



### Topics

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# Children and the future

Residents of Ovilkanda, a remote village in Matale District, central Sri Lanka, often contend with a natural hazard, lightning, that strikes with great frequency and sometimes with deadly effect. So when the local school, the Ovilkanda Maha Vidyalaya, hosted a disaster mitigation programme conducted jointly by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the Disaster Management Centre, the government agency handling disaster mitigation, the students were unanimous in their choice of which disaster prevention mechanism was most needed.

"They wanted a lightning conductor fixed to the school building," Indika Ranaweera, the DMC's disaster management coordinator for Matale District said. "Lightning was the most persistent natural danger for the kids. In the last two years lightning had struck twice in the school compound killing one person." Disaster mitigation specialists working with the UNDP/DMC project, as well as with them on other similar projects throughout the country said that Sri Lankan children were concerned that not as much attention was being paid to potential dangers always around them as to periodic large-scale disasters.

"Adults see the traditional dangers, like floods, cyclones, landslides or even tsunamis," UNDP field coordinator for the programme Zihan Zarouk said, "but children can look outside the box, and identify things that adults probably see but tend to ignore." The one-year UNDP/DMC programme will cover 48 schools in 15 districts by the time it concludes this November.

Officials involved in both programmes said such mitigation methods with children taking the lead were showing high levels of success. "They learn fast, but will also do their own research," the UNDP field coordinator working with the DMC Zihan Zarouk announced. "Kids also have the time, energy and enthusiasm to get involved [in prevention programmes] far more than adults who have other obligations."



# No sweet home for Pakistan people

Two and a half years after the devastating quake of October 2005 that killed 73,000 in Pakistan administered Kashmir and the North West Frontier Province; thousands of victims are still without adequate housing.

While reconstruction work - supervised by Pakistan's Earthquake Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (ERRA) - is under way in all quake-affected areas, in some instances (as in Kashmir's capital, Muzaffarabad) delays due to administrative issues mean many people are still to be housed.

Balakot - with a population of around 30,000, and about 100km north of Islamabad - was one of the worst-hit towns, and is an example of the complexities of reconstruction. About 80 percent of houses were destroyed by the quake and it was subsequently declared a "red zone" by the Pakistani government, which deemed it vulnerable to future quakes.

The situation called for an intermediate arrangement of some kind, and the Saudi Public Assistance for Pakistan Earthquake Victims (SPAPEV), a Saudi relief organization, stepped in. It has put up 4,000 pre-fabricated houses at Balakot, worth US\$18.5 million, to offer shelter to the Balakot quake survivors.

Khalid M. Al-Othmani, the regional director of SPAPEV, speaking at a ceremony in Islamabad on 7 July, said the houses had been handed over to families from Balakot displaced by the earthquake.

He said the Saudi public had "responded from the depths of their hearts to help their brothers and sisters". Hundreds of millions of Saudi riyals were collected.

So far, SPAPEV has provided 230,000 blankets, 150,000 quilts, 12,500 winterized tents,

medicines, stoves and 100,000 food parcels to those in need of aid in the quake zone. SPAEV has also provided US\$700,000 to the READ Foundation for schoolbooks, uniforms, stationery and other education materials.

The pre-fabricated homes offer an alternative to those people in Balakot who had refused to move to Bakrial and had been living in tents.

Some have said Bakrial is situated in an inhospitable wind corridor, unsuitable for a new town. Local people in Bakrial are also against the location of New Balakot City there.

“I have seen the place. It is desolate and barren. The winds are fierce. I will never go there,” said Muhammad Waheed, a farmer of the zone. But the authorities are determined that Balakot be moved, and until the matter is sorted out the new pre-fab houses at least offer the people of Balakot better accommodation.



Source: [www.irinnews.org](http://www.irinnews.org)

## Good example

Here we have the information about what is occurring in between Trinidad and Tobago and Atlanta Sister City. Please read this and will find the example to follow, you my dear reader will see why.



Network

Port of Spain/Atlanta Sister City

*through people"*

*"Peace*

Reg: # 1-1495/95

21<sup>st</sup> July 2008

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**NEWS RELEASE: World Environment Day: 100 Million Trees by 2017**

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**World Environment Day** activities at Mayaro will begin with an **environmental awareness walk**, participants were engaged in a **beach cleaning exercise**, leading into the **Sand Sculpting Competition** and joining the rest of the world by **reading the Youth Summit Declaration 2008**, in different languages to launch **GYSD 2009.....**

**3000 Water Melon seedlings were planted.**

**Note the Natural Disasters Youth Summit NDYS 2008 our project for Global Youth Service Day-**

**For Global Youth Service Day 2009 our project was :- launched on June 5<sup>th</sup> 2008 -----**

--- A Massive Tree Planting Decade by ENO Schools 2008-2017 –**Change for Climate Change** Schools can play a pivotal role in promoting environmental issues in their local communities. They can emphasize the importance of environmental protection and increase its awareness in the local communities.

Children and youth are the ambassadors for the environment.

Tree planting is an excellent activity for many reasons. It protects the environment and is a concrete action against the climate change. It is a joint effort by schools and the community.

Tree planting is also truly an educational act for peace and tolerance, issues that are essential for our common future.

The ENO programme has organized annual tree planting events since 2004. The programme joined the successful *Billion Tree Campaign* by *United Nations Environment Programme. UNEP..*

A pledge of 100 000 trees for 2007 was achieved. Thousands of schools or groups in 110 countries including Trinidad and Tobago have joined this activity.

