Silent movement
Giving a voice to the deaf
4 Silent movement
Giving a voice to the deaf

4, 5 VIET NAM
6, 7 CENTRAL ASIA
- Media trainers pull plug on subjective AIDS broadcasts
- Migration news network expands borders
8, 9 CAMBODIA
- Cambodians rally to save the planet
- Radio empowers the people
10, 11 CHINA
- Building harmony between people and nature
- Director-General participates in UNESCO week at World Expo
12, 13 INDIA
- Ahmedabad dreams of World Heritage status
- Network fosters balance between past and future
14 Bangladesh
- TV channel closure sparks censorship debate
15 THAILAND
- Life-changing decision
16 UZBEKISTAN
- Going from strength to strength (Interview)

17 VOX POP
18 GUEST COLUMN
- Virtual water saves prized liquid asset
19 Calendar of Events
20 Publications
IN BRIEF

Boost to Asia-Pacific arts research

The UNESCO-Nanyang Institute of Education (NIE), Centre for Arts Research in Education (CARE), was officially launched in Singapore recently. CARE is part of a region-wide network of observatories, spearheaded by UNESCO Asia-Pacific region to provide a systematic means of collecting and disseminating the growing body of research in arts education in the region.

UNESCO views arts education as crucial in safeguarding cultural diversity and being an important component within a quality Education for All framework. CARE provides activities and resources primarily for the professional development of arts educators, researchers and practitioners. Its mission is to generate, collect and disseminate high-quality research which promotes education in and through the arts with a strong collaborative network between NIE, UNESCO and like-minded individuals in the Asia-Pacific region. Its vision is to be a centre of excellence in arts research in the region.

CARE has a searchable, free-access and growing arts education research database that can be accessed at: www.unesco-care.nie.edu.sg.

Research on the value of arts in education can be used to support advocacy efforts for mainstreaming the arts in Asian education.

Social science under scrutiny

Social science studies from Western countries continue to have the greatest global influence, but the field is expanding rapidly in Asia, particularly in China, according to the World Social Science Report, 2010: “Knowledge divides”. In South Asia, barring some centres of excellence in India, social sciences as a whole have a low priority, the report stated. “Social scientists produce work of outstanding quality and tremendous practical value, but as this report illustrates, social scientific knowledge is often the least developed in those parts of the world where it is most keenly needed,” said Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, in her foreword to the report.

Education suffers attack

Teachers, students and school buildings are increasingly coming under attack from armed groups, soldiers and security forces, according to a report “Education under Attack 2010” launched recently by UNESCO. The report details incidents ranging from the maiming of students on their way to school, the forced recruitment of child soldiers and suicide bombers, the torture, or killing of teachers, to the total destruction of centres of learning. The study analyses targets and motives, as well as the impact of attacks – not only on education systems and learning outcomes, but also on social, economic and political development. In addition, it examines measures taken to strengthen protection and prevention, and to end impunity for perpetrators of such attacks.

Preserving the past for the future

Eighty three new nominations are currently being examined to see if they meet the criteria for the Memory of the World Register. They will be assessed by the 10th Meeting of the International Advisory Committee in May next year. The current nominations under scrutiny include documentary heritage from Asia and the Pacific: Iran, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, People’s Republic of China, Thailand, Republic of Korea, India, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Philippines, Fiji, Japan, Malaysia, Viet Nam and Bhutan. The vision of the Memory of the World Programme is that the world’s documentary heritage belongs to all; should be fully preserved and protected for all; and, with due recognition of cultural mores and practicalities, should be permanently accessible to all without hindrance.
In the world of Vietnamese dance, Le Vu Long is a pioneer.

Along with his wife, Luu Thi Thu Lan, he has established the country’s first contemporary dance company, notable not only for its presentation of modern forms in a country where only classical styles are recognized, but also for a troupe of deaf and hearing-impaired dancers who perform elaborate routines.

Long, the son of a painter, and a film actor and director, was drawn to dance at an early age when a friend of his father’s took him to an audition.

“Sometimes I think I didn’t choose the profession,” he said, “it chose me.”

The 37-year-old enrolled in dance school at the age of twelve and studied the conventional Vietnamese curriculum of classical, ballet, traditional, folk and foreign styles.

It wasn’t until his final year of study, at the age of 19, that Long was introduced to contemporary styles through a performance by a visiting dance collective from France.

He continued his experience in modern dance a year later, while working for the Vietnam National Opera and Ballet, when he was invited to join the contemporary Coline Information Company in France.

He spent two years at this company, learning contemporary dance styles from visiting choreographers, and performing in a variety of theatres across Europe.

Long continued to explore contemporary forms when he returned to work with the Vietnam National Opera and Ballet Company in Hà Nội.

In 2001, Long and his wife, who is also a classically trained dancer, began holding after-hours sessions with colleagues to explore modern techniques.

He became frustrated, however, with both the limited time the performers could devote to practice time, and the struggle of teaching contemporary techniques to classically-trained dancers.

“When a student studies, everything is stressed and [in a] fixed position,” he said. “When you train them, you have to find a way to make them free up the body.”

A breakthrough occurred for Long, when he and Lan had a chance meeting with a group of deaf people in a café.

Long was immediately drawn to their sign language, and saw in its movements the sort of communication he was pursuing through contemporary dance.

“Dancing is body language, we don’t need to talk. When I saw the sign language, I said ‘here is dancing.’”

Long invited the deaf people to his studio to practice dance movements and after a few sessions, the group began to develop a contemporary performance piece using rhythm and lighting to syncopate the choreography.

The experience was such a success for all involved, that in 2002 they decided to form the Together Higher dance company.

Long served as the company’s choreographer, and Lan assisted with teaching and managing the group.

The initial strong rapport Long had with the dancers became the blueprint for the company’s creative processes.

His pieces became inspired by studio work with the dancers, which focused on contact and improvisation.


The disease had made its way into the national consciousness and Long realized that the deaf community had limited means
to learn about it.

To address this problem, he organized a series of workshops between Together Higher and HIV/AIDS patients. During these visits, the patients would share with the deaf dancers their experiences of living with the disease, and in return, the dancers would perform for the patients, and encourage them to participate and express themselves through body movements.

For many of the Together Higher dancers, this was their first introduction to HIV/AIDS issues.

