

EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL ASIA PACIFIC REGION

REPORT 2006 – 2009

This report covers the EI activities in the Asia Pacific Region since the last EIAP Regional Conference in Jakarta from 9-11 September 2006.

Introduction

Since the last EIAP Regional Conference, EI's work in the region is defined by the resolutions and programmes adopted by the EIAPR Conference in Jakarta, the EI World Congress in Berlin, and the decisions taken by the EIAP Regional Committee and EI Executive Board.

The EI decisions in the last three years resolved to mobilise actions aimed at supporting quality public education for all; increasing public funding for education, excluding education from trade talks and privatisation, ending all forms of discrimination; promoting human and trade union rights; eliminating child labour, strengthening vocational education; supporting Indigenous education; mitigating the negative effects of HIV/AIDS, attaining gender equality; recruiting and retaining quality trained teachers; improving teachers' training; ensuring pay equity; attaining decent living salaries; promoting the core ILO Conventions and ILO/UNESCO Recommendations on the Status of Teachers; improving women's participation in education; achieving unity and solidarity among teacher organizations; participating in EI campaigns on "World Teachers' Day", "World AIDS Day", "Combating Child Labour" and "Global Action Week"; and developing networks with NGOs.

These actions were taken in order to achieve five broad objectives: Quality Public Education for All; Improving the Welfare and Status of Teachers and Education Personnel; Ending Discrimination; Promoting Democracy, Independence and Solidarity; and Strengthening EI and Promoting Membership Participation.

Quality Public Education for All

Since the Dakar Declaration in 2001 significant progress has been made in improving access to education in the region. Net Enrolment ratio in South and West Asia increased to 86% from 75%. While some countries would be able to achieve the goals of basic education for all by 2015, no significant improvement is made in improving the quality of education in developing countries. One of the critical components for achieving quality education is quality teacher professionals, which is being compromised by employing millions of untrained teachers. The situation is made worse by the number of teachers leaving the profession for other jobs.

In 2006, there were some 75 million children out of schools worldwide. It is estimated that in the last two years more than 120 million children dropped out of schools and ended up working. In India alone 30 to 50 million children work. A projection in 2006, for 134 developing countries worldwide showed that some 30 million children will remain out of schools in these countries in 2015. This would be a global failure, an educational crisis of an unprecedented proportion.

Poverty stricken illiterate parents and negative stereotypes in some countries forced children, especially girls and children from disadvantaged groups out of schools. Poor child health, ill

prepared schooling systems, growing pandemics, natural calamities and conflicts reduced education access. In Afghanistan out of 1000 new born 165 are likely to die before reaching their first birthdays and 257 before their 5th birthdays. Organisations working for education lacked coordinated efforts.

Since the Jakarta Conference in 2006, EI and member organizations in the region have worked to reduce dropout, eliminate child labour, increase public funding for education, improve school health and HIV/AIDS education, provide assistance to overcome humanitarian crises and build a broader civil society movement in favour of quality public education for all.

Increasing Public Funding on Education:

Despite economic growth in many developing countries a great number of people in the region continue to live in dire poverty surviving on less than US\$1 a day. Many governments' commitments to fight poverty, achieve education for all, respect universal human rights standards, democratic development are not fully realised especially due to the international economic order that promotes governments spending less money on basic social services, including education.

Shortage of funds for school infrastructure and trained teachers hampers education for all efforts. National spending on education increased in the majority of the countries, but the share of national income devoted to education decreased in 40 countries since 1999. Several high population countries in South Asia spent just over 3% of their GNP on education. International aid has to be tripled to reach the estimated 16 billion USD required annually. Despite assurances not to reduce education funding many countries face difficulties in continuing or increasing public funding on education due to the global financial crisis.

Disparity in education spending within and across national borders is alarmingly high. Education spending in South and West Asia is about 7% of the global spending on education. Many essential resources, such as electricity, furniture and text-books etc remain scarce in low income countries and communities. In half of the countries in South and West Asia more than 30% of primary school teachers remain untrained.

Student achievements in high income countries and communities far exceed those of the low-income countries and communities. Students from wealthier families are doing better than the low income families. Class sizes in low income countries and communities are far bigger than high income countries and communities.

EI and EI member organizations have taken a number of actions in order to increase public funding on education.

In 2007, EI with the member organisations in India, the AIPTF, AISTF and AIFTO jointly and separately held a number of pickets, rallies, advocacy campaigns, visits and meetings with the authorities demanding amendments to the Model Right to Education Bill and adoption of the bill by the parliament. The amendments demanded made by the EI affiliates included the need to improve learning conditions in schools, payment of salaries based on the VI Pay Commission recommendations, allocation of 10% of GDP for education and end to recruiting new para-teachers, untrained teachers receiving salaries as low as one fifth of the regular teachers. The Right to Education Bill was adopted by the both houses of the Indian Parliament in July 2009 and became an Act. EI affiliates in India would be closely monitoring the implementation of the Act.

Teachers' demonstrations and strikes in Indonesia in 2006 demanding end to cutbacks in education led to the PGRI taking the government to court in order to fulfill the constitutional provision to allocate 20% of the national budget to education. The courts in two instances ruled in favour of the PGRI and directed the government to comply by the constitution. The national spending on education in 2008 increased to 61.4 trillion Rupiah from 52.4 trillion in 2007. It is a significant

increase although it is below the 20%. The government has pledged to gradually increase funding including the funds contributed by the local governments in the provinces. The PGRI is monitoring the situation and persuading the government for full implementation.

In order to increase funding for the Public sector, initiatives are made to create partnerships between private and public sector under the Public Private Partnership. EI has established a task force and is monitoring the effects of the World Bank initiative on the Public Private Partnership. Initial observations in India show that in the public schools privatised under the PPP programme teachers' salaries have been reduced and fees have increased. Some of these schools have restrictive admission policies.

Since 2007, GATS negotiations to open trade in tertiary education took a back seat at the face of growing disagreement over opening trade on agriculture. This led to growth in a number of bilateral negotiations. Globally, there are now close to 3,000 bilateral investment treaties (BITs). After a bilateral investment talks between India and EU several differences are beginning to emerge on several key areas of services sector including the intellectual property rights and government procurement. EI in cooperation with the affiliates with expertise continue to monitor bilateral negotiations and published findings for the benefit of the member organisations.

Global Economic Crisis

Effects of the global economic crisis are not widely felt in the education sector of many developing countries yet. The crisis forced millions of people out of work and threatens to force thousands of children out of school and into work, especially in the low income countries. Governments have stated intentions to increase funds for education but it is not clear whether the funds will be used to provide scholarships, teacher training or would be used to develop school infrastructure.

In 2009, Western Samoa government reduced funding for education. In New Zealand, the Auckland University of Technology is likely to cut courses next year because of the government policy. The EI member organization TEU, estimates that due to these policies up to 450 students could miss out on admission to the university next year, of whom 40% would identify as Maori. In South Korea, the Korea University laid-off 88 lecturers and an estimated 5,000 to 10,000 lecturers working under contractual agreements have lost their jobs.

