



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Office of Her Royal Highness  
Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's  
Projects



# INCLUDING THE EXCLUDED

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A LECTURE BY  
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS MAHA CHAKRI SIRINDHORN

UNESCO GOODWILL AMBASSADOR  
FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF MINORITY CHILDREN  
THROUGH EDUCATION AND THROUGH THE  
PRESERVATION OF THEIR INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

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Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, H.R.H. Princess

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25 NOVEMBER 2005  
PRINCESS MAHA CHAKRI SIRINDHORN ANTHROPOLOGY CENTRE  
BANGKOK, THAILAND

## FOREWORD

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand graciously accepted to be the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for the Empowerment of Minority Children through Education and through the Preservation of their Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2005. It is a great honour for UNESCO to publish the keynote address given by Her Royal Highness at UNESCO's 60th anniversary celebrations in Bangkok on the theme "Including the Excluded: Building on UNESCO's First 60 Years."

Although countries across the Asia-Pacific region have taken great strides towards the achievement of the Education for All (EFA) goals, challenging obstacles still remain in reaching the unreached.

UNESCO defines the unreached as the last percentage of the population who have either been historically and culturally excluded, or have been pushed into difficult circumstances due to recent economic and political trends. Their participation is critical in meeting EFA goals by the year 2015.

The unreached and underserved groups include those from remote and rural communities and isolated areas; from religious, linguistic and ethnic minorities; from poor families; girls and women; and people with special needs, among others.

Since 1980, Her Royal Highness has undertaken numerous projects to develop the well-being of disadvantaged children and youth in remote areas of Thailand. The projects have addressed multiple dimensions of development – food and nutrition, health and hygiene, education, training in vocational skills and cooperatives, as well as environmental and cultural conservation. The royally-initiated projects have yielded positive impacts in enhancing the potential of many children, reinforcing their self-sufficiency and improving their quality of life.

In order to reach out to other children and youth in the Asia-Pacific region, a pilot project was launched in 2006 to adapt and apply Her Royal Highness's knowledge and experience to schools in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam.

It is our hope that this book will inspire educators, policy makers and teachers to contribute to closing the remaining gaps, thereby truly ensuring education for all.



Sheldon Shaeffer  
Director  
UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education



Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn graciously accepts the nomination as the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador from UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura on 24 March 2005.

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## OPENING REMARKS

It gives me great pleasure to preside over this event marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNESCO. Our theme is “Including the Excluded: Building on UNESCO’s First 60 Years.” I would like to thank UNESCO for nominating me as the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for the Empowerment of Minority Children through Education and through the Preservation of their Intangible Cultural Heritage. I trust that this role will assist me in promoting the development and well-being of those groups who would otherwise be excluded in Thailand, as well as in other countries of the region.

During the past decades, the world has made great strides towards the goal of economic and social development. Nevertheless, the gap between the rich and the poor still exists. There still are numerous underprivileged children excluded from development opportunities. Those children are mostly from poor families who cannot possibly afford good education or even proper health care for their children. To create social equity and sustainable development, they should be included in the mainstream of development opportunities.

Education is essential for a better life. All children should have the right to go to school since knowledge is the only weapon they can use to battle poverty. Education for All is our goal. How to turn it into reality is the reason why we are here today. With my best wishes for a fruitful discussion later on, I am pleased to declare this event open.

## INCLUDING THE EXCLUDED IS THE GOAL

The theme of the conference is “Including the Excluded”. We work as educators, and we work towards the same goal, that is, to give an equal educational opportunity to all human beings around the world.

To me, “Equal Opportunity to Education”, “Education for All” and “Including the Excluded” are the same. **Including the excluded means that anyone who is not the same as others is not excluded from services and education.**

What should we do?

## HEALTH PROMOTION IS THE FIRST STEP

In my previous talks, I emphasized the importance of healthcare in education development. I said that it was not possible to provide education if we did not tackle the problems of poor health, malnutrition and other health issues. My target group keeps expanding.

