

# UNESCO Amman Quarterly NEWSLETTER



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**D**ear colleagues, dear friends of UNESCO, As I am writing this introduction, the wind of change is still blowing through the region. Fortunately, unlike in Yemen, Syria and Libya where initial turmoil have turned into a protracted political and humanitarian crisis, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was swift in responding with concrete steps to the popular demand for change and political reform. Soon after the appointment of Prime Minister Marouf Al Bakhit in March, a National Dialogue Committee chaired by the Senate president Taha Masri was formed to evaluate reforms proposed by King Abdullah II. The committee composed of 52 members comprises representatives from political parties, professional associations, civil society, youth and women's groups and was requested to foster a consensus on a wide range of issues related to political reform. On Saturday 4th of June, the recommendations, produced by the National Dialogue Committee were submitted to Prime Minister Marouf Al Bakhit with a number of concrete proposals.

UNESCO has supported this process by providing international expertise on how to reform the Government's media legislation to be in line with international minimum standards and best practices. Let us hope that these recommendations will soon materialize in tangible reforms and an improved normative environment for media practitioners in Jordan guaranteeing full freedom of expression and media.

As the following pages will show, for the UNESCO

Office in Amman the last three months were very hectic and productive, however, let me single out one event that we look back at with particular fulfilment: the regional launch of the Arabic edition of the 2011 Education for All Global Monitoring Report which took place on May 30 with the presence and participation of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah. With the exemplary support of the EFA GMR Office led by Kevin Watkins and the support from UNESCO National Commissions and field offices, from neighbouring countries we successfully organized a high level event with the participation of Her Majesty and Ministers of Education and/or their representatives from Jordan, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Tunisia, Algeria and Iraq. Our most heartfelt thank you to all of you who have supported us in hosting this important event

Finally, it is worth mentioning that Jordan this year, in addition to Sudan are the only countries in the Arab region engaged in the current UNDAF roll-out process. UNESCO is a member of the UNDAF Steering Committee and actively engaged in the UNDAF roll-out process for the UNDAF 2013-17.

I hope you enjoy reading about our activities and we are eager to provide you with more information, so please do not hesitate to contact us!

Anna Paolini,  
Head of Office  
UNESCO Representative to Jordan



# Education

## Under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah, UNESCO Office in Amman hosts the regional launch of the Arabic edition of the 2011 Education for All Global Monitoring Report

Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah, UNESCO Office in Amman launched the Arabic edition of UNESCO's flagship publication Education for All Global Monitoring Report on May 30. The theme of this year's Report, "The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education" warns that conflict is robbing millions of children in the Arab States of an education by exposing them to violence, targeted attacks on schools and other human rights abuses.

In her speech, Her Majesty emphasised that education should always be a priority and should not lose its value during times of conflict, lack of security or economic difficulty, adding that: 'our duty is to make sure the current regional unrest does not impede our children's future.' Her Majesty stressed that human security can only be achieved if people are equipped with an education that allows them to overcome any challenges they may face. 'There are millions of children in need of a chance at a decent living, at an education that opens doors they need to dream, aspire and then realize their ambitions.

Kevin Watkins, the Director of the

Global Monitoring Report, emphasised in his speech that many of the world's poorest countries have registered extraordinary advances, demonstrating through their achievements that the Education For All goals are attainable. However, he also highlighted that there is still much to do as 'around one in every three children in the world's poorest countries start their primary school having experienced malnutrition and we still have 67 million primary school age children out of school.' Referring to this year's theme of the Report he added that 'armed conflict has devastating consequences for education systems, with almost half of out of school children living in countries affected by armed conflict.

In fact, as the Report highlights, the world's refugees and internally displaced people face major barriers to accessing education. In camps in the Arab States run by UNHCR, the average primary gross enrolment ratio in 2008 was 42%, and just 12% at the secondary level. According to the Report, there are 1.8 million Iraqi refugees, many hosted by Jordan and neighboring countries.

