TRAINING SEMINAR FOR NEW OFFICIALS OF ASIAN NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO

28 March – 1 April, 2005
Seoul, Republic of Korea
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(Summary Report)

TRAINING SEMINAR FOR NEW OFFICIALS
OF ASIAN NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO

Sangnam Institute of Management, Yonsei University

Seoul, Republic of Korea

March 28 – April 1, 2005

UNESCO

Korean National Commission for UNESCO
I. Background
As constitutionally recognized liaison bodies between UNESCO and the Member States, National Commissions are vital for the elaboration, execution and evaluation of the Organisation’s programmes. Especially amidst this era of global change, strong and effective National Commissions constitute an invaluable asset for UNESCO. In this context, the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU) and the Division of Relations with National Commissions and New Partnerships of UNESCO (ERC/NCP) jointly organized a “Training Seminar for New Officials of Asian National Commissions for UNESCO” as a part of UNESCO’s ongoing commitment to the pursuit of capacity-building programmes.

II. Objective
By helping new staff members of the National Commissions for UNESCO in Asia better understand UNESCO’s activities, its current reform process, status and roles of the National Commissions, partnerships with civil society and the project formulation process, this five-day training seminar contributed to the effective functioning of National Commissions while seeking to identify possible avenues of cooperation among them.

III. Organizers
The training seminar was jointly organized by KNCU and UNESCO HQ (ERC/NCP).

IV. Date and Venue
1. Date: 28 March – 1 April 2005
2. Venue: Sangnam Institute of Management, Yonsei University
   Address: 134 Sinchon-dong, Seodaemun-gu, Seoul 120-749, Republic of Korea
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V. In Attendance
1. Three representatives from UNESCO Headquarters
2. Five representatives from UNESCO Field Offices in Asia
3. Twenty-six participants from twenty-two National Commissions for UNESCO in Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, People’s Republic of China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam).
4. One observer from Brunei Darussalam, new Member State since 17 March 2005
5. Three observers from the Republic of Korea (two from APCEIU, and one from the Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development of the Republic of Korea)

A list of all participants is attached.
VI. Day One Proceedings

1. Opening Session

The Training Seminar was formally opened with the welcoming remarks from Dr. Samuel Lee, Secretary-General of KNCU. He expressed his warm welcome to the twenty-six participants and four observers from twenty-three different Asian member states. Likewise he conveyed his appreciation to UNESCO Headquarters for their support in organizing the seminar. Dr. Lee emphasized that this was a timely occasion in terms of helping new staff members better understand the important coordination and consultation roles of National Commissions.

This was followed by Introductory Remarks from the Director of the UNESCO Jakarta Office, Mr. Stephen Hill, who welcomed Brunei Darussalam as the newest Member-State to have joined UNESCO. Further, he stressed the vital role of National Commissions as being the “bridge to civil society” and representing the permanent presence of UNESCO and its goals in their respective Member-States.

The body proceeded to the election of its Chair, Vice Chairs and Rapporteurs. Mr. Ahmad from the Malaysian National Commission nominated Mr. Lee as Chair to which the participants unanimously approved. Mr. Rahman, representing Bangladesh, nominated the representatives from Malaysia, Nepal and Tajikistan for the Vice Chair posts. Further, he nominated the respective participants from Kyrgyzstan, Philippines and Korea as Rapporteurs. Said nominations were agreed to by the body through acclamation.

Participants elected the Bureau as follows:-

- **Chairperson:** Dr. Samuel LEE (Republic of Korea)
- **Vice Chairpersons:**
  - Mr. Shazali AHMAD (Malaysia)
  - Ms. Munzifakhon BABADJANOVA (Tajikistan)
  - Mr. Satya SHRESTHA (Nepal)
- **Rapporteurs:**
  - Ms. Marie Antoinette REYES (Philippines)
  - Ms. Nazira ALYMBAEVA (Kyrgyzstan)
  - Ms. Bom-mi LEE (Republic of Korea)

The Chair invited the body to review the programme for adoption to which the participants approved and adopted. The participants and resource persons proceeded to introduce themselves.

