

# WORK IN PROGRESS 2022

The year 2022 will be very active for Unity Foundation!

At the beginning of the year, Unity Foundation will have the pleasure to sign its second framework agreement with the MAEE which will allow us to support international projects until 2026.

In Luxembourg, Unity Foundation will continue to organize workshops in schools, universities and socio-educational centers with, we hope, new partners. UF will also continue its training activities for professionals in the socio-educational sector and the organization of new conferences where we hope to see you!

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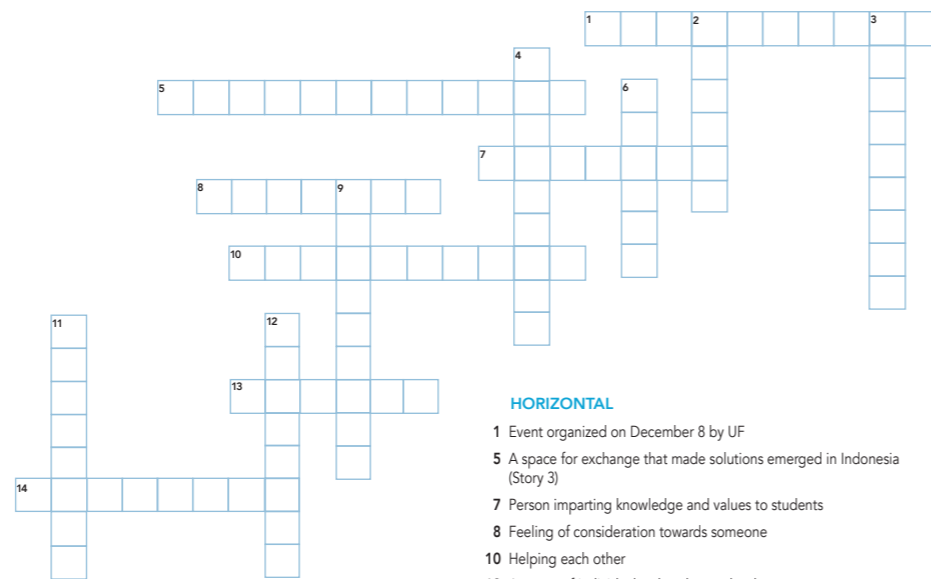


## THE JOY OF GIVING



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### HORIZONTAL

- 1 Event organized on December 8 by UF
- 5 A space for exchange that made solutions emerged in Indonesia (Story 3)
- 7 Person imparting knowledge and values to students
- 8 Feeling of consideration towards someone
- 10 Helping each other
- 13 A group of individuals related to each other
- 14 It's their day on November 20

### VERTICAL

- 2 Something children are the promise and the guarantee of
- 3 Any geographical space in which people live and carry out the activities that constitute their social life
- 4 Education reveals it
- 6 The institution that helped fight the pandemic in Malawi (Story 2)
- 9 Sharing of knowledge and values that allow a child to grow up
- 11 Space of discussion, learning and exchange for youth created by UF
- 12 What Vuthy Sophanna learned from her teachers (Story 1)

- Horizontal
- 1 Conference
- 2 Future
- 3 Consultation
- 4 Community
- 5 Research
- 6 Respect
- 7 School
- 8 Education
- 9 Mutual Aid
- 10 Family
- 11 Workshop
- 12 Sharing
- Vertical
- 1 Children
- 13 Children
- 14 Children



## CONTINUING OUR 30-YEAR EFFORT TO ENSURE QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN



Created in 1991, Unity Foundation is a Luxembourgish NGO officially recognized by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA).

Unity Foundation collaborates with a **network of local partners** in Latin America, Africa and Asia, and its main objective is to provide financial resources to the **educational projects** they carry out within the framework of three lines of action : (1) the **Community Schools (CS)** are dedicated to the schooling of children from preschool level, (2) the **Preparation for Social Action (PSA)** program builds the capacity of youth and adults who wish to take concrete action to contribute to the well-being of their communities, and (3) the **Training Centers** are designed to train and support organisations promoting CS in ten African countries. A fourth line of action, **Development Education**, consists of Luxembourgish projects that raise awareness among young people from 11 to 30 about development issues by encouraging them to become protagonists of social change.