EI is closely monitoring the impact of the economic crisis on member organisations and promoting increased public funding for education as a long term solution to the crisis. The EI website link "Hands-up for Education" and a blog "Education Funding: Crisis Watch" puts out quick and brief notes about the impact of the crisis.

Reducing Drop out and increasing Completion rate

Despite increase in enrolment there has not been much improvement in the retention and completion of basic education in many developing countries. About 45 million girls and 35 million boys worldwide remain out of schools, almost half of them in Asia. Countries, like Bangladesh with policies such as abolition of school fees, construction of schools in rural areas and recruitment of trained teacher are making slow progress in increasing completion rate.

In India, EI, AIPTF, the Australian Education Union and Uttar Pradesh Prathamik Shikchak Sangh after successfully reducing dropout and increasing completion rate in 33 schools in a pilot programme are set to replicate the programme in 225 schools. The programme aimed at increasing enrolment, reducing dropout, raising awareness of teachers, students and community, and pressurising the state government to recruit trained teachers in permanent positions.

In the Philippines, EI and EI affiliates held a “National Workshop on Reducing Drop-outs/Out of School Children in Basic Education and Achieving EFA by 2015” to analyse the national situation and the underlying causes of drop-outs and identified tools and indicators to monitor the government compliance of EFA commitments. The Council of Pacific Education in cooperation with the UNESCO/UNICEF/ ILO held a SPBEA Roundtable and Biennial Conference to initiate actions in improving the status of teachers and promoting children’s rights to quality education”

EI has established a task force on pre-primary education. The task force among many issues is looking at the reduced rate of dropout and improved achievement among the students who attend pre-primary education.

Eliminating Child labour

Everyday 158 to 220 million children around the world and 90 to 110 million in Asia spend time working in difficult and often dangerous work. Poverty, social beliefs and absence of appropriate education forces these children to work. Most of these children are not able to complete basic education. Educational achievement of the working children remains far below the average. Education for All will remain a distant dream without abolishing child labour.

The EI Central Asian Consortium programme for the National Trade Union of Education and Scientific Workers of Uzbekistan has included sessions on the abolition of child labour in the training programmes to help teachers prevent and eliminate child labour which is most prevalent in the Cotton Plantations.

The Japan Teachers’ Union (JTU), EI and the Federation of the Mongolian Education and Science Unions (FMESU) are looking forward to renewing cooperation to support 50 Mongolian children every year to attend schools and stop them from going to work. The programme since its inception in 2003 has supported more than 300 students.

In February 2009, PGRI and ILO Jakarta signed an agreement to combat child labour in Indonesia.

EI is working within the Global Task Force on Child Labour and Education For All, which brings together UN agencies, the World Bank and the Global March Against Child Labour, in a unique coalition rooted in shared commitment to prevent and eliminate child labour. Harvest For the Future: Agriculture Without Child labour is the title of a new publication brought out by EI and the ILO (IPEC). It provides current facts and ideas teachers can use to support the growing movement to tackle child labour and could be obtained from EI. EI is also part of the Global Union Federations alliance, promoting child right activities and training child right organisers and campaigners.

Building a civil society movement for EFA

In order to create a broader societal awareness and political pressure to attain Quality Public Education for All and end the education crisis, EI along with Oxfam International, Global March against Child Labour, Action Aid, and a number of other non-governmental organisations formed the Global Campaign for Education for All in 1999 with a conviction that Public Quality Education for All is achievable with the right amount of political will and appropriate policy choices by the governments.

A number of activities were held under the GCE during the Action Week (third week of April) every year. In 2008, under the campaign “The Biggest Lesson” more than 7.5 million children, adults, teachers and campaigners in more than 100 countries demanded quality basic education for all. Activities were held in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Turkmenistan and Vietnam. In 2009, the campaign “The Big Read” focused on adult literacy and a number of activities, including

those participated by the EI member organisations were held in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand.

In September 2008, 14 donor countries agreed to provide support for the core work of the national education coalitions of NGOs to enable them to engage in the work towards education for all and track the progress of the national governments. The fund is managed by the EIAP Regional office. Two staff are employed in the EI regional office to assist in the disbursement and managing the funds in 10 Fast Track countries in Asia for three years. A Civil Society Education Fund Asia Pacific Committee was established to finalise the allocation of funds to the national coalitions based on the proposals submitted to the committee.

With the encouragement of EI, EI member organizations in Nepal, India and the Philippines are active at building wider coalitions and taking part in a number of campaigns for EFA. In Nepal, NNTA heads the GCE coalition, in India the AIPTF, AISTF, AIFTO and AIACHE are part of the national coalition headed by the Global March against Child Labour, and in the Philippines EI member organisations are part of "The Education for All Movement", a broad coalition of organisations of teachers, students, parents and community leaders.

Improving Health and HIV/AIDS Education

Worldwide, more than 10 million children die before reaching the age of 5 and millions remain malnourished. In Asia, thousands of children battle and often die of diseases like diarrhoea, dysentery, Malaria, Dengue, Bird Flu, H1N1 and other epidemics. Approximately 7 million people in Asia live with HIV and 15% of the infected are under 15 years of age. Personal sickness and sick family members force children and teachers out of schools. Young people lack skills to avoid infection. Some State governments in India are amiable to including sex education and HIV/AIDS in the curriculum, whereas a few continue to resist sex education in schools.

Education is the most effective preventive vaccine against HIV/AIDS and other diseases. It is essential that teachers stand together to fight diseases, to protect our colleagues, our children and our future. Many EI member organisations in the region do not have a policy on HIV/AIDS. The EI EFAIDS programmes have helped to develop union policies and train leaders on skills to avoid infection, mitigate the negative effects of the infection and ensure that more children complete basic education.

In India, under the EI/EFAIDS programme the All India Primary Teachers' Federation, All India Secondary Teachers' Federation and All India Federation of Teachers' Organisations held a number of massive rallies and agitation programmes and conducted researches, surveys, campaigns and training activities to raise awareness on HIV/AIDS issues and ensure that more children complete basic education. Research conducted by the EI affiliates show that teacher training is vital for quality education and class size and the quality of learning process are interrelated. Efforts under the EFAIDS programme, in India would continue to enhance the role of teachers in promoting Education For All and in raising awareness on the HIV/AIDS issues.

Since 2007, under the EFAIDS programmes a number of workshops to develop policies and training on behavioural change were held in Nepal and Indonesia. The PGRI, in Indonesia targets the Provinces of Bali, DKI Jakarta and Papua for intervention and in Nepal, NNTA and NTA targeted schools for intervention in 25 districts along the national highway to raise awareness and mitigate the negative effects of the infection on education. In both the countries, advocacy campaigns are planned to promote union policies and help reinforce the important role of education in combating HIV/AIDS, and a number of publication including posters, pamphlets are developed and distributed to members and community leaders. In Papua New Guinea a consultative meeting on the EFA and HIV/AIDS programme was held with the Papua New Guinea Teachers' Association to develop

policies and action plans for PNGTA to raise awareness of teachers on HIV/AIDS. PNGTA has decided to establish a desk for HIV/AIDS education.

