

Russia

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Governance and its Effect on Education

A quality education for all is one of the main factors for the OECD's "Better Life Index" rankings. High levels of education and literacy are also indications that a country has a strong, stable government because people are able to devote time to things of that agriculture and manufacturing products for trade. The highest ranked countries for education (Finland and Denmark) on the "Better Life Index" are also the countries with the lowest levels of corruption, or "cleanest" countries on Transparency International's Annual Corruption Perception Index. When country is corrupt or in a time of war resources that should be going towards education programs are being allocated elsewhere, whether that be in the pockets of government officials or to the military to fund war.

In 2011 President Putin kicked off an anti-corruption campaign to make up for the lack of deep structural reforms and restrain certain key players. The results of this campaign were not the exact desired outcome. But, an effort that was very successful was in 2012 when Russia ratified the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials. This significantly improved Russia's ranking the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index and also brought greater foreign investment. A past issue in Russia in the realm of corruption was that Russian laws did not clearly define the term "corruption", leaving plenty of room for interpretation in the courts. In 2013, Russia defined what corruption relate offences are and are now in the Russian Criminal Code- Article 290, 291,204, and 13.3. The Russian Ministry of Labor has also developed guidelines for Russian Law anti-corruption compliance measures that are being taught to business and officials.

In order to assist nations suffering from immense levels of corruption, the Russian Federation suggest the creation of "Level of Corruption (LOC) Partnerships". Using Transparency International's Annual Corruption Perception Index, Global Corruption Report, Global Corruption Barometer, and Bribe Payers Index, countries will be ranked into a tiered red-yellow-green spotlight system based on their level of corruption. Partnerships will then be instituted between countries of differing rank (ex. Red and green) in which they will be able to share the issues they are facing and methods they have used to hinder corruption. An annual report of the efficacy of the partnerships in each nation will be released in order to make the LOC partnerships as transparent as possible to citizens, foreign investors, and NGOs. To improve refugee education, an overlooked issue when a country is at war, Russia urges the implementation of a 5 step Refugee Education Improvement Program (REIP). The first step is for nations (specifically host countries) to adequately fund their schools and universities to ensure refugee children receive a quality education. Second, the program calls for the expansion of vocational training in refugee camps by utilizing NGOs, such as CARE International, to give refugees the opportunity to learn a trade career. REIP then urges the international community to develop a Syrian specific curriculum (since Syrians are currently the bulk of the world's refugees right now), based upon the Teachers without Borders framework curriculum, to minimize the learning disruption caused by changing countries. The fourth step of the program is to employ refugees and make the implementation of the new curriculum easier by allowing refugee teachers to teach the students in their camp. The final step is to develop an international test, that will be transcribed in each country, as an alternative to transcripts. Many times, it is difficult for refugee students to earn a place in a public school or university because they do not have a school transcript. This would make the assessment of a refugee student's knowledge much easier and more universal.

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Preservation of World Heritage Sites

With the ever-changing global environment and situation, World Heritage Sites are always at risk of being harmed. The factors at play, whether it be climate change, rising sea levels, war, or thieves, are what determines each site's degree of risk. Another problem at many world heritage sites are the tourists themselves. While a booming tourist industry is great for the economy, many times tourists do not behave properly and end up causing damage to sites. Tourists end up visiting formerly rural areas to see the heritage sites and cause a disruption in villages; there have also been instances of tourists breaking artifacts.

In 1994 Greenpeace Russia initiated the project "World Heritage" to identify and protect outstanding natural systems that were being threatened by human impact. Russia currently has 26 World Heritage Sites and none of them are on the "List of Sites in Danger". To keep these sites in the best condition possible, Russia strictly adheres to the procedures laid out in the World Heritage Sites Manual. In 2002 Russia held the World Heritage Youth Forum which allows young representatives to have the opportunity to exchange ideas, contribute to the discussions and immerse themselves in topics within the scope of multi-layered heritage.