All the projects supported by Unity Foundation are **co-financed by the Luxembourgish Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs**.

## CELEBRATE WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY WITH UNITY FOUNDATION!

## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear readers,

2021 is a special year for Unity Foundation: we have been active as a recognised non-governmental organisation for thirty years.

This anniversary is an opportunity to celebrate the wonderful progress made by our partners over the past 30 years. With your generous support and that of the Luxembourgish government, more than 50 projects in 17 countries have enabled countless children, young people and adults to gain access to quality education and to build their capacities to contribute to the well-being of their communities in all its dimensions.

On the occasion of International Children's Rights Day this 20 November, we are pleased to share with you some stories that bear witness to some of the effects of our partners' recent efforts to educate a growing number of children, both intellectually and morally. We are very proud and grateful to support partners who are showing such resilience and creativity to continue their work in the context of the current pandemic.

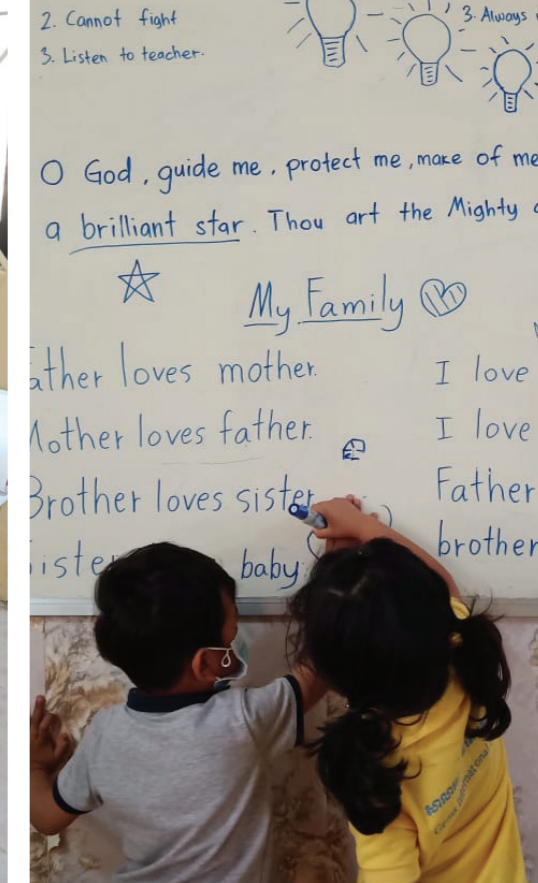
We hope that you will join us in supporting them this year again!

Fernand Schaber - President

## THE POWER OF EDUCATION

Children are the most precious treasure a community can possess, for they hold within them the promise and guarantee of the future. They carry within them the seeds of the future society, which is largely determined by the opportunities they are given to develop and flourish. We are convinced that every human being, and in particular every child in the world, is endowed with immense potential, which can be revealed through an adequate education. Such an education must take into account the physical, intellectual and moral development of individuals, make students active agents of their own learning, and allow parents and the community to be involved.

Our seven partner organisations are committed to providing such an education to an ever-increasing number of children and youth around the world, especially to girls and women who make up more than half of the pupils in community schools and students in the PSA program. In 2020, 12,767 children were enrolled in community schools and 1,343 young people and adults were participating in the PSA program.



