This issue of the e-newsletter highlights the activities of the Office undertaken in the second quarter of 2012. We once again would like to thank all our partners and readers for their continued support and contributions.

In India, UNESCO actively supported Global Action Week (GAW) by organizing various activities nationally and by mobilizing several partners. Global Action Week 2012 campaign on Education for All (EFA) took place from 23 to 29 April 2012 with a focus on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and under the slogan “Rights from the Start! Early Childhood Care and Education Now.”

This quarter saw the celebration of two international days. The World Press Freedom Day 2012 was celebrated, on 3 May, with a conference on the theme, Rural Voices: Unheard to Empowered, jointly organized by UNESCO, the Institute of Rural Research and Development (IRRAD) and Sesame Workshop India Trust. The Office also collaborated with its partners to observe the World Environment Day on the theme “Green Economy: Does it include you?” The main event “Greenathon - 2012” was organized at the University of Lucknow.

In June, a four-day Training Seminar for selected leaders of UNESCO Clubs and Associations in India was organized in Muzaffarnagar. UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations are valuable partners of UNESCO. The club movement members, who are all volunteers, include people of all ages and nationalities who share a commitment to UNESCO’s ideals.

Apart from this, UNESCO New Delhi also organized activities in the Cluster countries. Training Workshops on the Implementation of UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, were held in Sri Lanka and Bhutan, which was attended by professionals from various fields of expertise.

UNESCO New Delhi
Empowering the Unheard: Celebrating World Press Freedom Day

World Press Freedom Day 2012 was celebrated in India with a conference on the theme ‘Rural Voices: Unheard to Empowered’ jointly organized by UNESCO, the Institute of Rural Research and Development (IRRAD) and Sesame Workshop India Trust. Held in Gurgaon, at the IRRAD complex, the event brought together over 150 participants from media organizations, professional bodies, development agencies, the government, academia, and civil society organizations.

Physical security remains an issue in most of South Asia. The relative improvement seen in several countries of the region may have been achieved by deliberate decisions to cut the risks involved in reporting highly sensitive stories. And the sharp deterioration of an already bad situation in Pakistan far outweighed the slight improvements elsewhere.

Journalism was a hazardous pursuit through long years of internal conflict in Nepal and Sri Lanka. And now with conflict at an end and processes of political reconciliation underway, journalists are finding that several of the passions of the years of open warfare are yet to subside. These are some of the findings of the UNESCO-supported report *New Frontiers, New Struggles: Press Freedom in South Asia 2011-12*, produced by the International Federation of Journalists and launched on 3 May.

In spite of the fact that India is the largest democracy in the world and that all social groups could practice free speech and expression, community media remains the only means of expression and political participation for grass roots groups with no access to the mainstream media. Freedom of expression for community media is thus essential for empowering marginalized communities in rural and underdeveloped contexts. This was the core theme that the conference in Gurgaon sought to address.

In his opening remarks, Shigeru Aoyagi, Director of the UNESCO New Delhi, emphasized that the conference’s theme paid tribute to the critical role played by community media in promoting democracy and good governance. He also highlighted the particular efficiency of community radio not only as a development tool but as a channel for two-way communication, and acknowledged that the Indian Community Radio Policy places community radio within the framework of Article 19 of the Indian Constitution (which enshrines the freedom of speech and expression). Quoting Am-
artya Sen’s statement that giving a voice to the voiceless is a form of development, he then outlined some of the challenges the community radio sector in India is facing today – ranging from spectrum availability to licensing procedures, sustainability and restrictions on content.

The various sessions of the conference highlighted the positive impact of participatory communication within rural communities, and showcased creative and successful alternative media models and practices. A wide range of alternative media were discussed – these included community radio, vernacular newspapers, wall paintings, posters, street theatre, comics and songs. The conference also reiterated the need for community inputs in the development process, and the need to identify communications resources and policy gaps in rural development. The UNESCO Advisor for Communication and Information for South Asia, Iskra Panevska, observed that “By giving a voice to rural people, development workers and local authorities, policy acceptance processes are greatly facilitated. Another positive impact of using community media is the mobilization of people for participation and action, easy and simple dissemination of new ideas, practices and technology. Most importantly, community media can help overcome barriers of literacy, language, cultural differences and physical isolation.”

The UNESCO Clubs in India: Building Bridges within Civil Society

A four-day Training Seminar for Selected Leaders of UNESCO Clubs and Associations in India was held at the Shri Ram College of Management (SRCM) in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh from 21 to 24 June 2012. The event was organized by the Confederation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations in India (CU-CAI) in collaboration with SRCM.

The Training Seminar was attended by about 30 leaders of UNESCO Clubs from across India. These leaders were – for the most part – young teachers. The presentations on the first day focused chiefly on UNESCO’s mission, principles and areas of work; how these have been supported by UNESCO Clubs across the world since 1947; the history and value of the Clubs movement; and actual instances of change that Clubs in India and in Asia have been able to bring about at the local and grass roots level.

