Kits to enhance English language skills and increase knowledge of Australia

Bringing Australia closer to Latin America

The countries of Latin America are located more than 12,000 kilometres across the Pacific from Australia. CC International is helping to make that gap feel a little smaller for teachers and students in Chile, Mexico and Brazil with an initiative to produce kits for learning about Australia.

In partnership with the Council on Australia Latin America Relations, the Australian Department of Education, Science and Technology and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs, CC International conducted a scoping study to develop an English Language Teaching kit for students and teachers in Latin America.

Initiative

CC International’s scoping study involved researching and analysing key aspects of education markets in Brazil, Chile and Mexico. CC International provided advice to refine the content and cater for particular audiences and groups.

Once developed, the kit will offer an innovative approach to learning, with information primarily delivered in multimedia. An initiative of this kind will encourage collaboration and partnerships between teachers in the participating countries and draw on the expertise of Australian educators to develop state-of-the-art multimedia English language teaching resources.

An exciting initiative for teachers and students in Latin America, the project has great potential to assist with English language learning in Latin America and build knowledge about Australia and its people, places and history.

If you would like to know more about this project, please contact international@curriculum.edu.au

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The expansion of industry and commerce in the People’s Republic of China has led to a growing demand for skilled labour, and new challenges for the country’s Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector.

With its rapidly growing export industries and its position as mainland China’s gateway to Hong Kong and South-East Asia, Guangdong province was selected a special pilot area for a review of TVET needs and expansion prospects. The project was managed by CC International for China’s Ministry of Finance with funding from the Asian Development Bank.

Urbanisation and disparities between regions were key contextual factors. The project paid special attention to the training and education needs of migrant workers. CCI Australia conducted surveys of migrants working in the cities of Guangdong and Dongguan, and arranged focus groups as part of the assessment.

The project presented a series of strategic recommendations to the Asian Development Bank, which involved strategies to increase the capacity of TVET schools, colleges and institutes. Options for funding, and mechanisms to attract investment from the private sector were also considered.

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Raising assessment standards in Indonesia’s Islamic Higher Education Institutions

Better marks for students in Indonesia

What needs to be done to improve assessment and examination systems and ensure graduates are equipped to compete globally? This was one question put to academics and heads of faculty during a project delivered by CC International to raise assessment standards in Indonesia’s Islamic Higher Education Institutions.

Participants commented that the modelled teaching style was effective and appropriate, and could be used in their own teaching.

Differences in learning styles were acknowledged and catered for. The project also incorporated gender, change management and good governance components. The course and materials were delivered to participants in Bahasa Indonesia.

Participants considered procedures for fair and standardised approaches to examination preparation, marking, grading and plagiarism. The project drew on the expertise of Australian consultants with specialist knowledge and experience of assessment and examinations. The Centre for Teaching Staff Development within the State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga in Yogyakarta was CC International’s partner on this project.

As part of the project, CC International provided several recommendations for ongoing development to assessment procedures. Some of the recommendations included further training in the design of good examination questions, effective marking schemes, quality processes and English-language testing. The project attracted attention from local media in Indonesia, and received positive feedback from participants.

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Initiative

CC International worked closely with Indonesia’s Ministry of Religious Affairs to deliver this project to improve learning outcomes for students in Indonesia. Participants were drawn from the State Islamic University, the State Institute of Islamic Studies and State Colleges of Islamic Studies to ensure examinations conform to international standards and benchmarks. The project was part of the third phase of the Indonesia-Australia Specialised Training Project, a large AusAID funded initiative to upgrade the knowledge and skills of mid-career, middle level professionals in the public, non-government and private sectors in Indonesia.

In two steps, CC International delivered courses in Surabaya, Mataram and Makassar. Different student-centred learning methods were used to present the content including interactive lectures, role plays, case studies, plenary sessions, field trips and work placements. Most of the course was team-based with whole group discussions, panel presentations, reflection activities, case studies, small group work and work in pairs.

The experiences of participants was the starting point for learning and participants took part by doing, reflecting and by searching for answers to new questions.
Promoting ‘child-friendly’ schools in Iran

New ideas for teacher training

With a population of close to 70 million people, and around a quarter being school-aged, Iran’s education system faces big challenges. Building on relatively high literacy levels, and primary enrolment rates of around 94 percent, more needs to be done to improve the quality of education in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran’s Ministry of Education, with the help of UNICEF, is working to reform education and promote child-friendly school principles. One fundamental change is the move from rote-learning to a more student-centred approach where children learn by doing and by solving problems.

Initiative

CC International provided technical support to develop Teacher Training Modules for Teacher Training Colleges in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Deliverables from the project included:

- a needs assessment report, with a comprehensive audit of sector strengths and weaknesses
- content and working documents for the workshop
- development of teacher training modules workshop
- a report on the workshop
- teacher training modules, for delivery in pre-service training across Iran.

CC International facilitated a six-day workshop for 39 participants in Tehran during October and November 2006. Participants discussed current trends in education and developed modules and chapters from guidelines provided by CC International’s expert curriculum specialists. The focus of the workshop was pre-service training, involving staff from the Ministry of Education and lecturers from the Teacher Training College, Tehran University and Shahid Beheshti University.

Team and group-based work was an important part of the training delivery. Workshops were highly participatory, with critical feedback provided on both strengths and weaknesses. CC International sought to expose participants to as wide a range of readings and teaching strategies as possible. Participants responded well to the content and style of the workshops and valued the chance to contribute to changes in training approaches.

The project also contributed to UNICEF Iran’s ‘Girls’ Education’ activity, a key part of work in Iran towards the second and third Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to achieve universal primary education, and promote gender equality and empower women.

The development of teacher training modules was the third project in a series of work delivered by CC International for UNICEF Iran. The project is just one example of CC International’s innovative human development solutions, engineered through creativity and ownership.

If you would like to know more about this project, please contact international@curriculum.edu.au

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