what type of country do we dream of? We dream of a country in which each Haitian assumes responsibility, and participates in the development of the country... We want education for all... We want to build hospitals... We want to struggle against deforestation...We want to see Haiti evolve under a reign of reason, order, justice, tolerance

and especially peace... We should let ourselves be guided by a sense of honour, this value which was cultivated by our ancestors and which permitted them to pass on to us this extraordinary heritage which constitutes Haiti...".

The impact made upon the young people taking part in the Rally can be felt by reading some of their essays:

Winner of the contest, the student Mitchnaider Joseph concluded that *"The Rally taught us to come out of the silence which inculcated us a state of desperateness and socio-economic woes. It stirred in us the desire to safeguard and protect our moral and cultural values as well as our national heritage."*

In referring to his visit to the Citadel, one of the other winning students, Ricardo Honorat, declared *"During this exploration, the main message was retained – if our ancestors, who were reduced into slavery, into a sub-human state of being were able to build this chef-d'oeuvre, it is now the time for us to do something for our country. At the end of this day we thereby become agents of development, proud inhabitants of our birthplace"*.

As for the third place winning student, Ms Cornet, she was convinced that *"friendship had taken roots during the Encounter and thanks to this link we were able to formulate opinions and ideas which have brought each one of us to take a stand!"*

All of the participants were satisfied with their participation in the Rally and they made a number of constructive proposals, which included the urgent need to:

- organize more Rallies in order to sensitize as many young people as possible to the need to preserve their heritage
- improve the logistics (accommodations, meals, etc.) for future participants
- enhance the capacity of local communities to accommodate more groups of students
- improve the roads of the Rally, especially the road from Cape Haiti to the Citadel
- stop deforestation, especially in the savannah and around the Citadel
- enhance the National Historical Park's capacity to receive visitors, exhibitions and cultural performances
- improve the important cultural sites which are in need of repair such as the Fortresse la Source, the homes of Dessaline, de Claire and Charlotin Marcadieu, the Palace, the Citadel, the Fort Picolet, etc.

Financed mainly under the UNESCO Participation Programme, the Youth Rally received support from the Office of the Prime Minister, the University of Notre Dame of Haiti, the Ministry of Tourism, the Institute for the Protection of National Heritage (ISPAN), the Ministry of Education, the UNESCO Office, UNIBANK, Labadie Beach and others.

You can do it too!

In spite of very difficult conditions, the main organisers of the Rally, the Haitian National Commission for UNESCO and the ASPnet National Co-ordinator, proved that it was not only possible to conduct a major educational expedition in the country, but one that will hopefully have a lasting effect on all of the participants. This well planned, innovative and well conducted Rally can pave the way for future Rallies. Such encounters can enable many young people to make a "pilgrimage" back to their past with a view to reaffirming their identity and their commitment to building a better future. Other countries might want to organize similar significant encounters for young people.



3. UNESCO Associated Schools Good Practices for Quality Education at the **Regional Level**



ASPnet Students from Asia and the Pacific attend the World Heritage Youth Forum

Asia-Pacific

Christchurch, New Zealand, 18 to 23 June 2007,
on the occasion of the 31st Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee

Background

Every year the World Heritage Committee meets somewhere special in the world in order to, inter alia, inscribe new sites on the World Heritage List. Since November 2000 with the World Heritage Youth Forum for the Pacific (UNESCO, NORAD, Australian government) in Cairns, Australia, youth fora of students from UNESCO Associated Schools have been held just prior to World Heritage Committee sessions or during them. Such encounters provide a dialogue between young people and World Heritage stakeholders as well as a youth input to the debates of the Committee.

Hence, the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO planned an Asian Pacific Youth Forum to be held in Christchurch just prior to the World Heritage Committee which was meeting there from 23 June to 2 July 2007.

Following a rigorous selection, 30 high school students (aged between 16 and 19) attended the Forum from 12 countries in the region: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Japan, Korea (Rep. of), Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Samoa, Thailand, Tonga and Vanuatu. Some of the students excelled in history and geography studies and others were winners of essay competitions about World Heritage or selected after submitting applications and taking part in interviews. All of them were enthusiastic and well qualified to attend the Forum and the vast majority of the young people were ASPnet students.

Project/Forum objectives

- to increase young people's knowledge of World Heritage and their concern for its preservation
- to prepare a World Heritage Youth Challenge to be presented to the International World Heritage Committee
- to strengthen bonds of friendship in the Asia Pacific region
- to learn more about the Maori (indigenous) people of New Zealand and their role in heritage protection

Project implementation

Upon their arrival in New Zealand, all young delegates were given a survival kit (including a warm jacket as June is winter in the Southern hemisphere) and extensive documentation pertaining to the Forum, such as a copy of the UNESCO/ASPnet World Heritage Education Kit – Our Pacific Heritage – which they used constantly during the week. The organizers of the Youth Forum, led by the New Zealand ASPnet National Co-ordinator, worked closely with the Department of Conservation (DOC) and a powhiri (traditional Maori welcoming ceremony) was scheduled for the young delegates. This event, held in the sacred place of Rehua Marae, proved to be a major highlight of the week as many delegates, including some from the host country, had never been invited to attend a powhiri and to witness first hand Maori rituals.