## LEARNING TO LIVE IN HARMONY WITH OTHERS: TWO STORIES OF GENEROSITY AND SHARING

(1) Vuthy Sophanna focused on her lessons ; (2) Oun Sonita and Sanjay ; (3) Three students from a community school

**While school is often seen as a place to study grammar, history or mathematics, it is also a place for students to discover common values in order to learn how to live with their peers, their teachers and other individuals they will meet throughout their lives. Moral development, including learning kindness, respect and generosity, is just as important as the intellectual development that we associate our school years with. Our Cambodian partner CORDE wanted to share two stories that reflect the importance of these values.**

Oun Sonita is a student at a community school in Sambok Ork in eastern Cambodia. In her early days at school, she did not speak a lot to other children, she was not happy and did not participate in activities despite encouragement from teachers. One day, she made one of her classmates cry and would not apologise. Seeing this, the teachers decided to talk to her about the importance of fellowship and love. This discussion helped her open up to others and change: the next week she started talking to her classmates and teachers, playing with them, saying "thank you", apologizing for her mistakes

and being more active during class. Today, Oun Sonita does her best in class, especially during drawing and writing activities, and she also participates in school life by helping to clean the classroom.

\*

Vuthy Sophanna used to bring snacks to school, but one day she threw them away upon realizing that she did not like it. The teachers went to discuss with her to find out the reason for her actions and talk about the importance of generosity and sharing to her friends. On the next day, she shared her snacks with a classmate. Her classmate then shared his snack with her. The teachers noticed over the weeks that the students, including those from other classes, started to share their food and became more and more generous with each other. The behaviour of this student, who a few weeks ago kept food for herself, now serves as an inspiration for her classmates!

**These two stories show how, from simple lessons and sharing of values, great changes can take place in students and positively influence a whole school!**

## ONLINE EVENT ON EDUCATION ON DECEMBER 8, 2021

Aimed at raising awareness among a larger number of people of various ages and professional fields, UF organizes events to invite young people and adults to exchange and deepen together on certain principles, methods and approaches at the heart of sustainable development and education.

On the **8 of December 2021, from 6.30 pm to 8 pm**, join us for the online event: "Rethinking education, its actors and the values it conveys. Luxembourg and Cambodian perspectives". This open event will be an opportunity to listen to two speakers from Cambodia and Luxembourg, and then to split into groups to discuss three different themes.

Send us an email at [info@unityfoundation.lu](mailto:info@unityfoundation.lu) for more information.





## ENSURING THE CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION: ADAPTATION, CREATIVITY AND COLLABORATION

**Just like in Europe, the COVID-19 pandemic had an important impact in Indonesia, on many aspects of society and especially schools. YBTI, our partner in Indonesia, shares how schools adapted during the pandemic.**

Online learning for children in cities is not an issue, because a lot of parents in urban areas already have the necessary technology, and the connection in the city is very efficient. People in villages have a limited signal, their cell phones do not support Zoom, and they are not used to online learning tools; therefore it was not an option for numerous schools. Without schools to go to or online classes to attend, children end up going to the fields with their parents. They usually leave in the morning and return home in the evening.

**In response to this situation, YBTI held consultations to determine the best way to ensure education to all children. The solutions depended on the place where the school was located, the age of the students and the capacities of the parents.**

For the Metawai community, in the North-West of Indonesia, the first solution that arose from the discussions between teachers and parents was to give assignments to the children and have them work at home. Some parents were not happy with this solution and expressed their reasons to YBTI: "We have to go to the fields every day, how can we teach our children?", "How can we teach our own children? They never obey us!", "We can't read and write, how can we accompany our children?". Some of these concerns were answered by teachers by receiving students three times a week to work directly with them. This situation lasted for one semester, until January 2021, and some parents said that during this period they felt closer to their children but also felt that the learning outcomes were not optimal, especially regarding the development of the children's character.

To solve these problems, teachers consulted with parents to come up with a new solution: hold face-to-face study three times a week, and the two other days they would give assignments and conduct home visits.

*"YBTI School is truly a school that carries out its mandate and consistently provides learning and guidance for children. During the pandemic, YBTI is still serious in providing learning and guidance to every child even though they have to visit homes. The results we see in our children are very encouraging and they are developing well."*

Redita Sinaga,  
student's parent



Home learning , Sumatra

This solution brought balance between the necessity to adapt education to the health crisis and the need to find a way to support parents that are not able to help their children with their homeworks. Finally in September 2021, the government re-allowed full face-to-face learning.

