

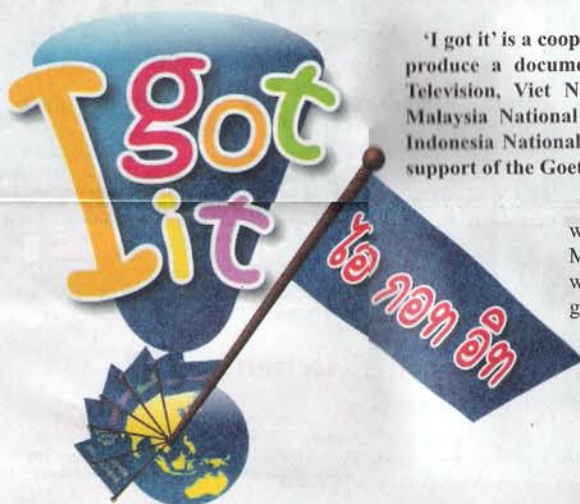


Seven Nations, One Vision

Thai PBS is one of seven ASEAN broadcasters collaborating to produce a documentary for children.



"The workshops enhanced our skill and gave us an opportunity to exchange ideas with professionals from abroad. 'I got it' is the first children's program that TV Thai has ever produced by itself. It's a good start if we want to excel at this type of programming in the future."



'I got it' is a cooperative effort between seven TV broadcasters in ASEAN to produce a documentary program for children. Thai PBS, Laos National Television, Viet Nam National Television, Cambodia National Television, Malaysia National Television, Philippines' ABS-CBN Foundation Inc., and Indonesia National Television have all joined forces under the guidance and support of the Goethe Institute.

"This is a great opportunity for broadcasters in the region to work together on different themes," said Thepchai Yong, the Managing Director of Thai PBS. "In the next five years ASEAN will become a single economic block so it is imperative that we get to know each other better."



Thepchai Yong, Managing Director of Thai PBS

The first phase of the series, which includes 26 10-minute chapters, will air from October to November 2010 on the seven ASEAN channels. Each of the contributing broadcaster's production teams will contribute to the content and format of the production. The documentary will be presented by a local moderator and in the native language of the country it airs in so as to more effectively communicate with children and their families.

"Thais need to learn more about their neighbours and that's why our policy is to focus more on people than issues," said Khun Thepchai. "We want to talk to young people about their dreams and ambitions but stay out of politics. This documentary is more about the way of life of children than anything else."

The 'I got it' project focuses on friendly media production to offer useful knowledge about culture and environment for children. In addition, the project also aims to encourage professional skill among ASEAN media producers and to promote cultural exchanges among media industry professionals.

"ASEAN is basically made up of agrarian societies with different cultures and social values," said Khun Thepchai. "One of the challenges we face is how to make characters and styles understandable and attractive to people in different nations and cultures."

The overall objective of the cooperation is to produce a docu-

mentary with educative value for children aged 7-10 years old. The program focuses on general topics in daily life presented in a scientific manner with a simple and easy-to-comprehend narration. Food, drinking water, garbage and the rain forest are among topics set for the first phase of production.

A moderator will introduce the program at the beginning and lead the audience into the content of each documentary. Each country will be responsible for producing three to five chapters. After production is complete, the series will be sent for dubbing in each country.

Khun Thepchai believes that this could be the start of many more collaborative initiatives in the future between the regions broadcasters.

"We would like to hook up with other countries in the future and co-produce documentaries, news and entertainment programs."

The 'I got it' project began with several training workshop programs for production teams from all seven ASEAN countries at the Goethe Institute in Bangkok. Producer Duangta Deeprasai and creative consultants Weerayoot Boonyanon and Norrapat Aramruang were part of the production team from Thai PBS, or sometimes referred to as TV Thai, which participated in three workshops between 2008 and 2010.

Khun Duangta believes that the workshops gave the team an opportunity to learn more about



TV Thai production team - Duangta Deeprasai, producer (right), and creative officers Weerayoot Boonyanon (center) and Norrapat Aramruang (left)

producing programs for children.

"Our experience with children's programming in Thailand is minimal compared with the Philippines. They have a channel exclusively designed for children and many of the programs there are supervised by psychologists who are experts in child development and behaviour."

The Goethe Institute workshops were supervised by a highly experienced German producer whose goal was to prepare producers and creative people from different culture and with different levels of experience to work together and find the best ways to effectively communicate with children in the ASEAN.

"The format is similar to that of Nine And A Half, a very popular children's program in Germany," explained Khun Weerayoot. "We had several brainstorming sessions to develop ideas together, to set topics for each episode and to find directions that can approach most children from cross-cultural surroundings."

Khun Norrapat also noted that "As documentaries are designed to offer both useful information and enjoyment, graphics and animation play an important role in helping to make knowledge comprehensible to children. We conducted research to find a direction that can attract both children and adults in the family."

Khun Duangta agrees that her team came away with a lot more confidence after the training program.

"The workshops enhanced our skill and gave us an opportunity to exchange ideas with professionals from abroad. 'I got it' is the first children's program that TV Thai has ever produced by itself. It's a good start if we want to excel at this type of programming in the future."



"Thais need to learn more about their neighbours and that's why our policy is to focus more on people than issues"