Students then attended an introductory session on the value of World Heritage which was given by three experts. They spoke respectively on: the creation of New Zealand and the South Island and what heritage means to indigenous peoples; the World Heritage Convention – how sites are assessed and the criteria of “outstanding universal value” for their selection; and features related to natural World Heritage sites and the distinct flora and fauna found in New Zealand. In an attempt to enable young people, from so many countries throughout this vast region, to have an opportunity to admire some of the wonders of New Zealand (its natural beauty, and its many rare species of flora and fauna), overnight stays were planned in five outposts (e.g. Kaikoura, Geraldine, Timaru, Banks Peninsula and Lake Ellesmere) near three sacred places (Takahanga Marae, Arowhenua Marae and Onuku Marae).

Five teams of students were formed (one for each outpost). The teams were given a camera and they were invited to collect information and material for an audio-visual presentation. Each student was given a special role to play such as taking photographs, interviewing local inhabitants, filming, etc.

During their overnight stays the young delegates focussed their attention on six main issues:

- Water conservation
- Sustainable tourism
- Preservation of the environment
- ESD
- Business and the natural environment
- Language and cultural diversity

In addition, five special Heritage Advisors (one for each outpost) were appointed by both the DOC and the Historic Places Trust to accompany the young people on their overnight trips. They provided background information about each site, organized access to special areas and ensured that the delegates had not only a meaningful learning experience but fun and enjoyment as well.

For example, during one stay, students visited two of New Zealand’s earliest high country farms where they were able to meet the descendants of those pioneers. They learned about the hardships, strenuous labour and struggles as well as about the rewards of starting up new farms.

At another outpost students had the unique opportunity to visit two significant Maori Rock Art sites (Frenchman’s Gully and Taniwha) which are some 500 years old. It seems that the Rock Art was drawn using charcoal made from the fat of an extinct native New Zealand bird called the Moa. Their visit coincided with the official opening of interpretation panels (for visitors) and with a special ceremony led by local Maori elders and leaders.

In just one week it is not possible to visit the many beautiful places and World Heritage sites in New Zealand. Therefore, thanks to the on-line educational project LEARNZ (Linking Education and Antarctic Research in New Zealand), the delegates were able to make a virtual field trip to the Tongariro Volcanoes and take part in a teleconference with New Zealand students who were on this site.

The five teams of students then worked with a professional producer and editors in order to make their own 9-minute video presentation of their field work and of their views on World Heritage which would represent their World Heritage Youth Challenge to be presented to the World Heritage Committee at its opening session.



Impact of the project

The Youth Forum organisers felt that the aims of the Youth Forum had been largely achieved. Students acquired important life skills such as conducting research and interviews, using information and communication technologies, especially digital equipment, and gained a deep insight on the importance of local and World Heritage and on the values and rituals of indigenous peoples. Throughout the Youth Forum deep bonds of friendship were woven amongst the young delegates, uniting them to strive for a better future.

A powerful impact was also made on the World Heritage Committee members who were the recipients of the well produced and meaningful Youth Challenge and who were in a position to measure the level of knowledge and commitment of the young people in support of World Heritage preservation from throughout the Asian and Pacific region.

You can do it too!

It is obvious that the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO made enormous efforts to plan and conduct this very worthwhile encounter for youth. No details were spared and many preparatory trips were made to the South Island (the National Commission is in Wellington, on the North Island). Indigenous people, World Heritage decision makers, other stakeholders and media specialists all made meaningful contributions. ASPnet can and should be used to hold special events for students who can make an input to major UNESCO regional and international conferences, as such initiatives help to empower young people and serve as a source of inspiration and hope for international experts.



4. UNESCO Associated Schools Good Practices for Quality Education at the **Inter-regional Level**



“Uniting the Seas (Baltic, Black and Caspian) in favour of World Heritage Education for Sustainable Development with the support of ICTs”

Background

The UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) was an early pioneer in launching inter-regional projects by mobilizing schools in different regions within the framework of a common project. A major project on the study of world concerns was conducted in the 1980s/1990s involving schools from four continents – Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America. Another long running initiative is the Western Mediterranean Project involving schools in Europe and North Africa, as well as the already mentioned Teaching about the Transatlantic Slave Trade “Breaking the Silence” Project which brought together schools in Africa, the Americas and Europe from 1998 to 2004.

The Volga, the longest river in Europe, is the main artery of one of the world’s greatest networks of commercial waterways linking the Baltic, Black and Caspian Seas. For centuries the Volga has played a major role in trade, industrialization, interactions of cultures (between the East and West) and the movement of people.

Hence the time had come to launch a major project to establish closer co-operation between schools in the countries which are to be found along the banks of the Volga and of the Baltic, Black and Caspian Seas. This project focused on three priority areas: World Heritage education, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue.

Project objectives

- plan and conduct joint water (Volga River) related activities (particularly dealing with World Heritage natural sites and biosphere reserve sites) and those dealing with the economic, environmental, social and cultural implications for sustainable development;
- explore the effective use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in support of quality education; and
- foster a dialogue between students and scientists as well as an intercultural dialogue amongst youth from different countries involved in the Project

Project implementation

The Great Volga River Route (GVRR) Project was approved by the UNESCO General Conference at its 31st session to improve intercultural dialogue. It was launched by UNESCO in October 2004 in the World Heritage City of Kazan (Tatarstan, Russian Federation) in close co-operation with the National Commission for UNESCO of the Russian Federation and the Mayor of Kazan. Sixteen countries pledged to take part in it (Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Iran, Kazakhstan, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Sweden, Turkey and Ukraine). The project ended in December 2007.

