

Media Update

8 Sep 2018

FAO

PRESS RELEASE

FAO promotes exchange of innovative agri technologies through universities

Sargodha- 7September 2018 :Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has joined hands with University of Sargodha (UOS) Faculty of Agriculture Out-reach Extension Educational Program to enhance institutional capacities in the seed sector.

Today, a collaboration agreement was signed between FAO and UOS effective for the next two years. The collaboration builds upon FAOs experience in developing the capacity of the Federal Seed Certification and Registration Department to facilitate seed and plant supply industry regulation.

Ms Mina Dowlatchahi, FAO Representative in Pakistan, and Dr Ishtiaq Ahmed, Vice Chancellor University of Sargodha, signed the agreement. Speaking at the ceremony, Ms Dowlatchahi said “FAO is pleased to begin this collaboration which will present opportunities to small holder farmers in the area and help promote entrepreneurship and provide employment to young men and women. This agreement will also help enhance institutional capacity in line with the Amended (2015) Seed Act 1976 and the Plant Breeders’ Rights Act, 2016. It will also be instrumental in achieving results in conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources, strengthening agricultural research programmes in the adoption of modern seed technology, climate smart agriculture practices, nutrition including bio-fortified food crop varieties, and improved technologies for minimizing postharvest losses of food crops.”



The collaboration will stimulate the exchange of innovative technologies between national and international universities to benefit local farming communities, students and UOS Faculty.

United Nations

PRESS RELEASE

United Nations, Thomas & Friends™ launch collaboration to introduce Sustainable Development Goals to preschoolers

New Thomas & Friends Season to Explore Themes, From Gender Equality to Responsible Consumption, Inspired by Sustainable Development Goals

NEW YORK, 7 SEPTEMBER 2018 (1200 noon NYT) —The United Nations and Mattel, Inc., today launched at UN Headquarters a collaboration to introduce the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to preschool audiences through the animated children's series *Thomas & Friends*™.

Through the collaboration, elements from five of the 17 SDGs are incorporated into nine of the 26 episodes of the new season of *Thomas & Friends*, which premieres on Nick Jr. in the United States today, with global roll-out in the coming months. Specifically, the Goals represented in the episodic content are: #4 Quality Education; #5 Gender Equality; #11 Sustainable Cities and Communities; #12 Responsible Consumption and Production, and #15 Life on Land.

This collaboration will further come to life with short-form early childhood educational videos, parent tips and interactive activities available on a new website, *AllAboardForGlobalGoals.com*, that was launched today in English, with more languages on the way. In addition to the five SDGs already present in the episodes, content featuring SDG #6 Clean Water and Sanitation is also available on the website. The short-form content and parent-targeted materials are intended to help preschoolers around the world learn more



about sustainability and start meaningful conversations between parents and children at the household level.

“In our quest to popularize the Sustainable Development Goals and raise awareness about them among all ages, Thomas & Friends was a natural fit for younger audiences, as well as their parents and caretakers. The SDGs also proved to be the perfect tool for Thomas & Friends to teach children the importance of taking part in the global efforts to end poverty, providing girls and boys with the same opportunities, and of course doing so while protecting our planet,” said Maher Nasser, Director of the Outreach Division at the United Nations Department of Public Information who has led the collaboration with Mattel on this project.

“Thomas’ unique focus on empathy, collaboration and friendship is more relevant than ever and such an effective way to introduce children to the most important global values of their lifetimes - as embodied by the Sustainable Development Goals,” said Richard Dickson, President and COO of Mattel. “I cannot imagine a more appropriate partnership than Thomas and the United Nations – the most dedicated and purpose-driven people, organizations and brands never go it alone, but recognize the value of collaboration in creating a better world. That’s why the UN exists, and that’s been the core lesson of Thomas for over 70 years.”

The collaboration grew out of a series of writers’ workshops that began in January 2017 and were organized by the Outreach Division of the United Nations Department of Public Information. Over the past 20 months, UN subject matter experts worked closely with the Thomas & Friends production team to develop and finetune the SDG-inspired content, with the support of several UN entities, including the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment).

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by world leaders at the historic Sustainable Development Summit held at the United Nations in September 2015. Encompassing everything from health to gender equality and education, the Goals will mobilize efforts around the world to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. For more information on the Sustainable Development Goals, please visit

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.



Thomas the Tank Engine™ was created over 70 years ago. Today, the preschool train franchise is enjoyed by families in more than 160 countries and territories and 55 languages across multiple touchpoints and formats, including: 500+ original TV shows; 12 feature-length films; apps; toys; consumer products; publishing; live attractions and more.

For further information, contact Mr. Jeffrey Brez, Chief, NGO Relations Advocacy and Special Events, United Nations Department of Public Information, at brez@un.org or +1 212 963 8070 / cell +1-917-328-6736.

UNESCO

MESSAGE FROM AUDREY AZOULAY, DIRECTOR GENERAL, UNESCO

International Literacy Day

“Once you learn to read, you will be forever free”, wrote Frederick Douglass in the nineteenth century, an emancipated black American slave, champion of the abolitionist cause and author of several books. This call for emancipation through reading, and more generally by mastering basic skills – literacy and numeracy – has universal scope.

Literacy is the first step towards freedom, towards liberation from social and economic constraints. It is the prerequisite for development, both individual and collective. It reduces poverty and inequality, creates wealth, and helps to eradicate problems of nutrition and public health.

Since the times of Frederick Douglass, and particularly in recent decades, considerable progress has been made in all regions of the world, and millions of men and women have been lifted from ignorance and dependency through a broad-based movement of literacy and the democratization of access to education. However, the prospect of a world in which every individual has fundamental knowledge remains an ideal.

Today, worldwide, more than 260 million children and adolescents are not enrolled in school; six out of ten children and adolescents – around 617 million – do not acquire the minimum skills in literacy and numeracy; 750



million young people and adults still cannot read and write – and among them, two-thirds are women. These seriously debilitating shortcomings lead to a de facto exclusion from society and perpetuate a spiral of social inequalities and gender inequalities.

A new challenge is now being added to this: a world in flux, where the pace of technological innovation is continuously accelerating. In order to find a place in society, get a job, and respond to social, economic and environmental challenges, traditional literacy and numeracy skills are no longer enough; new skills, including in information and communication technology, are becoming increasingly necessary.

Preparing young people and adults for jobs, the majority of which have not yet been invented, is a challenge. Accessing lifelong learning, taking advantage of pathways between different forms of training, and benefiting from greater opportunities for mobility has thus become indispensable. The theme of this year's International Day, "Literacy and Skills Development", focuses on this evolving approach to education. UNESCO is actively engaged in the redefinition of literacy policies and encourages innovative educational practices. It also supports various forms of public and private sector cooperation, since only a comprehensive understanding of the education cause can enable an appropriate response to the needs of a world that seems to be reinventing itself every day.

On this International Day, I call on all stakeholders in the world of education, and beyond, because it is a cause that concerns us all, to mobilize so that the ideal of a fully literate global society becomes more of a reality.