The EI EFAIDS programme is now undertaken in 43 countries worldwide in close cooperation with the Education Development Center, World Health Organisation and Global Campaign for Education and is funded by the Government of the Netherlands.

EI is encouraging teachers to spend 'One Hour on AIDS' on 1st December, the World AIDS Day with their students to learn about HIV and AIDS. An activity kit for teachers was developed and distributed to the affiliates. Thousands of teachers have reported using the kit in union activities as well as in classrooms. The lesson plan on "One Hour on AIDS" and poster on "Take the Lead on AIDS" can be downloaded from the EI Website. Among the EI affiliates which took part in the initiatives were the National Union of the Teaching Profession Malaysia (NUTP) and the All Pakistan Government School Teachers Associations (APGSTA).

To mark the World AIDS day EI organised a three day SAARC Sub-Regional Round Table on "HIV/AIDS: Role of Teachers and Teachers' Unions" from 1-3 December, 2006 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Thirty eight 38 teacher leaders from 13 EI member organizations from four countries namely India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated in the Round Table. An EI workshop on "Prevention of HIV/AIDS and Related Discrimination" was held for 27 top leaders from 4 EI member organizations in India in December 2007 with the aim to update information and reinforce the link between HIV/AIDS and Education for All.

An EI ASEAN sub regional workshop on HIV/AIDS prevention was held in Kuala Lumpur in April 2008 to sensitise 32 top leaders of the 10 EI member organisations in the ASEAN Sub-Region on the need to address HIV/AIDS concerns and promote effective school health programme with particular emphasis on ending discrimination. The Tuvalu Teachers Association in cooperation with the COPE, AEU, NZEI, IEUA, and NZPPTA in May and August 2007 held HIV/AIDS and EFA/Awareness Workshops.

Natural Disasters/Conflicts

The 2004 Tsunami killed more than 280,000 people, cyclone "nargis" in Myanmar claimed more than 154,000, 65,000 lives were lost in an earthquake in China, Bangladesh, Taiwan, India, Pakistan, Indonesia and the list goes on. Every year earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, mudslides, forest fires, volcanic eruptions and other natural calamities claim thousands of lives in Asia and leave behind millions of destitutes. Every year, these calamities create humanitarian crisis that threaten and in many cases take away the educational opportunities of millions of children in Asia.

Conflict situations in the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Afghanistan have displaced thousands of students and teachers. Education of thousands of students remains affected in north eastern Sri Lanka. The EI member organization the Ceylon Tamil Teachers' Union has requested EI for humanitarian aid for the teachers and students held in the military run restricted rehabilitation camps under difficult conditions lacking in shelter, food and medicine and where the media is barred. India, Pakistan and Afghanistan suffered a number of terrorist attacks, which killed hundreds. In Afghanistan, more than 400 girls' schools and 250 other educational institutions were destroyed or closed and a number of girls were sprayed with acid for going to schools by the Taliban. In Pakistan hundreds of schools were destroyed in the Swat Valley by the Taliban. In Southern Thailand, many schools were burnt and teachers killed by the rebels.

EI in cooperation with Oxfam Netherlands started a reconstruction and rehabilitation programme for the Tsunami - devastated province of Aceh in Indonesia and Sri Lanka. A number of organisations including the Australian Education Union and Japan Teachers' Union contributed in the rehabilitation programmes of EI in these countries.

The programme was completed in August 2009 after successfully achieving the following.

1. Building 35 child friendly schools in Aceh and 8 in Sri Lanka
2. Training 1966 teachers on teaching skills, 39 principals on school leadership, 732 teachers on trauma counseling and 399 PGRI local union leaders on union building and strengthening the role of parent teachers association in the schools.
3. Providing furniture and office equipment to PGRI Aceh Province office and 4 District Branches
4. Providing scholarship to 3805 children for two years in Aceh and Sri Lanka.
5. Holding a number of symposiums, conferences and organising exchange programmes for students who helped raise funds for the EI Solidarity Fund.
6. Providing humanitarian assistance to teachers
7. Assisting ITUC in capacity building programmes for trade unions and providing skills training for displaced members
8. Training teachers, students and others in a computer lab in Aceh.
9. Providing 150 computers donated by the KSU of the Netherlands to the PGRI District committees and a number of schools.

In addition, 30 headmasters were trained by the AEU and 200 teachers as trauma counselors by the JTU, in Aceh. Mr. Jerome Fernandez was the EI project coordinator in Aceh for the full duration of the programme. In Sri Lanka, the EI project coordinator Mr. Basil De'Silva died before the completion of the project and Mr. Ganasharaja took over the responsibility until the completion of the project.

Improving the Welfare and Status of Teachers and Education Personnel

The average salary of the teaching profession is low compared to the salary of other professionals and has not increased at the same ratio of the national average increase except in a couple of countries. Some teachers' continue to earn less than 40 US dollars a month in public schools whereas some untrained teachers and private school teachers earn as low as USD 20, much less than the minimum wage in the country. There are millions of untrained teachers employed as para-teachers, contract teachers, temporary teachers and voluntary teachers in the developing countries. These teachers are deprived of any form of social security including pension, healthcare and insurance.

In some high population low income communities for instance in rural India, one teacher is responsible for as many as 250 students. Millions of teachers struggle to do justice in preparing lessons and attending to students individually. Millions of teachers continue to use unhygienic educational materials like soft chalks and thousands end up with respiratory diseases.

The ancient Asian culture of respect for teacher is rapidly diminishing. Teachers are less and less respected. Most of the best and the brightest do not enter the profession. The Teaching profession has become a last resort profession to many. Teachers are forced to take up multiple unprofessional jobs to augment their income and are distracted from their professional responsibilities.

Since the Jakarta Conference, EI and member organisations in the region have worked to address these obstacles and improve the welfare and status of teachers and education personnel by promoting human and trade union rights, professional development and drawing public attention to the important role of teachers.

Promoting Trade Union and Human Rights

Legislative barriers in many countries restrict free operation of unions and teachers organisations. Teacher organisations are not recognised as representative organisations with the rights to collective bargaining. They are viewed as professional organisations working only towards academic excellence. In some countries, teacher organisations are fragmented and weakened by some of these laws.

Teacher leaders from organisations that demand the rights to association and collective bargaining are at times critical of the governments are often threatened, harassed and discriminated against. Authorities continue to portray unions as organisations concerned only with salaries and ignore representation of unions in the decision making bodies and are not consulted. The anti-union campaigns have discouraged millions of new teachers and para teachers from joining organisations in fear of losing their jobs. Teachers' unions face difficulties in attracting and organising new recruits and the average age of union membership continues to increase. Many organisations lack resources to strengthen and contribute to improving the human and trade union rights situation in their countries.