From the start, the GVRR Project was conceptualized as a multi-faceted approach and was supported by colleagues from most UNESCO sectors: Education, Culture (including the World

The Great Volga River Route

Project co-ordinators:

Ms Livia Saldari,
Programme Specialist,
ASPnet International Coordination,
Division for the Promotion
of Basic Education,
UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

Mr Dende Badarch,
Director,
UNESCO Moscow Office





Heritage Centre), Science and Communication, who worked closely with staff from the UNESCO Moscow Office.

Numerous activities were conducted by more than 200 schools participating in the project. These were presented and discussed at the following four major events:

- Regional Youth Forum on “Sustainable Development and World Heritage” (cultural implications), Helsinki, Finland, 9 to 12 June 2005
- Regional Workshop on “Sustainable Development and World Heritage: Preservation of the Environment”, Bucharest, Romania, 28 to 31 July 2005
- Regional Seminar “The Great Volga River Route: a scientific approach – ASPnet schools, scientists and World Heritage experts working together”, Novorossiysk, Russian Federation, 3 to 5 November 2005
- Inter-regional Forum “Along the Great Volga River Route: Young People Set Sail to Explore World Heritage, Sustainable Development and ICTs”, held aboard the cruise ship Georgy Checherin from Moscow to Yaroslavl, 16 to 21 May 2006

Students and teachers from all 16 participating countries took part in this unique GVRR educational and cultural river cruise. It comprised a wide range of educational activities including field trips to enable students to explore various World Heritage sites and to take stock of concrete sustainable development issues. A number of workshops were held on board which permitted students, teachers and scientists to exchange their views on activities conducted and to make proposals for sustainable solutions in response to the environmental challenges at the local and inter-regional levels.

During the four-year implementation of the project (2004-2007) a bilingual (English/Russian) web portal (<http://gvrr.unesco.ru/?lang=E>) was set up and was instrumental in contributing to the success of the project. E-modules were also produced and are available online. These modules include interactive quizzes and are based on the four main topics of study of the GVRR Project.

Project results

The GVRR Project generated numerous activities in accordance with the objectives and goals of the UN DESD (2005-2014). Many of these activities can be found on the above mentioned web portal which includes an interactive map and modules on a wide range of topics dealing with sustainable development such as water, the conservation of the environment, the preservation of both natural and cultural World Heritage sites, the economic implications of the Volga, etc. The web portal also proved to be an effective instrument to enable students who live far apart (from Sweden to Azerbaijan and from Lithuania to Kazakhstan), to communicate with each other, to plan and conduct joint projects and to share their self produced materials. The capacity of students to use information and communication technologies effectively was substantially increased as well as their commitment to intercultural dialogue.

Since the GVRR Project was designed as a multi-disciplinary project, it contributed to team teaching both within schools and between schools, and to a holistic approach to sustainable development. It also led to close collaboration between programme specialists from the various UNESCO sectors and with those from the UNESCO Moscow Office.

Impact of the project

This project enabled students and teachers from 16 countries: to focus on intercultural dialogue; to exchange experiences and work together on common actions; and to experience

the importance of intercultural dialogue in seeking solutions to sustainable development issues. The GVRR Project also addressed sustainable development concepts as they apply to the various dimensions of life (social, cultural, environmental, economic), and brought ASPnet schools together to share their good practices in teaching methodologies and in developing twinning activities.

The web portal resulted in improved information exchange and an overall better use of ICTs. The online modules helped teach students and teachers alike that ESD is interdisciplinary. It covers a wide range of issues relating to the cultural, environmental, economic and social dimensions of global sustainable development and indicates that this same overall goal can unite students across 16 countries in a powerful way.

You can do it too!

Maybe on a much smaller scale, but you too could plan and conduct a virtual sustainable development project between some schools in different countries or even continents. The use of waterways (lakes, rivers, seas) has proved to be an effective vehicle for such projects. Furthermore, more and more ASPnet schools are equipped with ICTs and are keen to participate in joint and meaningful projects with schools in other regions. Water, energy, consumption patterns, depletion of resources, climate change, environmental degradation are just a few possible topics. Even if schools do not have a computer, teachers and students often use local cyber cafés or other places (even homes of friends or family) which have the necessary equipment. By working on a common project with schools sharing the same topic from different countries or regions of the world, intercultural dialogue can be made meaningful, strengthened and enhanced.



5. UNESCO Associated Schools Good Practices for Quality Education at the **International Level**



Mondialogo School Contest in support of intercultural dialogue

Background

From the time it was launched in 1953, ASPnet has always been an international network operating at local and global levels. Although ASPnet started out very small with only some 33 secondary schools in 15 countries, each decade witnessed more schools in more countries. At the turn of the 21st Century in 2008, there are more than 8,000 Associated Schools in over 177 Member States of UNESCO covering all parts of the world.

In view of its size, capacity and commitment to promoting quality education and the ideals of UNESCO, UNESCO Associated Schools have served, time and again, as a powerful vehicle for launching new and challenging projects at the international level.

