



Great Challenges, Even Greater Opportunities

“In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”

*(Colossians 2:3, NLT).**

The Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD) is comprised of Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, and Pakistan. The SSD Education Department oversees approximately 13 percent of the church’s educational institutions, with 864 elementary schools, 115 secondary schools, and 20 tertiary schools. SSD’s 999 schools employ 7,758 teachers to train 103,158 students at all levels from pre-kindergarten through graduate school.

The church invests astounding amounts of resources in terms of funding and personnel for training of the young, in accord with the statement by Ellen White that “Nothing is of greater importance than the education of our children and young people” (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 165).

Growth in Size and Numbers

The past quinquennium (2010-2015) demonstrates the growth of the SSD educational system. There was an increase in the number of schools and the number of personnel in our institutions, but the enrollment decreased rather sharply between 2010 and 2014.

Accreditation Visits and Baptisms

This past quinquennium, the Education Department has been averaging 31 accreditation visits every year, 26 visits to secondary schools, and five to our colleges and universities. Our

schools have been averaging 4,463 baptisms every year, for a total of 22,313 students baptized between 2010 and 2014.

Seminars, Conferences, and Conventions

During this past quinquennium, SSD held five regional teachers conventions for the various unions in its territory. The three Philippine unions held one convention each; the two Indonesian unions held one at Indonesian Adventist University in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia; and Southeast Asia Union Mission (SAUM) hosted a convention for the nearby unions (Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the SAUM countries) at Asia-Pacific International University in Muak Lek, Thailand.

The division also convened annual councils for college/university adminis-

BY LAWRENCE L. DOMINGO and CANADIAN Z. PANJAITAN



Above: Week of Prayer circles.

Right: Baptism of high school students in Indonesia.





Principals council in Johor Bahru, Malaysia.

trators and union education directors and for college and university board chairs, as well as seminars on risk management and school leadership. More than 100 secondary school principals, conference/mission superintendents, and other educational leaders from throughout the division participated in a 2014 principals council in Johor Bahru, Malaysia.

Scholarships

SSD’s commitment to quality Adventist education is demonstrated by its provision of four graduate-level scholarship programs: bursary funds for college and university instructors,

educational aid funds for elementary and secondary school teachers, and the Leadership Education and Develop-

ment (LEAD) Scholarship for pastors supported by SSD funds allocated for this purpose. A newly created under-

Table 1. Number of SSD Personnel Participating in Graduate-level Scholarship Programs, by Year, 2010-2014

Year	B.A./B.E./B.S.	M.A./M.S./M.B.A.	Ph.D.	Total
2010	1	3	1	5
2011	6	69	5	80
2012	1	37	7	45
2013	0	5	5	10
2014	0	9	2	11
Total	8	123	20	151



Welcome ceremony for the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities team visitors.

graduate scholarship program will help prepare future teachers for our church schools and academies.

Table 1 shows the statistics of our upgrading program. Since 2010, we have had a yearly average of 28 individuals sponsored by the bursary funds and an average of 136 sponsored by the educational-aid fund. Many of the participants have completed their degrees. Since the LEAD Scholarships and the undergraduate scholarships just commenced in 2014, the first class sessions are expected to begin by the summer of 2015.

Challenges

During this past quinquennium, the number of SSD schools and teachers has increased. However, between 2010 and 2014, the number of students shrank by 6.1 percent, from 109,000 to 103,000, which has created financial challenges for our institutions. Despite this difficulty, we continue to strengthen the educational programs of our institutions throughout the SSD territory, as we see the tremendous opportunities to advance the Great Commission through the ministry of our schools.

Opportunities

Education is a powerful evangelistic tool of the church. The SSD schools produce many thousands of baptisms

each year. We have strengthened the Grades 1-10 Bible curriculum, so that the spiritual climate of our schools will combine nurture and outreach. Our accreditation visits monitor the spiritual programs of the schools to ensure that they are distinctly Adventist and prepare the young people for leadership, both in the church and in their chosen disciplines.

Closing Thoughts

Colossians 2:3 calls attention to the focus of true education: “In him [Jesus Christ] lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (NLT). That’s what sets Seventh-day Adventist education apart from secular education. Jesus is the center of all classroom instruction, school programs, and activities in all our educational institutions. This is indeed the hallmark of Adventist education! ✍

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Lawrence L. Domingo, Ed.D., is Director of Education for the Southern Asia-Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists in Silang, Cavite, Philippines.



Canadian Z. Panjaitan, Ph.D., is Associate Director of Education for the Southern Asia-Pacific Division.