From these workshops, Long was inspired to produce the 75-minute “Stories of Us”, which addressed the themes of isolation and identity loss experienced by both HIV/AIDS patients and the deaf dancers.

The troupe toured Viet Nam, Cambodia, Italy and the United States, providing an opportunity to showcase components of the Together Higher company.

At each venue, the dancers held workshops for local communities, which Long described as an interactive experience. They also staged performances of “Stories of Us”.

Through their work with Together Higher, Long and Lan were introduced to the UNESCO Centre for Culture and Sport Development, part of the Viet Nam Federation of UNESCO Associations.

The couple joined the centre’s board in 2007 and have since helped organize events that introduce national and international music, art and sport to local communities. In addition to community events, Long is also able to run Together Higher out of the UNESCO centre. This has relieved some of the hardships of running the first contemporary dance troupe in Viet Nam.

The Vietnamese government does not recognize contemporary dance as an art eligible for public funding, so for its first five years, Together Higher operated under the auspices of the Vietnam National Opera and Ballet Theatre.

This made the troupe’s travel and finances quite challenging, but once his troupe was aligned with the UNESCO centre, Long was able to apply for performance space, travel and funding as an independent entity.

Their work with the UNESCO centre gives the couple freedom to work with the dancers three to four months a year.

With the continued support of the UNESCO centre, Long has developed his latest show “Sigh Memory”, which was inspired by his own dancers.

During a Q&A session following a performance of “Stories of Us”, an audience member asked one of the dancers what it was like to be deaf.

Having been born deaf, the dancer could only answer that it was “normal”. This inspired Long to investigate the concepts of lost experiences and memory, and he and Lan began working with Together Higher to explore this concept.

“Sigh Memory” was performed during Viet Nam’s Hue Festival in early June, the country’s largest single festival of culture and arts.

The piece begins with the ten dancers on stage. Nine dancers are arranged inside a wood-framed cube, the only prop used during the performance.

The remaining male dancer stands alone, and as the music starts he begins to perform and gradually the cube is emptied of dancers as it is rolled, flipped and spun across the stage.

Some dancers perform acrobatic jumps, tucks and spins, while others stand together and mime movements.

The performance ends with each of the dancers lining up, taking off their gloves and waving into the distance before they assemble again inside the cube.

It is a remarkable piece, and is made more poignant through the combination of a video interlude that touches on themes from the Viet Nam conflict, and original music that shifts from ambient to up tempo.

When asked about the significance of the cube, Long chuckles that it is “a long story”.

“No. To imagine one day you can go into your past, into your memory, you can see yourself in your memory, it’s open, there’s more space for you.”

Long and Lan hope “Sigh Memory” will repeat the success of their previous show. Many members of Hanoi’s deaf community have approached him to join the dance company, but as the majority of his work is self-funded, he has financial constraints.

He hopes to find a source of funding that would support an open studio for deaf dancers. There are 10 dancers in the company at present.

At the moment though, Long has much to be proud of and he has received scores of requests from Vietnamese dancers to join Together Higher.

“This makes me very happy, because for me dance is something I have to do, and for the dancers too. We need to dance together.”

Contact: n.hart@unesco.org

For further information, contact: togetherhigher@gmail.com
Media trainers pull plug on subjective AIDS broadcasts

Workshop equips TV producers with skills to transmit non-discriminatory reports

Young Central Asian TV producers recently attended a UNESCO workshop on HIV/AIDS-related issues to train them to produce objective, accurate and non-discriminatory broadcasts and reduce discrimination towards people affected by the disease.

The eight participants were selected through a contest organized by the UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, in collaboration with the Journalism and Mass Communication Department of the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (KIMEP).

The applicants submitted materials on social journalism topics in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, in order to gain selection.

UNESCO and KIMEP initiated the “Central Asian Young TV Producers’ Network” this year and the pre-production workshop, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, is a component within the project.

Some media professionals in Central Asian countries still use socially undesirable terms in HIV and AIDS coverage, and there is a need to widen the scope of their coverage to give the public a greater overview of the disease, as the media, especially TV, has a crucial role in educating the public about the causes of infection, and how broadcasts affect those living with, and affected by the disease.

Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, have low HIV prevalence rates. In 2009 for example, the infection rate in Kazakhstan was 0.16 per cent. The most prevalent mode of HIV transmission in all of the countries is through unsafe injection of drugs.

However, it is significant that infection rates through the sexual mode of transmission are increasing. For example, infection related to unsafe sex in Kazakhstan increased from five per cent in 2001, to 35 per cent in 2009. Regarding female infection for this mode of transmission, the rate increased from 67.8 per cent in 2008, to 71 per cent in 2009.

The workshop was conducted by media trainers Marina Maximova and Irina Kunanbayeva, who have been working with UNESCO for the last five years.

“We have trained media correspondents to achieve a better understanding of HIV and AIDS issues and raised motivation and interest in the topic, so media professionals can produce objective, informative and balanced reports,” said Ms. Maximova.

Issues covered in the workshop included: appropriate content; language and terminology used in HIV and AIDS related media materials; ethical issues; TV genres; and TV interview techniques.

During the training, each participant created a short TV film covering HIV and AIDS issues, with support from the trainers.

Participants were able to interview representatives of AIDS rehabilitation centres and meet people living with HIV/AIDS.

At the end of workshop, the trainers, health and care experts, and people living with HIV watched the short films and gave feedback on content and presentation.

Ms. Kunanbayeva said: “The workshop has improved the capacity of each participant’s ability to produce relevant, balanced and interesting short subject films to increase personal risk perception and reduce stigmatization and discrimination related to HIV and AIDS. This will help improve TV coverage of HIV and AIDS-related reports.”

The workshop also gave TV producers a reliable source of information, and access to communities of people living with HIV. It also provided advice on practical issues, such as scenario development, investigative journalism, creative ideas, etc.

“It was the first practical workshop that gave me the opportunity, not just to gain information, but to improve my professional skills in the creation of TV films, helped by very useful advice from trainers, experts and participants,” said one of the TV producers who took part.

Another participant added: “It was very hard work. But finally I am happy, because the training gave me very relevant skills to improve the quality of TV materials on HIV and AIDS.

“Moreover, I have a better understanding of my role in HIV prevention and the reduction of HIV-related stigmatization and discrimination.”