EI conducted a three-day ASEAN Trade Union Rights Planning Workshop for 28 top leaders in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand to develop action plans to promote human and trade union rights and establish a network. Subsequently a Trade Union Rights Network ASEAN Sub-regional Conference was held in Kuala Lumpur from 27-29 June 2008 which was participated by 13 member organizations in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. As a follow up of the Conference, four National Workshops were held in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand to sensitise teacher leaders on the current human and trade union rights issues and improve understanding of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ILO instruments, complaints and supervisory mechanisms. EI is developing a manual to help member organisations in lobbying, campaigns and advocacy work in favour of human and trade union rights. An EI workshop on Human and Trade Union Rights was also organised for 22 teacher leaders from India, Sri Lanka and Nepal to develop action plans and deal with the upsurge of violation of the rights at the workplace.

EI and a consortium of EI member organisations, the Lararforbundet of Sweden, Union of Education Norway, OAL of Finland, and Australian Education Union are assisting EI members in four Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to transform into democratic, independent and sustainable trade union organisations. After a joint planning meeting in Kyrgyzstan two workshops in cooperation with the Lararforbundet of Sweden were held on "The Role of Teachers' Union in the Market Economy and Trade Union Leadership" to assist union leaders better understand the educational challenges and the solutions, concepts and principles of union leadership and administration. In 2009, 12 3-day workshops were held for the local and national leaders of the EI member organisations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

EI organised two separate workshops for 54 top leaders from the Alliance of Concerned Teachers, National Alliance of Teachers and Office Workers, Teachers' Organisations in the Philippines Public Sector, and Federation VIII of FFW in Manila, Philippines. The workshop on ILO instruments developed plans to promote ILO conventions and the workshop on promoting Environment, Human Rights and Peace Education made recommendations on improving grade 7-8 textbooks on the subject. Four separate EI workshops aimed at building capacity in promoting human and trade union rights were held for 54 women and 75 men leaders from the EI member organisations in Solomon Islands, Fiji and India. The workshops provided opportunity for better understanding of the tripartite mechanisms, labour laws registration regulations and ILO Core Conventions. The Vanuatu Teachers' Union, the Friendly Islands Teachers' Association, the Kiribati National Union of Teachers, the Solomon Islands National Teachers' Association and the Cook Islands Teachers'

Institute in cooperation with the COPE, AEU, NZEI, IEUA, and NZPPTA conducted activities on recruitment and trade union education, effective leadership and finances and negotiating skills.

In Cambodia, trade union leaders are constantly harassed and killed. In the last three years 3 top union leaders have been fatally shot, attempts on life were made on 12 leaders and hundreds were violently attacked mainly because these leaders were pressurising employers for better working conditions and wages. EI joined a campaign by trade union organisations, GUFs and the American Center for International Labour Solidarity condemning these attacks and calling on the government to prevent and punish all acts of violence against union leaders. Among the intimidated leaders is the President of the Cambodian Independent Teachers' Association (CITA) who was arrested and imprisoned for four months for making comments on the border treaty Cambodia reached with Vietnam.

The new Australian Parliament led by the Labour Party decided to halt the individual contracts which restricted union rights. The teachers unions along with other workers organisations had vigorously campaigned against the restrictive laws. The teacher organisations are still working to establish laws that ensure full implementation of trade union and human rights.

EI affiliate Nikkyoso, Japan Teachers' Union opposed the revision of 1947 Fundamental Law on Education bill and mounted a nationwide campaign against the revision. Several thousand teachers from all over the country demonstrated against the bill. The revision would have promoted a narrow view of nationalism, forced patriotism on students and teachers and affected teachers' freedom of expression.

The EI intervened to ensure that the ILO mission investigating violation of trade union rights in Japan consult the Japan Teachers' Union before making recommendations.

EI urged the Korean government to honour and respect the fundamental right to freedom of expression and release two teachers for uploading North Korean posters and information concerning politics. EI also wrote to the President of the Republic of Korea, urging to lift the penalty imposed on 430 teachers for publicly protesting against the imposition of the teacher evaluation system and urged the Government to involve teacher unions in the preparation and implementation of all education policies.

EI made representation to the government of Fiji to revoke the dismissal of Mr. Tevita Koroi, the President of Fiji Teachers' Association and member of the EIAPR Committee and immediately reinstate him to his teaching position. Mr Koroi was suspended by the Fiji's Public Service Commission alleging that he made a statement against the regime. Fiji's Military regime has imposed media control and restrictions on freedom of assembly. Fiji was suspended from the Commonwealth membership.

EI protested to the Myanmar Government on its crackdown on peaceful demonstration by the people and called on the government to release immediately those who have been unjustly arrested and imprisoned and to begin a process of genuine social dialogue to establish harmony and respect for people and human rights. An EI urgent appeal was sent to the government of the Philippines to address the issue of the extra-judicial killings of activists including two national officers of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers. EI wrote to the Prime Minister of Thailand expressing concerns about the level of violence in the south of the country and demanding that the government take steps to stop the destruction of schools and the killing of teachers including disrupting children's education.

Professional Development

In many Asian developing countries millions of untrained teachers are employed, duration of teachers' training reduced and in-service/specialised trainings are virtually non-existent. Because of the lack of training, which is compounded by low salaries and poor working conditions, many teachers are unable to do justice to their profession. Teachers' organisations are struggling to encourage professionalism. It has become ever so important for teacher organisations to promote Professional Ethics and the ILO/UNESCO recommendation among the membership.

The Asia Pacific region faces a shortage of 7.56 million trained teachers. Instead of training more teachers, public teachers' training institutes are either closed or privatised in a number of countries. There is a severe shortage of teachers in English, Mathematics and Science in most of the developing countries. Teachers' low wages are at the root cause of the teacher shortage. There is a need for teacher organisations to take initiatives in assisting professional development of all teachers. The EI Board has decided to become involved in designing and implementing quality teachers training programmes in resource stricken countries on a temporary basis until the governments are able to take over the programme.

A number of organisations in the Asia Pacific Region have their own Professional Code of Ethics. However, the organisations are unable to promote the Code due to lack of resources and are unable to enforce due to non-cooperative governments. EI held 4 separate seminars on Promoting Professional Ethics for 24 member organisations in 8 countries. The seminars attended by 139 top leaders from organisations in India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Cambodia, Singapore and Malaysia, drafted a Professional Code of Ethics for promotion in the respective countries and developed campaign plans to advocate participation of teachers' organisations in developing national codes of ethics.

The Korean Federation of Teachers' Association on 16th March 2007 submitted signatures of 112,886 teachers to the Presidential Committee on Education Innovation against the plan to extend teacher performance evaluation period from 2 years to 10 years. Other public officers and fire brigade officers are evaluated on a 3 year basis and provincial public officials on 1-3 years basis.