### **Pre-School and Primary School Children**

At first I worked with primary school children. Then I had to work with smaller children. From the beginning, the thing I was doing was health promotion, like immunization and de-worming of children. We had to go around the villages to catch the children. This seemed quite cruel! We ran after them, captured them and injected them with vaccines. I myself did not dare to do the injection, so I gave the kids the oral vaccine for polio instead.

Then we had to keep records of these children. Doing that was quite tiring. We set up daycare centres for the children so that our target population would be in one place; and we hired teachers from the villages to look after

the kids. At that time, there was a debate among social workers about whether one should give this service free of charge or ask the parents to pay part of it. Some said that those parents who are irresponsible should not get free services. I do not quite agree with that because the children whose parents neglect them are usually the most affected and the most excluded from all services. This is one example of health promotion.

### **Pregnant Women and Nursing Mothers**

After that, my professor suggested to me that it would not be enough to work in just primary schools and pre-schools, because the brain of a person is forming before that. We should try to target even younger children. It would be better if we could help pregnant women and nursing mothers. This was quite difficult for me in the beginning, because I am not quite familiar with going around asking people, "Are you pregnant?"! In fact, it is possible to work with health workers from the Ministry of Health. We can find out who is pregnant because expecting mothers come to the health stations. Also, as we send teachers out to the families of the children, we know to a certain extent which mothers are pregnant. Then we try to give additional food and provide health education for those women.

For nursing mothers, we give supplementary food or, at the very least, powdered milk, because the World Health Organization suggests that women should breastfeed for at least four to six months. What we have found is that the quality of the mothers' milk is not up to standard because the mothers themselves are malnourished. So that is why we have to try to nourish both the mothers and their babies.

## HEALTH EDUCATION

### **General Health Education and Sanitation**

I have just returned from India where I was discussing with my colleague responsible for health and food issues how they worked with the women less than three-months pregnant. We find it very difficult to know who is pregnant at this early stage. What should be done? We have to provide health education for schoolkids which includes general health and sanitation, for example, about cleanliness in their houses and schools.



## **Personal Hygiene and Reproductive Health**

Personal hygiene is also important, but sometimes it is not so easy to promote. Some people with whom we have worked take a bath only once a year. I have just talked to a doctor who has a similar experience in community services. He said that some of his patients took a bath two years ago. Of course they changed their clothes at bath time. This can be the local practice and there are some reasons behind it. Water may be so scarce that it is not easy to find water for bathing. It might be very cold, too cold to bathe often. So sometimes if we try to change something, we have to change it gently. Another problem is about reproductive health, which is quite difficult to explain in an effective way.

## **Nutrition and Food Safety**

Nutrition and food safety are about knowing the right food to eat. It is something as simple as knowing that the proteins you want are from meat or some kinds of vegetables, that carbohydrates give you energy, what minerals and vitamins are for and where you can find them, etc. Sometimes we try to work on a food-based category, but it is not easy because in some regions the soil is poor. It is not possible to grow what is needed for good nutrition. The human body can also resist some forms of food, and so natural vitamins and minerals may not work unless they are provided as supplements in tablet form or mixed with other food.

## **Target Groups**

The target groups for which we would like to provide health education are students in the upper primary level and those in the secondary level. Due to “hunger” for education, a lot more people seek educational services at the secondary level. This puts more stress on the Ministry of Education, because it is not possible to set up secondary schools in all villages. Setting up primary schools for all is difficult enough. We may find a place with only a few households, having 30 children and a few adults who want education. How can we even set up a full-scale primary school in this case? A secondary school is unthinkable.

One way to help is to have distance education, which still has some technological and budgetary limitations. Another way is to take the children to the nearest school that can provide secondary education. Where there are welfare schools, we can also provide accommodation

for the children, but sometimes the schools are already too crowded. Nowadays, parents are more willing to send their children to nearby secondary schools or to primary schools that have been extended to give educational services up to Grade 9. These schools are very crowded and have no food budget. Apart from collecting donations, there is no way to help them. Some schools that are near tourism sites may try to earn some money from tourists, and they can be quite successful. Others may find some additional ways to raise funds.