Over the next three months, each participant will develop short TV films in their home countries, with the opportunity to get feedback on these from trainers and other participants.

A DVD containing the finalized short subject films is due to be circulated among Central Asian TV companies.

The next “Central Asian Young TV Producers’ Network” workshop will take place in February 2011.
Migration news network expands borders
Pressure to pass prompts revision of evaluation systems

The American University of Central Asia's (AUCA) Central Asia Migration Research Network in Kyrgyzstan is celebrating the 100th issue of its e-News Digest.

AUCA launched the weekly news digest to promote the exchange of news and research on migration in the region in 2008.

Director of AUCA’s Social Research Center (SRC) Aida Alymbaeva described the network as “primarily an electronic venue for the exchange of ideas and info on current and future research projects, conferences and journals among its members.”

The SRC began a partnership with UNESCO Almaty to expand the reach of the migration network in 2009. The cooperation has been fruitful; the e-News Digest now has 300 subscribers, double the number it had just one year ago.

Subscribers come from 30 countries, ranging from Argentina to New Zealand, and including government ministers to students. The e-News Digest offers content in both Russian and English.

“It’s the only resource of its kind in the sub-region: a user-friendly service for receiving migration information in Central Asia,” said UNESCO Almaty Social and Human Sciences Programme Specialist Laura Kennedy.

“We immediately saw enormous potential in working with AUCA to disseminate migration information, both within Central Asia and also around the world,” she said.

AUCA also launched a quarterly newsletter on migration issues in 2009 as part of its partnership with UNESCO. The newsletter includes exclusive interviews from government and other migration experts, as well as selected in-depth news not included in the weekly digest. It is available in both Russian and English, in printed form, and accessible on the AUCA website.

In 2010-11, the Bishkek-based AUCA will continue expansion of the migration research network. Plans include an improved user interface, additional English-language content and an expanded research database.

AUCA SRC will also sponsor student and faculty-led research projects on the theme “migrants in crisis;” the theme is particularly relevant given not only the economic crisis impacting migrants throughout the region, but also the current political crisis in Kyrgyzstan that has complicated border crossings and heightened tensions with neighbouring states.

SRC’s Aida Alymbaeva is hopeful that AUCA’s partnership with UNESCO will continue to influence a positive and practical dialogue: “…helping the expert community to increase its knowledge about migration processes in the region and to influence the adoption of effective policies by countries in the region.”

Subscribe to the Central Asia Migration News Digest at: src.mrt@mail.auca.kg, c.mrt@mail.auca.kg

For further information, contact: l.kennedy@unesco.org
Cambodians rally to save the planet

Green activities held to protect the environment

Cambodia recently marked World Environment Day (5 June) with a celebration of the earth’s “diversity of all living forms”.

The June celebrations were organized by the country’s Ministry of Environment, and the event was held in conjunction with National Environment Day.

Cambodia is especially vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change. The immediate challenges facing the country include, for example: the unsustainable use, and low adaptive capacity to cope with climate change, including weak awareness about environmental issues; and a lack of disaster risk preparedness.

The country is also regularly affected by extreme weather conditions. Last year Typhoon Ketsana killed dozens of people, displaced thousands of families, and destroyed infrastructure, homes, and thousands of hectares of rice. The damages were particularly serious in the poorer rural areas.

Nor Chan Ratanak, a 15-year-old schoolboy from Boeng Kaeng Kang Secondary School said more measures should be introduced to cope with climate change.

“We should plant more trees to protect our homes, prevent flooding, and absorb the rainfall,” he said.

Three major events were organized to mark World Environment Day, including a high-level public meeting and clean-up activity, which involved over 1,000 people in front of Wat Botum Vortei.

“It is the duty for us all to solve the problem of climate change,” said participant Hor Ravy, a schoolgirl at Sothearos Secondary School.

An exhibition on green achievements was held at the Wat Botum Vortei site to show that everyone can live in a sustainable way for a common sustainable future, by presenting “green achievements” from villages and different organizations.

A meeting on “Responsive Strategies to Climate Change and Education for Sustainable Development” was held on 1 June. This event attracted around 120 participants from the government, development partners, NGOs, academia and the private sector.

Contact: l.sun@unesco.org

Cambodia is especially vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change.
Radio empowers the people

Community station improves lives in Cambodian communities

Ethnic minority people living in four remote Cambodian villages are to benefit from solar battery-powered radio receivers.

Over 100 radio receivers, purchased by the Basic Human Needs Association (BHN Association), a UNESCO Japanese partner, with funding from two Japanese telecommunications agencies, were recently donated to the Kreung, Brao, Tampoun and Jarai indigenous community villages in Cambodia.

Tampoun, a woman from Ou Chum district, said: “I thank you very much for this present. In this village, we like listening to the radio and this receiver is very good because we do not need to buy batteries”.

“Sometimes, we do not have 3,000 riel (USD$0.75 cents) to buy batteries, so we cannot listen to the radio [3,000 riel is the price of two batteries for a small radio].”

In Cambodia, indigenous communities face serious challenges in diverse areas such as education, access to information, natural resources, land, and health service.

Concentrated in Mondulkiri, Ratanakiri and Preah Vihear provinces, the indigenous farming communities make up around two per cent of Cambodia’s total population of 13.5 million.

In 2007, in the remote northern province of Ratanakiri, the Cambodian Ministry of Information, in association with UNESCO Phnom Penh, developed a radio system.

The station was initially launched as government radio, but gradually progressed into a community radio station. Community radio means “radio in the community, for the community, about the community and from the community”.

The community radio concept was further developed to help reduce HIV/AIDS vulnerability among ethnic minorities in Ratanakiri province, through the use of a radio drama in the Kreung language to spread awareness about the disease.

The young Kreung boys and girls who broadcast their own radio drama were reaching for the first time in their own indigenous community, in their own indigenous language.

The Cambodian government then began to acknowledge the importance of addressing a lack of information among indigenous communities and realise the importance of promoting the use of Cambodian indigenous languages, some of them at risk of disappearing forever.

Only Kreung – one of sixteen indigenous languages in the country – has a script. Therefore talking, through radio in this case, is the greatest way to promote and preserve this language.

In 2009, the UNESCO Office in Phnom Penh organized and provided training sessions on “How to do community radio” to three additional ethnic groups: the Tompon; Jarai; and Brao.

