

Regional Seminar for UNESCO Resource Distribution and Training Centre (RDTC) Sustainable Partnerships for Transformative Teaching

23-25 November 2016
Bangkok, Thailand

Concept Note

Since its inception in 2002, the ICT in Education Programme at UNESCO Bangkok has created various tools and resources for teachers and teacher educators to support effective ICT-pedagogy integration. These include a teachers' portal¹ on useful online resources, as well as repositories of curated teaching and learning resources.² To facilitate more systematic and wider dissemination of such resources and provide corresponding training on the pedagogical use of the resources, UNESCO Bangkok established the UNESCO Resource Distribution and Training Centres (RDTC)³ network in 2013 with 24 teacher education institutions (TEIs) in 12 countries across the region in order to strengthen the network of TEIs in the Asia-Pacific region with a special focus on ICT in supporting teachers. In 2014-15, the RDTC network distributed a total of 38,720 original and reproduced CD ROMs, and provided 204 corresponding trainings to some 12,300 participants who are pre-dominantly in-service and pre-service teachers. The network also annually gathers to exchange achievements, views and expertise to disseminate and strengthen each other's capacity.

Throughout the past RDTCs, the strongest and most effective asset of the network has undoubtedly been the partnership aspect. It has been the main driving force of achievements, research, exchanges, and sharing among RDTC members as well as external partners across the Asia-Pacific region, notably vast and diverse. The network has achieved commendable progress, and partnered in numerous ways: from developing and implementing a training guidebook on UNESCO digital educational resources, sharing research findings on the impact of the work the RDTC network has done, and/or simply updating each other on best practices, and quality resources. In most cases, if not all, both resource distribution and training were carried out by the RDTC members in partnership with nearby schools, relevant education authorities, private agencies and various departments and institutes within the mother university. Additionally, partnerships among TEIs within country and between countries are being developed for future possibilities. It has been evidenced during the previous 2015 Regional Seminar that member TEIs actively explored possible areas for collaboration in training and research.⁴

¹ <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/online-resources/portal-for-teachers/>

² <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/resources/free-educational-resources/>

³ <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/current-projects/rdtc/>

⁴ UNESCO Bangkok. (2016). Outcome Document: Regional Seminar for UNESCO Resource Distribution and Training Centre (RDTC) 2015. Retrieved from http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ict/Workshops/RDTC_15ch/OutcomeDocument_RDTCRegionalSeminar2015.pdf

The critical value and benefit of collaboration has been underscored and given considerable attention in the new Education 2030 agenda.⁵ It specifically mentions that in order to “achieve SDG 4 on education and the education targets included under other SDGs, it will be necessary to mobilize national, regional and global efforts that are aimed at achieving effective and inclusive partnerships”. While the RDTCC network has tremendously contributed to this goal and is continuously aiming to strengthen and stimulate its partnerships, the foundation of its existence, it is nevertheless imperative and highly relevant for the network to systematically explore what potentials they have in their existing and prospective partnerships. It is therefore timely for the RDTCC members to collectively deliberate on viable strategies to enhance and expand the partnership so as to contribute to achieving this new global education agenda for “ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

In this regard, UNESCO Bangkok, in collaboration with Digital Learning for Development (DL4D), will organize the annual Regional Seminar for UNESCO RDTCCs in Bangkok, Thailand, 23-25 November 2016, focusing on strengthening and harnessing on the partnerships and collaboration that have been the pre-existing stepping stones of the network, while rethinking new pathways to harness this asset toward achieving realistic and measurable goals related to transforming teacher education and teaching with technology.

To sustain this momentum UNESCO plans to continue providing opportunities for stronger partnerships beyond the existing framework of ‘south-south’ cooperation. For example, partnerships beyond the network can be explored in the form of inviting development agencies from the so-called ‘global north’, i.e. more advanced systems of education/teacher training to share information about their relevant partnership as well as further collaboration opportunities. This way, countries can cross-fertilize and expand their horizons within familiar contexts, while reaching to higher goals with the help of more advanced systems of training, teacher support, and partnership models.

In view of the above, this year’s Regional Seminar intends to support dialogue, discussion and research to promote diverse partnerships locally and globally in order to further strengthen the integration of ICT in teacher education. In particular, this year’s seminar aims to provide the member TEIs with a venue for: 1) sharing experiences and building capacity in strengthening and sustaining global and local partnerships, 2) supporting cross country research to evaluate the impacts of UNESCO digital resources, and 3) introducing the preliminary training modules on pedagogical use of the UNESCO repositories for members to adapt in their contexts.