### **Nutrition and Education**

Educators say that nutrition is the key to education. They also say that if children are hungry, they will have no concentration. If they are malnourished, they will not develop the brain or have the strength to study.

The nutritionists that I have just met said that education is the key to their work. If they have to go to work where education is not provided, they work with difficulty. So the most important thing is education. Educators say that nutrition is important, and nutritionists say that education is important!

## **ROLE OF RELIGION IN PROMOTING EDUCATION AT THE GRASS-ROOTS LEVEL**

I would like to talk a little bit about the role of religion in promoting and providing education at the grass-roots level.

### **Buddhism**

In the past, before the official school system was established, the only place to get education was in the temples. The teachers were mainly monks. Temples and monasteries were the places where people went to study. However, in this way, education was an opportunity for boys only. I do not think girls can stay in the temples like boys, except in a nunnery. Just some weeks ago when I went to Cambodia to inaugurate the high school that we helped construct with the cooperation of the Cambodian government, the Prime Minister and other members of the cabinet were there. Over lunch the Prime Minister told me that he was very interested in building schools. He himself has built about 5,000 schools, mostly

elementary schools, because he was deprived of education when he was little. In his home town there was no proper school, so he moved to the city and stayed in a temple. Again it was the temple that provided him with good education.

Nowadays, I have an opportunity to work with a lot of monks who gather boys from poor families, ordain them as novices and then give them good education. The monks teach the children themselves and they hire some lay teachers too. However, there are a lot of problems in this system, because it is not possible to find much money to hire enough teachers, and the temples are usually situated in quite remote areas. So it is a problem to feed the novices and to find the vehicles to move the novices from the poorer places, because the schools and the temples with the schools are not big enough to accommodate all novices. Also, the children who become novices have a lot of problems to begin with, like poor nutrition, and their basic knowledge is not good. Though they have completed the sixth grade, many of them have forgotten what they have learned. They may not have learned anything at all. There are also a lot of mental or psychological problems that have to be tackled. What we have been doing is to provide good nutrition and enough physical exercise for the novices, in a way that conforms to their religious practices.

I am happy to work with a lot of dedicated monks who are in their 20s. They are very knowledgeable. Many of them are from the ethnic groups themselves, and they are hard-working. I hope that this way of education will provide help for a lot of needy children and help to include more of the excluded.

From what I can remember, Buddhist temples also provide some education for girls. For example, when my own grandmother was young, she was included in the first program that the monks at Wat Anongkaram started to provide education for girls.

## **Islam**

In Thailand, the Islamic private schools help a lot in providing education for Muslim children. I have been working in the Muslim-predominant area for more than 30 years. A lot of my Muslim friends who own religious schools ask me whether it is possible for the Ministry of Education to

send more teachers to their schools to help with general education. This is not always possible because there are so many schools. The Ministry can provide teachers only to the schools that have a certain number of students and that meet certain criteria. So, what we are trying to do now is to ask for teachers and volunteer teachers from the Department, now the Office of Non-formal Education. It works to a certain extent. We work in partnership: the schools, the parents, some government agencies, that is, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture. It has been quite successful, but I can do this only in some schools.

I have been working with a lot of primary schools in this region. I usually do a follow-up with my ex-students. I want to know what kind of things they are doing after leaving primary school. Many of them join private Muslim religious schools, because they are less costly than going to general secondary schools. Also, their parents are happy making sure that their children will follow the teachings of their belief more thoroughly. In those schools, some teachers have agreed that they are going to teach some general education courses. Some are happy to teach only about health and agriculture, and also some vocational training. Now we are pairing up those schools with the former primary schools that provide secondary education as well. In this way they can share their facilities, like the computer rooms. Nowadays, we set up computer rooms in Islamic schools and provide training for their teachers.