With young indigenous people equipped to develop radio programmes, aided by UNESCO’s donation of essential equipment, community radio continues broadcasting an hour every day in the Kreung, Tompon, Jarai and Brao indigenous languages.

A male resident of a Kreung village said: “Before we could only listen to radio programmes in the Khmer language. Yes, I can understand the Khmer language, but I feel happier if I can listen to my own language.

“Now I receive news about our communities and our culture, apart from the national news. If good or bad things happen in our villages and in other parts of the country, I like to know.”

The radio receivers, which cost nothing to run, are helping indigenous communities improve their daily lives, through providing useful information related to health, culture, weather, education, environment, agriculture and forestry.

The indigenous communities are also being provided with their rights to communicate and their rights to information. Through the radio, the community can promote its identity, its character and local culture, and create a diversity of voices.

Soun, a Brao indigenous girl, who is very active with community radio, said: “I and my friends at the community radio go to the villages at least two times a week. There, we interview the villagers. Depending on the radio programme, we ask them their ideas related to health, education, environment and climate change.

“Also, we ask them to let us know about the traditional ways to deal with troubles as well as about traditional folk tales, way of making traditional tools, handy-crafts and cooking. When we finish, we come back to the radio station and we develop the news to be broadcasted.

“By doing this, we make the stories available to everyone. We like it, and people in the villages enjoy it too. That is what they told me every time I go back to my own village. My community likes listening to me. They say they learn many things,” she added.

Contact: isabel.g.rojo@gmail.org

LEF'T: Community radio staff showing the community how to use the solar-powered radio receivers
The imposing risk of climate change necessitates a greater focus on biodiversity conservation, as protecting natural terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems will protect threatened wildlife species and maintain the proper function of ecosystems in the global carbon cycle.

How can we reconcile nature conservation with the quest for economic and social development and the maintenance of associated cultural values?

The UNESCO-led Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development – 12th China Biosphere Reserve Network (CBRN) convention advocated the principle that “biodiversity is essential for the well-being of all life – including human beings”.

The May meeting had added significance as the United Nations declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity to encourage world citizens to take concerted action to safeguard the variety of global animal and plant species.

“Our lives depend on biological diversity. Species and ecosystems are disappearing at an unsustainable rate. We humans are the cause. We stand to lose a wide variety of environmental goods and services that we take for granted. The consequences for economies and people will be profound,” UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon said.

This year, UNESCO is leading several activities which aim to educate and raise public awareness about the importance of conserving biodiversity; to fill in gaps in our knowledge about biodiversity; and to catalyze further international action for its sustainable use.

“China’s nature reserves have effectively protected 85 percent of terrestrial natural ecosystems, 47 percent of natural wetlands, 20 percent of natural forests and most of the rare and endangered wildlife species,” said Professor Xu Zhihong, chairman of the Chinese National Committee for Man and Biosphere (MAB) at the opening of the convention.

UNESCO-MAB started in 1971 and the Chinese government joined in 1978. The goal is to identify driving factors for biodiversity loss, and to coordinate socio-economic development with biodiversity conservation to reduce the loss.

“MAB is committed to improving the management of natural reserves, strengthening exchanges between partners and exploring an effective way to promote biodiversity conservation and coordinated development,” he added.

Five biosphere reserves in China were also inducted into the China Biosphere Reserve Network at the May meeting. With the participation of the five new members, CBRN’s membership has increased to 141, providing a stronger base for biodiversity protection and scientific research.

To date, 557 biosphere reserves have been set up under the framework of MAB in 107 countries, constituting the World Biosphere Reserve Network (WBRN).

There are now 28 WBRN biosphere reserves in China and these have become demonstration sites for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005 to 2014.

The Meeting was jointly organized by the Chinese National Committee for MAB and UNESCO Beijing.

Contact: r.jayakumar@unesco.org
Director-General participates in UNESCO week at World Expo
Projects showcased under the theme of building sustainable, creative cities

UNESCO’s projects were showcased in the UN pavilion at the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai, China 17 to 23 May 2010. The Shanghai World Expo’s 2010 theme is “Better Cities, Better Life”.

Under the theme of “Building Sustainable, Inclusive and Creative Cities,” UNESCO launched the UNESCO Week with a week-long poster exhibition to showcase the agency’s work, followed by UNESCO-themed days throughout the week.

On the afternoon of 21 May, an interactive workshop was held in which Ms. Bokova discussed topics related to girls’ education, gender equality and climate change. Eighty students from schools linked to the Shanghai Associated Schools Project took part.

Activities to mark “World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development” culminated with a reception hosted by Ms. Bokova at Huai Hai Lu 796, a historical villa which was awarded the 2009 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards (of Merit) for Cultural Heritage Conservation. The reception highlighted and celebrated the rapprochement and diversity of cultures through a colourful array of activities and performances. This included a musical performance of China’s ancient music art of Guqin, the presentation of a painting by a Chinese artist to Ms. Bokova, a photography exhibition entitled “Creative and Sustainable Urban Development” organized by the China Folklore Photographic Association. National and international guests from diverse backgrounds attended the event.

Director-General of UNESCO Ms. Irina Bokova greeted Ms. Geng Ying, the President of the China Cultural Heritage Foundation at the Director-General’s reception.
Ahmedabad dreams of World Heritage status

Candidate could become first Indian city on list

To celebrate the 600-year centenary of the founding of Ahmedabad city, and its preparations for World Heritage nomination, an international conference on “Asian World Heritage Cities” was held there recently.

India, with its 5,000 years of urban civilization, currently has no city on the World Heritage List,” said Armoogum Parsuramen, Director of UNESCO New Delhi.

“Cities constitute the largest, most abundant and diverse category of UNESCO World Heritage Sites,” he added.

Ahmedabad, with its aspiration to become the first on the map of World Heritage Cities of India, was at the core of all discussions.

“I would like to express my hope that the process for this nomination should be inclusive and holistic in nature, so that the city of Ahmedabad can become exemplary in people-based protection, conservation and management of urban heritage in India,” said Mr. Parsuramen.

Ahmedabad was established in 1411 on the left bank of the River Sabarmati as a tiny military settlement. Today, it is a bustling city with a population of nearly five million, but it still contains a rich heritage and an attractive fusion of the traditional and the modern.