1) Sharing experiences and building capacity in strengthening partnerships

The RDTCC members are invited to submit abstracts on concrete projects or initiatives where partnerships played a key role in enhancing ICT-integrated teaching and learning. Cases with supportive institutional strategies that help implement the training for pre-service and in-service teachers are also encouraged to be submitted (please see “Annex A: Call for Papers” for details). Moreover, promising international and regional cases will be presented by invited experts and representatives from development agencies to share the actual practices, concrete tactics and tools on building and strengthening partnerships for ICT-integrated teacher education, as well as ways to sustain the impact of such practices. These will help member TEIs expand their

⁵ UNESCO. (2015). *The Education 2030 Framework for Action*. Retrieved from: http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/efa/TWG/39th_TWG/Framework_for_Action_Education_2030.pdf

partnership horizons locally and globally in order to strengthen their ICT-integrated teacher education delivery. Furthermore, RDTC members will have the opportunity to present various accomplishments made since last year's Regional Seminar, and a session will be organized to jointly plan future activities for 2017.

2) A cross country impact study

From UNESCO's end, one concrete action towards strengthening this partnership is supporting a cross country research in order to monitor and evaluate the impact of UNESCO educational resources and corresponding trainings. With the guidance from the RDTC Research Working Group, it is expected that at least 10 RDTC members participate in this study. One session in this year's Regional Seminar will be dedicated to develop and finalize an agreed research framework (i.e. research questions, data collection tools and techniques, data sources, data analysis techniques and timeline etc.) for carrying out this cross country impact study, while soliciting strong partnership and voluntary participation of the members in the study. In the end the study report will work as an important reference document for TEIs worldwide on how they can effectively use free digital educational resources and deliver related trainings, as well as how partnership can facilitate the entire process to achieve desired outcomes.

3) UNESCO repositories and training modules

This year's Regional Seminar will also provide a special occasion to inaugurate two UNESCO repositories of the free educational resources,⁶ and introduce the member TEIs to the training courses associated with the new directories. The "Directory of Free Educational Resources for Teachers: Science" is mapped against core curriculum standards for lower secondary science across the Asia-Pacific Region. It aims to provide teachers and teacher educators with a new collection of curated free (or open) digital science contents. The "Directory of Free Educational Resources for Teachers: Classroom Productivity" is a collection of free quality software which is ready to be installed directly onto computer even without Internet connectivity. The RDTC Training Working Group, in collaboration with UNESCO Bangkok, will present the preliminary training modules to help the members effectively use the repositories in their educational practices. This hands-on workshop invites the members to provide feedback on the design of the modules in order for the Training Working Group to enhance and refine the modules before officially distributed in 2017. The new training modules will be built upon UNESCO's existing training guide on ICT multimedia integration for teaching and learning.⁷

Objectives

The objectives of the Seminar are to:

1. provide the member TEIs with an avenue to actively exchange practical information (e.g. funding and partnership opportunities), perspectives and first-hand experiences on global partnership for ICT-integrated teacher education;
2. set up a research framework to evaluate the impact of the UNESCO educational resources and the corresponding trainings;
3. introduce training modules for the new directories of free educational resources;

⁶ <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/resources/publications/elibrary-themes/teaching-and-learning/directory-of-free-educational-resources-for-teachers/>

⁷ <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/ict-in-education-projects/training-of-teachers/training-modules/multimedia-training-guide/>

4. update each other on the RDTC activities of the past year and discuss future plans to continue the activities of RDTC network in 2017.

Main Theme

Sustainable Partnerships for Transformative Teaching

Participants

- Two representatives (1 fully sponsored/1 partially sponsored) from each of 23 UNESCO RDTC members from 14 countries
- Resource persons and experts
- Representatives from development and funding agencies (e.g. FIT-ED, IRDC, SiRC, HEAD Foundation, etc.)
- Representatives of the partner organizations
- UNESCO staff

Venue and Date

Bangkok, Thailand on 23-25 November 2016.

UNESCO Contact

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Annex A

Call for Papers

Members from UNESCO RDTCs are invited to share their research and cases during the Regional Seminar on sustainable partnerships for transformative teaching, including but not limited to:

1. Results or findings from concrete projects and initiatives where partnership played a key role in transforming teaching and teacher education
2. Cases of professional learning communities for in-service teachers
3. Examples of international collaboration (e.g. south-south or south-north) projects that impacted local educational practices of your TEI and/or schools
4. Cases with supportive institutional strategies that help implement the training for pre-service and in-service teachers

If you would like to share your stories and lessons learnt from your various collaboration projects, please submit an abstract, no longer than 300 words by 3 October 2016 to a.tungatarova@unesco.org. The RDTc advisory group will work as a scientific committee for reviewing your abstract and subsequently making decision of acceptance. Depending on the quality of the papers, there is a possibility to publish them in a Seminar proceeding or in any other form.

Important Dates

- Deadline for submission of abstract: 3 October 2016
- Notification of acceptance: 13 October 2016
- Deadline for submission of PPT presentation: 10 November 2016