The second and third days of the Seminar consisted of presentations by academics, practitioners in the social/development sector, and other experts on core issues that the Clubs in India intend to engage with, build awareness about and conduct local activities around. These included the Right to Education and the RTE Act, cultural heritage (with a focus on local heritage), the UN International Decade on ‘Water for Life’, the functioning of cooperatives, the rights of minorities...
and migrant workers, sustainable development, and gender equality. Participants found the lectures and discussions most informative and useful, and brainstormed about how they might translate ideas into activities and implement relevant programmes at the local level. The fourth and final day was given over to sightseeing at nearby Rishikesh and Haridwar – an experience that allowed participants, trainers, and organizers to engage informally and get to know each other better.

A common feature of most UNESCO Clubs in the Asia Pacific region has been a focus on programmes highlighting education for sustainable development, human rights, peace, and intercultural dialogue; awareness and advocacy on the conservation and preservation of World Heritage Sites; preventive education for HIV and AIDS; environmental concerns, and disaster preparedness.

Today there are over 3,800 UNESCO Clubs in more than 80 countries. The Clubs’ key contribution in India and elsewhere has been their remarkable ability to build sustainable bridges within civil society. Over time, the engagement of civil society in UN activities and programs has become a necessity. The involvement, personal commitment and practical perspectives of civil society create a vast synergy of expertise and hands-on leadership allowing communities to act on global problems at a local level. UNESCO Clubs offer UNESCO an excellent way to access members of civil society in every part of the world and mobilize them in support of the organization’s priorities and mission.

‘UNESCO Club members are all volunteers, and include people of all ages and nationalities from every walk of life. They share a commitment to UNESCO’s ideals and work to translate them into reality on the ground.

Today the movement includes over 3,800 associations, centres and clubs for UNESCO in more than 80 countries throughout the world.’
For over thirty years, UNESCO has been working with countries around the world to identify World Heritage sites and ensure their safekeeping for future generations. Over 960 cultural, natural and mixed sites have been inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The ‘Western Ghats’, India’s hottest biodiversity hotspot was inscribed to the World Heritage List during the 36th Session of the World Heritage Committee meeting held at St. Petersburg, Russia, in June 2012. A total of twenty-six new sites have been inscribed to the World Heritage List this year.

The Western Ghats inscription is for the serial nomination of 39 sites that include tiger reserves, national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and reserved forests in Maharashtra (4 sites), Karnataka (10 sites), Kerala (20 sites) and Tamil Nadu (5). The mountain chains of Western Ghats are older than the Himalayas and represent geomorphic features of immense importance with unique biophysical and ecological processes. The site’s forest ecosystems influence the Indian monsoon weather pattern. Moderating the tropical climate of the region, it presents one of the best examples of the monsoon system in the planet.

India’s first Biosphere Reserve - the Nilgiri (established in the year 1986, UNESCO designation in 2001) is also a part of the Western Ghats - Nilgiri Sub-Cluster (6,000+ km²). The nomination dossier for the Western Ghats was submitted by the Government of India, in March 2006.

Among the many efforts towards raising awareness among the stakeholders, a capacity building and awareness seminar ‘Save Kaas: Save Heritage’ was organized in Satar (Mahaatra) in April 2012. The seminar was part of the ongoing efforts to follow up on the recommendations of the Western Ghats nomination. It brought together some 100 participants including experts and representatives of local government.

Dr Ram Boojh of UNESCO New Delhi office and Dr Rajendra Shende, former Director UNEP participated in the seminar and provided guidance for the conservation of Kaas plateau. The outcome of the seminar was presented by Dr Shende to the World Heritage Committee meeting in St Petersburg. The findings of the seminar emphasized the importance of inscribing such sites to the World Heritage List, which it stated boosts the pride and dignity of the local communities as also enhances their livelihood through promoting ecotourism, green jobs and long-term conservation.

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After a long 10 year gap of the ratification of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, the Royal Government of Bhutan finally submitted in February of this year, a first ever tentative list to the World Heritage Centre (WHC) for the consideration of their sites for future World Heritage status. Preparation of a Tentative List is a first step required for State Parties prior to submitting an official nomination dossier to the WHC, after which the WHC committee reviews these for world heritage recognition. Bhutan, in their tentative list to the WHC submitted 4 cultural and 4 natural sites for consideration.

This tentative list was jointly prepared by the Division for Conservation of Heritage Sites, Department of Culture at the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs and the Wildlife Division of the Ministry of Forest and Agriculture, Royal Government of Bhutan. The process was supported by the donation of the Oriental Cultural Heritage Site Protection Alliance.

For centuries, the people of Bhutan have treasured their natural landscapes. Bhutan boasts of beautiful national parks like the Jigme Dorji National Park which has been included in the aforementioned list, Phipsoo Wildlife Sanctuary etc. The people of Bhutan take great pride in their country’s natural beauty and are keen on maintaining this beauty whilst at the same time developing into the 21st Century. The cultural heritage of Bhutan consists of various typologies of structures, namely monasteries, fortresses, watch towers and shrines. The vernacular housing type construction are also a very important component of Bhutanese cultural heritage that has evolved as a sensitive response to local resources and climate. These natural and cultural sites together form an integral part of a unique cultural landscape defining relationship of natural elements (mountains, rivers, flora and fauna) to humans and their built environment, reinforced through religious beliefs and practices. This world recognition to Bhutan’s heritage site is truly a proud moment for its citizens, who can pass on their Country’s rich heritage to future generations to come.