2. UNESCO and its Reform Process by Dr. Stephen HILL

Mr. Hill provided a general picture of UNESCO, how it works, applications of the founding mandates, its five main functions as well as the reforms introduced by Director-General Mr. Koichiro Matsuura since 1999. The Chair then invited the participants to raise their questions, comments and clarifications. One of participants requested clarification on the accountability of National Commissions to the Field Offices, to
which Mr. Hill emphasized that National Commissions are in fact accountable only to their respective
governments. Another participant commented that while certain Member-States are focused on by Field
Offices and the Headquarters, some however are overlooked. Mr. Hill acknowledged that this as an
important issue which needs to be dealt with. Due to funding constraints however, it is not possible to have
a representative in all countries. Therefore a need to find creative ways of connecting, for instance “by
creating an antenna” is required.

3. Role of National Commissions within a Decentralized Context by Mr. Xiaolin CHENG

Mr. Cheng discussed the basic roles and functions of National Commissions, their interface and
cooperation with Field Offices as well as communication tools and services National Commissions may
find useful. He emphasized the three-fold relations within which National Commissions should operate,
that is, within their respective countries, between and among other National Commissions and UNESCO
offices (Headquarters, Field Offices and institutions). The expected functions include advisory, liaison,
information, programme evaluation and elaboration and/or programme execution. In conclusion, Mr.
Cheng raised the prospects and challenges for National Commissions, in terms of reviewing training
modalities and content, increasing local impact, ensuring proper resources and maintaining the stability of
National Commission staff and leaders.

On the matter of National Commission structure and the statistics presented, one participant inquired if
there is research conducted on the effectiveness of National Commissions with regards to being attached to
a particular ministry, i.e., education, foreign affairs, etc. Mr. Cheng clarified that there are different
structures for each National Commission, which have advantageous and disadvantageous implications. He
expressed that the best approach is to enjoy some autonomy and to have an inter-sectoral representation
within the National Commission. Anyhow it is up to each government to decide on the structure most
suitable to their national context.

4. Programme Priorities for 2004-2005 (32C/5) & Elaboration of Draft Programme and Budget for
2006-2007 (33C/5)

A. General Considerations by Dr. HILL

Mr. Hill briefly discussed the major programme priorities of 32C/5 and 33C/5 on the sectors of education,
natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication. Regarding the Draft Programme,
he discussed the development of a new programme that focuses on disaster preparedness in view of the
recent devastation of the tsunami in Asia. Mr. Hill explained cross-cutting themes and key regional
priorities. During the open forum, one of the participants inquired on the rationale for UNESCO’s having a
lower emphasis on the MOST programme. Mr. Hill replied that due to the limited budget, the priority of
the SHS sector is in fact increasingly on ethics. He again emphasized that countries should speak up about
these concerns prior to the submission of the draft resolution by each country. Mr. Abtahi, Chief of
UNESCO ERC/RIO, added that Member-States should indicate which programme should be allocated funds and that at the end of the day, the Programme Priorities are up to the countries’ approval.

B. Natural Science by Dr. HILL
Mr. Hill continued his presentation discussing the principal priorities for the natural science sector, as well as its other priorities and strategic objectives. He noted that the IBSP or the International Basic Sciences Programme, newly created as it is, is considered a flagship activity together with Knowledge, Education and Information for Natural Disaster Programme. One participant inquired during the open forum if the disaster preparedness programme will not only focus on tsunami. Mr. Hill responded that the focus would in fact be more on reconstruction than humanitarian relief. He stressed that the issue is actually about bringing science to poor people and for them to build their own lives.

C. Education by Mr. Gordon JOHNSTON
Mr. Johnston presented global and regional challenges as seen in a medium-term strategy and related these to UNESCO’s mandates. He further provided examples from the regional work plan for 2004-2005 as well as the proposed regional activities for 2006-2007. He then presented a table summarizing proposed 33C/5 activities across all 15 UNESCO offices in the region. In closing, he stressed that it is important to join forces in determining synergies among National Commissions.

D. Communication & Information by Ms. Jocelyn JOSIAH
In the absence of Ms. Susanne Ornager who was supposed to present the Information for All Programme, Ms. Josiah proceeded with her presentation on the Communication Programme. She outlined the main objective and the major emphases of the UNESCO Communication & Information programme. She then introduced those projects implemented in the Asia Pacific region. One participant requested details on the activities for freedom of expression and the promotion of awareness. Ms. Josiah cited in particular the World Press Freedom Day activities as well as the facilitation of dialogues in Nepal and Cambodia. Further, she explained about capability-building activities conducted by the UNESCO New Delhi Office.