The World Environment Day 2008 is the start for the new tree planting campaign in the ENO Programme, called **100 Million Trees By 2017**. The first target is to plant one million trees in 2008. More trees will be planted, a year after year. Tree planting will accelerate in **2011, the International Year of Forests**. The ultimate goal is to plant 100 million trees in the ENO Programme by the end of 2017.

At the same time **ENO Programme challenges all the tree planters in the world to follow our example and join our common effort to plant 100 Billion trees by the end of 2017.**

Campaign is officially launched in Kuala Ketil, Kedah, Malaysia. To celebrate the day ENO Teacher **Kalaimani Supramaniam** and his school **SMK Teloi Kanan** will plant some pine trees. They have been spending weekend and school holidays planting mangrove seedlings and seeds to save on of the remaining mangrove sites along the west coast of Malaysia with the help of **Global Environment Centre and Scouts of Malaysia** Students help prepare nursery beds and transport seedlings to the planting site. It takes 40 of them to plant 1000 seedlings and 500 seeds in 2 hours. Their school plans to mobilize students nation-wide to plant one million trees and hopes that it can be achieved in the Kuala Gula area. Mangroves are the only defense against sea storms and tsunami and without them, coastal villages such as Kuala Gula area will be left defenseless and at the mercy of nature.

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The director **Mika Vanhanen** says: *“We have a dream. This effort is very challenging but possible. We have to struggle, but this target will be reached together and through co-operation. As the ENO programme comes from Finland and there is a saying “Finland lives off its forests” we also want to do our part for the forests in this global village. Therefore, we will invite all Finnish companies and stakeholders to support this movement, in co-operation with other countries and the United Nations. We also hope that governments in other countries will support this action nationally.”*

Environment Online – ENO is a global virtual school and network for sustainable development where currently hundreds of schools in over 100 countries study their local environment together and share the results of learning through campaigns locally on the web globally. The ENO programme was founded eight years ago in Finland and works in co-operation with the United Nations Environment Programme and other international and national educational partners. Tree planting and climate change have been regular themes in this programme.

More information:

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ENO Finland/Environment-Coordinator**

**or**

**Abraham Fergusson  
NDYS Youth Ambassador/ ENO Environmental “Warrior” Agent**

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Environment Online- ENO is a global virtual school and network for sustainable development where learners observe their local environment through similar activities. ENO is a strong and active network of schools. It has been running since 2000 and it is currently administrated by the city of Joensuu, Finland.

The main idea is to lay emphasis on local environment and see it in a global aspect: act locally - think globally. Information is gathered at local level and shared globally on the website.

Learning is student-centred with online and offline activities.

At the end of each theme there is a campaign week when students share their results and raise them in their local communities. They become eventually ambassadors for environment in their respective local communities and regions and worldwide.

## OBJECTIVES

- \* to strengthen the role of environmental education at schools
- \* to spread the environmental awareness not only at schools but in the local communities
- \* to get developing countries as active participants and network them
- \* to support sustainable development
- \* to develop methods in eLearning for the better environment PARTICIPANTS
- \* 400 ENO schools from 104 countries, about 15 000 active participants
- \* Age of students: 10 - 18 years

## PARTNERS AND PARTNER NETWORKS

- \* UNEP
  - \* INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND RESOURCE NETWORK
  - \* The University of Joensuu, Finland
  - \* Finnish ministries (education, environment, foreign affairs)
  - \* European Schoolnet, Schoolnet Africa, iEARNTnT, GLOBE Program, Eco Schools, UNESCO Aspnet, Life Link, World Links
    - Global Footprint Network, Eco 4 the World Foundation,
    - Miss Earth Foundation RECENT ACTIVITIES
    - World Environment Day 2007: The Drops Of Life (an environmental play about tree planting and co-operation) available in over 40 languages, June 2007
    - ENO Conference with SciFest 2008
    - The Launch of ENO Africa and ENO Asia 2008
    - The launch of 100 Million Trees By 2017 campaign, June 2008
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**Please note: NDYS Youth Declaration 2008 – Made official by Mayor of Port of Spain: will be read in different languages around the world for World Environment Day.**

### Delegation:

**“That as a Global Village, we must resolve to create an awareness, risk management and the adaptation to global climate change, by forging strong ties between youths’ and professionals and integrating all countries as international partnership for this common purpose”**

**One Village, One Effort, THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW”**

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 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization		 interaction... communication... education Trinidad Tobago	 SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL	 GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY
Mayor's Office # 2-4 Knox Street Port of Spain City Corporation Port of Spain. 2231: Mobile: 683 4251		Email: <a href="mailto:ndystt@gmail.com">ndystt@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:iearntnt_net@yahoo.com">iearntnt_net@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:president@posatlskn.org">president@posatlskn.org</a> Website: <a href="http://www.iearntandt.interconnection.org">http://www.iearntandt.interconnection.org</a> <a href="http://www.naturaldisastersiearntnt.org">http://www.naturaldisastersiearntnt.org</a> - <a href="http://www..posatlskn.org">http://www..posatlskn.org</a>		
		Telephone: 1 868 640 9141 Fax: 1 868 640		

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**Comments:** First of all I feel so sad for the people affected by the earthquake in Pakistan; I think they should try to think in a new zone, because that is not the only one option. I am so happy for hearing about Trinidad and Tobago and Atlanta Sister City, they are doing something positive and very important, and for me it is an awesome work.

I personally believe that many countries should adopt that kind of attitude and then everything will be better than what we have.

■ **For more information please contact** ■

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*"Communication saves lives!"*