Bhutan submits its first Tentative List under World Heritage Convention

Tentative list of Bhutan

1. Ancient Ruin of Drukgyel Dzong
2. Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary
3. Dzongs: the centre of temporal and religious authorities (Punakha Dzong, Wangdue Phodrang Dzong, Paro Dzong, Trongsa Dzong and Dagana Dzong)
4. Jigme Dorji National Park (JDNP)
5. Royal Manas National Park (RMNP)
6. Sacred Sites associated with Phajo Drugom Zhigpo and his descendants
7. Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS)
8. Tamzhing Monastery

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40 Science Kits developed for Secondary Schools Teachers in Sri Lanka

The Malta Government project on “Development of Science Kits to Facilitate Hands-on Science Education in Secondary Schools of Sri Lanka” has led to the creation of 40 Science Kits.

The newly introduced modernised science curriculum for grades 6 – 11 in Sri Lankan schools emphasizes the need for empowering teachers to use their creative and critical thinking skills to make science learning joyful. Keeping this in view, UNESCO is supporting the National Institute of Education (NIE) to train provincial teachers to develop their own science kits from locally available low–cost materials, instead of procuring ready-made equipments.

A training manual on how to develop 40 different science kits is being prepared for imparting hands-on training to the science teachers. The fourth and final stage will then bring the kits and manuals to the Provinces, where exhibitions will be held and knowledge transferred to teachers. Bringing these creative and low-cost science kits to provincial teachers and ultimately to the students will therewith support child friendly schools where students get the chance to have a hand-on experience in science and benefit from joyful learning.

National Conference on Prior Learning: A key to Lifelong Learning

The ‘Conference on Prior Learning: A Key to Lifelong Learning’ took place 29th and 30th June in the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi – organised by the National Literacy Mission Authority MHRD in partnership with UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning, Hamburg, Germany (UIL). With around 125 participants from the Government of India and State Government, academia, experts, private sector and international representatives from around 10 countries, the conference aimed to enhancing the understanding of the practical and political challenges involved in the topic. Participants assisted further to the release of the ‘UNESCO Guidelines for the Recognition, Validation and Accreditation of the Outcomes of Non-formal and Informal Learning’, whilst official representation from the Government of India and UNESCO assured their continuous and strengthened cooperation on the recognition and validation of prior learning.

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The 4th International Policy Dialogue Forum on Teachers for Education for All (EFA) in India, held on 29-30 June 2012 in New Delhi, has given a unique opportunity for sharing India’s efforts and experiences worldwide.

The Forum was organised in collaboration with the Government of India, the International Task Force for Teachers for EFA and UNESCO. After presentations and Q&A from the participants on the various topics, experts from the different fields and country representatives sat together to deliberate about the six main areas in order to create clear and practical recommendations for the ‘International Task Force on Teachers for EFA’ for their way forward.

These areas were namely, the professional development of teachers; challenges around the issue of decentralization; gender issues in teaching force; public-private partnerships to address the teacher gap; inclusive education (with a focus on children with special needs) and finally monitoring and evaluation of teacher policy reforms.

The Conference, as part of the ‘International Task Force on Teachers for EFA’ promoting North-South and South-South cooperation, was also a place of sharing policy-related experiences with other participating member countries and has come out to be a very fruitful and meaningful forum for India.

With Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the flagship programme of the Government of India to support the universalization of elementary education and with the implementation of the Right to Education Act 2009, India has taken up major initiatives to upscale the teacher profession. India recognises that qualified teachers are a key element for of EFA and SSA and therefore many steps have already been undertaken such as provision of additional teachers to schools with inadequate teachers strengths or grants for the development of teaching-learning material. However, many challenges remain and the shortage of teachers has been identified as crucial factor, if SSA is to be successfully implemented.
EFA Global Action Week

Global Action Week (GAW) 2012 campaign on Education for All (EFA) took place from 23 to 29 April 2012 with a focus on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and under the slogan "Rights from the Start! Early Childhood Care and Education Now!"

In India, UNESCO actively supported GAW by organizing various activities at national level and by mobilizing several partners. This year the partners for joint initiatives included: Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), UNICEF, National Coalition for Education (NCE), Centre for Early Childhood care Education and Development (CECED), Ambedkar University, Right to Education (RTE) Forum, CARE India, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), and National Bal Bhawan. Supported activities ranged from a round table discussion on ECCE and emergency; painting competitions; session on “Early Childhood Care and Education” organized in Odisha state as well as a Teacher Union Assembly AIFTO (All India Federation of Teacher’s Organization), AIPTF (All India Primary Teacher’s Federation), AISTF (All India Secondary Teacher’s Federation) in Shimla.