The Director of the Report also addressed the poor record of many aid

donors in education. National governments and national financing hold the key to progress in education yet for the world's poorest nations, aid has a vital role to play. He said that 'We estimate the aid requirements for achieving education for all in the poorest countries at around \$16bn annually. Current aid flows average \$2-3bn, implying an average development assistance shortfall of around \$13bn annually'.

UNESCO's Representative to Jordan, Anna Paolini urged in her speech that 'The reshaping of the political landscape is an opportunity to challenge existing norms and structures. Out of conflict or transformation exist opportunities to address challenges and to even build back better, to reverse inequalities and injustices engendered by anachronistic policies that are at the root of prejudice and ignorance that far too often divides societies'.

The official event concluded with a high level panel discussion under the participation of the ministers of education from Jordan, Egypt and Palestine, representatives of the ministries of education of Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Tunisia, Prof. Malaak Zaalouk, Advisory board member on the GMR as a special representative of the Arab region, the director of the EFA Global Monitoring Report Kevin Watkins and Marilena Viviani, UNICEF Deputy Regional Director. The discussion was moderated by Samir Aita of Le Monde Diplomatique, the editor of the Arabic edition of the Report. The panel highlighted the existing problems but also achievements and opportunities Arab states have to improve access to and quality of education. The need to improve the quality of education and address the problem which many young people face today in the region: they emerge from the education system to find that they have skills which are in limited demand.

In addition to Her Majesty Queen Rania al Abdullah, the launch was also attended by Her Royal Highness Princess Sumaya Bint El Hassan, the United Nations Resident Coordinator Luc Stevens, the Minister of Social Development, the Minister of Awqaf and several other policy makers.

## UNESCO Office in Amman hosts regional INEE tools launch

The regional launch of four new INEE Education in Emergency tools in Arabic, took place at the UNESCO Office in Amman on May 17 and was co-hosted by UNICEF, UNRWA, Save the Children, Reach Out To Asia (ROTA), Qatar Foundation, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and UNESCO (Office for Iraq, and Offices in Amman and Ramallah). Under the patronage of Jordan Minister of Education His Excellency Dr. Tayseer Al-Nuaimi, the event was opened by the Deputy Regional Director of the UNICEF Regional Office Marilena Viviani and brought together education practitioners, policy makers, representatives from several UN agencies, the Ministry of Education in Jordan, the donor community, and national and international NGOs.

The Arabic versions of the following new INEE tools with a focus on improved educational preparedness, response and recovery were introduced in detail by specialists in the field of Education in Emergency and from UNESCO and INEE:

- \* INEE Minimum Standards Handbook (updated 2010 edition),
- \* INEE Guidance Notes on Teaching and Learning,
- \* INEE Reference Guide on External Education Financing, and
- \* INEE Gender Pocket Guide.

The presentation of the four tools was followed by a panel discussion on the INEE Minimum Standards, its applica-

tion, results and best practices chaired by education specialists from Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, and Jordan. Representatives from the UNESCO Office in Ramallah, Save the Children, IRC-Iraq and a representative of the Ministry of Education in Jordan, Dr. Omar Miqdadi discussed the application of the INEE Minimum Standards in the MENA region and shared their experiences. This session was followed by an interactive discussion on the steps forward to improve the educational preparedness, response and recovery.

The Secretary General of the Ministry of Education in Jordan highlighted the experience of Jordan in the field of preparedness and planning for crisis situation such as natural disasters and man-made disasters highlighting that the ministry in partnership with UNESCO, UNICEF and Save the Children is implementing an assessment evaluating the validity of school buildings in emergency situation.

It is worth mentioning that recently the UNESCO Office in Amman conducted two trainings for 50 ministry officials and educators from 25 schools all over Jordan on the application of the INEE Minimum Standards. UNESCO is also implementing a needs assessment to measure the scale of compliance of minimum standards in education during emergency. The needs assessment will be conducted at the Ministry of Education, the directorate level, and at schools in Jordan.

## Capacities in policy and planning in education strengthened at Ministry of Education

Within the framework of UNESCO's support to the education sector in the development of education policies and strategies to achieve the goals of Education For All, UNESCO Office in Amman provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Education in policy and planning in education. A training workshop on Policy and Planning in education was given to 22 participants from the Ministry from April 26 to May 12. Participants came from all sections of the Department of Planning and Educational Research –EMIS, Research, Financial Planning, Human Resource Planning, Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation- and the "Gender and Partnership" Division.