In 2003, UNESCO signed an agreement with Daimler (ex-DaimlerChrysler), one of the world's largest automobile companies, to promote intercultural dialogue amongst young people through the Mondialogo School Contest, the Mondialogo Engineering Awards and the Mondialogo Web portal. At the outset, in order to launch the Mondialogo School Contest, the UNESCO Bureau of Strategic Planning turned to ASPnet for guidance and support at the practical application level, to encourage intercultural dialogue among schools worldwide.

Project objectives

The Mondialogo School Contest aims to:

- establish effective and sustainable intercultural dialogues amongst schools worldwide
- promote appreciation and respect of cultural diversity among young people
- develop intercultural skills through cross-curricular activities
- achieve tangible results through long-distance teamwork on joint projects by students
- improve proficiency in using information and communication technologies as well as different languages
- contribute to enriching the curricula and enhancing quality education

Project implementation

The first round of the Contest was launched in the autumn of 2003 and some 1,500 teams of students aged between 14 and 18 years old in 126 countries registered to take part in it. The vast majority were from UNESCO Associated Schools. Each team was twinned with a partner team in another continent and the students forged an intercultural dialogue by conducting a joint project together. All of the results achieved were submitted to UNESCO for review by a pre-selection UNESCO-Daimler Committee which transmitted their proposals to the Mondialogo International Jury who met in Paris to nominate 50 partnered teams (representing 25 joint projects). The eminent jury members included Paulo Coelho, Brazilian author, Vigdis Finnbogadóttir, first woman elected President (Iceland) in Europe, Marcel Khalifé, Lebanese musician and composer and Countess Setsuko Klossowska de Rola, famous artist from Japan and honorary President of the Balthus Foundation. Each nominated team was invited to send one student and one teacher to attend the First Mondialogo International Symposium, held in Barcelona, Spain (September, 2004) during which the three winning projects were announced.





In view of the variety and quality of intercultural dialogue projects conducted, Daimler decided to pursue a second (2005/2006) and third round (2007/2008) of the Contest which has now involved a total of some 100,000 students in 144 countries. The intercultural dialogues forged reflect the “I”, “you” and “we” concept which reaffirms one’s own identity, enables students to learn about their peers from a different culture and to carry out a joint project together, promoting “unity in diversity”. Projects covered many topics ranging from water conservation, HIV-AIDS prevention to contributing to the UN MDGs to prevention education against natural disasters.

Project results

The Mondialogo School Contest has become, by far, the largest school contest in the world in favour of intercultural dialogue. Supported by National Commissions for UNESCO, ASPnet National Co-ordinators and Daimler branches around the world, this project shows how public and private sectors can work closely together in pursuing the mandate of UNESCO, in building bridges between the young people of the world in a spirit of mutual respect and friendship, and in promoting quality education for all.

In their detailed Mondialogo Project Reports submitted to UNESCO following the first two rounds of the Contest, students and teachers recorded the results achieved from pursuing an intercultural dialogue transcending borders, languages, religions, time zones and cultures. The vast majority agreed that the Mondialogo School Contest helped them to:

- develop team work and a team spirit, within their teams and with their partnered teams
- learn more about their own country whilst discovering another culture, different life styles and values
- exchange their views on issues of major concern
- acquire research and communication skills and a more effective use of ICTs
- “learning by doing”, having fun whilst learning and succeeding in planning and conducting joint projects

“I realized that the problems we are moaning about in Europe are simply ridiculous compared to those of people in Africa. And yes, I can say such meetings make us more responsible for the world and build up our civic duty”.

*Daniela Stefanova
(teacher, Bulgaria)*

“Cambodia is a very poor country and we did not have computers and e-mail, but our partner school helped us with supplies and resources and we have now solved our problems.”

*Sam Kokha
(teacher, Cambodia)*

The Mondialogo School Contest has led to thousands of concrete intercultural dialogue projects spanning across all of the continents. Examples are abundant, partnered schools in:

- Italy and Indonesia worked together to set up a new school for street children in Djakarta
- Turkey and Japan produced a game on action to be taken in case of natural catastrophes such as earthquakes
- USA and Iran exchanged their views on water conservation
- Yemen and Romania built a maquette for a new intercultural model city

The Mondialogo Internet Portal (www.mondialogo.org) has proved to be a vital instrument to facilitate participation in the contest and to enhance contacts and networking amongst the participating teams. It includes a Mondialogo World Team Map, a log-in protected “team area” for exchanges between partnered teams, chat fora, and the “MondialogoMagazine”. Schools which do not have Internet access received printed materials and are assisted through a help



desk. Solidarity is another important feature of the Mondialogo School Contest and schools with resources often share them with schools which are less equipped.

UNESCO and Daimler have produced information brochures on the Contest, a report on the second Mondialogo International Symposium, two major exhibitions presenting the results of the first two rounds, Mondialogo Calendars and a Mondialogo World Map, as well as three editions of the Mondialogo SchoolKit for Teachers on how to participate effectively in the Contest, containing many ideas and suggested activities on how to engage and pursue meaningful intercultural dialogues with students worldwide.

Mondialogo has been the recipient of seven prestigious international awards including the "Best Corporate Social Responsibility Programme in Europe".

Impact of the project

In the hundreds of Mondialogo Joint Project Reports submitted, both teachers and students commented on how much they gained from the Contest, how it improved the learning process, their motivation and their increased capacity to communicate and to use ICTs, their vision of others and their hopes for the future. Students attending the Second Mondialogo School Contest International Symposium in Rome (November 2006) declared in their joint Declaration that:

"The Mondialogo School Contest helps to improve the quality of education that is so desperately needed by combining formal learning with learning by doing and learning to live together. Not only do we learn about different cultures, but we also develop key skills that will surely help us to succeed in the future. We learn to overcome linguistic, national, social, political and economic barriers in order to work together towards the common goal of peace and well-being for all."