Furthermore under the theme of ‘Celebrating Childhood’, play-based interactive activities for children from marginalized groups, were organized for a small group of 150-200 children. The children belonged to a group of NGOs, namely Pratham, Kalakar Trust, Mobile Creches, Navjothi, Katha, TYCIA Foundation.

To conclude all partners developed and endorsed a joint message for the week which was uploaded on the respective websites.

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Seminar Focusing on Reintegrating Out-of-School Children in Schools

The International Seminar on ‘Age & Grade Appropriate Training to Prepare Out-of-School Children for Schooling: Issues and Challenges’ took place from 3rd to 5th July 2012 in the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The event was jointly organised by CARE India, Stockholm University and UNESCO. During the 3 days participants presented and deliberated on challenges and issues concerning the implementation of age and grade appropriate training in the view of reintegrating out-of-school children in schools in India. Curricular and co-curricular issues, questions of teacher development, experiences on community involvement are only some of the various important topics that were discussed during this proactive and inclusive seminar.

Sale of KOSHISH Products at UNESCO New Delhi Office

Supported by UNHCR and implemented by Don Bosco Ashalayam (DBA), KOSHISH is an initiative providing livelihood opportunities to more than 100 refugee women and skills training to over 300 asylum seekers in Delhi. As an exceptional event, DBA and UNESCO will be organizing a sale of KOSHISH products made by refugees, including kurtas and kurtis for women and men, tops and artificial jewellery, new designs and useful items like bed covers and Ipad covers with Burmese embroidery.

UNESCO staff and colleagues from other UN agencies are welcome.

Date: Friday, 20th July from 1100 to 1400 hrs.

Venue: Conference Room, UNESCO Office, New Delhi

For security reasons, please carry your UN Identity card
World Environment Day 2012
Green Economy: Does it include you?

We want a future where we can live in a healthy setting, with strong bonds to nature and a rich diversity of social relations. For this, we need a flourishing environment. We need to create green economies.

Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director General in her message on occasion of World Environment Day 2012

UNESCO New Delhi Office collaborated with various organizations to observe the World Environment Day on this year’s theme “Green Economy: Does it include you?” The main event “Greenathon - 2012” was organized at the University of Lucknow by observing the Environment fortnight from 5 to 20 June. Various events were organized during this period to raise awareness among the academic community specially students and youth about the current environmental issues.

The inaugural function was held on June 5, 2012 at the Malviya Hall of University of Lucknow where the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Manoj K Mishra welcomed the guests. He expressed his thanks to the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) for his support in organizing the event. Dr Ram Boojh represented UNESCO in the event where he introduced the theme of the World Environment Day. He emphasized the role of green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication which he said is in line with the theme of Rio+20. He mentioned that UNESCO through its competencies in education, science, culture and communication plays significant role in transition towards green economy and sustainable development.

Dr M Z Hasan former senior scientist at the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) Nagpur spoke on the need for cultivating the habit of green economy and its use in development of an eco-friendly environment around the world. The technical session which followed subsequently included key-note presentation on development, sustainability and green economy. Dr. Pradeep K Srivastava of Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow made a presentation on scientoons as a tool to illustrate complex scientific facts. This technique is an area developed by Dr. Srivastava, which is useful educational tool for science education. A Panel discussion on green economy in the context of U.P. – issues and action plan for a sustainable future was also organized. This was followed by skit play “Jaisi Karni Waisi Bharni” by students of Amity Institute of Pharmacy, Amity University, U.P.

Other student activities included collage making, written science quiz, skit play, poster making, slogan competition, power point presentation, on the spot essay competition and poster presentation were conducted as part of the event. Students of different universities, colleges actively participated in these activities. They focused on critical issues like environmental degradation, water crisis, cause of ozone depletion, and save forests.

On the spot poster, collage and slogan competition were organized at the Department of Mathematics and Astronomy, with the themes: Breaking of vicious circle of 3P’s (population, poverty and pollution); Green Economy: Does it include you? Renewable sources of energy in Uttar Pradesh; Water crisis in India - need for effective water management. A training session on “How to make Scientoons?” was also conducted by Dr. Pradeep K Srivastava.

The World Environment Day Celebrations concluded with the screening of the Film “An Inconvenient Truth” by Former U.S. Vice President, Mr Al Gore.
Seminar on Green Energy for Clean Environment

A seminar on Green Energy for Clean Environment was organized by Biotech Park, Lucknow on June 7, 2012, with the main objective of creating awareness about the need for clean sustainable environment and to bring together all stakeholders to analyze the scope and challenges across the bioenergy and biofuel industry.

At the outset, Dr P K Seth, Chief Executive Officer, Biotech Park introduced the theme and welcomed the participants. Mr P S Ojha of the Bioenergy Cell, State Government of Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) spoke about the bioenergy initiatives of the Government. Dr Ram Boojh from UNESCO New Delhi emphasized the need for sustainable energy for all and shared information on UNESCO initiatives in the area. Mr Alok Ranjan, Government of U.P. spoke about the rural energy scenario in the State and the need for innovation. Representatives of Bharat Renewable Energy Ltd. and the Association of Knowledge Workers also shared industry experiences. This was followed by an interactive panel discussion on critical issues related to Bio-fuel in the State.