The training focused on the following topics: education planning – concepts, methodology and process; EMIS and school mapping; results based budgeting and MTEF; monitoring and evaluation; education sector analysis and education policy formulation and framework. The workshop was opened by the Minister of Education Dr. Tayseer Nuaimi and attended by the Secretary General of the Jordan National Commission for UNESCO. The Minister of Education also hosted a session on Saturday 7 May on "Educational Reform", attended by senior staff from the Ministry as well as the participants in this workshop.



## UNESCO Office in Amman supports Ministry of Social Development in creating a culture of human rights



The Ministry of Social Development, with the support of UNESCO Office in Amman held a human rights workshop on June 13 at the Ministry of Social Development in Amman. The objective of the workshop was to contribute to the dissemination and promotion of a human rights culture among the staff of the Ministry of Social Development. To this end, fifteen staff members of the Ministry and five heads and representatives of civil society institutions were trained by the National Centre for Human Rights on “The Concepts of Human Rights between Theory and Practice”.

During the training the concepts and terminology of human rights were clarified, and participants were introduced to international mechanisms for protection of human rights and the international conventions on human rights ratified by Jordan. In addition, the role of the staff of the Ministry of Social Development and civil society institutions in strengthening human rights concepts was discussed and the Ministry employees acquired skills to integrate human rights concepts into practical plans and programs. UNESCO Office in Amman also introduced the UNESCO human rights manual, “Human Rights, Questions and Answers” which will be used by the Ministry in its activities. This workshop was a first step to understand the role of UNESCO in promoting human rights in Jordan in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development.

The workshop was opened by the Minister of Social Development Salwa Shaher Damen Al-Masri who highlighted the role of the ministry in boosting human rights through its services offered to children, juveniles, disabled people, women and the elderly. UNESCO Representative to Jordan Anna Paolini highlighted UNESCO's role and achievements in the field of human rights education.



## Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, Ms. Gretchen Kalonji's visit to Jordan

Assistant Director-General of UNESCO for Natural Sciences, Gretchen Kalonji visited Jordan from May 28th to June 1st. During her visit, Ms. Kalonji met with UNESCO's main partners in Jordan, namely the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Education, the Higher Council for Science and Technology, and the International Center for Water and Environmental Research at Al Balqa'a Applied University.

Ms. Kalonji discussed scopes of cooperation in education, culture and sciences and valued Jordan's qualitative strides in information technology domains, stressing the UN organization's support for the Kingdom's projects on climate change, energy, water and others.

On the sidelines of her mission, Ms. Kalonji visited Mujib reserve, which scheduled to be the second MAB biosphere reserve after Dana reserve. The tour included the visitor centre and the water trails inside the reserve.

## Two staff of the Meteorological department in Jordan to be trained at the International Center for Theoretical Physics on climate change modeling

Two staff from the Jordan meteorological department were sent for a training in climate change modeling in the Abdus Salam International Center for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Trieste, Italy. The awardees will be working closely with Earth Science Division at ICTP on developing a regional model of climate change for Jordan. The training started on the 6th of June and will continue till the 22nd of July 2011. The activity was organized by UNESCO Amman Office as part of the joint UN programme “Adaptation to climate change to sustain Jordan's MDG achievement” of the MDG Achievement Fund.

The MDG Achievement Fund is an international cooperation mechanism whose aim is to accelerate progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) worldwide. Under this fund, in Jordan, UNESCO together with three UN organizations -UNDP, Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), and the World Health Organization (WHO) - is part of a joint UN programme to enhance Jordan's capacity to adapt to climate change.



## SESAME (Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East) on track for first experiments in 2015

The SESAME Council met on 30 and 31 May at the El Hassan Science City (EHSC) in Amman (Jordan), courtesy of Her Royal Highness Princess Sumaya Bint El Hassan, President of the EHSC. Welcoming Delegates, Her Royal Highness stated that: "There is a great deal to celebrate at this meeting as we record that the SESAME project is making real and meaningful progress. We are all aware that SESAME's location in Jordan places it at a crossroads for regional peace-building and development. This has never been more relevant as the region shifts towards a new dynamic of opportunity.