### **Christianity (Catholic and Protestant)**

We know that Christian churches and religious schools have provided a good education for a lot of needy children. A long time ago, I myself asked some Catholic priests and nuns to teach a group of disadvantaged children. I did not dare to ask the public schools, because I thought they admitted children who could afford to be there and who have better school performance. The ones I had met could not meet that standard. Although it is not quite nice to use privilege to get children into schools, it is possible for religious schools, like the Catholic or Protestant schools, to help. Actually, those schools are not really religious schools, just organized by religious personnel. As private schools, they can help without many restrictions.

In remote areas, I have seen missionaries and priests who work with the grass-roots community in the villages. Some are Thais, some are people from ethnic groups and some are foreigners. Once we worked in a jungle, and I met a French Catholic brother. He was pleased to meet me because it had been a long time since he had the chance to speak French. He speaks Karen every day, and he speaks some Thai when he goes to the city to raise funds.

I firmly believe from my experience that the great religions play an important role in providing and improving education.

## **EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

### **People with Disabilities**

The people with special needs who are sometimes excluded from services are those with disabilities. Let me mention the kind of things that I have been doing. I have been working with deaf and blind people. We have schools for the blind and also those for the deaf, but they are quite far away from the children's homes. One problem is that the teachers in the village schools do not know how to deal with them, and so they lose the opportunities to develop themselves even though they might be quite smart. They are put in the regular schools where the teachers cannot convey knowledge to them. The teachers can only provide them good food and fun from playing, but no serious lessons.

The only option is to send them to schools where the teachers know well how to deal with them. But then they are deprived of their families, just like those who have to leave their home towns to get higher education. Now we train teachers about all these problems more and more. It is still difficult, and we have more people with disabilities.

### **Extreme Cases of Disabilities**

I have dealt quite a lot with extreme cases in which the children have no limbs at all: no hands and no feet, just their head and body. The first two children were one girl and one boy. Now the girl has moved up to the secondary school, so she has to change school. With the help of our engineers and many others like the teachers and the administrators, she is now in good hands. She can use the existing parts of the body, including

her shoulders, to control the computer. At first, I had not thought of the computer at all. The girl herself suggested to me that it would be better if she could use it. So, we tried it, and now she does not have to use her mouth to write which caused her backache and a lot of other problems. She also needs her mother and sister to help carry her. Though she does not have a father, she is lucky enough to have her caring mother and sister, and also her friends and her teachers, who help her tremendously.

We also had to improve her house so that she has a certain level of independent living which is very important for everybody, not just for people with disabilities. Nobody should be excluded from the right to have independent living, to be able to help oneself. From our side, we still try harder to find more technologies to help children with disabilities.

We suggested that the girl should have better posture while seated. The village head, who is a carpenter himself, made a specially designed desk and chair for her. It was very kind of him. Now she studies happily at a secondary school with the help of the new school's teachers and administrators. We think that she should work with a computer that has voice command, because it is easier and faster than using the head gear to strike the keyboard. So we are developing software for that. If it is in English, it can be done more easily. So we've suggested that she should have extra English lessons, but it is quite difficult to find teachers in that area. We are also developing some works in the Thai language. I tried yesterday and it worked quite well. However, some vocabulary is not recognized and needs further work. I hope that this can be done within a few months so that the learning prospects for severely disabled children improve greatly.

The second child is a boy from Yala. He has both his parents. We can help his education develop in the same way we have helped the girl.

We have also started working with another disabled child. She will benefit from the experience we have gained working with the first two. However, her situation is different. Her parents could not cope with her, so she was placed in an orphanage. Without the most important part of her education, loving care from her parents and family, she surely faces more difficulties than the first two. Luckily, she has a very kind lady who loves her. The lady works at the orphanage, and she is especially kind to this girl.

### **Sick Children in Hospitals**

Some sick children have to stay in the hospital for a long time, and the hospitals have to provide teachers. They request teachers from the Office of Non-formal Education, but the office cannot provide that many. So we try to find a new solution by using computers as teaching aids. We can also find more volunteers or hire more people. Now the Ministry of Public Health is interested in doing this project.