Young Researchers of Natural Sciences (YRoNS-2012)

UNESCO New Delhi supported Amity International School to organize the 5th session of the International Symposium on Natural Science - YRoNS (Young Researchers of Natural Sciences) – A platform that enlightens ventures in natural science by youth.

Over 20 delegates including from Denmark, France, Slovenia and South Africa participated in the event along with 32 delegates from Amity Group of Schools in India. In all 24 projects were presented during the event. The projects were evaluated by a Panel of experts from Amity University, Department of Biotechnology and Botany Department of Delhi University and the science team from Sankt Annae Gymnasium, Denmark.

Project on “Filling of potholes of Roads” by South African team was found to be socially relevant project. Application of Biochar (fine grained charcoal) in agriculture, from Slovenia had all the elements of a well researched project. A Study of Indigo presented by France team was appreciated for the experimentation skills of students. The development of multipurpose herbal soap, soil testing kit was recommended for larger production after some more field testing.

During the valedictory function, a special appreciation was accorded to Ms Srishti Prasad, a student of Amity International School, Mayur Vihar on her work on Eco-E car. Ms Prasad has been working on this project for the last five years and has already developed prototype.

Dr. Ram Boojh, UNESCO, New Delhi in his keynote address informed the participants about biodiversity initiatives of UNESCO and the importance of biosphere reserves for conservation linked sustainable development. Dr V B Mathur from the Wildlife Institute of India gave a presentation on biodiversity rich areas of Punjab which was followed by series of presentations. This was followed by extensive discussion session leading to formulation of recommendations.

UNESCO partnered with World Wildlife Fund-India to organize ESD capacity building workshops, within the framework of SIDA supported ESD capacity building programme being implemented in Sunderban Biosphere Reserve and other biodiversity rich areas in India. This programme is a precursor to the youth ESD and biodiversity event planned during COP 12 being organized Hyderabad, in October 2012.

The programme is organized by WWF-India in partnership with WWF-Sweden who has been running eight ESD model schools in Sunderbans, Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh since 2009. They have also published a handbook on ESD in Hindi and Bangla and are members of the Regional Centre of Expertise in ESD under the aegis of the UN University. The aim of the workshops was to explore Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and how to take it forward and implement in the participants’ schools.

The first workshop was held last year at WWF-India. There were about 25 participants including directors, principals and teachers from NCERT, CBSE and SCERT and was facilitated by three ESD experts from Sweden, namely Dr. Per Juhani Sund, Dr. Staffan Mikeal Svanberg and Dr. Germund Sellgren. The final workshop was organized from 26 to 28 of April 2012 in Ranthambhore with field activities, preparation of action plans and visit to the Ranthambhore National Park.
The regional capacity building workshop and consultative meeting on Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was organized from 10 to 12 March 2012 in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. The meeting was organized by Department of Environment, Government of Iran in collaboration with the ECO Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ECO-IEST) with support from UNEP and Government of Norway. The objective was to provide information on IPBES process, agenda, and documents to facilitate exchange of views.

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was established by more than 90 Governments in Panama City on 21 April 2012 after several years of international negotiations. IPBES is established as an independent intergovernmental body administered by one or more existing United Nations organizations, agencies, funds or programmes. The secretariat of the platform would be located in Bonn, Germany. Pursuant to both the United Nations General Assembly resolution and the UNEP Governing Council decision, UNEP is working in cooperation with UNESCO, FAO and UNDP, and in close consultation with other relevant organizations.

Dr. Ram Boojh from UNESCO New Delhi office attended the meeting and contributed in the formulation of recommendation and conclusions as “Friends of Chair” being part of the drafting committee consisting of members from Iran, Pakistan, Liberia, ECO and UNESCO. The drafting committee based on discussion in the technical session and interaction with participants came out with recommendations which was presented at the concluding session of the workshop.

The meeting of SACAM (South & Central Asia MAB) Network counties was also organized on the sidelines of the IPBES workshop on 12 March 2012. Around 10 participants including delegates from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan participated in the meeting. During the meeting, possibility of SACAM participation in COP 11 was discussed.

Workshop on Cultural Landscapes in Sikkim

Two-day review workshop-cum-brainstorming session of Mac Arthur funded project entitled “Cultural Landscapes: The basis for linking biodiversity conservation with the sustainable development” was organized by National Institute of Ecology in association with UNESCO New Delhi at The Mountain Institute – India, Gangtok on 18th and 19th April 2012.

About 20 participants representing the existing partners of the programme, representatives from Sikkim University, and NGOs took part to discuss new ideas for the project proposal preparation. The ideas floated by various participants included; community-based initiative for conservation of natural resources, morpho species based classification for prioritizing the areas for conservation and economic development, development of bamboo based economic development and social forestry, documenting the indigenous/traditional knowledge systems with reference to foods, storing mechanisms, fermented foods, livestock etc.