During the open forum, another participant requested a definition of “sustainable”. Mr. Hill explained that due to the limited resources of the planet, there should be an awareness and consciousness of these limitations. More importantly, there should be a mindset of long-term thinking. Ms. Domenach-Chich of UNESCO Beijing Office added that sustainability means taking care of the future of what we are doing and having a long-term and concrete perspective.
VII. Day Two Proceedings

1. Programme Priorities for 2004-2005 (32C/5) & Elaboration of Draft Programme and Budget for 2006-2007 (33C/5) (Continued)

A. Culture by Ms. Beatrice KALDUN

Ms. Kaldun introduced the principal priority of the UNESCO Culture Programme, that of promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and went on to outline the aims and focus of the 32 C/5 and 33 C/5 programmes. She explained how the first line of action was the even distribution of funds among UNESCO clusters, and then the next step of setting programme priorities, which follow UN mandates for peace and human rights. Programme IV priorities are now more specifically concentrated on cultural heritage and the development of cultural policies and industries, and the programme has an inter-sectoral approach which includes natural heritage, crafts and design, cultural diversity and biological diversity. Ms. Kaldun also stressed the importance of working in partnerships with NGOs, academies, and local authorities.

B. Social and Human Sciences Sector by Ms. Geneviève DOMENACH-CHICH

Ms. Domenach-Chich outlined the mission and working methods of the Social and Human Sciences sector and showed the spread of Social and Human Sciences workers in the field. She covered the main themes of SHS, science ethics, and human rights and pointed out that SHS is the leading sector in the alleviation of poverty, and coordinated 20 CCT projects worldwide. Finally, Ms. Domenach-Chich demonstrated how SHS and its goals fit into the UNESCO structure.

2. UNESCO’s outreach to NGOs and other civil society organisations by Mr. Massoud ABTAHI

In his presentation, Mr. Abtahi addressed UNESCO’s cooperation with NGOs, the interaction of UNESCO’s governing bodies with NGOs and cooperation on NGO-related issues within the UN system, noting that UNESCO has provided for NGOs involvement in UNESCO’s work even at the policy-making level, by the latter’s participation in the NGO Committee of UNESCO's Executive Board. Mr. Abtahi first looked at the aims, framework and conditions by which UNESCO deals with NGOs. He then outlined the official relations with NGOs by region, and discussed the obligations that NGOs hold in their relationship with UNESCO. Mr. Abtahi showed how both bilateral and collective cooperation exists with NGOs under a statutory framework and concluded by briefly describing the UNESCO structures that interact with NGOs and reinforced UNESCO’s theme of interaction with NGOs: Towards a sustained culture of dialogue.

Activities of ICOMOS-Korea by the President Dr. Lena KIM

Dr. Kim described the goals of the Korean Committee of ICOMOS, an international non-governmental council of professionals dedicated to the conservation of historic monuments and sites worldwide. Dr. Kim described how KNCU initiated the establishment of the Korean Committee of ICOMOS in 1999, and how KNCU, in particular, and UNESCO HQ have been active in supporting its activities.
The Activities of the Centre for Energy Alternatives in Korea by Prof. Pil Ryul LEE

Prof. Lee gave an overview of the main Korean environmental organisations and discussed the history, goals, and activities of the Center for Energy Alternatives. These activities included several Citizen Solar Power Plants and the establishment of the Citizen Solar Power Plant Company.

3. Workshop: Development of Regional Cooperation by the Use of the UNESCO Participation Programme led by Mr. Xiaolin Cheng

Mr. Cheng discussed the principles of the PP, such as the application process, the possible beneficiaries, and the forms of assistance offered through the programme. He then described the budget and conditions for assistance, and some factors by which the UNESCO Director-General approves requests. Mr. Cheng noted that the procedures to apply for Emergency Assistance are almost the same as a regular PP and concluded with a budget breakdown of approved PP projects for 2004-2005. After Mr. Cheng’s short presentation, participants were divided into five groups, according to the preference marked on their registration forms, and worked in groups to draft a PP project.