The distinctive urban fabric of the historic walled city area forms the heart of Ahmedabad, showcasing the essence of community living through the concept of pols. Pols are traditional micro-neighbourhoods, with clusters of residential buildings protected by a gate, generally occupied by people belonging to a particular caste, religion or profession, which are accessed by narrow streets meeting in communal squares.

The architecture is truly diverse in nature, ranging from mosques and temples to the fascinating wooden havelis (mansions) with ingenious underground systems of water harvesting and numerous step wells.

This rich tradition of architecture continues even today as the city is home to some of the finest examples of industrial and modern architecture in India, showcasing the works of Le Corbusier, Louis Kahn and B V Doshi. It is also where Mahatma Gandhi spearheaded the Indian freedom movement from.

The three-day conference was organized to introduce the concept of World Heritage and related instruments. The presentations explained in detail what it takes to gain World Heritage status and significantly, how to maintain it once it has been attained.

The event attracted 150 participants from Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal and Viet Nam.

Mr. Abhay Mangaldas, of the House of MG, a historic heritage hotel, in Ahmedabad, said: “I believe it’s important to convince people about the importance of heritage and valuing it.

“Unless people don’t see the value of what they have and most significantly, its relevance in today’s context, ‘heritage’, merely remains a romantic notion.

“It’s important to make heritage an economically viable and sustainable activity. With the support of the government, in areas such as policy changes, tax releases and loans. We can put into place a system to encourage people to pay attention to old properties,” he said.

The event was organized by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, in collaboration with UNESCO, the Indian Heritage Cities Network, the Archaeological Survey of India and other local partners. 

Ahmedabad has started a new chapter but they have to put into practice the management required to achieve the status. Getting the status is a difficult process. Tougher still is to retain the status

Professor Syed Idid of Malaysia.

For further information contact: s.mahajan@unesco.org

© Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and Indian Heritage Cities Network

The wooden havelis of Ahmedabad
Network fosters balance between past and future

Cultural and natural heritage safeguarded in the face of rapid urbanization

Rapid urbanization, as witnessed in recent times in India, has accelerated the pace of change in all aspects of life, particularly in the urban environment. The majority of Indian cities and towns are exposed to strong extraneous and fast growing agents of change, disturbing the delicate balance that exists between physical, social, cultural and ecological aspects of urban settlements.

In order to strengthen Indian cities and towns to cope with these changes that threaten India’s diverse heritage, UNESCO took the initiative to form the Indian Heritage Cities Network (IHCN).

The network aims to highlight the Indian city as a living cultural resource; foster the safeguard and sustainable use of the unique and diverse urban cultural heritage of India; promote the physical natural and cultural heritage, traditions, crafts and creativity as driving forces for urban development, and the generation of employment for a balanced socio-economic and cultural development.

“The Indian Heritage Cities Network is a valuable programme to bring urban conservation at the forefront of the concern for the role of heritage in urban development in India,” said Giovanni Boccardi, chief of the Asia and Pacific Unit, UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

The IHCN constitutes a network of urban local bodies, governmental and non-governmental institutions and dedicated individuals.

The network and its members aim to foster sustainable socio-economic and ecological development of Indian historic cities and towns based on the strength of their traditions, cultural identity and social networks.

They also encourage local community participation and help to create partnerships between people, technical experts and administrations, and in the process build the capacity of Indian cities and towns to protect and conserve their cultural and natural heritage.

Some of the key activities of IHCN include partnerships, capacity building, policy advice and technical assistance, knowledge base and awareness-raising.

IHCN was founded as a programme by UNESCO New Delhi at an international conference on “Indian Cities of Living Heritage” in September 2006 at Jaipur, Rajasthan.

Having then been established with the endorsement of the Ministry of Urban Development, together with 10 Indian cities, associated partners, seven French cities and the French heritage cities association: “Association Nationale des Villes et Pays d’Art et d’Histoire”, the IHCN has since grown to encompass more than 20 cities, and has gained the support of major Indian and international institutions in the field of urban development, heritage preservation and capacity building.

Contact: info@ihcn.in or visit: www.ihcn.in

UNESCO New Delhi, through its Culture Sector, is maintaining the Secretariat of the Indian Heritage Cities Network (IHCN).
TV channel closure sparks censorship debate

Channel 1 television station went off the air in Bangladesh in the early evening of 26 April, just seven days before World Press Freedom Day 2010 on 3 May.

While the country’s telecommunication regulatory authority attributed the closure to the channel’s use of rented broadcast equipment, many believe the blackout was inspired by political vengeance.

Significantly, this happens to be the fourth TV channel to be closed in the last six years. All four channels somewhat violated the rules, but in all of the cases, the channels were believed to be pro-opposition.

The issue was raised by media experts addressing an audience, including two cabinet ministers, media representatives, NGO partners and academia, at the UNESCO Bangladesh Journalism Awards, held on World Press Freedom Day, in Dhaka.

Editor-in-chief of Baishakhi Television, Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul used the event to call for new broadcasting policies to protect the media from unfair government interference.

Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, editor of The Bangladesh Observer, one of the country’s premier English language dailies, underscored the need to reform restrictive media legislation, including libel and sedition laws. He also spoke out against a special power act that continues to be used to persecute and harass journalists.

The media in Bangladesh enjoy relative freedom; the state does not interfere directly, or influence editorial policy, as was the case during the latter half of the 1970s and 80s during the autocratic regime.

However, violence against journalists is rampant, especially outside of the capital where reporters are routinely harassed, often in the form of trumped up police charges brought by local politicians and their cohorts.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina recently informed Parliament that 384 journalists were injured during the course of their duty, and there were 1,388 recorded incidents of harassment, between 2001 and 2006.

Minister of Information Abul Kalam Azad reiterated his government’s commitment to freedom of expression, mentioning the enactment of the 2009 Right to Information Act (RTI), which he said would reinforce the media’s capacity to play its watchdog role.

The act basically gives people the right to seek and receive information held by government departments.

“We believe a free media can contribute to good governance by pointing out our mistakes,” he said.

Regarding the closure of Channel 1, he said the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Authority shut the station because it was using rented broadcast equipment, which he said is illegal under telecommunication legislation.

Derek Elias, officer-in-charge of UNESCO Dhaka, lauded the RTI law, but expressed concern about the challenges facing its implementation.