The final outcome of the Mac Arthur project activities were also discussed in the meeting and the results were consolidated for the final report. The project also provided opportunity for the capacity building of students from G. B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development; and North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology for their Ph.D. degree.
First National Training Workshop on the Implementation of UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, was held in Bhutan from 14 to 18 May 2012 and in Sri Lanka from 25 to 29 June 2012. These training workshops were attended by professionals from various fields of expertise, including academics, government officials, active NGOs, local communities as well as intangible cultural heritage bearers and practitioners from across the countries. During the training, participants were exposed to key concepts as well as practical applications of the Convention, and were guided by two experienced international trainers.

One of the most important issues constantly addressed during the workshops was the involvement of the communities. Participants learnt that the key to successfully safeguard the intangible cultural heritage is to work together with the communities in defining, identifying, and inventorying their intangible cultural heritage.

In an effort to ensure that the countries that ratified the Convention, are aware of how to benefit from it, UNESCO has been organizing a series of such workshops in different regions aiming at an efficient implementation of the Convention both at the national and at the global level. The workshops are generously funded by the Japanese government within the UNESCO-Japan Funds-in-Trust cooperation framework.

Considering the importance of the intangible cultural heritage as a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development and the interdependence between the intangible cultural heritage and the tangible cultural and natural heritage, the General Conference of UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Paris on 17 October 2003. At present, there are 143 Member States of UNESCO who have ratified the Convention.
The 5th World Information Technology Forum (WITFOR) was held on 17 and 18 April 2012 in New Delhi, India, under the theme ‘ICT for Sustainable Human Development’. The Forum was organized by the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) and the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India. India was selected to host WITFOR 2012 as the country presents enormous development challenges, and models of innovation and globally competitive IT capabilities.

Attended by representatives from over 30 countries, the Forum provided an opportunity for policymakers, development professionals, IT businesses and experts to share their vision and knowledge; enhance their understanding of the innovative uses of IT for development; share best practices in the use of IT for governance and delivery of key public services; and showcase successful working models of ICT for development.

Inaugurating WITFOR 2012, Mr Kapil Sibal, the Union Minister of Communication and IT, and Human Resource and Development, said that e-Governance promotes transparency and openness, which helps keep people better informed, resulting in higher government accountability. The Minister observed that if the goal of sustainable development is to be achieved, an enabling ecosystem must be created to address the issue of content, connectivity and accessibility in a holistic and integrated manner.

The Minister of State for Communications and IT, Mr Sachin Pilot, said the Government of India faces the challenge of increasing IT and broadband penetration, and a key obstacle is the high cost of IT hardware and connectivity. He observed that this challenge could be overcome by encouraging greater domestic manufacture of IT products. The Minister also noted that Parliament is considering a bill that will mandate provisioning of all public services compulsorily through electronic means to ensure transparency, efficiency, accessibility and reliability in delivery of such services.

In his address, Mr Janis Karklins, UNESCO’s Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, said that technology offers tremendous opportunities for sharing knowledge and information. According to him, education brings sustainability to development, and technology can be a powerful education multiplier. Mr Karklins emphasized that the innovative and creative use of technology is crucial for achieving international development goals along with literacy and quality education.

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WITFOR has emerged as a unique global platform to bring together different stakeholders involved in the application of ICT for sustainable development. After editions in Lithuania, Botswana, Ethiopia and Vietnam, WITFOR moved to India this year. But like its previous editions, the goal of WITFOR 2012 was also to highlight the successful application of ICT for development, with a focus on replicable projects that combine research, policy and practice, with the smart use of resources. Some of the themes discussed during the two-day Forum in India included open government; the use of ICTs in agriculture, health, education, vocational training and skill upgrading; e-governance issues; state data banks and issues of privacy; cyber-security; and administrative reform.

Building the Institutional Capacity of the Nepal Press Institute

A project under UNESCO’s International Programme for Development of Communication (IPDC), titled ‘Building the Institutional Capacity of the Nepal Press Institute’ was completed recently. The project’s goal was to develop and obtain government approval for a three-year distance learning course – a Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication – which would be offered by the Nepal Press Institute. The course is expected to contribute significantly to the development of high-quality media training in Nepal, as the country does not have a comparable formal distance learning course at present.

The course was developed during 2010–11 by a team of senior media academics and trainers, and was then submitted to UNESCO. Experts at UNESCO further developed particular modules and components. Combining distance learning with formal classes, the Diploma is divided into 24 different papers, to be taken over a period of three years. In 2011, a Training Committee that included five members of the Nepal Press Institute (including its Chairman) approved the course contents. Feedback from journalists during the development phase had indicated that the Diploma would acquire greater credibility if it obtained the affiliation of a reputed government-recognized institution. The Centre for Technical and Vocational Training Education (CTEVT) was identified as an appropriate body for affiliation. After an internal review, and the endorsement of the Diploma by Nepal’s Minister for Education, the CTEVT formally approved the Diploma in early 2012.

The Nepal Press Institute now hosts the course and its contents online, and has begun testing the system in different regions of the country.