The Council was impressed by progress in the construction of SESAME which was presented by the Director of SESAME, Dr Khaled Toukan (who is also Minister of Energy of Jordan), and the Technical Director, Dr Amor Nadji. The radiation shielding wall is complete and the tunnels are ready for installation of the accelerators. The booster synchrotron will be commissioned with beam early next year. Construction of the new 2.5 GeV main storage ring is ready to begin, and the third generation SESAME light-source is technically on track for experiments to begin in 2015 with three 'day-one' beamlines, provided the necessary funding is secured. Some \$20 million that is still required in manpower and operational costs will be provided by the Members of SESAME, in addition to which some \$35 million is needed in capital funding (the full cost of SESAME and the day-one beamlines will be some \$110 million, including the value of the land and building, which have been provided by Jordan, and equipment donated by various synchrotron laboratories around the world).

Commitments and offers confirmed and announced during the meeting look set to provide most of the capital funding needed to complete construction and allow experiments to begin in 2015 with three beamlines. The Council noted with gratitude that SESAME has benefitted enormously from help and advice that has been provided by some of the world's synchrotron laboratories (especially SOLEIL in France, but

also ALBA in Spain, ELETTRA in Italy, the Swiss Light Source, Diamond in the UK and the Canadian Light Source). It also thanked UNESCO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for their continuing support, and the many laboratories and other organisations that have provided and funded training opportunities for SESAME staff and future SESAME users. The Council specifically thanked the Lounsbery Foundation (the first private foundation to provide substantial support) for a recently-announced training grant of US\$100,970 which will help build a regional scientific community that is well prepared to carry out the first experiments and hone the skills needed to complete the construction of SESAME.

During the meeting, Professor Salman M. Salman (Palestinian Authority) was re-elected for a second two-year term as Chair of the SESAME Finance Committee.

Closing the meeting, the President of the Council, Professor Sir Chris Llewellyn Smith FRS (Director of Energy Research, Oxford University) said: "I am now confident that SESAME is on track technically, and will soon also be positioned financially, for experiments to begin in 2015. It is a remarkable tribute to the spirit of cooperation in pursuit of a common goal which underwrites the project, that SESAME is progressing so well during a time of external turbulence". SESAME (Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East) is a major science facility under construction near Amman (Jordan), modelled institutionally on CERN. SESAME will both foster scientific and technological excellence in the Middle East and neighbouring countries (and prevent or reverse the brain drain) by enabling world-class research in subjects ranging from biology and medical sciences through materials science, physics and chemistry to archaeology, and build scientific and cultural bridges between neighbouring countries and foster mutual understanding and tolerance through international cooperation.



## Risk mapping at Petra Archaeological Park continued

As part of the UNESCO Office in Amman Risk Mapping project at the World Heritage Site of Petra, a group of 23 graduate students of the Master in Conservation of Monuments and Sites from Leuven University in Belgium recently carried out field work to map and assess the risks which threaten the state of conservation and vulnerability of the Petra Archaeological Park (PAP), as well as the visitors of the site. The project is carried out in partnership with the University of Leuven through the Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation, in coordination with the Department of Antiquities (DOA) and the Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority (PDTRA).

The fieldwork is a follow up of a Preliminary Risk Assessment carried out in June 2010 by a multi-disciplinary team of graduate students from the University of Leuven (Belgium), Jordan University and Al Hussein Bin Talal University. The work of 2011 focused on the identification of risks facing both the visitors and the environment in four areas of the PAP (Wadi Syaagh, Wadi Turkomania, Colonnaded Street, Wadi Ad Deir) radiating from the basin area where restaurants are located.

For each area, archaeological and natural features, as well as newly built structures were documented, geo-referenced photographs were taken and GPS coordinates were gathered. Further to this, the condition of each feature was assessed by identifying threats and disturbances as defined in the Middle Eastern Geodatabase for Antiquities (MEGA) – Jordan, and recommendations for future management and conservation strategies formulated.