He identified three broad areas that demand urgent attention if people are to benefit from the law: building capacity of public officials; developing an efficient information management system so that information requests can be complied with; and raising public awareness about the RTI law.

The discussion on press freedom was followed by the presentation of the UNESCO Bangladesh Journalism Awards 2010. The UNESCO Dhaka Office instigated the awards scheme in 2008 to recognize excellence in investigative reporting.

Nazrana Chowdhury of nTV, one of 12 private satellite television channels in Bangladesh, won an award for a report in which he identified mistakes in primary and secondary level text books. One text claimed there is a planet called “volcano” and other texts included incorrect data.

He was presented with a USD$730 cash prize and a certificate.

Mr. Chowdhury described the win as his “biggest achievement” and drew the attention of Minister for Education Nurul Islam Nahid, who was presiding over the ceremony, to the text book mistakes.

The event was jointly organized by UNESCO Dhaka and the Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO.
Life-changing decision
Awareness programmes give hope to abandoned pregnant teens

Fon didn't think her boyfriend would leave her if she became pregnant. The couple had been dating for nearly a year and she thought they were in love.

The two eighteen-year-olds decided to stop using contraception because they wanted a baby. However when Fon discovered she was pregnant, her boyfriend abandoned her. This is a common story throughout Thailand, as adolescent pregnancy rates are on the rise.

A report by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) revealed that adolescent mothers accounted for 20.3 per cent of total births in 2008, compared to 18.3 per cent in 2004 in Thailand.

Fon's life has been nothing short of difficult. The only daughter of a single mother, she moved frequently due to her mother's search for factory work. The fiercely independent young woman enrolled in a vocational training school to better her job prospects.

When she realised she was pregnant, Fon told her mother she had a job in another city and left in search of an abortion without her mother knowing the truth.

She also searched the Internet for emergency homes for young women with unwanted pregnancies, which led to her discovery of the Association for the Promotion of the Status of Women (APSW), a non-profit organization that provides assistance to female victims of forced sex, HIV/AIDS infection and domestic violence.

The APSW centre in Bangkok includes an emergency shelter, a women's clinic and a rape crisis and youth centre.

"With these kids, the first thing that comes to their minds is to get rid of the baby," said Dr. Maytinee Bhongsvej, executive director of APSW.

After her boyfriend abandoned her, Fon thought abortion was the only way out. She said her boyfriend's family gave her herbal concoctions to terminate the foetus. However, now six months pregnant, Fon receives shelter, prenatal care and counselling at the APSW site. Dr. Bhongsvej said APSW provided shelter to 31 pregnant women under the age of 18 in 2009.

APSW has also introduced the World Population Fund's "World Starts With Me", programme to Thai schools. This is an interactive computer programme on sexual health, that includes information on how to prevent adolescent pregnancy.

After two weeks of living at APSW, Fon has decided she wants to keep her baby. Her life-changing decision came after she was entrusted to look after babies in the centre's nursery and following advice from counsellors.

Fon now plans to return to school after her baby is born and either put the baby up for adoption, or entrust her child to the APSW's nursery, until her own life has more stability. She has not been in communication with her ex-boyfriend, or her mother during her stay at APSW.

"Comprehensive sex education is a key component in deterring teen pregnancy," said Philip Bergstrom, a programme specialist with the HIV Coordination, Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health unit at UNESCO Bangkok.

"Most people believe that teaching comprehensive sex education will lead young people to go out and have sex, but research studies conducted in 14 countries around the world have indicated that the opposite is true. Comprehensive sex education delays the first sexual experience."

"Traditional sex education tends to only address the biological aspects of sex. A comprehensive sex education includes addressing topics imperative to understanding sexuality, such as the human need for love and the maintenance of healthy relationships."

Technical advisor at UNFPA Dr. Josephine Sauvarin said a comprehensive sex education programme is essential to reducing teenage pregnancy rates.

"The school environment and general curriculum need to emphasize the rights of girls, and work with boys and girls together on communication skills," she said.

UNESCO Bangkok and the National Science Museum of Thailand, with support from the Thai Health Promotion Foundation and UNAIDS, in collaboration with UNIFEM, the Women's Health Advocacy Foundation and other partners, have developed a comprehensive exhibition on healthy sexuality to address the mounting reproductive and sexual health issues specific to adolescents.

The upcoming exhibition, titled the "Story of Love", is scheduled to open in August at the National Science Museum of Thailand in Pathumthani and will run until June 2011.

It will provide awareness and knowledge to adolescents on all aspects of healthy sexuality, including the prevention of sexual and domestic violence, adolescent pregnancy, love and romance, gender identity, reproductive health, contraception and HIV/AIDS.

It will aim to deliver an engaging and entertaining approach to sex education by showcasing accurate, factual and unbiased information, through the use of multimedia display elements, including games, quizzes and hands-on exposure to condoms.

The goal is to engage adolescents in the discussion of healthy sexuality. Students visiting the exhibition will also receive information on how to access UNESCO’s healthy sexuality website, which showcases a wealth of information on all aspects of sexuality, including information not provided in the exhibition.
Going from strength to strength
UNESCO Uzbekistan meets myriad of challenges

Colombian-born Jorge Ivan Espinal landed in Uzbekistan in April 2009 to take up his new role as the head of the UNESCO office in Tashkent and UNESCO Representative in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan became an independent republic in December 1991, but still retains its old traditions and deep cultural diversity. After one year in the country, Mr. Espinal spoke to Voices about challenges, both past and present.

“I feel comfortable with the activities in our national office in Tashkent and satisfied with the manner in which my colleagues implement the programmes, with our national partners, in particular with different ministries and international partners, such as the UNCT (United Nations Country Team) in Uzbekistan and several bilateral donors based in Uzbekistan.

“Established in 1994, the UNESCO office in Tashkent has gained a good reputation within the last 15 years, in particular, in safeguarding the tangible heritage, particularly as there are four historical sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List: Samarkand; Bukhara; Khiva; and Shakhrisabz.

“Also, we are glad to see how local authorities understand and highly estimate the importance of the 2003 International Convention on Intangible Heritage.

“Furthermore, national authorities and partners have expressed their interest, not only to enlarge the knowledge and awareness of a wide audience, but also to intensify efforts to preserve the rich cultural diversity of the country and pass it onto the next generation safely. Our main goal is to consolidate stakeholders in this field and support government as much as possible.