Russia would like to endorse the creation of the Tourism Harm Reduction and Implementation of Vocational Education initiative, or THRIVE. This campaign would be dedicated to blending tourism and the environment and cultural heritages of locations on the regional and global scale by supporting the sustainability of biodiversity, adopting a socio-economic impact assessment program in tandem with the approval of tourism projects associated with World Heritage Properties, and establishing the outreach to local communities in an effort to identify the heritage sites that are under promoted. The initiative is also devoted to equipping the new employees with the proper tools required to perform the tasks of guiding tourists by installing a boot camp training program aimed towards local residents that will provide financial support to new employees during the time of training so that they can support their family and themselves and cooperate with NGOs and enlist a volunteer team that will educate the local residents looking for a job on: respecting the tourists' cultures, properly chaperoning tourists, emergency procedures, and all of the necessary information to keep both the tourists and the environment safe. THRIVE asks that all category 2 organizations and associated teacher training programs provide a focal point towards furthering cultural education. The THRIVE Initiative also encourages the cooperation of various NGOs, such as the Network of Asia Pacific Education and Training Institute in Tourism (APETIT) in the cultural training of tour guides, promoting preservation with the Earthwatch Institute, employing the Travel Foundation in addressing sustainable tourism in business professionals so as to institutionally protect the cultural integrity of the most frequently visited World Heritage Sites.

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Supporting and Accomplishing Education 2030

Education is one of the most quintessential parts of success. Countries lacking an efficient education system rank lower on the OECD's "Better Life Index" than countries with high functioning ones. When a girl in a developing nation receives 7 or more years of education, she marries 4 years later and has 2.2 fewer children than she would have without it. Education, whether it be a basic primary, or extensive trade career training, is the first step to a sufficient lifestyle. Accomplishing SGD 4 is imperative for the success of each nation.

In Russia, the primary education enrollment has remained around 99%, so the global goal has already been achieved, however reaching a more ambitious goal of 99% coverage with basic education is still ahead, with current average of 90%. In 2009, the literacy rate of 15-24 years old for both sexes estimates 99.7%; the literacy rate of 15-24 years old for men is 99.6%; the literacy rate of 15-24 years old for women - 99.8%. Much still needs to be done in order for Russia to become very successful in achieving its basic educational goals. Russia still needs to work on involving socially vulnerable groups and children from low-income families in the education and socialization processes, and equalizing financing and accessibility of the general secondary and primary levels of education between all regions. Hopefully these efforts will result in the decrease in regional differences in availability of good-quality secondary education.

To aid developing nations in the achievement of global education by 2030, the Russian Federation proposes the implementation of "Transfers for Education", in which national and local governments create social programs in partnership with the Quality Education in Developing Nations NGO that measures learning by strengthening awareness and accountability for children's learning, demonstrates that low-cost practical interventions can improve learning on a large scale, and ensure that the education funds are improving learning. These social programs are then partnered with local and regional governments to provide the amount of money based off the general cost of sending a student to school. Transfers will help assess skills of children within a school by sharing results with school administrators, teachers, the public, government, and donors. This program will also feature an oversight mechanism that monitors resource allocation and budgeting information. The "mechanism" is a board run by the QEDN that helps to distribute money to families and teachers. The Transfers for Education program also ensures that low income families have free school meals, uniforms, and classroom materials and that schools are adequately resourced with clean bathrooms, water, desks, writing materials, and cooking facilities. The transfers themselves will come from the international community, NGOs, and regional or national governments. Another problem with building and maintaining schools in many nations is the cost of resources, which is why Russia recommends creating an incentive for corporations to collaborate with the UN by creating and marketing an internationally recognized, UN-affiliated "ABC sticker" program, wherein companies that work with UNESCO to achieve the goal of Education 2030 are granted special UN status. Companies can earn the sticker certification by providing free or reduced-cost materials to schools, having scholarships and manager tracks available for their employees, and significantly support UNESCO's initiatives in any way. The ABC sticker will be the subject of a UN public awareness campaign as an example of ethical consumption, much like fair trade stickers.

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