The workshop was part of a broader Risk Mapping project and its outcomes will set grounds for the delineation of a proposal of a Risk Management Plan for the Petra Archaeological Park which will be the first step towards the development of a comprehensive Management Plan of the site.

The results of the workshop, concerning the risks assessed in the four areas of interest were presented in Petra on May 18th to local stakeholders including the Commissioner for the Petra Archaeological Park, PDTRA staff), local NGOs and a Member of Parliament from Wadi Musa; and to national authorities at UNESCO premises in Amman on 19th May 2011. Secretary General of Ministry of Tourism, representatives of Jordan universities, Siyaha USAID, representatives of the Department of Civil Defence, Petra National Trust, international archaeological research institutions and the Jordan National Commission for UNESCO.

## Expert Meeting “Museum Theft Response Plan” held in Amman

A two day expert meeting, titled “Museum Theft Response Plan” was held in Amman at the Department of Antiquities from June 12 to 13. This meeting was part of a joint project between UNESCO and the European Commission called ‘Witness the Past’ on the response in case of theft in museums. The meeting took place under the participation of museum directors and museum security experts, as well as international experts specialised in museum security who shared experiences of risk preparedness, management and theft response plans, so that actions can be fostered and coordinated to prevent theft, develop an adequate response, and to promote effective recovery actions.

The meeting highlighted the critical importance of museum documentation and inventory tools and was a follow up meeting of the emergency meeting convened by UNESCO in March for the safeguarding of cultural heritage in danger in the Arab States.

Anna Paolini, the Head of the UNESCO Office in Amman chaired a session on the first day of the meeting titled “Reports from the Arab countries about recent events affecting museums”.

As a result of the workshop, an Arabic poster-like theft response plan for museums, cultural institutions, and private collections will be published and disseminated.



## UNESCO supports teachers in promoting world heritage awareness

*Workshop on how to integrate UNESCO's World Heritage in Young Hands Kit into extracurricular classroom activities in Jordan*

A two day workshop on how to raise awareness and stimulate interest among young students on world heritage organized by UNESCO Amman Office the Jordan National Commission for UNESCO and the Department for Antiquities concluded on May 4. During the two days, 25 teachers from schools of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) were trained on the importance of heritage education and on how to apply the revised UNESCO World Heritage in Young Hands Kit in extracurricular classroom activities in Jordan.

Cultural and natural sites of unique importance and significance are accorded World Heritage status by UNESCO which recognizes the need to protect this heritage and transmit it to future generations. Jordan has three sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List - Petra, Quseir Amra, and Um er-Rasas – and a further 16 sites on the Tentative List. According to Ms. Anna Paolini, UNESCO Representative to Jordan, the role of teachers and educators is of crucial importance for World Heritage education. “The World Heritage in

Young Hands Kit was designed to stimulate teachers' and students' imagination and creativity so as to further enrich the pedagogic approach to heritage preservation. It is in partnership with them that UNESCO can best transmit the message of the World Heritage Convention who will include tomorrow's policy and decision-makers.”

During practical sessions, teachers were acquainted with the status of tangible and intangible heritage in the new curriculum and introduced with innovative educational approaches, methods and materials on safeguarding world heritage as outlined in the World Heritage in Young Hands Resource Kit.

“This training has provided me with important skills and materials which I can use together with my students outside the classrooms and we have developed action plans on how to teach World Heritage Resource Kit,” says a satisfied participant.

The event was organized under the patronage of the Ministry of Education and opened by Dr. Rafe Al-Masaadeh, the Managing Director of the Text books and Curriculum Department. Among the participants were Toujan Bermamet, the Secretary General of the Jordan National Commission for UNESCO, the Ministry of Culture and the Department of Antiquities.



## Let's laugh! Successful comedy initiative brings people of different backgrounds together

On the 18th of June, UNESCO Office in Amman, in cooperation with Pioneers Production and the Technical Cooperation Agency of the Spanish Embassy, held the first “Let's Laugh!” Comedy Event at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman. Ten young men and women took part in a final performance which was the cul-

mination of a 10 week workshop to train young people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds in stand-up comedy techniques.