VIII. Day Three Proceedings

1. Extrabudgetary Fund Raising presented by Ms. Birgitte MOLLER

Ms. Moller first explained that the overall aim of her presentation was to highlight the further training needs, in the area of resource mobilization, of the National Commissions. Ms. Moller described in depth the characteristics of bilateral and multilateral funding arrangements, noting that bilateral funding increasingly uses direct national channels rather than go via the Secretariat in Paris. She briefly talked about UN funding sources, multilateral development banks, and the EU, and outlined the features, reasons, organisations, criteria and partnerships involved in funds-in-trust cooperation. Ms. Moller then touched upon private funding sources and concluded with the role that National Commissions play in extrabudgetary fund raising.

In the discussion that followed, one of the participants asked about the deadline of extra-budgetary funding requests and Ms. Moller responded that these are processed and approved on an ad-hoc basis. There were some questions from the floor about the difference between the activities of National Commissions and UNESCO, and about the delegation of authority and financial accountability for extra-budgetary activities between National Commissions and Field Offices, particularly when the same space is shared. Ms. Moller replied that ideally National Commissions and Field Offices are one in the same and there should not be any competition. She said that joint projects have a much better chance of convincing a funding source, and that there is a decided trend in the donor community towards national-level funding, with Vietnam as a good example. Concerning the accountability for National Commissions, Ms. Moller explained that
National Commissions implement or evaluate the project under a contract with UNESCO and then they are accountable under the contract on its deliverables.

2. Cooperation with the private sector presented by Ms. Birgitte MOLLER
Ms. Moller began by tracing the evolution of UNESCO’s cooperation with the private sector, both internally and externally. She then discussed the changing roles of the private sector, from concern about philanthropy and image transfer to enlightened self-interest, and the changing role of UNESCO, from conception and implementation to orientation and facilitation. She described several flagship partnerships with corporations and foundations, and concluded by talking about the role of National Commissions in dialogue, cooperation, support and monitoring of such partnerships.

Samsung-KNCU Educational Fund presented by Ms. Soon-ho CHOI
Ms. Choi gave a presentation about the Samsung-KNCU Education Fund: Hope in Action for Disadvantaged Children in the Global Village. Ms. Choi outlined the background of the project and its objectives and scope, such as focusing on countries in conflict and developing countries. She then described the Fund’s wide range of activities in over twenty-one countries, including building or renovating school facilities, day-care centres, and shelters for girls exposed to human trafficking, and providing educational equipment.

3. Visit to Samsung Electronics Factory and Hwaseong Fortress in Suwon
All the participants joined in a study visit to Samsung Electronics Factory and Hwaseong Fortress in Suwon.

IX. Day Four Proceedings
1. Cooperation with Programme Networks
Mr. Jinsung Jeon, Programme Specialist of KNCU, briefed participants on KNCU’s organisational structure, key features of the Commission and its current salient activities. Dr. Utak Chung, Head of the Education Team at KNCU, shortly introduced UNESCO Associated School Project Network in Korea including its history, major activities and its relevant facts and figures. The presentation was followed by an introduction to the Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme prepared by Mr. KIM Dong-woo, Programme Specialist of the Youth & Cultural Exchange Team at KNCU.

Professor Chung-il Choi, President of the MAB National Committee of the Republic of Korea, briefed on the operational mechanism of the MAB National Committee of the Republic of Korea as well as its activities. Then Professor Young-min Yun, Member of the Korean Committee for Information for All, gave his presentation based on the theme of ‘Informmatization & Information Divide’. Mr. Dai-geun Kang, Director of the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding also familiarized the
participants with APCEIU’s activities by sharing information on the establishment of the APCEIU Centre, its main activities, and its future plan for action.

2. Participation in the Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme
As a part of the training seminar, all participants were invited to the Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme (CCAP) on the afternoon of Thursday 31 March. Five participants had a chance to make a valuable contribution to the promotion of a culture of tolerance and mutual respect by giving presentations on their national culture for a class of Korean students at Seoul National University Girl’s Middle School, with the support of a Korean Interpretation Volunteer. All other participants of the Training Seminar also joined in the programme as observers.

