



WUSC Connections - September 2010

Truly WUSC: 2010 Leadership Meeting

By Aditya Rao University of Alberta Local Committee member

There are few organizations that aim for the sky and reach it too. WUSC is one of them – changing communities, cities, and even countries through measurable change in the lives of individuals.

The leadership conference was truly WUSC: It was a connection not only between Canadian students from across the country, but SRP students from across Canada and even an awe-inspiring representative from Burkina Faso who won the hearts and minds of everyone he met. The leadership summit trains not just leaders of local committees but leaders of the global fight for social justice.

Local Committee leaders pledged to shine a light on women's right to education, to raise money for bicycle ambulances, to promote fair trade and ethical consumption, to support the Farm Radio International project, to partner with frontline Local Committees overseas, and to sponsor refugee students in order to provide them with the means to a good post-secondary education - something many of them had only ever dreamed of achieving.

The intercultural sharing, the exchange of ideas and the overwhelmingly inspiring individual spirits were all precisely what WUSC has harnessed to create change in peoples' lives and to promote education. If there is one thing that WUSC has taught me, it is that truly, education changes the world.





Former Refugee Students Begin New Life in Canada

The start of a school year often means new classes and teachers, but for many sponsored refugee students it also means a new life and the start of a promising future.

This year, 67 former refugee students will be attending close to 50 Canadian universities and colleges across Canada through Many of these students have fled their country of origin to refugee camps in Kenya and Malawi because of political unrest and in order to

escape violence and persecution. As a result, their lives are put on hold as they have little to no employment opportunities or access to higher education. The SRP enables these young men and women to resettle in Canada as permanent residents and pursue their dreams for the future by providing them with a post-secondary education. WUSC's student-led Local Committees on campus sponsor the student(s) and cover all their costs for a minimum of 1 year.

For over 30 years, the SRP has been helping students escape the camps and resettle in Canada. To date, over 1100 students have been sponsored from various refugee camps.

New friendships and new beginnings



On August 18th, 53 Batswana students arrived in Canada to attend post-secondary school through WUSC's International Student Management (ISM) and with sponsorship from the Ministry of Education and the Government of Botswana. As soon as they arrived in Canada, the students quickly became acquainted with each other as they plunged right into orientation at Algonquin College in Ottawa. The orientation served as an introduction to Canadian life and studies as students are provided with essential information to improve their comfort and chances of academic success in Canada. At the end of the four-day orientation many of the students said goodbye to their new friends and left for their respective cities where they stayed with Homestay Host families until classes began in September. To date, well over 800 students from Botswana have studied at 25 universities and colleges across Canada through scholarships paid by their government but managed by WUSC. More than 90% have graduated and returned home to contribute to their country's development.

Teaching the Teacher



Due to years of conflict, a large number of teachers in Southern Sudan do not have formal teacher training. Both is a Southern Sudanese teacher in his mid 30s who began teaching at just 13 years old. When his class lost their instructor, he moved up to the front of the room and began teaching all he knew. Although the language of instruction in Southern Sudan is English, most teachers have been trained in Arabic.

Now Both, like many of his colleagues, is looking to upgrade his English language and teaching skills. He is enrolled in an Advanced English Language training program delivered by Windle Trust International. Both teaches during the day and heads back into the classroom in the late afternoon

where he becomes the student. Both is proud of the accomplishments he has made so far and he knows that his commitment to bettering himself will allow him to educate the next generation of Southern Sudanese students to the best of his abilities. Teachers like Both are not uncommon, however the quality and access to English classes for teachers in Southern Sudan is scarce.

Through WUSC's new project, Building a Sustainable Future through Education and Training (BSFET), teachers will be provided with in-service English language training to successfully teach classes in the language. Gender equality training will also be provided and the teachers will be assessed based on both teaching ability and gender sensitivity. The goal of gender-aware teaching is to encourage girls to remain in the classroom. Currently female retention is half that of their male counterparts.





BFEST will also provide vocational training for men and women in the region. However, focus will be placed on women in Southern Sudan, a group that is particularly marginalized and has limited access to education. WUSC has experience in working in conflict and post-conflict environments and in managing vocational training programs based on our success in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.

Education for All

The Education for All goal adopted by the World Education Forum in 1990 has inspired many countries to reform their education policies and management. This year, WUSC along with the Government of Ghana and the Ministry of Education began implementing a program to increase quality and access to education throughout the country. The Ghana Education Decentralization Project (GEDP) is a two-year program, which aims to improve the efficiency and transfer of knowledge through the different levels of government and education sectors. This will hopefully result in a more cohesive, shared vision of educational governance in Ghana. The GEDP will create a stronger framework for delegation of responsibilities and functions and will contribute directly to improve gender sensitivity in government and education to increase equal access to schools and completion of basic education for girls and boys in Ghana. WUSC has assembled an all-Ghanaian team of education specialists and experts, who will be supported by Canadian volunteers for technical assistance. WUSC has been working in the education sector in Ghana since 1997. Currently, WUSC manages a number of initiatives in Ghana under Uniterra, which supports the education sector through volunteer cooperation and capacity building towards the achievement of the Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals in Ghana. The GEDP will also build on WUSC's successful Girl Child Education Project in Ghana.