A number of professional development activities were held in India in cooperation with the All India Primary Teachers' Federation. In cooperation with the Canadian Teachers' Federation the project aimed at improving the teaching-learning environment in the schools especially the multi-grade teaching.

The Federation of the Mongolian Education and Science Unions (FMESU) held a number of activities in improving the teaching of English and upgrade English language training in cooperation with the Canadian Teachers' Federation and EI. In addition, a group of six Mongolian teachers were sent to Canada for further training as English teacher trainers.

EI and Australian Education Union, Canadian Teachers' Federation, National Education Association of the USA and SNES of France in the John Thompson Fellowship programme continue to train top leaders of the member organisations on professional and trade union skills, in developing planning models and strategies for organisational development in a three week course. Since the inception of the yearly programme in 1998 155 top leaders from 54 member organisations have been trained. In 2009, the programme is scheduled for 24 leaders from PGRI in Kuala Lumpur. Plans are being made to organise a JTF course for leaders in the South Pacific organisations in the first half of 2010.

EI and Action Aid jointly organised a seminar in Gurgaon, India in 2008 to discuss strategies of working together with NGOs, especially on the problems of non-professional teachers and Quality Education For All. 13 EI member organisations along with the equal number of participants from Action Aid and other NGOs, besides other strategies recommended advocating policies in favour of

employing professional teachers and building capacity of communities and NGOs to demand for professional teachers.

Drawing Public Attention to the Important Role of Teachers in the Societies

One of the most important documents that outline the role, responsibilities, and importance of teachers and the teaching profession is the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation on the Status of Teachers adopted on 5th October 1966 and the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Personnel adopted in 1997. These recommendations recognise teachers and their central role in nurturing and guiding infants, children, youth and adults through the life-long learning process. Every year on 5th October, teacher organisations commemorate the adoption of the recommendation celebrating the World Teachers Day to draw public attention to the important role of teachers within society.

EI member organisations in the region use this opportunity to review the implementation of the recommendation in their respective countries. EI in the last three years produced a number of World Teachers' Day promotional materials to assist member organisations in their activities. "Quality Teachers for Quality Education" has been the overarching theme for the WTD in the last four years. In 2006, the focus was "Better working conditions for Teachers Means Better Learning Conditions for Learners", in 2007 "Training for a Stronger Teaching Force!", and in 2008 "Teachers Matter" and in 2009 "Build the Future; Invest in Teachers Now".

In the last three years a number of activities on the World Teachers' Day were undertaken by the Australian Education Union, Cook Island Teachers' Institute, Fiji Teachers' Association, All India Federation of Teachers Organisation, Fiji Teachers' Union, All India Primary Teachers' Federation, All India Federation of Education Associations, Kiribati National Union of Teachers, Trade Union of Education and Scientific Workers in Kyrgyzstan, National Union of the Teaching Profession, New Zealand Educational Institute, All Pakistan Government School Teachers Association, Alliance of Concerned Teachers, Teachers' Organisation of the Philippines' Public Sector, SMP-National Alliance of Teachers and Office Workers, Solomon Island National Teachers Association, All Ceylon Union of English Teachers, All Ceylon Union of Teachers, National Teachers' Association, Friendly Islands Teachers' Association and Vanuatu Teachers Union. EI provided funds to the requesting member organisations in order to help organise activities on WTD.

Ending Discrimination in Education

More than half of the estimated 774 million adults without literacy skills are in Asia and 75% of the illiterates are women. Girls' education is hampered by poverty, teachers' attitudes, gender biased text-books and cultural and religious gender stereotypes. In many developing countries including India, Indonesia and Pakistan infant girls are less likely to survive than infant boys; girls are less likely to complete school; and on average women earn less and are in lower positions compared to men. 43 countries in Asia were not able to achieve the goal of Gender parity in education by 2005. The Millennium Development Goals and Education for All Dakar Goals will not be reached without ending discrimination against girls and women.

Discrimination on ethnic, racial, cultural, linguistic and religious grounds continues to divide people and marginalise millions of people. Indigenous people, ethnic and disadvantaged minorities in societies struggle for their rights including the right to appropriate education. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people are discriminated based on their sexual preferences.

Since the Jakarta Conference in 2006 EI and member organisations have worked to end all forms of discrimination by promoting education of marginalised and indigenous population, gender equity in education, union and society, girls education, celebrating women's day and establishing and operating women's network to promote women's activities.

Education of marginalised and Indigenous people

In many countries, including developed country like Australia, access to education for the indigenous groups, ethnic minorities and disadvantaged people is difficult and the completion rate of these groups remains low compared to the national average. Indigenous and tribal children continue to be deprived of education and are forced to child labour.

EI organised two separate seminars to promote minority rights and reconciliation in the Philippines for 50 leaders from 9 EI member organisations from Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia. Two workshops were organized by EI for 30 teacher leaders in Nepal and 28 teacher leaders in Sarawak to enhance capacity of EI members in promoting minority and ethnic rights, especially in education and within teachers' organisations. EI every year urged member organisations to join the struggle to end discrimination against Indigenous People on 9th August, the World Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Promoting Gender Equality

The Asia Pacific region has made reasonable progress in achieving gender equality in the areas of education and union leadership. However, achieving full-fledged equality between women and men is still far away. Inequalities are manifested in the lack of women's representation and participation at all levels, discrimination in employment and treatment and lack of support mechanism to ensure balance between family and work.

Sexual harassment and abuse, violence against women and girls including selective abortion, foeticide and infanticides, "honour" killing trafficking and spraying acid on face are among some horrendous acts that manifest discrimination against girls and women.

75% of about estimated 380 million illiterates in Asia are women. More than 80% of the poor living in under one dollar a day are women. Asia Pacific accounts for almost half of the maternal death worldwide. 300 out of 100,000 women die giving birth. In South Asia more than 200,000 women and children are trafficked across national borders. There are at least a million child prostitutes in Asia alone with the greatest numbers in India, Thailand, Taiwan and Philippines, and 30% of the women in prostitution in Cambodia are below the age of 17.

Young women in the Indian sub-continent account for 62% of HIV infections in the 15 – 24 year old age group. Girls remain more vulnerable to the HIV infection mainly due to poverty, marriage to older men, trafficking and prostitution, and the inability to make sexual decisions of choice.

Climate changes, economic crises, globalization and increased labour migration have contributed to the increase in the inequality. The lack of sex segregated data has worked against surfacing and addressing women's concerns and needs. Despite the increase in women's participation in unions, notably in South Asia, recruiting young women teachers and ensuring their active participation in union's activities are still among the major challenges faced by the teacher organisations in the region.

EI held a Pay Equity Seminar in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia for 29 top leaders of the FMESU to determine wages putting higher values on responsibilities rather than academic qualification. Two seminars were held in cooperation with COPE, AEU, NZEI, IEUA, and NZPPTA in Tonga and Fiji for teacher leaders from the Friendly Island Teachers Association and the Fiji Teachers Union on empowering women leaders in unions and in the implementation of the CEDAW.