“Uzbekistan’s young population up to the age of 24 constitutes 44 per cent of 27.5 million people, which challenges the education sector to be more proactive and responsive to ensure the competitiveness of the young generation.

“It is important to note that the school enrolment rate in general education schools is 99.97 per cent. Therefore, I should note that the Government of Uzbekistan is paying much attention to strengthening the education sector and to improving the quality of education through an annual financial allocation of 40 per cent of the state budget.

“In the 2008-2009 academic year, 9,800 general educational schools operated, including 2,100 schools in urban areas and 7,700 schools in rural areas, with a total number of 5.1 million students. Eighty-seven per cent of these schools have been equipped with modern furniture, training and laboratory equipment, computers and other recreational equipment.

“In addition, for the period 2009-2010, 1,500 TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) schools were functional, covering 1.5 million students. In 2008-2009, 298,000 students were enrolled in 63 higher educational institutions.

“UNESCO Tashkent is continuing to support the Government of Uzbekistan in overall educational reforms, with a special emphasis on Inclusive Education, New Pedagogical and Information Technologies in education, advocating healthy lifestyle principles and HIV preventive education among young people. Also, strengthening the capacities of education policy makers on result-based education planning is kept under focus.

“In the area of science, new research on crops helped in the struggle against salinization which adversely affected the Khorezm and Karakalpak regions. For example, our science sector specialist cultivated the unique herb Indigofera, which helps to increase agricultural fertility and enable plants to grow in adverse climatic conditions. Also, we support young scientists attending the national science school, especially with their research in the field of renewable energy.

“In conclusion, we have good cooperation with media establishments and associations in Uzbekistan. Jointly, we strive to strengthen the capacity of local media in the coverage of sustainable development issues.”

Read the full interview at: www.unescobkk.org
Technology to the rescue
Can gadgets in the classroom enhance learning?

We sought the opinions of young people in the Asia-Pacific region on how information and communication tools can be used to promote literacy in a more fun and active learning environment.

Quek Rian, 24
Singaporean, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
“It’s about engaging teenagers’ interests. So you’ve got to use something they use in their daily lives, which is basically SMS, iPhones, or Facebook. Facebook itself is actually a good resource to provide cross-cultural information and access to any types of knowledge they want. Another fun way is to write blogs because right now they are so popular. Maybe we can have teachers handing out assignments where students have to keep a blog everyday and just discuss various topics that encourage critical thinking.”

Ly Sokheng, 25
Cambodian, Royal University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia
“ICTs help people to share feelings through chatting channels such as Facebook, Hi5, Yahoo and so on. All the information means should leave an open space for people to express themselves and leave comments about the news they read or listen to.”

Abdul Husain, 19
Afghan, 12th grade, Ibni Sina High School, Kabul, Afghanistan
“There are no communication tools or computer labs in my school and I think very few schools in Afghanistan have such facilities. Anyway I think it would be really great to have such aid tools which would help in a better understanding of the lessons taught. I have a computer at home which I don’t use much because I have to work after school and I do my homework when I have some free time.”

Nay Lin Aung, 25
Myanmar, Assumption University, Thailand
“I would like to use Moodle software as an example. Moodle is an Open Source Course Management System. It can support learning in a classroom by uploading video files, audio files and course materials into it. For discussion, it can support chatting and forums. For questions, users can also ask questions, not only to the teacher but also to others. And, learners can check their level by taking quizzes and on-line exams. For each chapter or course, students can submit their assignments to their teachers and share them with others.”

Jeong Jaehoon, 26
Korean, Seoul National University, Republic of Korea
“Let me think about an e-learning system! If there’s a real-time lecture, we can let students share their ideas and questions through the web while they are having lectures, like on-line games let users exchange their strategies with the chatting function. They can give answers to each other, and the teachers in the lecture can give answers right after they check the questions. Also, teachers can introduce good answers at the same time.”

Li Xien Yap, 21
Malaysian, Sunway University College, Malaysia
“ICT brings learning into lives; for example small children are able to learn from the educational programmes on TV such as Dora the Explorer and Sesame Street. It may seem like a cartoon but these programmes use repetition and reinforcement to teach the alphabet, numbers, colours, shapes and basic vocabulary. This whole new way of teaching makes learning much more effective.”
Virtual water saves prized liquid asset

Concept raises awareness about dwindling resource in arid region

Not many people in the Aral Sea Basin in Central Asia realize that it takes about 2,865 litres of virtual water (see box) to produce one simple T-shirt, or that it takes about 2,074 litres to produce one kg of bread, which is part of daily diets of the households in this region.

Countries of the Aral Sea Basin depend a lot on agricultural production to sustain livelihoods, support processing industries and their economies. However, due to the arid continental climate, which is characterized by low precipitation and high evaporation, agriculture is possible with irrigation only.

Irrigation water absorbs around 95 per cent of all available water resources in the region – and is thus much above the worldwide mean. Water in the Aral Sea region has become scarce. This was caused by the diminishing natural availability of water resources and by the growing demand for water resources for irrigating the expanded fields and feeding the growing population.

At the same time, the poor condition of the irrigation and drainage networks causes high water losses. This not only threatens agricultural production and thus the entire set up of the local production systems, but it has already resulted in unprecedented ecological consequences, such as the drying of the Aral Sea.

The increasing scarcity of water may lead in future to increased political and social tensions and even trans-boundary conflicts over water. It is therefore really important to create water shortage awareness among the population in the Aral Sea region.

This can start through using less water. In this regard, the concept of virtual water is becoming an important component of sustainable water use and water management in water-scarce regions worldwide, and is expected to lead to more efficient water use.

Researchers from the German Ministry for Education-funded ZEF (Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung/Centre for Development Research, University of Bonn/UNESCO) project, titled “Economic and Ecological Restructuring of Land and Water Use in the Region Khorezm (Uzbekistan): A Pilot Project in Development Research” have worked extensively on developing comprehensive, science-based concepts to improve economic efficiency and ecological sustainability of agricultural land and water use in the Khorezm region of northwestern Uzbekistan, as an example for the whole of the Aral Sea Basin.

