

UNESCO

Education

UNESCO is the lead agency of the UN system in the area of education. In Pakistan, UNESCO education programmes focus on the coordination and implementation of EFA (Education for All) and ESD (Education for Sustainable Development). UNESCO works closely with the Federal and Provincial Ministry/Departments of Education towards achieving MDG and EFA targets by 2015. UNESCO's emphasis is on strategic, upstream interventions e.g. the current education policy review, aiming to bring about incremental changes in the education system through dialogue with national leadership and capacity building of officials.

The Office extends technical assistance in a wide range of thematic issues affecting the education system. Interventions include post-emergency education reconstruction in the earthquake-affected areas (see below), literacy and non-formal education, early childhood education, teacher education, HIV/AIDS prevention education, the promotion of ICTs and gender equality, and the formulation of education policy and governance.

An important domain of UNESCO's work is capacity building of individuals and institutions. On-going interventions include training of district education managers in educational planning and management, capacity building on EMIS and analysis of census data, strategic reforms in teacher education, and training of educationists on HIV/AIDS prevention education.

Eradication of illiteracy in Pakistan is a particularly challenging priority area for the Government and UNESCO. In response to this demand, UNESCO has included Pakistan in its global programme 'Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE)'. A 2-year country-wide project on capacity building in planning and implementation of literacy programmes has recently been launched to that effect.

Earthquake Response Programme

The 8 October 2005 earthquake caused extensive damage to the education system in the affected areas. 18,000 children and 900 teachers died in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan and in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). In the eight most affected districts of NWFP and AJK respectively, 46% and 96% school buildings were damaged or destroyed¹. Given the scale of the damage, UNESCO engaged right from the beginning in the

humanitarian response and vowed not just to reinvigorate the education system, but to **build back better** than before the earthquake.

UNESCO's response has been in line with its mandate that covers support to the education system as a whole.

Interventions include capacity building of education officials and educational rehabilitation through rapid reorientation and training of teachers.



Secretary Education, AJK, awarding certificates to participants of the Planning & Management Workshop in Muzaffarabad

¹ Asian Development Bank and World Bank. *Pakistan 2005 earthquake: draft report preliminary damage and needs assessment*. 5 Nov. 2005. Islamabad: ADB/WB. Annex 9 – Education, pp. 1-2

Through these interventions, UNESCO is working closely with national, provincial and district authorities to reactivate and reinvigorate the entire education system in eight most affected districts.

With the support of DFID and the Government of Japan, UNESCO's activities range from the level of policy making, educational planning and management to curriculum development, teacher training and psychosocial support in the classroom. On-going activities include in-service training of teachers in collaboration with the Departments of Education in NWFP and AJK (target 10,000 in NWFP and 12,000 in AJK), training of trainers for master trainers (56 master trainers, 319 secondary teachers trained in NWFP and 53 in AJK), capacity building and logistical support of educational planners and managers at various levels in all affected districts (130 senior managers have been trained and 1780 middle managers and head teachers in AJK will be trained for which a needs assessment workshop has been held).

Culture

The main thrust of UNESCO's activities in the Culture sector focuses on safeguarding the cultural heritage of Pakistan. With financial assistance from the Government of Norway (USD 1,6m) the project 'Conservation and Preservation of the Lahore Fort' is being implemented to stabilise and protect the Shish Mahal ceiling, and to restore the Akbari Gateway, the Royal Kitchens and the "Pictured Wall". A Master Plan for the Lahore Fort site has also been developed in collaboration with the Government of Punjab.

For the project 'Conservation and Restoration of Shalamar Gardens', UNESCO received a grant from the Getty Foundation to carry out baseline studies towards overall safeguarding of the site.

With emergency assistance from the World Heritage Centre, UNESCO also undertook emergency works in the most endangered structures of the Shalamar Gardens. The Master Plan for the Shalamar Gardens has been finalized.



Shish Mahal at the Lahore Fort

Another project about to start by mid 2006 is the 'Preservation of Endangered Moveable Cultural Assets of Gandhara Art in Pakistan', a US-funded intervention focusing on the preparation of national inventories and databases; improvement in museology and conservation; and building capacity of staff for the protection of cultural property.

Communication and Information

In the area of Communication and Information, UNESCO Islamabad implements activities to promote access to media, freedom of expression and to reinforce objective, pluralistic media.

A training workshop on photojournalism in the disaster areas affected by the earthquake will be organised in September 2006 aiming at objective and constructive reporting of natural or man-made disasters as well as ways to generate awareness, support and understanding from citizens and local authorities.

UNESCO has also instituted the "Gender in Journalism" and "Press Freedom" awards jointly with the Pakistan Press Foundation (PPF) aimed at recognizing outstanding coverage of any issue by a female journalist and for excellence in gender sensitive reporting by the best journalists in the country. The selection of judges has been finalised and the award ceremony will be held in August.

A key upcoming activity in late 2006 concerns a training workshop for the Young TV Producers Network in Asia focussing on HIV/AIDS issues and information, in collaboration with PTV, HUM TV, AIBD-Malaysia, UNAIDS and UNDP. Twelve young TV producers from national broadcasting organisations will have acquired skills to cover and inform on HIV and AIDS issues. As part of their assignment, the participants will produce a documentary on HIV/AIDS to be compiled onto a DVD for wide dissemination in the region.