In India, EI in cooperation with member organisations in the country held a number of activities which resulted in plans to secure 40% of leadership positions to women in AIPTF and 50% reservation for women under the AIFTO constitution.

In Indonesia, EI in cooperation with the CTF held a women empowerment and solidarity workshop for 33 women leaders of the PGRI which recommended the need to increase women's participation in the union decision making bodies and actively address issues relating to exploitation of women and violence against women. A PGRI women caucus held prior to the PGRI Congress adopted the recommendations of the workshop and consequently the PGRI Congress amended the constitution providing at least 30% leadership position to women.

Representatives of EI and member organisations continued to actively participate in the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York along with the PSI and ITUC representatives to deliver the trade union perspective on "violence against the girl child", "HIV/AIDS", "Equal Sharing of Responsibilities Between Men and Women" and many other gender issues.

Strengthening Women's Networks

The women's networks in the SAARC, ASEAN and COPE sub regions and the participating member organisations continue to play a significant role in promoting equality by organising educational programmes aimed at raising awareness and sensitising union leadership on gender issues. A number of trainings were held on union leadership skills and issue based trainings. A number of campaigns were organised for the adoption of policies to increase women's participation in the union decision making structures.

The EI activities focused on increasing women's recruitment and leadership in unions. Issues of importance for women mostly dealt in the network activities were violence against women, legal rights, HIV/AIDS, para-legal skills, maternity protection, discriminatory practices against the girl child and school centered programmes.

The EI women's network in ASEAN focused on Maternity Protection Benefits, COPE on Peace and Human Rights including legal literacy law and CEDAW and Convention on the Rights of the Child, whereas the SAARC region concentrated on Maternity Protection Benefits, capacity building, and participation of women in the decision making levels and education of the girl child. Initiating a women's network in North East and Central Asia is being planned.

At the regional level a joint seminar was organised to strengthen the SAARC and ASEAN Women's Networks in addressing women's concerns and shared the difficulties faced by unions in building, maintaining and running the women's networks. Twenty two committee members of SAARC Women's Network and ASEAN Women's Network participated in the 3 day seminar recommending the need to train young leaders and attain 50% leadership positions in unions.

At the SAARC sub-regional level two meetings were held to amend and edit publications in cooperation with the AEU and UEN for 6 member organisations from India, Sri Lanka and Nepal. An EI Women's Workshop was organised in Chennai to review the progress made by the member organisations in South Asia with regard to the promotion of the status of women in teachers' unions, education and society in the past three years.

In India, five women's network activities were held to promote girls education, maternity protection, and develop "Teachers' reading material on status of the Girl Child in the SAARC", "Role of women teachers and unions to motivate Girls' Education", "Information on help lines for counseling and behavioural change" and "Appeal card for the promotion of Maternity Protection Benefit". In Nepal, three network activities were held to promote unity among unions to solve problems of teachers, raise awareness on maternity protection and to improve participation of rural women in union activities. 90 women and 19 men leaders from EI members in Nepal participated in the activities. The women's network in Sri Lanka organised activities to recruit new members and train young women teachers.

At the ASEAN sub-regional level two meetings were held to review the progress of work, ensure completion of activities and plan future activities under the network. An editorial committee meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur to prepare a newsletter and launch a website. In cooperation with the FES a "South East Asian Sub Regional Women Conference" was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for 40 women leaders from NUTP, Sarawak Teachers' Union and Sabah Teachers' Union in Malaysia, SMP NATOW, ACT, TOPPS and FFW in the Philippines, NTTU and PSTAT in Thailand and PGRI in Indonesia and developed plans for 2009 to 2011 and also decided to build greater awareness on MDGs and Gender Equity.

A workshop on "Maternity Protection" was held in Kuching for 30 leaders of the Sarawak Teachers' Union. Two separate meetings were held in Indonesia and the Philippines to discuss women's issues and develop national action plans.

International Women's Day Celebrations

EI member organisations in Fiji celebrating International Women's Day on 8th March shared issues such as repercussions of violence against women in the workplace. The FTU and FTA celebrations were joined by the women members from the police force, the public sector unions, the nurses and bank staff from the private sector and members from the mothers club.

In Sri Lanka, the EI member organisations provided scholarships to 10 poor girls from the tsunami affected areas on the occasion of International Women's Day. In India, celebrating the International Women's Day, the AIPTF honoured the women and men leaders, who made exemplary contributions in promoting the cause of women in 22 states and welcomed the enactment of a government Act on Violence against Women and pledged to work in unity to save women and girls from all forms of violence.

Promoting Girls' Education

The majority of the 126 million children engaged in hazardous work in Asia are girls. Majority of the 5.7 million children trapped in forced and bonded labour are girls. Majority of the 1.39 million children involved in forced commercial and sexual exploitation are girls. Girls' retention rate in education is lower than boys. Societal pressures stop girls from going to schools and completing basic education. The value of girls' education is not appreciated by many in some communities. The action by the Taliban in Afghanistan to stop girls and women teachers from going to school is an example of how blatant the discrimination is against the girl child.

EI continues to actively participate in the activities of the UN commission on the status of women. Along with 250 other NGOs and UN agencies EI, PSI and ITUC made inputs in the areas of norms and policies, educations, health and child labour during the 51st session of the commission on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. In 2008 December 2, the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, EI called on governments to invest and increase access to education for all girls, respect and enforce laws that protect girls and women, take measures to halt trafficking and prosecute those guilty of perpetrating such crimes.

Preference of boys over girls is rampant in China and India. In China alone selected abortion has led to a situation where there are 32 million more boys than girls. This preference poses a major challenge in ending discrimination and promoting girls' education. Newly enacted laws in India and Indonesia on human trafficking and domestic violence try to address this issue.

Promoting Democracy, Independence, Sustainable Development and Solidarity

In order to ensure Quality Public Education for All, End All forms of Discrimination and Improve the Welfare and Status of Teachers and Education, teacher organisations in all countries need to be strong, independent, democratic, sustainable and in solidarity with like minded organisations within and across international borders.

A substantial time of the EIAP Regional Office is spent in assisting member organisations strengthen themselves into strong, independent and democratic organisations: not only to protect the interests of teachers and to promote quality education, but also to build civil society movements that will contribute to democratic development. The strength of EI is in the independence and the democratic practice of the member organisations.

EI's work included providing assistance in organising, recruiting and maintaining membership, developing leadership, promoting democratic elections and decision-making, alliance-building and networking and empowerment of women by mainstreaming gender issues. To this end number of activities were held during the period in cooperation with a number of cooperating organisations in developed countries. 32 organisations in 18 developing countries in the region benefited from this cooperation. There is a need to expand development cooperation work in the region and develop activities for member organisations that would benefit from the cooperation, for instance like EI member organisations in Bangladesh.