### **People in Remote Areas**

There are people who live in the remote areas that I have already talked about. Their situation, in fact, could happen to people who live quite near Bangkok, like Nakhon Nayok Province. This is my 24<sup>th</sup> year working in the Military Academy, which moved from Bangkok to Nakhon Nayok in 1986. At that time, only 30 percent of the children who finished primary school attended secondary school. But now it is 100 percent.

In some remote places we have involved the police force in teaching. We have a number of border patrol police schools with whom I have worked in the past 25 years. In fact, the schools will celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year. Policemen have been trained to help the local population in health, education and agriculture. Without them, many children would never have had the opportunity to be literate. After leaving primary school, most of them go on to study in secondary schools and then universities. Some have got Master's degrees, but so far there is no Ph.D yet.

### **People from Different Ethnic Groups**

There are people from different ethnic groups that I should work on more. This is difficult because we have to use our judgment in each case. We all know that it is very important to preserve minority cultures, but how to do so is sometimes a difficult issue. To dress in their ethnic clothes is easy, but to preserve the old wisdoms, such as what can be eaten, what can be used as dyes for clothes and what can be used in local medicines, is more difficult.

The third issue is language. It is said that anyone who has lost their language loses their identity. I try to encourage many minority people to keep their languages, but it is not easy because everybody wants higher education. For some ethnic groups, their languages may not be rich enough to be used

for higher learning. There should be a balance. Many parents very much want their children to learn the national language.

Then there are the people from outside Thailand or the refugees in camps where only the language of their tribe, the language of the country they came from and also English, as the lingua franca, are taught. Parents are often not happy about that, so they have tried to have their kids smuggled out of the camps to attend Thai schools. Now I think Thai language is taught in many camps, so that people have more choices. Knowing Thai, they hope to continue their study at a higher level, because it is very difficult to return to the place they came from. It is even more difficult to go to a third country. This is a way to provide opportunities for everyone.

### **Prison Inmates**

Another group is prison inmates. Prison inmates vary in their level of education. Some are illiterate, and some even came from other countries. Many are highly educated. In the prisons, basic education is taught by prison officers. They manage to teach quite well. I am quite surprised to know that and am happy about it. The officials from the Office of Non-formal Education and a university also help them. I found that many of them have four or five degrees and still have more years to serve.

What I have been doing is to provide computer courses for them, and they like that very much. They can earn some money from their work as well. Yet this is an issue to debate about. Some people think it is not right to use prisoners' labor, but the prisoners themselves think that it is nice to be able to do something while serving in the prisons where they can earn additional income and gain useful skills.

### **People in Disaster Areas**

Another category is people and children in disasters, both natural and man-made, like wars. Recently, we had a tsunami and we had the South Asian earthquake. I have some experience about the tsunami in Thailand. In the first stage, of course, the things we should provide are food, shelter, clothes and basic stuff. As soon as those things are given, education has to be provided. I do not think we did it fast enough, but it was not too bad. Even when there were no real schools, some people went out and taught the children before proper schools were rebuilt. It was done in



small groups. I saw on television some teachers helping the South Asian earthquake victims. The classes started right there, without any shelter at all. The problems are how to move to proper schools and how to deal with all those schools. Some schools may not have been washed away, but the families of the students and their affected livelihoods are something to deal with.

## IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The last point I would like to talk about is the importance of research and higher education. This is to remind everybody that although we talk about grassroots education, giving the right or the opportunity for everyone to study, we should not forget that it is higher education that provides most of the workers, instructors and facilitators.

Nowadays, I do not know why they do not want to mention the need for teachers. They say that there are too many teachers, not only in Thailand, but worldwide. They think that children should learn from nature and by themselves. They should not be crammed with all that knowledge. In fact, in the remote areas, teachers are still needed, and higher education has provided us with more teachers. Although now it is the age of ICT, and we have a lot of technological facilities in education, teachers have to be trained to use them, for example, computers, CDs or satellite long distance education.