In the case of a school in Barisan Nainggolan Hamlet, in the North-West of Indonesia, teachers held a meeting with parents to discuss how the learning process could be carried out with children taking into account the limitations of parents, limitations of technological tools, limitations of signals and the work of parents who are mainly farmers. From the consultation it was decided that learning for children would be carried out at parents' homes in turns, where children who lived close together would form a study group.

The efforts carried out by the YBTI teachers attracted the attention of parents, who were very grateful that the current pandemic situation did not dampen the enthusiasm of the teachers to provide education to

their children. Due to the current pandemic, quite a number of kindergartens have temporarily closed their schools, but the YBTI schools are consistent in providing full teaching during the year. This opportunity was used by teachers to make home visits to parents to discuss their children's development.

**From these stories we understand the importance of consultation and adaptation that were essential for both teachers and parents to assure the continuity of classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Every solution found through these consultations took into account the specificities of the individuals and families involved, in order to ensure an equitable and harmonious outcome in these difficult times.**



Children washing their hands before entering class



Discussion on the short film Mercy's Blessing with the students of the international school of Mondorf-les-Bains.

## THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

## INSPIRING YOUTH AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO BECOME PROTAGONISTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

**This story, shared by our partner Bambino Foundation in Malawi, illustrates how a community school is integrated into the life of the community and how the knowledge it spreads and the habits it promotes extend far beyond the classroom.**

The Thiwi Community Nursery School is located 40 km from the capital, Lilongwe. It contributes to the life of the rural community by educating young children who are preparing to start formal schooling. The community is happy to have this school as they have long wanted the children to have access to a quality education. The school started with informal moral education classes for children, which later evolved into a formal kindergarten and junior primary school. Through the teachings and values imparted by the school, the students and the community have adhered to the health rules to combat COVID-19.

Some of the lessons taught to students and the community focus on hygiene and sanitation to limit the spread of the virus, while allowing children to benefit from the lessons. These efforts also include parents, who meet twice a month at the school to make handwashing soap using locally available resources.

This soap is used in school and some is taken home to ensure that handwashing is also practiced outside of school.

Thiwi Nursery School has demonstrated that the community as a whole has benefited from the school's lessons on cleanliness as a virtue, which enabled it to become outstanding in terms of cleanliness and hygiene. The children participate in the clean-up of the surroundings in the morning. They pick up litter, dispose of it in the right place and make sure they are clean by washing their hands after each activity. Every parent bought a plastic chair, and kept it at the school for the children to use during lessons. All these efforts show how a single school can contribute to the progress of a whole community!

In 2021, Unity Foundation organised workshops in various schools, highschoools and socio-educational centers in Luxembourg. These workshops aim at creating spaces of discussion with young people around complex topics related to development and education and to acquire the knowledge, develop the skills and adopt the values that enable everyone to have a positive impact on their neighbourhood and their environment.

Among the various programs offered by Unity Foundation, the workshop most used by teachers and educators since 2016 and still very attractive this year is centered on the short film Mercy's Blessing: the story of a brother who chooses to sacrifice his school education and his passion to make sure his little sister goes to school.

Provoking many reactions from the participants, participants share that such a story of selfless love in the midst of social injustice "opens their eyes" to some of the inequalities in the world. In the classrooms, with their families or among adults, everyone questions and exchanges together on the strength of the human spirit, the power of choice and the capacity of each individual to harmonise their individual development on the one

hand and their participation in the well-being of society on the other. Acting courageously in the face of obstacles to defend equality and justice becomes a source of motivation and an important goal for them.

Reflections expressed by two 13-year-olds at the end of the Mercy's Blessing workshop are quoted below:

*"I was under the impression that the whole world had the same equality and way of life as in Europe; the workshop made me realise how privileged we are and how important it is to reach equality around the world."*

*"To be an example for others and always try to do the right thing. I also try to think of others, not just myself, and help them. But we all have to do that if we want to change the world."*

The youth enthusiastically expressed their willingness to act and one student even asked how they could help Unity Foundation. Our response was to encourage them to make the world a better place in their everyday lives through good deeds!