You can do it too!

Bravo if you have participated in the third round of the Mondialogo School Contest. You can visit the Web portal: www.mondialogo.org. You can also reach out to one of the many UNESCO Associated Schools in your region or in another continent in order to embark on an exciting journey of dialogue, exchange, sharing and conducting together a common project, with the goal of attaining the "I", "You" and "We" concept.





Summing up

This First Collection of UNESCO Associated School Good Practices enables us to take stock of the Network's recent initiatives and accomplishments. It shows us that ASPnet is not an elitist network of schools. On the contrary it includes mostly public schools, sometimes in remote rural areas and often with few resources. Associated Schools are seriously engaged in striving to improve quality education and the acquisition of life skills and competencies as defined in the Education for All (EFA) Dakar Framework for Action (2000). From local to global levels, UNESCO Associated Schools are reinforcing the role of education to help meet some of the most pressing demands and challenges of the third millennium.

Some of the examples of activities conducted by Associated Schools at the grassroots level presented in this publication were an integral part of classroom teaching. Each activity sheds some valuable light on practical ways to improve the quality of education in the following six priority areas of education today:

Improvement of the relevance and pertinence of education by addressing such priority issues as:

Inclusive Education by conducting projects to:

- enrol students with learning difficulties into the mainstream of the education system (Lebanon)
- bring street children back to school and to their families (Gabon)
- promote mutual respect amongst students and increase solidarity between each other (Rwanda)
- facilitate the integration of young people from abroad (mainly from North Africa) into the French school system (France)

Paving the way to Education for Sustainable Development by:

- starting at the elementary school level (Germany) and familiarizing young children with the concept of sustainability by involving them in hands-on activities such as organic farming in a local field and to learn about the needs and aspirations of people in Africa
- taking a holistic approach to understanding the concept of sustainability by learning about the issues of poverty, the environment, human rights and World Heritage (Japan)
- sensitizing young people to become responsible consumers and seek environmentally friendly sources of energy, e.g. solar (Spain)
- undertaking a ten-year programme on vital issues and aspects of sustainability to help reach the objectives of the UN DESD (Switzerland)

Education in support of Intercultural dialogue by:

- expressing solidarity, interest and concern for indigenous peoples, such as the pygmies (Democratic Republic of Congo)
- exchanging ideas and views on topics of mutual interest with peers in different countries (Cuba)
- studying in-depth about another country and culture (Poland)
- better appreciating and understanding of one's own culture and other peoples' cultures and traditions, cultural differences and issues of injustice and acquiring skills to deal with conflict resolution (Sweden)



• **Human Rights Education through:**

- becoming familiar with one's rights and responsibilities as declared in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Greece)
- learning about the violation of human rights by enslavement, both in the past and in the present (Kuwait)
- awareness raising of the causes and consequences of corruption and the need for preventive action (Lithuania)
- empowering girls by gaining confidence and self esteem (Uganda)



Enhancement of the learning process

In conducting their projects, it is obvious that UNESCO Associated Schools emphasize active learning and team work. "Learning by doing" and using one's creativity, imagination and talents are part and parcel of interdisciplinary ASPnet activities. Activities stimulating creativity such as drama, art, music, educational games, essay writing, reporting, etc. all help to motivate students and to bring out the best in the learners and are important features of most projects, e.g. Poland, Sweden. Students are often encouraged to work in groups, to conduct independent research on the issues at stake, to draw their conclusions and make proposals for action as reflected in the projects conducted in Spain, Haiti, and Lithuania. Such group work does not only foster synergy and positive results but it also helps students to get to know each other better, to promote empathy, caring and solidarity.



The school visits by experts and decision makers generated young people's empowerment. Visits from the Minister of Energy (Switzerland), a university professor and a UN expert (Kuwait), as well as the local Ombudsman (Greece) provided platforms for students to express their ideas, exchange their views with specialists and policy makers, to speak in public and to learn directly from them.

Information and communication technologies, when available and put to good use, are revolutionizing the learning process. They serve as vital research tools facilitating research projects and have become indispensable in enabling frequent exchanges between students in different countries and often in different continents as shown in the case of Cuba, teleconferencing in New Zealand and the UNESCO/Daimler Mondialogo School Contest. At the same time, attention is paid to the acquisition of a wide range of other life skills and competencies ranging from speaking in public to communicating in another language and from formulating questionnaires to taking surveys and polls in public places, such as in Spain and in Germany. All of the projects presented reinforce autonomous, motivated and responsible learning, not only at school but hopefully throughout life.

Development of a holistic approach to education

For years and decades, there has been a call for interdisciplinary learning so that children and young people develop a holistic view on education and on their role and responsibility in meeting the needs of society and of the world. Yet in many countries the curriculum remains very subject oriented with little time and flexibility for breaking down the barriers between the disciplines. This is probably one area in which ASPnet has contributed the most throughout the years. Through project work and team teaching, teachers work together on a wide range of issues of local and world concerns, such as those reflected in this publication. In the early years of ASPnet it was mainly teachers of social studies, history, geography and language who

participated actively in the Network. However, due to globalization and enormous breakthroughs in science and technology, ASPnet activities today are mobilising teachers from many other subjects such as science, mathematics, physics and ICTs particularly in the 16 countries taking part in the Great Volga River Route Project. Such an interdisciplinary approach enables students to become better aware of the complexity and multi-facets of any given major concern and to understand the pertinence of such issues as related to their daily life, now and in the future.