However, this comedy event which attracted a crowd of 400 persons was more than just a training. Comedy is a safe environment, through which we can develop a sense of respect for each other which is the foundation of mutual understanding, friendship and learning. This is in line with UNESCO's mandate of building a culture of peace since comedy is a way of appreciating and enjoying what makes us different from each other, but also recognizing similarities. Through creating platforms for dialogue and discussion and through the celebration of cultural diversity this event successfully promoted a culture of peace.

UNESCO Amman is planning to hold a similar event next year, and to broaden to programme to have regional focus. Any amateur performers who are interested to participate,


## SIQ STABILITY- Sustainable Monitoring Techniques for Assessing Instability of Slopes in the Siq of Petra, Jordan

The “Siq Stability” project in the Siq, is the newest addition to UNESCO Amman’s project in Petra which is financed under the Italian Funds in Trust scheme. The allocation of fund has been recently approved by the Italian Government and the project is foreseen to start in September 2011 and will be implemented over a period of 30 months.

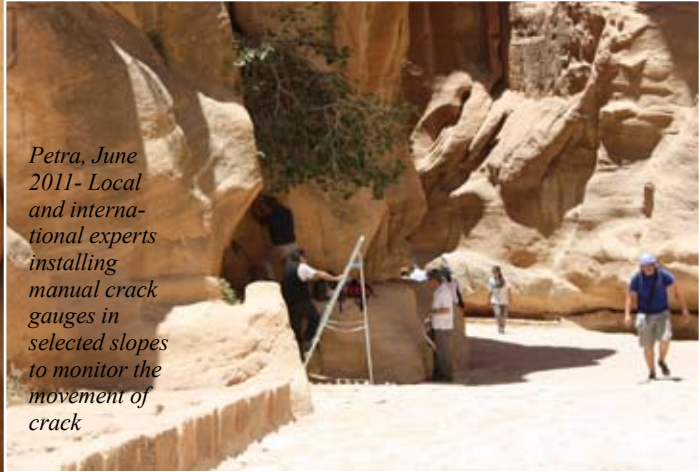
Within the World Heritage Site of Petra, the Siq is a 1.2 km naturally formed long and narrow gorge in the sandstone mountain that serves the main entrance and represents the most dramatic one to the site. Recent problems of use and tourist security due to rock-falls which occurred in the last years in Petra especially in the Siq, are the cause for the inception of this project. The main aim of this project is to make the main entrance to Petra safe for the visitors and protect its monument.

During April and June 2011 a rapid assessment of the Siq has been undertaken by UNESCO Amman in partnership with DoA and PDTRA to provide a preliminary assessment of visible unstable slopes in the Siq potentially prone to collapse and to assess the extent of threats in the Siq. In continuance with this preliminary rapid assessment, the Siq Stability project will be identifying unstable areas in the Siq by means of field engineering geological techniques and will be applying a set of monitoring techniques, from remote to field, to carry out long-term monitoring of selected unstable slopes.

This is a unique project, in a unique environmental context and work of this kind has never before been done elsewhere which makes this project very challenging. The experiences gained from this project will provide a model for risk assessment and management in sites of similar geological conditions. The capacity building component of the Siq Stability project and knowledge transfer of methods and techniques implemented during the project to the local authorities will set ground for the implementation of such techniques in wider areas of the site.



*Petra, June 2011- Local and international experts installing manual crack gauges in selected slopes to monitor the movement of crack*




*Petra, June 2011 – Local expert installing manual crack gauges in selected slopes to monitor the movement of cracks*

## Completion of work of consolidating the unstable rock block in the Siq

The challenging work of stabilizing the unstable rock in the Siq of Petra has been completed. Considering the structural condition of the rock blocks in the Siq and other relevant monuments in the archaeological park, this kind of geological conservation work could be considered the first of others to be followed in order to preserve the site and insure the safety of the visitors. The work has been undertaken by the PDTRA. UNESCO Amman, as part of the technical committee, has been assisting the DoA and PDTRA.