In India AIACHE, AIFTO, AISTF, AIPTF; in Nepal NTA, NNTA and TUN; in Sri Lanka, ACUT, ACUT(G), SLITU, CTTU, USLTS; in Indonesia the PGRI; in East Timor, the ETTU; in Mongolia, the FMESU; in Cambodia, the CITA, in the Philippines, the ACT, NATOW, TOPPS; in Malaysia, NUTP and STU Sarawak; in Afghanistan, the ATSA; in Tonga the FITA; in Solomon Islands the SINTA; in Fiji, the FTA and FTU; in Vanuatu the VTU; in Thailand, PSTAT, EST and NTTU; in Kazakhstan, the KNTUTSW; in Kyrgyzstan, the TUESWK; in Uzbekistan, NTUESWU participated in the development cooperation activities with the Japan Teachers' Union, Australian Education Union, Canadian Teachers' Federation, National Education Association of the USA, the Lararforbundet of Sweden, the Union of Education Norway, FNV and AOB of the Netherlands, SNES of France, British Irish Group, Danish Teachers' Union, Finish Teachers' Union, ILO, FES and others.

Getting Established

A newly established teachers' organisations in order to get established need EI support in recruiting members, collecting dues, developing democratic structures establishing branches and being recognised by other educational and trade union organisations. In the Asia Region EI member organisations in Afghanistan, Cambodia and East Timor are among those that need development cooperation support.

After the Taliban was defeated, the Afghanistan Teachers Support Association was established. It received assistance for office facilities, staff salaries and basic trade union seminars under the EI/Lararforbundet Cooperation. At the end of 2004 the ATSA membership reached 1,500 from around 50 members in 2000. The cooperation was suspended in 2005 as the President of the ATSA became less available for the union activities and in 2006, was appointed the Director of Adult Education in the Ministry. In 2008, the cooperation was revived. Recruitment activities are being undertaken and a national conference is scheduled later this year with EI support.

In Cambodia, under the EI programme in cooperation with the Lararforbundet of Sweden, the Cambodian Independent Teachers' Association increase membership from 350 to 8000 in four years, established union branches in 22 provinces and amended constitution promoting internal democracy. Despite the successes, the cooperation had to be suspended following accusations

against the President for unconstitutionally holding the Congress and undermining collective decision making. An EI mission this year will assess CITA's compliance to the EI's requests to follow the constitution. A new teachers' organization in Cambodia, NEAD (National Education Association for Development) has applied for EI membership.

Immediately after the establishment of the East Timor Teachers' Union, EI in cooperation with the Lärarförbundet of Sweden, Australian Education Union and the British Irish Teachers' Union supported a number of leadership and capacity-building trainings for members and Basic Union Management and Administration trainings for office bearers. Security situation in the country, continuous internal strife and emergency in the past three years led to the suspension of the programme. The situation is now returning to normalcy and the ETTU is planning to hold a national Congress later this year. EI is assisting the ETTU in drafting a more democratic and country appropriate constitution. EI and AEU are looking into the possibility of providing funds for activities and also for the reconstruction of the ETTU office building which was destroyed by the rioters.

Overcoming specific organisational difficulties

A number of teacher organisations lack their own resources to overcome a particular difficulty faced and require financial and human resource assistance from EI and other EI member organisations. The EI member organizations in Mongolia, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines are organisations which face specific difficulties.

The AIPTF in India with about 1.6 million members requires assistance to continuously upgrade leadership skills among thousands of its leaders at all levels. EI and Lärarförbundet of Sweden have been cooperating with the AIPTF in the union education programmes for almost 20 years under which study circles and training programmes aimed at improving organisational skills of the AIPTF leaders are held. Planning meetings in 2008 under the cooperation decided to assist AIPTF in addressing educational issues as well as those arising from the adoption of Right to Education Bill, the report of the 6th Pay Commission, the situation in Uttar Pradesh and the Supreme Court ruling on non-professional duties assigned to the primary teachers.

In Mongolia, FMESU after the fall of Soviet Union faced two major challenges, restructuring and expanding the organisation and training English language teachers. EI in cooperation with the Canadian Teachers Federation and FMESU developed a professional development programme under which a resource center was established and a number of English language teachers are trained every year both in Mongolia and Canada. In order to restructure and expand the organization, EI and Union of Norway assisted the FMESU to amend the existing constitution, recruit new members in rural towns and train them on union skills. The FMESU membership grew from 3,000 to 12,000 during the first four years of cooperation. Despite the progresses made the EI/UEN/FMESU cooperation was suspended following disruptions in the programme mainly due to internal conflicts in the organisation and an external evaluation report early this year.

In Nepal, the EI/UEN/NNTA/NTA joint unity programme started in 1995 with an aim to develop leadership in both organisations to work together and build a strong teacher organisation. As a result of the programme unity was built amongst teachers bitterly divided along political lines. The unity and the government decision to negotiate with only one organisation led NTA and NNTA to establish a federation called the Teachers' Union of Nepal. Despite the success of the cooperation it was temporarily suspended in 2009 mainly due to the duplication of programmes with the TUN project with the Danish Teachers' Union and disruptions in the activities outside of the capital caused by the fluid political situation. Nepal in 2008 became a republic abolishing 240 year long monarchy mainly as a result of armed Maoist insurgency for 12 years. The conflict between the insurgents and the Army displaced thousands of families and closed hundreds of schools affecting education. More than 1,500 teachers were maimed and killed in the conflict and thousands of students were kidnapped and indoctrinated in Maoism.

In the Philippines, EI and Lärarförbundet cooperate with TOPPS and NATOW to recruit new members and strengthen the organisations. The cooperation aims to organise the large number of unorganised teachers in the country by building capacity of the EI member organisations to run recruitment campaigns and play an effective role in collective bargaining.

In Sri Lanka, EI and UEN cooperation with the EI member organisations under a joint project aimed at recruiting new members was terminated following an evaluation which identified the lack of progress in recruitment.

Facilitating transformation

A number of organisations due to the political changes in the country need to redesign and transform into organisations able to meet the challenges posed by the changed situation. These organisations need assistance in developing new skills and redefining organisational culture to be successful in the changed political and economic order.

During the period under review EI worked with member organisations in Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan to train leaders, restructure the organisation, increase membership, improve finances, develop policies and assist in developing strategies to address the challenges faced by education and teachers and their organisations in the changed situation.

The Teachers' Association of the Republic of Indonesia (PGRI) decided to function not only as a professional body but also as a trade union after the fall of Suharto. The EI Consortium consisting of the Lärarförbundet of Sweden, Australian Education Union, Union of Education Norway, Japan Teachers' Union and National Education Union of the USA cooperated with the PGRI and trained more than 9,500 leaders and members on union skills and assisted in publishing newsletters. Due to the cooperation, the PGRI has shown significant signs of transformation.