Improvement of the climate of the school and the involvement of parents and the community in the life of the school

A caring environment is essential for stimulating good educational results and developing the notion of mutual respect, well-being and belonging to the school, local community and to the world at large. From Gabon to New Zealand and from Rwanda to Haiti, special efforts were made in support of inclusion, mutual respect and solidarity. Many of the projects involved parental participation and fruitful interactions between the school and the community, such as in Germany, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Greece, France and Lebanon. Parents provided not only material support for projects but they motivated students by attending their children's performances, display of results achieved and special events. All communities have valuable resources which can benefit ASPnet activities and the life of the school, such as elders, non-governmental organizations, media, private companies and municipal leaders.



Contributions to education for all (EFA)

Ever since the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000 adopted the Dakar Framework for Action – Education for All: "Meeting our Collective Commitments", the UNESCO Associated Schools Network has been actively engaged in contributing to meeting its six goals (see Annex, p. 63), and more particularly two of them. As reflected, time and again, in this publication, the acquisition of learning and life skills (goal number three) and improving every aspect of the quality of education (goal number six) are high on the agenda of ASPnet during this first decade of the 21st Century. These goals are priority areas in the ASPnet Strategy and Plan of Action for 2004-2009, which was elaborated at the ASPnet's 50th Anniversary International Congress (Auckland, New Zealand, 2003) and pursued in the "Blueprint for Action – A Quality Network for Quality Education in the 21st Century" (Berlin, Germany, 2004). However, as the struggle against illiteracy intensifies in support of goal number 2 "access to compulsory and free primary education of good quality", ASPnet is becoming a major actor in the worldwide movement in support of inclusive education and in preparation for the International Conference on Education (Geneva, November 2008) on this issue.

Promotion of quality education through globalization

Much is written about the negative effects of globalization, such as the growing gap between rich and poor nations, exclusion, standardization, loss of identity and the uniformity of cultures. However, there are also many positive dimensions of globalization and UNESCO Associated Schools have been amongst the pioneers in exploring and developing its benefits and reaching excellent collective results. Since

ASPnet operates at local, national, regional, inter-regional and international levels it is particularly well placed to constantly reap the advantages of a global Network. Let us take another look at each level.

Local level

As this Collection shows us time and again, so many grassroots activities entailed international contacts and involvement. For the school in Cuba was able to make electronic contacts with Associated Schools in several other countries, the school in Lithuania got the idea for its project from Poland, and the school in Japan reached out to other Asian countries and to an Arab State.

National level

Within almost any given country there are many regional differences due to ethnicity, geography, history, industrialization, urbanization, language, etc. Teachers and students do not always have an opportunity to meet and exchange with their counterparts and peers from other parts of their own country. Hence, the UNESCO Associated Schools Network plays a formidable role in strengthening national unity by organizing annual meetings of ASPnet schools from all regions of a given country and from all levels of education – teachers who would never meet otherwise. ASPnet addresses the educational priorities of the country and facilitates fruitful school networking, not only within the country but also with other parts of the world.

The ASPnet Youth Rally in memory of the abolition of the Slave Trade conducted in Haiti brought together young people from most of the Associated Schools in the country as well as from other interested institutions. It enabled the young people to visit (for most of them for the first time) important historical sites in their country. The Youth Rally helped to reinforce national identity, pride in one's past and hope for a better future. Young people were given the opportunity to reflect on the Haiti of tomorrow and to formulate a series of proposals to improve the country's infrastructure, protect and preserve its environment, improve living conditions, set up a programme for sustainable development, ensure security and a peaceful future. The Youth Rally also illustrates Haiti's deep commitment to pursuing the UNESCO interregional Transatlantic Slave Trade "Breaking the Silence" Project (which Haïti helped to launch and which was conducted from 1998 to 2004).

Regional level

Within each major geographical region there are many differences between countries, e.g. size, population, culture, religion and socio-economic levels. Once again ASPnet helps to: build bridges between countries; open new channels for effective dialogue and joint projects; and organize meaningful encounters for students and teachers.

The Pacific is the largest region in the world with thousands of kilometres separating the island nations from each other. However, this did not prevent the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO from bringing together young people from throughout the Asia/Pacific region to take part in the Regional World Heritage Youth Forum in Christchurch, New Zealand, in June 2007. The Forum was planned to enable students to make an input to the 31st session of the World Heritage Committee which was also meeting there. It not only brought together young people from as far away as Japan, the Marshall Islands, French Polynesia, Vanuatu, the Republic of Korea, the Cook Islands, etc., but they were given the opportunity to learn and exchange their views with leading experts in the field of World Heritage promotion and conservation. They met with Maori young people and specialists and gained an insight





into the rituals, traditions and values of the indigenous people of New Zealand. Due to the distances within New Zealand, students benefited from the latest ICTs available. They embarked on a virtual tour of the Tongariro Volcanoes and took part in a teleconference with students from this outstanding World Heritage site.