The Diploma has generated widespread interest, particularly among working journalists. Part of the Diploma’s attraction is that anyone completing it becomes eligible to join a Bachelor’s level course at any university in Nepal offering degree programmes in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The course’s emphasis on practical working skills has also been enthusiastically received. The course is expected to become an important benchmark for enhancing journalists’ professional skills in Nepal, and to have an enduring impact on the country’s media training sector.
The Centre for Communication and Development (CCD) recently completed its implementation of the IPDC project ‘Capacity Building of Women on Radio Journalism and Programme Production’. The project sought to help redress the near absence of women in the Bangladeshi media. A number of newsrooms in the country are entirely devoid of any women, and this has led to a severe under-representation of women’s issues in the media.

The project’s objective was to develop a group of 25 young women broadcasters with sufficient capabilities and skills in community radio (CR) management, programme production, broadcasting and technical operations. The women would use their newly acquired skills to produce weekly programmes on women’s issues. The CR sector in Bangladesh is in its nascent stages, with 14 CR stations having been granted licences thus far. As increasing numbers of stations obtain licences and the sector as a whole begins to mature, the existence of trained and competent resources will prove to be a major asset.

The project was well advertised in local newspapers and through notices at educational institutes, and drew almost 200 applications. 30 trainees – five more than the proposed number – were finally selected through interviews and discussions. The group of 30 women underwent four training workshops in ‘Basic Radio Journalism’, ‘Radio Programme Production’, ‘Editing’ and ‘CR Management and Operation’. At the trainees’ request, a fifth workshop on ‘Radio Reporting and Presentation’ was also conducted. The training sessions were followed by a three-month-long fellowship for the participants at Radio Rajshahi (a CR station at Rajshahi University, run by Bangladesh Betar). The fellowship programme provided trainees with essential hands-on experience and led to the production of 25 programmes that were aired by Radio Rajshahi and RadioDesh.com.

The project achieved much more than it had set out to achieve. It trained more women than it had anticipated. The training itself was of greater length and depth than expected, with the duration of the four planned workshops being increased, and an additional workshop being conducted. The relationship between trainers and trainees extended beyond the workshops themselves – trainers subsequently provided feedback and mentorship to trainees. An unexpected outcome of the project was the formation of the Women Empowerment Network (WEN) by the trainees. CCD responded by actively engaging WEN in the organization several other activities related to capacity-building and advocacy, and helping them develop their organizational and leadership skills further. The project has had a clear impact on participants’ employability – most trainees have since found jobs in the mainstream media, and a few are working at the newly established Radio Padma.
World Book and Copyright Day
23 April 2012

“Our relationship with books determines, to a large extent, our relationship with culture. On 23 April, for World Book and Copyright Day, UNESCO invites everyone to rally around books and support those who make their living from them and those who make them live.”

Extract from the message by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

International Jazz Day
30 April 2012

“Jazz has been a force for positive social transformation throughout its history, and it remains so today. This is why UNESCO created International Jazz Day. From its roots in slavery, this music has raised a passionate voice against all forms of oppression. It speaks a language of freedom that is meaningful to all cultures. The same goals guide UNESCO in its efforts to build bridges of dialogue and understanding between all cultures and societies.”

Extract from the message by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

International Press Freedom Day
3 May 2012

“Freedom of expression is one of our most precious rights. It underpins every other freedom and provides a foundation for human dignity. Free, pluralistic and independent media is essential for its exercise. This is the message of World Press Freedom Day. Media freedom entails the freedom to hold opinions and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, as stated in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”

Extract from the message by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
21 May 2012

“The chief purpose of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is to provide ways and means of unlocking the potential of cultural diversity. UNESCO’s cultural conventions show that culture can forge ties between the past and the future by protecting the world’s tangible heritage and intangible heritage and by promoting the diversity of cultural expressions. Culture helps us to rise above conflicts by elucidating the factors that bring us together. It boosts the creativity that drives innovation and development.”

Extract from the message by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

23 April - World Book and Copyright Day
30 April - International Jazz Day
3 May - International Press Freedom Day
21 May - World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
5 June - World Environment Day
8 June - World Oceans Day
### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