A makeover for Uniterra and Leave for Change!



In fall 2009, we hired a communications firm to redefine the Uniterra brand and make it consistent with the corporate brands of CECI and WUSC. This process of reflection has led to the development of a new



visual identity for Uniterra. It is with great pleasure that we present it to you today! The heart of this identity is a new logo, with a simple and sober design, which clearly positions Uniterra as a joint program of CECI and WUSC. In all official documents this logo will be regularly accompanied by a banner containing the logos of both organizations. Beyond the logo, Uniterra's new visual identity consists of a palette of colors and fonts plus a formal set of guidelines that facilitate the presentation of a strong and coherent program. The Graphic Standards Guide is available to assist you in this new practice.

Just as Uniterra, **Leave for Change** is now presented as "A WUSC & CECI program", to simplify its presentation. Its new identity is governed by the same standards contained in Uniterra's Graphic Standards Guide. The *Graphic Standards Guide (short version)* as well as the Uniterra and Leave for Change logos are available in the Resources / Logos section on www.uniterra.ca **Need more information?**

Please contact info@uniterra.ca for any question related to the visual identity.

Unforgettable service.....

By M. M. Wickramasinghe, Ex-Divisional Director of Education Wellawaya, Sri Lanka.

Education should not be a process like filling water into an empty vessel. It should be a process like lighting a lamp.



The **education programming that World University Service of Canada (WUSC)** implemented in the Monaragala district of Sri Lanka is like a lit lamp. The Monaragala district is the second largest district on the island.. With a high percentage of rural residents (90%) and a minimal infrastructure, investors are reluctant to invest money in this part of the country. Lack of educational facilities and employment opportunities, are common here. The teacher-student ratio is 1:51 with limited opportunities for higher education. As a result, about 75% of the population is unable to reach a high standard of living. The monthly average expenditure of a person in the Colombo district is about 80 USD while it is 30 USD in the Monaragala district. They spend more than 75% of their income on food. WUSC identified the Monaragala district as an area where vocational training could have a significant impact in the lives of the youth in the area. WUSC's motto is "*Education Changes the world*". WUSC brought that motto to life through the "Project for Rehabilitation through Education and Training" (PRET). This project



was implemented after a thorough study of the economical, social and political environment in Monaragala. The employment market was the main focus.

Research revealed there was a great decline in the field of skilled labour. Even those who were skilled labourers did not have institutionalized residential training. Their knowledge was not up to date and did not match the modern technical needs.

Even though there is a great demand for skilled labour in the district, thousands of youths enter the work force without any aim or target after primary and secondary education. Youth who were unable to access higher education did not have the opportunities or interest in vocational training. Most people had forgotten that the youth in the area could be used for the development of the area.

With the aim of avoiding this unfortunate situation, WUSC staff focused on vocational training. Accordingly WUSC supported the private vocational training centers in the area, and not only helped develop the vocational training centers, but also the management of those institutions. Various training programs were implemented for instructors. The trainees acquired knowledge and experience in other areas in addition to their course technical trade subjects. They were also taught nutrition, safety, first aid, professional responsibilities and workers rights and responsibilities through pre, mid and post course training. Through On-the-job training, they were given opportunities to put their theoretical knowledge to work. In addition to this, traveling allowances were provided for the trainees who came from far away areas. The trainees were insured. After completing the course they were provided with a set of tools according to their vocational training. It is very difficult to get these privileges from other vocational training centers.





As a result of this approach, many training centers were able to award the “National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) certificate to participants. It is accepted both nationally and internationally. Among such institutions, Thelulla Bodiraja Vocational Training Center, Ampara Bodhiraja Foundation and Kumbukkana Gangarama Vocational training Center are able to award NVQ certificates for the courses of Automobile Mechanism, Carpentry, Scientific Tailoring and Masonry. The youth entering society after vocational

training through WUSC, have a lot of competencies, and knowledge, skills, attitudes and social values. Such youth are human- capital in the development process. The WUSC staff in Sri Lanka and overseas were always dedicated, with great aims and objectives.

These great characteristics were seen not only in WUSC-Sri Lanka’s Country Directors like Mr. Doug Graham and Ms. Shelagh Savage , but also in every person at WUSC. It is our obligation and duty to thank the organizations like Canadian Red Cross and Canadian International Development Agency that assisted WUSC. One day WUSC, will eventually finish their service in my county and leave. Even though they will be out of our sight, they will be in our heart for ever.

They were attentive not about the space they could allocate for our life in theirs, but the space they could get in our life. I would like to repeat “ Education should not be a process like filling water into an empty vessel. It should be a process like lighting a lamp.