As a result of many visits and debates the Asian/Pacific young people united together to present their position on World Heritage in the form of a “Youth Challenge” to the World Heritage Committee Meeting at its inaugural session. The interaction between young people and World Heritage Committee members from all continents proved to be an empowering experience for the students and rewarding for the experts. ASPnet activities do not only emphasize “learning in the present” but also “learning throughout life” and in the light of their “Youth Challenge”, it can be expected that these young people will remain committed to preserving heritage at both local and global levels, now and in the future.

The dialogue between young people and heritage stakeholders should be continued. In organising youth forums in connection with future World Heritage Committee sessions, the well documented and illustrated Report on the Forum, produced by the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO, can serve as a useful guide.

Inter-regional level

Over the years, bodies of water (seas, oceans, rivers, etc.) have served as stimulating foundations for ASPnet Flagship projects, such as the Baltic Sea Project at the sub-regional level, the Blue Danube River Project at the regional level and the Western Mediterranean Project at the inter-regional level.

Therefore, it was not surprising that the UNESCO Moscow Office, keen to launch a new major ASPnet project to promote both ESD and World Heritage Education with the support of ICTs, drew up plans for the launching of the Great Volga River Route Project (GVRR). This inter-regional project, highly supported by the National Commission for UNESCO of the Russian Federation, proved to be unique in a number of ways.

Firstly, in view of its content relating to a wide range of vital issues, e.g. ecology, development, industrialization, navigation, energy, protected reserves, natural and cultural World Heritage sites, intangible heritage and tourism. It was obvious that a holistic approach was required. Hence, UNESCO staff from all Sectors – Education (ASPnet was the focal point for the Project), Science, Culture (including the World Heritage Centre), and Communication collaborated closely with their UNESCO colleagues in Moscow in both launching and conducting this Project from 2004 to 2007.

Secondly, the GVRR provided a unique opportunity for young people from this immense region ranging from Sweden to Iran, from Germany to Kazakhstan, and from Estonia to Azerbaijan to be in contact, for the first time, with each other. In exchanging their views and ideas, students perceived much diversity. At the same time, they became more aware of their common past linked by the Volga, of how it still connects them today and how much they have to strive together to protect and enhance it in order to offer a better future for all who live along its banks.

Thirdly, communication and joint projects between schools so far apart were largely facilitated by the bilingual (English/Russian) GVRR's web portal set up and monitored by the UNESCO Moscow Office and which presented activities conducted by the participating schools.

Last but not least the three GVRR regional encounters and the week-long scientific river cruise on the Volga shed valuable light on the intricate connections between sustainable development and the conservation of World Heritage. Aboard the cruise

ship, ASPnet students from all the participating countries were given the opportunity to work side by side with scientists in searching for sustainable solutions to complex issues of development and heritage preservation. Since the young people of today will be the decision makers of tomorrow, capacity building projects such as the GVRR can have a positive long term effect.

International level

By ensuring solid Networks of UNESCO Associated Schools at the national level, it has become much easier, in this era of globalization, to conduct international projects successfully. That is why UNESCO, upon signing an agreement for a new initiative with the private corporation Daimler, turned immediately to ASPnet for launching the Mondialogo School Contest in support of intercultural dialogue. ASPnet National Co-ordinators were consulted on how best to conduct this Contest and UNESCO Associated Schools represented the vast majority of the participating institutions in its first round (2003/2004). The impressive Contest results achieved laid the foundation for the two subsequent rounds in 2005/2006 and in 2007/2008. Since ASPnet was designed to have a multiplier effect, Associated Schools have encouraged many other schools to take part in the contest, which helps to explain the constant increase in the number of participating schools: a total of almost 100,000 students in 144 countries.

At a time in history when it has become so crucial to establish effective intercultural dialogue the Mondialogo School Contest is breaking new ground in a number of directions.

For example, this Contest has become the biggest and boldest initiative to engage secondary schools in all parts of the world in meaningful dialogues and exchanges. It not only links schools in different countries but also across continents, thereby giving students unique opportunities to reach out to their peers in far away places transcending enormous geographical areas, languages, cultures, religions and life styles in order to get to know each other better. Throughout the world, teams of students work together on innovative joint projects which emphasize common concerns and aspirations while respecting differences and promoting unity in diversity. In spite of the absolute necessity to forge intercultural dialogues at both local and global levels, this vital dimension is still not sufficiently integrated in school curricula in many countries today. The third and revised edition of the Mondialogo SchoolKit for Teachers is an example of international resource materials which is helping to fill this gap. The Kit has become a major instrument to introduce and reinforce intercultural dialogues as part of school curricula.

Once again the use of ICTs and the Mondialogo web portal have served as an essential platform for: facilitating contacts and exchanges; training for improved use of ICTs; accessing data, resource materials and documentation; and receiving assistance through a central "help desk".

The Mondialogo School Contest is a prime example of excellent collaboration between the public (UNESCO) and private (Daimler) sectors, between UNESCO National Commissions for UNESCO and Daimler national branches, between ASPnet National Coordinators and UNESCO Associated Schools and between leading intellectuals, artists and experts who are members of the Contest's International Jury. The effectiveness of the Mondialogo School Contest has been highly recognized and acclaimed by a number of prestigious awards.



