

# EDUCATION IS A HUMAN RIGHT

## UNICEF EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN MALAYSIA

### PARTNERS

GOVERNMENT	NGO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Education</li> <li>Ministry of Health</li> <li>Ministry of Women Family and Community Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mercy Malaysia</li> </ul>

### Project: SUPPLEMENTARY READING PROGRAMME

- **Issue:** One of the main aims in the Education Development Plan for 2001-2010 is to ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to education, in terms of access, equity and quality.
- **Action:** The Supplementary Reading Programme (SRP) was initiated to reach vulnerable communities and ensure that the children in these communities have the learning resources required for quality education. The SRP provides reading materials of different levels and genre, to cater for students of different learning needs, stages and abilities.
- **Impact:** In the last 1-2 years, 13,000 students from 90 schools in Sabah and Sarawak have benefited from the enrichment materials and remedial activities carried out under the SRP. These students have attended reading camps, story-telling competitions, spelling bees and field trips. By supporting the evaluation of this programme, UNICEF hopes to measure the impact and provide policy makers with recommendations on further improving the programme and rolling it out to other vulnerable communities in Malaysia.

### Project: LEARNING ACTIVITIES THAT INCORPORATE ORANG ASLI FOLKLORES

- **Issue:** Children from the *Orang Asli* community, mostly living in rural and poor areas, have been left behind in receiving quality education, compared to their urban counterparts. Absenteeism and dropout rates remain a huge issue among the children of this community. Statistics show that 34% of these pupils failed to make it to the secondary level while 46% failed to reach Form Five<sup>1</sup>.
- **Action:** In 2007, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education Curriculum Development Centre piloted a programme incorporating Orang Asli folklore to encourage school attendance of children from these communities. In addition to producing curriculum, teacher's training and student learning activities were developed to improve student's reading and writing skills, while promoting local heritage and cultural knowledge. The programme is expanded in 2008.
- **Impact:** In the first phase of this programme, a total of 72 *Orang Asli* schools and its teachers underwent training in the story-telling project. The second phase will be carried out for 50 teachers in 94 *Orang Asli* schools in Pahang, Perak, Selangor, Kelantan, Johor, Negeri Sembilan and Terengganu, benefitting an estimated 10,000 Orang Asli children.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Orang Asli Affairs Department (JHEOA).

**Project: DISASTER RELIEF RESPONSE – SMART SUPPORT TEAM (SST)**

- **Issue:** After a disaster strikes, children are among the most vulnerable survivors, requiring safe shelter, intensive medical care, psychological counselling and the assurance that their life gets back on track as soon as possible. A post-disaster response system is needed, where specific and targeted health and education services for children are implemented timely and effectively on the ground.
- **Action:** The most successful post-disaster response will include a well-coordinated multi-sectoral programme. UNICEF will partner the Ministry of Education's Smart Support Team, which complements the welfare services of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development as well as the National Security Council (Majlis Keselamatan Negara). Close collaboration with MERCY Malaysia will ensure that disaster relief and response mechanisms best practices are shared with the Ministry of Education.
- **Impact:** The Smart Support Team will empower schoolteachers to respond in a timely manner to children who are faced with disaster relief and rehabilitation. This will ensure that children's education continues, and that their stress levels and psychological well-being are properly managed. The programme is expected to benefit some 105,000 children in Malaysia.

**Project: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN SCHOOLS**

- **Issue:** Children living in areas that are prone to natural disasters face the risk of becoming the earliest victims of a disaster, as they are the most vulnerable. Children and their families need to be equipped with skills that prepare them on how to respond when a disaster takes place.
- **Action:** UNICEF is collaborating with Ministry of Education and MERCY Malaysia to strengthen emergency preparedness programmes by targeting increased capacity in children and teachers. Currently, UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Education to scale up these programmes, together with the grassroots expertise of MERCY Malaysia to implement a post-disaster response.
- **Impact:** More school counsellors will be trained in the area of disaster relief management. Schools nationwide will also be equipped with disaster preparedness guide books and teachers' manuals on how to respond in the event of a disaster, benefiting an estimated 1.3 million students.

**Project: LIFE SKILLS-BASED EDUCATION ON HIV AND AIDS**

- **Issue:** Like in most parts of the world, young people in Malaysia account for an increasing number of HIV infections every year. December 2007 statistics from the Ministry of Health reveal that 36 per cent of the 80,938 HIV cases are amongst young people between 13 to 29 years old. Because of the progression of HIV, it is likely that they were infected before their mid-twenties and possibly even during their teens.
- **Action:** UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health to introduce a Life Skills-Based Education (LSBE) programme for schools. The programme will include teacher training to ensure effective delivery of lessons on HIV and AIDS using the LSBE approach.
- **Expected benefits:** 100 more schools across Peninsula and East Malaysia will receive LSBE training. Additional schools will be added on after sensitisation in the initial stage. Some 13,000 students are expected to benefit from the programme directly, and another 990,000 indirectly.