Among the many findings are the estimates of the virtual water content for the main agricultural crops in the region (cotton and wheat) and the respective processed products. Virtual water estimates for a T-shirt, or a loaf of bread reflect total water use at all production steps, starting from cropping raw cotton in the field by farmers, plus the water used during industrial processing (e.g. raw cotton – fibre – yarn – fabrics – T-shirts), or in the case of bread from the wheat kernel to the bread (wheat – flour – bread). Thus, the total virtual water (TVW) of each product is the sum of agricultural water use (AWU) and water use at each industrial stage (IWU):

\[ TVW = AWU + IWU. \]

For a T-shirt this would be: \( 2,865 \text{ litres} = 2,074 + 791 \);

Whereas, for one kg of bread this would be:

\[ 2,074 \text{ litres} = 2,072 + 2. \]

Obviously, irrigated agriculture demands the greatest share in water use, since it uses the most water, not only for the irrigation of agricultural fields, but also for washing out salts from the soil, a process called leaching.

Thus, irrigated agricultural water use includes water for leaching, irrigating fields during the vegetation season and the amount of water lost in the main and on-field irrigation canals.

But also the grey water (see box), or water virtually needed to dilute the pollutants caused by pesticide and fertilizer seepage need to be included.

Under irrigated agricultural conditions this can be estimated as:

\[ AWU = \text{Leaching + Vegetation + Losses + Grey}. \]

Similarly, the virtual water content was calculated for all cotton and wheat products in the conditions of the Aral Sea Basin.

Such estimates will make people aware of how much water is used and will be needed, unless present production and processing procedures are altered.

In a follow-up step, farmers and authorities in the Aral Sea Basin need to become more aware to consider their options to improve water use efficiency in a region which became famous for the drying up of the Aral Sea.

The goal of the ZEF/UNESCO project is to assist people to be prepared for the future by laying a good knowledge foundation, which will help to improve water availability in the future.

The concept of ‘virtual water’ refers to the total volume of water used to produce any commodity.

The virtual water content of any product, (a commodity, good or service) is defined as the volume of freshwater used to produce the product. The virtual water of a product refers thus to the sum of the water used in all steps of the production chain. The adjective ‘virtual’ refers to the fact that most of the water used to produce a product is not contained in the product itself. The real-water content of products is generally negligible if compared to the virtual-water content. Virtual water consists of the three components: the blue, green and grey water.

The blue water is the volume of freshwater (surface water and ground water) used for the production of a product.

The green water is the volume of rainwater used in the production cycle.

The grey water is the volume of polluted water or water needed to dilute the polluted water in the production process of any commodity.

The concept of virtual water is used to increase awareness on the high water use and water shortage in the world, and to release the pressure on the scarcely available domestic water resources of countries through producing and trading goods with low virtual water content, while importing commodities with high virtual water content.

For more information access: http://www.zef.de/zur_khorezm.0.html
The increasing scarcity of water may lead in future to increased political and social tensions and even trans-boundary conflicts over water.
Building Ecologically Harmonious Civilization

This publication aims to share experiences and lessons learnt from projects carried out in the Wuyishan Biosphere Reserve to preserve nature, while at the same time, promote economic development within a community in a harmonious way. It describes the joint protection measure and methods; provides in-depth views of the roles of science and technology in solving the contradiction between conservation and development; and summarizes achievements and challenges encountered.

The Asia-Pacific region counts for almost two thirds of the world’s population, living in 47 UNESCO Member States. UNESCO Bangkok covers the Asia-Pacific region with a network of Field Offices, consisting of a Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok, a Regional Bureau for Science in Jakarta, seven Cluster Offices (covering a number of countries) in Almaty, Apia, Bangkok, Beijing, Jakarta, New Delhi and Tehran, and seven National Offices, in Dhaka, Hanoi, Islamabad, Kabul, Kathmandu, Phnom Penh and Tashkent. In line with UNESCO’s mandate to promote peace and human development through education, sciences, culture and communication, the UNESCO Offices in the Asia-Pacific region facilitate international co-operation, set common standards and foster the dissemination of quality information.

Music of the gods: the intangible cultural heritage of Nepal’s musical castes (DVD, full version and promotional version)

This DVD documents performances from a three-day event entitled “Music of Gods”, the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Nepal’s Musical Castes” organized by UNESCO in February 2009. It includes interviews with the musicians and individuals working towards the preservation of traditional musical forms in Nepal. The publication contributes to the recognition of the great value of these masterpieces of intangible culture, and helps to elevate the status of the performers.

Peer and outreach education for improving the sexual health of men who have sex with men, a reference manual (Nepali translation)

This manual helps peer educators and outreach workers, working with men who have sex with men, sustain and update their knowledge about HIV/STI and sexual health issues. It provides detailed information about everything a peer or outreach worker may be asked during his, or her, work. It aims to improve the scope and accuracy of information peers and outreach workers provide to their target audience. The UNESCO Office Kathmandu translated it into the Nepali language.

Training women journalists in Terai, resource book (Nepali)

This resource book helps journalists in Nepal to understand the concept about basic journalism, conflict sensitive journalism, and human rights and the personal security of journalists. It contains resource materials used during training conducted for women journalists in Terai by the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu. It was produced in collaboration with the Nepal Press Institute.

EFA GMR 2010, Summary: Reaching the marginalized (Nepali translation)

The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010 highlights how education systems in many of the world’s poorest countries are now experiencing the aftershock of the global economic downturn. The report argues that the crisis could create a lost generation of children whose life chances will have been irreparably damaged by a failure to protect their right to an education. The report examines who these children are, why they are being left behind, and looks at concrete solutions for making sure that no children are excluded from school.

Peer and outreach education for improving the sexual health of men who have sex with men, a reference manual (Nepali translation)

This manual helps peer educators and outreach workers, working with men who have sex with men, sustain and update their knowledge about HIV/STI and sexual health issues. It provides detailed information about everything a peer or outreach worker may be asked during his, or her, work. It aims to improve the scope and accuracy of information peers and outreach workers provide to their target audience. The UNESCO Office Kathmandu translated it into the Nepali language.

Music of the gods: the intangible cultural heritage of Nepal’s musical castes (DVD, full version and promotional version)

This DVD documents performances from a three-day event entitled “Music of Gods”, the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Nepal’s Musical Castes” organized by UNESCO in February 2009. It includes interviews with the musicians and individuals working towards the preservation of traditional musical forms in Nepal. The publication contributes to the recognition of the great value of these masterpieces of intangible culture, and helps to elevate the status of the performers.