## Creating a network among museum professionals in Jordan



UNESCO Amman is hosting a series of seminars on various topics of museum management throughout 2011, in order to create a stronger network among museum professionals in Jordan and provide a forum for exchange of ideas in the field. Four seminars have already been held, and a further six planned, covering broad topics ranging from museum management to exhibition planning, to more specific areas such as museum security and conservation practices. Participants from each of Jordan’s museums are introduced to the topic by an international specialist, who then facilitates the often lively discussions. A booklet will be produced at the end of this year, outlining the major conclusions of each seminar, and ways to move forward in the sector.



## UNESCO raises awareness on gender sensitive reporting and climate change among young journalists

In cooperation with the Arab Women Media Center (AWMC), UNESCO Office in Amman held a four-day workshop in Amman for young journalists on gender in media. The workshop, titled “Media and Gender” introduced the concept of gender and its representation in media while exploring the ways of how climate change affects gender.

Twenty students from Amman, Irbid, Maan, Karak, and Zarqaa took part in the workshop which among other topics covered themes such as the stereotyped image of women in the media, violence against women, gender and nationality law, the role of community media in gender sensitization, gender and social media and climate change and gender.

In her concluding remarks to the future journalists, Ms. Anna Paolini, Head of the UNESCO Office in Amman said, “Journalists and media professionals are destined to exercise a powerful influence in determining whether society fully recognizes important gender issues, this can only happen through proper representation stemming from an adequate knowledge and understanding of what gender is, its relation to global issues, such as climate change, and the importance of promoting justice and equality for women while fostering appreciation for their specific contributions to the society.”

Mahasen Imam, Director and Founder of Arab Women Media Center added that, “In line with recent political changes in the region, traditional media no longer exists, instead a new form of media has risen: citizen journalism. This “new media” has emerged eliminating all forms of gender discrimination, allowing both men and women to speak out about their issues from their common belief in change and reform.”

## UNESCO supports the establishment of a free and professional media environment in Jordan

The Council of Ministers formed a National Dialogue Committee in early March, chaired by Senate President Taher Al Masri, and with participation of representatives of various political and civil society groups. The Council of Ministers endorsed the Committee’s tasks to administer an intensive national dialogue regarding various legislations on political work, aimed at founding an advanced democratic and political party-based life and form parliamentary governments based on political parties. The National Committee also proposed consensus-based drafts for the electoral and political party laws, and has the freedom to look into various related legislations and provide recommendations in this regard.

In May, UNESCO Amman office was approached by the Jordan government for assistance in the works of the National Dialogue Commission, in particular media legislations, press freedom, and professional standards in journalism.

With the support of the Communication and Information Sector at UNESCO Paris, UNESCO Amman acted

promptly by providing two experts in media legislations and media development to produce reports that would help both the government of Jordan and UNESCO in preparing a work plan for action towards improving the state of media, access to information, and press freedom in the country.

In order to better understand the media environment in Jordan, meetings were conducted with lawmakers, members of local and international civil society institutions, the journalists’ Syndicate, members of the committee working on the 2012-2015 Media Strategy, in addition to journalists and media professionals in the country.

In June, reports by both experts, in addition to the government’s Media Strategy were produced and exchanged between UNESCO and the Jordanian government.

An action plan is currently being drafted by the committee, while UNESCO Amman Office is also working on its 2012-2013 work plan based on the experts’ reports highlighting media needs and pressing matters that require immediate action and follow up.



## UNESCO Amman Office hosts the launch of The ICT in Education Indicators for Arab States Project

*UNESCO and the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization (TAG.org) launch a pilot project on ICT in Education indicators in Arab States at a meeting for ICT in Education Policy developers in Amman, Jordan*

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play an increasingly important part in the way we communicate, learn and live. Likewise, ICTs are being introduced into education systems worldwide through various initiatives such as ICT enhanced learning, application of Open Educational Resources, computers in schools. Significant resources are invested in national ICT in Education initiatives, and key to developing and implementing such initiatives is the availability of appropriate, timely and reliable educational statistics on which policies can be based and progress measured.

UNESCO and TAG.org are cooperating on building capacity in Arab States by strengthening national capabilities to define ICT in education indicators for measuring the use and impact of applying ICTs in education, as well as to facilitate the ICT in education policy development.