Universities and institutes of higher learning also provide technology and research. If the soil in the area is not good, the research question is how to improve the soil. Some children should be able to get higher education and to become researchers someday.

There are many more techniques we can apply to include the excluded that I would like to talk about. But I have to end here because I have exceeded my time already.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.



Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn administers an oral vaccine for polio to a young boy. Education for All starts with promoting good health, including immunizing and de-worming pre-school and primary school children.



Pregnant women and nursing mothers are encouraged to pay attention to health issues such as hygiene and nutrition, which educators say is the key to education.



Schools based in religious institutions can play an important role promoting and providing education at the grass-roots level, including general education.



Temple schools provide a place to educate young novices from rural and remote areas, especially ethnic minority villages.



Under Her Royal Highness's initiative, computer courses are being offered to inmates to provide them a chance to gain useful skills.



Technology can be used to help children with extreme disabilities attain an education and achieve a certain level of independent living.



Her Royal Highness granted an audience to teachers and principals from pilot schools on 21 December 2007.

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EXPANDING THE INITIATIVE OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS  
TO THE EXCLUDED  
IN OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE REGION

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In 2006, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn graciously gave permission to the Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects to work closely with UNESCO through the two-year pilot project **"Improving the Quality of Life for Children and Youth in the Asia and Pacific Region"**. The project aims to ensure the well-being of excluded children and youth in the region.

In accordance with Her Royal Highness's initiative, the project, as a first step, was designed to promote better nutrition and health among children attending schools. Schools are an effective setting to implement the project. By establishing small-scale integrated farms in schools, children are encouraged to participate in producing food for their own needs. While food production and consumption for better nutrition are promoted through this school farm, personal hygiene and sanitation are concomitantly emphasized.

The project was launched in three countries of the Greater Mekong Sub-region: the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

Pilot schools were identified that are located in remote but reachable areas, with poor farming families and ethnic minority communities, and that are unable to produce enough food for human consumption. The implementation in the schools has been carried out with the cooperation of the UNESCO National Commissions and Ministries of Education in each country.

- In **Cambodia**, the project has reached 2,328 children in three pilot primary schools. These schools are situated in rural areas of Kampong Cham, Kampong Speu and Prey Veng provinces where the poverty rate is high.



- In **Lao PDR**, the project has reached 2,055 children from two types of schools: three ethnic minority boarding schools and four primary schools in four provinces including Vientiane, Khammoun, Udomxay and Huaphan.
- In **Viet Nam**, the project has reached 1,357 children from three remote schools in three different geographic and cultural settings: a mountainous ethnic minority village in Hoa Binh province, a lowland village in a flood plain in Quang Ninh province and a sea-based village in Ninh Binh province.

To start the project, teachers – the key persons for development – received training to set up the project in schools for children. Teachers and principals from the pilot schools took part in workshops and study visits to Thai schools in August 2006 and December 2007. The training aimed to strengthen the teachers with knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- food and nutrition
- health and hygiene
- techniques of agricultural production: design of a school agricultural map, vegetable and fruit planting, animal husbandry, fish raising, mushroom cultivation, use of organic fertilizer for soil management and use of biological controls for pests
- school cooperatives
- growth monitoring
- local wisdom and heritage conservation
- project planning and management
- monitoring and evaluation system

In addition, funds, equipment and other supplies needed for implementing the project have been provided, such as:

- water supply systems
- separate latrines for boys and girls
- agricultural inputs such as agricultural tools, vegetable seeds, fruit trees, animals and animal food
- cooking utensils
- scales and equipment to measure height and weight
- medicines and basic medical kits

The teachers in the pilot schools have observed and reported the following benefits during two years of project implementation:

- More agricultural products are now available for children as well as for teachers. In the Laotian boarding schools and Vietnamese schools, more nutritious meals have been prepared using these products. This has an impact on improving nutrition among children.
- New latrines provided in participating schools help children to practice personal hygiene and learn how to reduce the spread of germs.
- Supporting the construction of wells and reservoirs has contributed to improving access to water resources. Water for school farms in some participating schools is now available. Children have more clean water for drinking and they have improved personal hygiene by washing their hands using the well water as reported by Cambodian schools.
- Some participating schools have built new kitchens so children can have meals prepared in a better hygienic environment.
- The communities have a positive attitude to the project and have contributed to and participated in school activities by donating land and labor and providing funds, which in turn strengthens community-school partnerships for better child learning and ultimately leads to self-reliance and sustainable development.
- Collaboration between schools and local health workers has been created. For example, in Viet Nam, health workers have helped schools conduct health examinations of students every three months. With the medicines received from the project, some schools in Lao PDR have strengthened ties to health workers by asking the health workers to advise the school and community on how to use these medicines.
- More partnerships have been created at the local level within the school community, such as in Viet Nam. The school representatives



organized a meeting with local officials, parents and community members and informed them about the project and the need to improve the well-being of school children. This has resulted in the provision of local funds and technical input to undertake the activities.

- Understanding and appreciation of local ecology and culture has improved. For example, schools in Viet Nam and Lao PDR have promoted growing local vegetables and animals. In Viet Nam, school activities have been organized to help clean up a nearby World Heritage site. Students are encouraged to value their local traditions, such as food culture.
- Vietnamese schools are now considered to be models for other schools nearby to learn from and implement similar activities.

Since many participating schools, particularly in Cambodia and Lao PDR, are in remote areas, the schools still lack basic infrastructure such as classrooms and school kitchens, and equipment such as tables and chairs, books, etc. However, this deprivation is not a barrier for the project implementation. Instead, good cooperation and support from local communities and local organizations have been the key factors which have contributed to the progress of the project during these two years.

## PILOT SITES

### KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

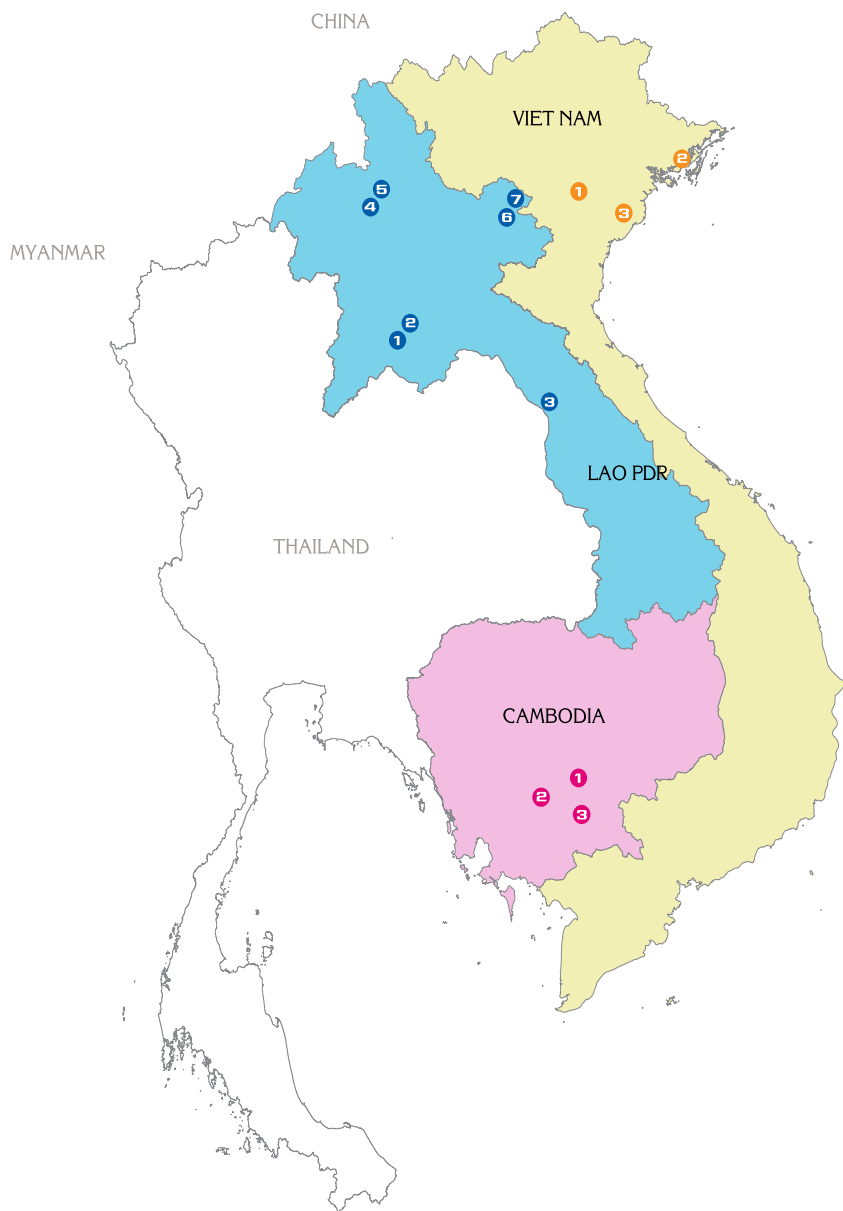
1. Dom Ber Primary School, Kampong Cham Province
2. Tompong Primary School, Kampong Speu Province
3. Ponlei Primary School, Prey Veng Province

### LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

1. Suan Mone Primary School, Vientiane Province
2. Ethnic Group Lower Secondary School, Vientiane Province
3. Ethnic Group Primary School, Khammoun Province
4. Ban Yor Primary School, Udomxay Province
5. Ban Thin Primary School, Udomxay Province
6. Ethnic Boarding Elementary and Middle School, Huaphan Province
7. Sobbao Elementary School, Huaphan Province

### SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

1. Cao Son Lower Secondary School, Hoa Binh Province
2. Hung Thang Primary and Secondary School, Quang Ninh Province
3. Ninh My Primary School, Ninh Binh Province



## TEACHER TRAINING



During the training, pilot schools are encouraged to grow vegetables for the school lunch programme.



Teachers plan school agriculture plots, emphasizing vegetables with high nutritional value that are native species or readily available locally.

## TEACHER TRAINING



Raising fish is one way to supplement the protein intake of school children.



In the study visit schools, the school children are responsible for feeding chickens and collecting eggs.

## TEACHER TRAINING



Teachers learn to process vegetable waste into useful household or farm products, such as dishwashing liquid or organic fertilizer.



A school-based handicrafts livelihood training program helps to build skills, make use of local resources and reinforce local cultural wisdom.



## CAMBODIAN PILOT SCHOOLS



After the training, Cambodian students started planting school vegetable gardens.



Teachers carefully monitor the children's health by regularly measuring and recording their height and weight.

## LAO PILOT SCHOOLS



Digging water ponds, building pipelines and other preparations were needed to allow the pilot schools to undertake agricultural activities.



Schools are now raising fish, pigs, chickens and goats, with a focus on native species.

## VIETNAMESE PILOT SCHOOLS



All three Vietnamese pilot schools are growing vegetables, with support from parents, officials and the local community.



Providing a well-balanced and hygienic school lunch is helping to improve the health of the school children.



IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION  
COOPERATION PROJECT



Office of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's Projects



UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education  
UNESCO Hanoi  
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**In cooperation with**

Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO  
Canadian International Development Agency  
Ministry of Education, Lao PDR  
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Cambodia  
Ministry of Education and Training, Viet Nam  
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Education is essential for a better life.  
All children should have the right to go to school  
since knowledge is the only weapon they can use  
to battle poverty. As educators, we work towards  
the same goal, that is, to give an equal educational  
opportunity to all human beings around the world.  
Including the excluded means that anyone who is  
not the same as others is not excluded from  
services and education.

”



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
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UNESCO Bangkok  
Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education