<table>
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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Release of the’ Shareer Apna, Adhikaar Apne’ - Youth-Led Report on Policy Recommendations for Enabling Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Uttar Pradesh</strong></td>
<td>Gemini Hotel, Lucknow, India 10-08-2012 Contact: Nandine Schuepp (<a href="mailto:n.schuepp@unesco.org">n.schuepp@unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers’ Day Celebrations</strong></td>
<td>New Delhi, India 5-9-2012 Contact: Alisher Umarov (<a href="mailto:a.umarov@unesco.org">a.umarov@unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Heritage and Development: Investing in Culture for Sustainable Development</strong></td>
<td>Kochi, India 12-9-2012 to 14-9-2012 Contact: Moe Chiba (<a href="mailto:m.chiba@unesco.org">m.chiba@unesco.org</a>)</td>
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#### PAST EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Young Researchers of Natural Sciences</strong></td>
<td>New Delhi, India 10-4-2012 to 14-4-2012 Contact: Ram Boojh (<a href="mailto:r.boojh@unesco.org">r.boojh@unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WITFOR 2012 – ‘Sustainable Human Development’</strong></td>
<td>New Delhi, India 16-4-2012 to 18-4-2012 Contact: Iskra Panevska (<a href="mailto:i.panevska@unesco.org">i.panevska@unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy Campaign-EFA Global Action Week on Early Childhood Care and Education: “Rights from the Start”</strong></td>
<td>New Delhi, India and Thimphu, Bhutan 22-4-2012 to 28-4-2012 Contact: Alisher Umarov (<a href="mailto:a.umarov@unesco.org">a.umarov@unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>World Press Freedom Day</strong></td>
<td>New Delhi, India 3-5-2012 to 4-5-2012 Contact: Iskra Panevska (<a href="mailto:i.panevska@unesco.org">i.panevska@unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Diversity Ministerial Forum of Asia and the Pacific Region</strong></td>
<td>Dhaka, Bangladesh 9-5-2012 to 11-5-2012 Contact: Takahiko Makino (<a href="mailto:t.makino@unesco.org">t.makino@unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Meeting on “Under Water Heritage”</strong></td>
<td>Koh Kong, Cambodia 14-5-2012 to 15-5-2012 Contact: Takahiko Makino (<a href="mailto:t.makino@unesco.org">t.makino@unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity-Building Workshop on Implementing the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage</strong></td>
<td>Thimphu, Bhutan 14-5-2012 to 18-5-2012 Contact: Moe Chiba (<a href="mailto:m.chiba@unesco.org">m.chiba@unesco.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Teachers Task Force and Steering Committee Meeting
New Delhi, India
28-5-2012
Contact: Alisher Umarov (a.umarov@unesco.org)

International Conference on Teacher Education India
New Delhi, India
29-5-2012 to 30-5-2012
Contact: Alisher Umarov (a.umarov@unesco.org)

Asian Media Summit 2012 – ‘Broadcasting and Information’
Bangkok, Thailand
29-5-2012 to 30-5-2012
Contact: Iskra Panevska (i.panevska@unesco.org)

Meeting of E-9 countries’ experts on Teacher’s Training for Inclusive Quality Education
New Delhi, India
31-5-2012
Contact: Alisher Umarov (a.umarov@unesco.org)

Preparatory Meeting for 9th E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting
New Delhi, India
31-5-2012
Contact: Alisher Umarov (a.umarov@unesco.org)

Capacity-Building Workshop on Implementing the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
Colombo, Sri Lanka
25-6-2012 to 29-6-2012
Contact: Takahiko Makino (t.makino@unesco.org)

Celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention
Sigiriya, Sri Lanka
June, 2012,
Contact: S.M. Karunaratne, Secretary, Ministry of National Heritage (kanthi_wije@hotmail.com)

STAFF NEWS

ARRIVALS

Jean-Baptiste Fauchille (June 2012)
Intern, Communication and Information Sector

Hanoz Shaher (April 2012)
Intern, Culture

Ines Ayari (May 2012)
Intern, Culture

Fengwen Lin (May 2012)
Intern, Culture

DEPARTURES

Harsh Wardhan Aggarwal (May 2012)
Intern, Library, Documentation and Public Information

Hanna Baumann (May 2012)
Programme Officer, Culture

Ashita Singh (May 2012)
Programme Assistant, Culture

Laetitia Sieffert (May 2012)
Intern, Culture
Compendium on Indian Biosphere Reserves


Compendium on Indian Biosphere Reserves is an outcome of collaborative efforts of UNESCO, G B Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development and Ministry of Environment and Forest. The publication intends to provide glimpses of representativeness, uniqueness and values of Indian Biosphere Reserves to inculcate excitement about these reserves amongst diverse stakeholders in India as well as abroad.

Transforming Teacher Education with Public Software

Produced by: IT for Change in cooperation and UNESCO

Transforming Teacher Education with Public Software discusses the integration of ICTs into teacher education and has a special focus on building “Teachers Communities of Learning and Practice” in Karnataka, India. The “Teachers community of learning and practice” is increasingly accepted as a powerful and cutting edge teacher education method and the film aims to demonstrate to policy makers how such use of ICTs for teacher education is essential to meet goals of national policies in India including the Right to Education, National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 and NCF Teacher Education 2010. The film shows how the use of abundantly available free/public software tools supports a rich learning environment in which teachers co-construct digital learning materials for public use that are contextual. Such public tools also help to connect teachers to one another for their professional development through sharing and peer learning. This model eventually aims to help liberate the energies of millions of teachers in the public education system in India for the purpose of systemic rejuvenation and reform. The film is based on interviews with two Directors of Education in Karnataka government - Mr. M.N. Baig and Mr. H.S. Rama Rao, Prof Padma Sarangapani and two teachers who are state resource persons for the Subject Teacher Forum program. The film is also available on http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-kgSW_o9z8&feature=youtu.be and a shorter 6 minute excerpt is available on http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcBas7ehQaM&feature=Endscreen
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Website: www.unesco.org/newdelhi