The ICT in Education Indicators for Arab States project was launched in Amman, Jordan with an initial meeting of Policy Developers from Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Oman, Palestine, Qatar and United Arab Emirates.

The Amman meeting found that the application of ICT in Education varies significantly across the region, ranging from enhancing access to improving quality education as well as effective school management. However there is a common aspiration of taking full advantage of new ICTs both in effective school and learning management as well as to provide students with 21st century skills. The meeting further identified a series of top national issues with regards to ICT in Education. While the monitoring of enabling conditions (e.g. political commitment, ICT infrastructure, public-private partnership etc.) remained a common primary concern for most countries in the region, some additional reoccurring issues were:

- The lack of quality contents in Arabic, and opportunities for their cost-effective sharing between countries (e.g. via regional open educational resources platforms)
- Teacher training and the incentives for change
- Leadership in applying ICT in education (including use of ICTs to improve school-based management)
- Research, monitoring and assessment of impacts to inform decision-making
- Learning Management Systems as a source of relevant data if aggregated from individual schools to system level.

The project is part of a concerted effort by UNESCO's Communication and Information Sector, Education Sector and the Institute for Statistics (UIS) to provide Member States with a comprehensive approach to developing, implementing and assessing national ICT in Education Master Plans.

# Communication



## UNESCO Amman Office teams up with local and international partners to commemorate World Press Freedom Day 2011

On May 3rd of each year, UNESCO celebrates World Press Freedom Day (WPFJ) around the world.

In Jordan, this year UNESCO Amman Office organized a number of events in partnership with local and international organizations including IREX (Jordan Media Strengthening Program, USAID) the Centre for Defending Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ), the Danish International Media Support (IMS), Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ), and the social media entrepreneurship group 7iber.com.

The events organized on the occasion of WPFJ 2011 included a high-level panel discussion on the 3rd of May, the dissemination of a

video message/PSA on WPFJ, a public awareness campaign and a cultural event celebrating freedom of expression on the 13th of May.

The high level panel debate addressed the barriers and prospects of freedom of access to information in Jordan. The panelists included the State Minister of Media Affairs and Communications, Media Law Expert Yahia Shkair, Fateh Mansour, Managing Director Center for Defending Freedom of Journalist (CDFJ) and Rana Sabbagh Director, of Arab Journalists for Investigative Reporting (ARIJ). Moreover, journalists Majdoline Allan and Walid Hossni presented reports and research on specific cases involving access to information legislation in Jordan to a diverse audience of media professionals, policy makers, the international community and international organizations.

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, a video message was produced in Jordan to be shared with the public. The video message was broadcasted on TV and was part of a digital campaign on Twitter and Facebook.

In addition to the digital campaign, banners displaying slogans on press freedom were displayed on major intersections and main streets in Amman.

Events celebrating World Press Freedom Day in Jordan concluded on May 13 with a public event featuring artistic performances by youth in Jordan at Hussein Cultural Centre in Amman.





## Teambuilding training in Petra brings office together

Building upon the previous training received in November 2010, the staff of UNESCO Office in Amman engaged in an intensive one-day training in Petra on June 6. The training was provided by an external trainer and engaged the entire staff of the office in group exercises, role plays and other exercises designed to encourage communication and teamwork in a fun and constructive way. At the end of the day, staff identified solutions and individual action plans on how to improve personal communication and productivity at work. On the following day, the entire staff, led by the office's culture sector visited the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Petra. Back in the office now we can say that the training proved to have strengthened the skills acquired in the November session and improved team morale while reopening internal communication channels in an informal setting.



## Staff enjoys a camaraderie bowling competition celebrating Staff Day at UNESCO Amman

Celebrating Staff Day, UNESCO Amman office held a bowling competition in May at Kempinski Hotel Amman. Divided in four groups, the entire office competed in a camaraderie spirit, enjoying their afternoon outside the workplace.

The game was followed by lunch and the announcement of results. First-time player Kamel Alqam, came in first place with the best score, proving the saying "beginners luck". He received a gift from the office to remember this day and his accomplishment.