Participants who conducted a CCAP class as follows:-
Mr. A.N.M Bazlur Rahman (Bangladesh) in cooperation with Ms. Seong-ah Lee
Mr. Yipeng Cao (China) in cooperation with Ms. Keum-beet Hwang
Ms. Aya Yokoi (Japan) in cooperation with Ms. Gee-yeun Kim
Ms. Marie Antoinette Reyes (Philippines) in cooperation with Ms. Seo-Jun Chung
Mr. Djamshid Mirhalikov (Uzbekistan) in cooperation with Ms. Mi-ji Lee

X. Day Five Proceedings
1. 33rd UNESCO General Conference by Ms. Birgitte MOLLER
Ms. Moller briefed on the structure of the UNESCO General Conference, which is its supreme policy-making body in the organisation, as well as its main functions. She then highlighted UNESCO’s recent efforts to reform the General Conference, together with some of the important recommendations to be considered during the upcoming General Conference. Some participants asked a question in relation to the membership of the Executive Board, and Ms. Moller responded to this question by explaining the nomination and election procedure for UNESCO Executive Board members.

2. Workshop: Development of Regional Cooperation by the Use of the UNESCO Participation Programme
Mr. Cheng invited all the five workshop groups to present their group works and each group took the floor to introduce its prepared PP proposal to other participants. Then, Mr. Cheng made brief comments on each group’s work and gave some practical tips for filling in a PP application form. The titles of the group projects are as follows:

a. Group A : Regional Workshop on Improvement of the Quality of Teaching at the Primary School Level.
b. Group B : Public Awareness on Water Pollution in South Asia.
c. Group C : Women’s Empowerment in Rural Areas of Seven Countries—Pakistan, Nepal, Uzbekistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and China.

d. Group D : Regional Workshop on Crafts Development in Asia within the Context of Sustainable Tourism.

e. Group E : Towards the Visibility of National Commissions in the Asia-Pacific Region.

3. Seminar Evaluation Survey

An assessment questionnaire was circulated to all participants, and a short evaluation session was held at the end of the seminar. Among 28 replies received from participants, 25 of them thought that the seminar had met their own expectations and that all the seminar topics were treated in an effective way. Participants unanimously agreed that this seminar has been very successful and truly beneficial to them as new staff members of their Commission. Many participants agreed that this seminar had a positive impact on their future National Commissions’ work.

In this regard, encouraging observations and comments were made, such as:

“The training seminar has been very informative and enriching. It has also given all the participants a chance to build up good personal networks”.

“I am very satisfied with all the lessons and experiences that I have gained from participating in this training seminar”

“The whole programme has been delivered in very effective ways as well as in a pleasant manner. During this intensive five-day training seminar, a wide arrange of important issues were presented and discussed in depth”.

“It has been the best training seminar that we have ever attended”.

According to their replies, participants were most interested in the following items: Extrabudgetary Fund Raising; Cooperation with the Private Sector; Workshop: Development of Regional Cooperation by the Use of the UNESCO Participation Programme; Roles of National Commissions within a Decentralized Context; 33rd UNESCO General Conference; UNESCO and its Reform Process; and UNESCO’s Outreach to NGO’s and Other Civil Society Organisations.

Even though most participants (21 participants) were satisfied with the documentation distributed during the training seminar, some participants pointed out that participants could have gotten even greater benefits from this training programme if they were given printed materials in advance. As for the satisfaction of their stay in Seoul, 23 participants expressed that they were satisfied with their travel to and stay in Seoul. Some participants also suggested that more time be allocated to group discussion and practical exercises in order to give participants a chance to be actively involved in exchanging their different views and experiences on relevant issues.
At the closing session, many participants expressed their satisfaction with this seminar and their willingness to keep in touch with their fellow participants and share acquired information and knowledge with their colleagues in their countries. Gratitude and appreciation were expressed to the Korean National Commission for UNESCO for its wonderful organization of this event. All participants were also thanked for their active participation, and the Secretariat was thanked for their assistance and service.

3. Visit to the National Folk Museum of Korea & Kyongbok Palace
All the participants joined in a study visit to the National Folk Museum of Korea and Kyongbok Palace.
List of Participants

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