

Malaysia Provides US\$300,000 For IBE 'STEM' Project

Bernama

April 16, 2015

From Muin Abdul Majid

GENEVA, April 16 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has awarded the International Education Bureau (IBE) US\$300,000 (about RM1.1 million) for an initiative to strengthen Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) curricula for girls in Africa and the Asia Pacific.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin handed over the contribution to IBE director Dr Mmantsetsa Marope during a visit Wednesday to the bureau's Geneva office.

IBE is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) institute specialising in educational content, methods and structures.

In expressing her gratitude, Marope lauded Malaysia for always being in the forefront of initiatives under UNESCO and its agencies.

The 18-month project involves Kenya, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Indonesia, with Malaysia as the content consultant.

The funding assistance comes under the Malaysia-UNESCO Cooperation Programme: Malaysia Funds-in-Trust (MUCP-MFiT).

Muhyiddin said the approval was premised on four firsts, namely it was the first MUCP-MFiT approval involving African states; the first MUCP-MFiT project to IBE; the first project under MUCP-MFiT involving the verticals in curriculum and the first MUCP-MFiT project on STEM.

Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, presented a copy of the Malaysian education blueprint for higher education to the IBE director as a gift to her organisation.

She commented that the blueprint should not only be a gift to IBE but also to other UNESCO member countries.

"There may be challenges ahead in enhancing Malaysian education but we also have a lot to learn from Malaysia," she said.

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