



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

UNESCO Bangkok Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific
Regional Unit for Culture in Asia and the Pacific
Advisor for Communication and Information in Asia
Regional Advisor for the UNESCO Institute for Statistics

UNESCO Bangkok Press Release

The Philippines Hosts the 6th international Asia-Pacific Regional Early Childhood Development (ECD) Conference

“Early Childhood Development on the global agenda: Building partnerships for Sustainability and Harmony”

MANILA, 4 DECEMBER, 2014 – Yesterday the ECCD Council and Childfund International Philippines alongside the Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) and its partners opened the 6th International Asia-Pacific Regional Early Childhood Development (ECD) Conference in the Crowne Plaza Manila Galleria, Metro Manila.

UNESCO is an official partner of ARNEC and supports its advocacy on the importance of early childhood education.

Almost 400 early childhood professionals and high level policy-makers from the Philippines, Asia-Pacific and beyond attended the opening ceremony of the conference and following plenary sessions under the theme, ***“Early Childhood Development on the global agenda: Building Partnerships for Sustainability and Harmony”***.

Guest of honour, Former Philippine Senator Hon. Teresa Aquino Oreta, stressed that “the grand alliance for ECD is still a big challenge but offers great opportunity”.

Regional Keynote Speaker Dr Sheldon Shaeffer, Former Director of UNESCO’s Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok and a member of ARNEC’s Board of Directors said: “ECCD sets the tone for the quality of life of every individual and society. Early learning begets later learning success as early failure breeds later failure.”

A major highlight of the event was the showcasing of a reading camp (collaboratively organised by Save the Children, Childfund, World Vision and Plan International) where a space was created for the children to express their own views about their needs and dreams which they presented to international audience. The drawings will be displayed throughout the three-day conference.

The Event: Asia-Pacific Regional Early Childhood Development Conference

When: 3-5 December 2014, from 9am-5pm

Where: Crowne Plaza Manila Galleria, Ortigas Avenue, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippine

About the organisers:

The **Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC)** is a professional network established in 2008 to build strong partnerships across sectors and different disciplines, organisations, agencies and institutions in the Asia-Pacific region to advance the agenda on and investment in early childhood.

It is one of the most extensive and fastest growing networks for early childhood development in Asia-Pacific, covering 47 countries and includes East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Pacific sub-regions, as well as Central Asia to a small extent. ARNEC is making efforts to create a stronger and more dynamic ECD community in the Asia-Pacific by equipping ARNEC members with updated knowledge to help them become effective advocates for holistic and inclusive ECD. ARNEC is supported by UNICEF, UNESCO, Plan International, Open Society Foundation, Save the Children and ChildFund International. www.arnec.net

ChildFund International exists to help deprived, excluded and vulnerable children have the capacity to improve their lives and the opportunity to become young adults, parents and leaders who bring lasting and positive change in their communities. ChildFund International promotes societies whose individuals and institutions participate in valuing, protecting and advancing the worth and rights of children.

ChildFund International currently works in 30 countries and assists 18.1 million children across the Americas, Africa and Asia through integrated, multi-sectoral child development programs. In Asia, ChildFund International currently implements programs in Afghanistan, India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor Leste, as well as supports ChildFund Alliance members in Cambodia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Papua New Guinea and Vietnam. www.childfund.org

The **Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council** is a government organization established by the Philippine government in 2009 through EO No. 778. The Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) was initially tasked to serve as a national ECCD coordinating council in 2000 through R.A. 8980 or the ECCD Act. These laws – including EO 806 (Affirming the Roles of the ECCD Council and the CWC) and EO. 778 (Transforming the CWC into the ECCD Council) – mandate the ECCD Council as the primary agency to support the government's ECCD programs, covering health, nutrition, and early learning for children 0-6 years. In 2013, R.A. 10410 on the Early Years Act repealed R.A. 8980, changing the definition of early childhood from 0-6 years to 0-8. This law specifies that the first crucial stage of educational development of children from zero (0) to four (4) years shall be the responsibility of the ECCD Council while the responsibility of helping develop children in the formative years of five (5) to eight (8) years shall be with the Department of Education (DepED). www.eccdcouncil.gov.ph

For further information please contact:

Ms Silke Friesendorf,
Communications Manager, ARNEC
email: silke.f@arnec.net
mobile: +65 94869837
website: <http://www.arnec.net/manilaconference2014>
www.arnec.net

[Ma. Eloisa Ramirez: loi.seaclsd@gmail.com](mailto:loi.seaclsd@gmail.com)