WORLD TSUNAMI AWARENESS DAY
5 November 2019

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the Indian Ocean Tsunami, when 230,000 lives were tragically lost in 14 countries. Since then, we have seen great improvement in early warning systems, not only for the Pacific Ocean but also for the Indian Ocean, the Caribbean, the North East Atlantic, the Mediterranean and others. As a result, many lives have been saved.

However, it is clear from the growing economic losses over the last twenty years that we have not yet fully learned the importance of disaster-proofing critical infrastructure. This is essential to avoid the disruption to important public services that can occur during tsunamis, earthquakes and extreme weather events.

The risks remain immense. An estimated 680 million people live in low-lying coastal zones; by 2050, this number might surpass 1 billion. At the same time, rising sea levels caused by the climate emergency may further exacerbate the destructive power of tsunamis.

Risk reduction will be crucial to our efforts to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals. On World Tsunami Awareness Day, I encourage governments, local authorities and the construction industry to pursue risk-informed development and invest in resilience.
UNESCO, BNU Conclude 5-day Residential Creative Business Training Programme

Pakistan’s Creative Future, a five-day residential creative business training programme, held at BNU’s Tarogil Campus, was concluded on Friday, November 01, 2019. The programme is a response to UNESCO’s 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which supports the development of the creative economy.

The programme, a tripartite partnership between Beaconhouse National University (BNU), the Republic of Korea and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was customized to the needs of twelve aspiring entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative industries. The participants worked on case studies taken directly from successful Pakistani businesses in film and media, performing arts, game design and advertising. The trainings were delivered by BNU faculty, along with local and international experts, including Andrew Senior, an expert in the creative economy, who has been working with UNESCO, in Pakistan, since 2015. The Republic of Korea’s Ken Roh, co-founder of WELT, also provided participants with insight on how to develop their business.

The twelve participants, selected through an open call for applications that prompted over 240 applications, were a diverse group that included four women, seven men and one transgender. The mean age of participants was 31 years, ranging between 24 years and 39 years, who came from across Punjab, Sindh, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan (some hailing from less urbanized cities such as Chitral, Bhakkar and Nawabshah).

The programme is part of UNESCO’s Korea Funds-in-Trust project, which is focused on the development of the creative industries. It is actively supporting sustainable creative industries and enhancing skills and professional networks in the Asia-Pacific region. The objective is to create a training methodology, sensitive to local needs, that responds to the potential of Pakistan’s growing economy. The programme empowers young creative entrepreneurs, promotes participatory policymaking for the culture sector and integrates
culture in the national sustainable development agenda and in international cultural cooperation.

Note to editor:

- The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005 Convention) is a legally-binding instrument that supports the emergence of dynamic and strong cultural and creative industries.

- Pakistan has not ratified the 2005 Convention (Countries in the region that have ratified the 2005 Convention include: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Republic of Korea).

- Benefits to ratification include technical support for policy making and regulatory frameworks.

- Programme modules included problem-solving for emerging businesses, design thinking, intellectual property rights and legal obligations, finance and accounting, marketing and internalization at both startup and accelerator levels.

- Available for interview:
  - Andrew Senior
  - Lindsay Cotton
  - Jawad Aziz
  - Zaeem Yaqoob

- UNESCO, in partnership with BNU and Hunerkada, is organizing an advocacy event for the ratification of the 2005 Convention for the promotion of cultural and creative industries in Islamabad on Monday, November 04, 2019. The purpose of the event is to bring together parliamentarians, academics, government officials, civil society as well as experts in cultural, economic, and social development to discuss the
growing importance of the creative economy in Pakistan. This will provide opportunities to exchange views about how policies in the field of culture and beyond can further strengthen Pakistan’s creative sector. For an invitation to the event, please contact Jawad Aziz (j.aziz@unesco.org).

- Profiles of Participants are being shared as separate attachments.