Conclusion

Going ahead with taking to scale UNESCO Associated School Good Practices

Quality education is a vast field covering every aspect of the education spectrum from content to methodology, from the role of the teacher to the capacity of learners, from assessment to educational materials, from scholastic results to the overall development of children and young people. The UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) does not pretend to cover all aspects of quality education. It concentrates, as it was initially created to do so, on conducting projects aimed to:

- reinforce the humanistic, ethical and international dimensions of education
- enhance the learning process
- enable learners to acquire life skills and essential competencies
- contribute to the observance of international days, years and decades proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly
- be incorporated into the mainstream of national systems of education in many countries for the benefit of all
- create synergy, partnerships, exchanges and launch flagship projects at national, regional and international levels



This first Collection of UNESCO Associated Schools Good Practices provides concrete examples of ASPnet's meaningful contribution in support of the above-mentioned areas from local to global levels.

Through the promotion of inclusive education, ESD, intercultural dialogue and education for human rights, UNESCO ASPnet schools are striving to promote a culture of peace by incorporating UNESCO's priorities as well as those adopted by the United Nations into classroom learning.

The time has now come to give greater attention to multiplying UNESCO Associated Schools Good Practices by taking them to scale and incorporating them into the mainstream of systems of education.

Each Good Practice presented in this publication was followed by a section: "You can do it too!" giving suggestions for undertaking similar action.

Hence, any country "can do it too!" by examining how best it can:

- incorporate ASPnet Good Practices into the mainstream of education for the benefit of many other schools

Conclusion

- give recognition to ASPnet principals, teachers and students and reinforce its capacity, including its use of ICTs for effective national, regional and international networking
- mobilize UNESCO Associated Schools to observe the international days, years and decades declared by the United Nations General Assembly
- organize significant ASPnet empowering encounters and events such as youth rallies, youth forums, etc. between young people, experts, decision makers and stakeholders
- encourage the media to cover ASPnet projects and initiatives

Each region of the world, with the help of UNESCO Field Offices, “can do it too!” by taking action to:

- include UNESCO Associated School Good Practices in major publications and documents
- incorporate the role of UNESCO Associated Schools in promoting quality education in EFA regional strategies
- ensure ASPnet inputs to and participation in major meetings and conferences
- use ASPnet to launch innovative regional flagships projects and reinforce ongoing ASPnet projects

At the international level, UNESCO Member States “can do it too!” by taking additional measures to:

- ensure a systematic and frequent international diffusion of UNESCO Associated Schools Good Practices
- foresee ASPnet inputs to major international meetings and conferences and events, such as the World Heritage Committee Meetings, the International Conference of Education, the UNESCO General Conference, etc.
- rely on ASPnet to launch new international and intersectoral projects, initiatives, programmes, etc. with both the public sector (particularly the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies) and the private sector

In the early 1950s, UNESCO Associated Schools were considered as the pioneers “for building peace in the minds of children and young people”. In the 2000s, they continue to assume their pioneering role in contributing to real and lasting peace and in strengthening the four pillars of learning for the 21st Century – learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. May these committed, and often courageous, UNESCO Associated Schools worldwide fully benefit from the necessary recognition, support and resources which they deserve in order to remain at the forefront of pursuing the improvement of education in their respective countries in accordance with the UNESCO Constitution and the mandate which they were set up to fulfill.



Annexes

UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

In 2000, for the first time, the Member States of the United Nations made a commitment to tackle together, on all fronts, the problems of peace, poverty, security and development, human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Millennium Declaration identifies the following eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015:

Goal 1 Eradicate poverty

Target 1 Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day

Target 2 Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Goal 2 Achieve universal primary education

Target 3 Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Goal 3 Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4 Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

Goal 4 Reduce child mortality

Target 5 Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

Goal 5 Improve maternal health

Target 6 Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

Goal 6 Combat HIV/AIDS malaria and other diseases

Target 7 Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

Target 8 Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Goal 7 Ensure environmental sustainability

Target 9 Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

Target 10 Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation

Target 11 By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

Goal 8 Develop a global partnership for development

Target 12 Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non discriminatory trading and financial system (includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – nationally and internationally)

Target 13 Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction

Target 14 Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States

Target 15 Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term

Target 16 In cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth

Target 17 In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

Target 18 In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies – especially information and communications technologies

EFA Goals

As the lead agency for the Education for All (EFA) movement, UNESCO has been mandated to coordinate international efforts to reach the following six internationally-agreed education goals aiming to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015. Governments, development agencies, civil society, non-government organizations and the media are but some of the partners working toward their achievement.

Goal 1 Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education

Goal 2 Ensuring that by 2015 all children have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality

Goal 3 Promoting learning and the acquisition of life skills for adolescents and young people

Goal 4 Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015

Goal 5 Eliminating gender disparities by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015

Goal 6 Improving the quality of education

Resource materials

UNESCO Associated Schools (ASPnet)

www.unesco.org/education/asp

GVRR project

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/483>

www.gvrr.unesco.ru/?lang=E

Inclusive Education

www.unesco.org/education

Intercultural Dialogue

www.unesco.org/culture

Millennium Development Goals

www.un.org/millenniumgoals

Mondialogo

www.mondialogo.org

TST project

<http://www.antislavery.org>

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

www.un.org/Overview/rights.html

United Nations

www.un.org

United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

www.unesco.org/education/desd/

World Heritage Center

<http://whc.unesco.org/>

World Programme for Human Rights Education

www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/programme.htm



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www.unesco.org/education/asp