At the PGRI provincial committee elections many bureaucrats, who used to dominate PGRI leadership, lost elections to classroom teachers. The PGRI has registered as a trade union organisation, took the government to court twice in order to enforce the constitutional provision of providing 20% of the national budget to education and won verdict in its favour. The PGRI Congress held in South Sumatera in July 2008 elected a new leadership more active in the transformation process. The cooperation is ongoing.

The EI member organisations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are in transition and need assistance to transform into unions to work effectively in the market economy. The EI Consortium for Central Asia was formed comprising of the Australian Education Union, Lärarförbundet of Sweden, OAJ of Finland, National Education Association of the USA and Union of Education Norway to assist them in transforming into a democratic, independent, transparent, strong and sustainable organization capable of operating in the market economy.

To that end, among others a series of union education activities were conducted and more are planned and are being undertaken in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In addition to union skills the cooperation also focus on raising awareness of the top and local leadership on human and trade union rights, EFA goals and the impact of the current situation on education. Activities in Uzbekistan also discussed child labour situation in the cotton plantations and the role of teacher organisation in combating child labour.

Strengthening EI and Promoting Membership Participation

It is important for all teacher organisations that EI remain strong as their voice in the international arena in order to strengthen international solidarity and influence decisions of the international

agencies. Greater and active participation of the member organisations in the EI activities strengthens the collective voice of teachers and ensure success of the EI work. .

EI member organisations are provided support to participate in EI campaigns, advocacy work and to participate at the EI conferences and congresses. EI has been encouraging and assisting member organisations to improve communication and internet facilities and establish regular exchange of information with members and with EI. EI caucuses and roundtables prior and during the EI conferences provide member organisation with opportunities to actively participate in formulating EI policies and give direction to EI work.

Membership and Membership Dues

EI membership in the Asia Pacific region is more than 9 million teachers in 75 organisations in 37 countries. The ASTE, New Zealand and Association of University of South Pacific, Fiji were admitted into EI membership during the period under review. A number of organisations in the region have applied for membership. The EI Board has decided to send the committee of experts on membership to Indonesia to investigate and make recommendations on the application for membership submitted by FPGI Indonesia.

As of 30th June 2009, out of 75 member organisations, 16 have not paid EI dues for the last three years. Out of 9 million members, EI dues are paid only for 918,700 members, of which 398,169 are from JTU and AEU. A number of EI member organisations in the developing countries face difficulties in paying EI dues. The EIAP Regional Committee formed a sub-committee comprising of Mr. P Ramanathan, Ms. Anah Suhaena Suparno and Mr. Mike Thiruman to make necessary recommendations on the membership and membership dues. A representation based on the recommendations of the sub-committee was made to the EI Board and EI Congress on the dues structure.

Communication

EI encouraged member organisations to improve communication using internet facilities. A number of EI member organisations in the developing countries now have web sites. The EI web site (www.ei-ie.org) has a section for the Asia Pacific Region. EI headquarters sends a number of newsletters electronically as well as printed on specific projects like child labour, EFAIDS and Human Rights.

A number of videos prepared by EI affiliates could be found in the internet and are useful for union work. EI also prepared a video on child labour. A number of manuals and kits are being published and sent to the EI member organisations in the region. Manuals on child labour and HIV/AIDS education are very useful for the use in the unions. A number of researches are produced every year. Two researches on privatisation of education were published in 2008.

The EIAP regional office produces a newsletter twice every year. A number of awareness raising kits on gender was published and distributed by the SAARC Women's Network. The Women Networks in SAARC and ASEAN produce Newsletters. EI national projects and development cooperation activities in some countries produce newsletters and devote significant amount of sum for different forms of communication. Under the EI/Lararforbundet of Sweden assistance funds were provided to 28 provincial branches of the PGRI to produce news bulletins and 24 provincial branches were provided with computers, printers and initial internet connection costs for provincial offices. Many EI member organisations and their affiliates have regular newsletters, in English and in their respective languages.

Funds were allocated to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to produce news bulletins and campaign brochures targeting the primary level, rayon (district) and oblast (provincial) leaders. EI provided a laptop and a LCD projector for the member organisations in these countries.

The TUESWR/Kyrgyzstan received assistance from EI to connect to the internet.

World Congress

The Education International 5th Triennial World Congress was held in Berlin, Germany from 22nd to 26th July, 2007 under the theme "Educators Joining Together for Quality Education and Social Justice". 1,686 participants, of whom 1140 were delegates from 331 member organisations from over 160 countries and territories, participated in the Congress.

The Congress adopted resolutions on the Strategic role of Educators, fixed-term higher education teaching personnel, Trade Union Rights Violations in Ethiopia, the Australian Government's incursion in to Aboriginal communities, joining together to build a more effective union movement, vocational education and training, defense and development of public education, education in correctional settings, the place of religion in schools, the school principals and school leadership, Quality education: present and future, "United for greater social justice", defending the Federación Colombiana de Educadores (FECODE) and teachers persecuted for trade union activity, cultural diversity, peace and an end to violence, higher education and research as a public service, gender and pay equity, international migration, solidarity with Iraqi workers, the Situation in Oaxaca, Mexico, the situation in Peru, the situation in the Higher Education system in France, the situation in the Philippines.

Ms. Susan Hopgood of Australian Education Union was elected Vice President of the EI Executive Board. Among the Asian members elected to the Board were Mr. Grahame McCULLOCH - NTEU Australia, Mr. ESWARAN - AIPTF India and Ms. Lok Yim Pheng - NUTP Malaysia and Mr. Yasuo MORIKOSHI-JTU, who retired last year and was replaced by Mr. Yuzuru NAKAMURA- JTU Japan,

Regional Committee Meetings

Apart from a short meeting immediately after the last Regional Conference in Jakarta, the regional committee met three times during the last three years.

In 2007 the committee met in Kathmandu, Nepal on 11-12 May and decided to follow up on the EIAPR Conference resolutions especially on the ones which require EI Regional Committee and EI Asia Pacific Office to undertake actions and submit them to the Executive Board in order to reflect regional concerns in the World Congress Resolutions. A sub-committee was formed to make recommendations on the dues structure after looking into the difficulties faced by the member organisations in paying EI membership dues. The meeting adopted the recommendations made by the development cooperation meeting in Kathmandu from 9-10 May 2007 and the regional report submitted by the EI regional office.

Expressing solidarity with the affiliates in Nepal, the NNTA and NTA in their struggle against the decentralisation of education the Regional Committee participated in a picketing action on 11th May 2007 outside the Ministry.

In 2008, the committee met in Chaing Mai, Thailand from 5-6 June adopted the regional report and mandated the regional office to continue undertaking activities to contribute to attaining Quality Public Education for All, full implementation of Human and Trade Union Rights, ending discrimination and strengthening member organisations. The meeting applauded the efforts of the EI staff working for the reconstruction work for the tsunami affected places in Ache and Sri Lanka. It also decided to work to seek participation of the EI member organisations in the commonwealth countries in the "teachers' forum", which runs alongside the commonwealth education ministers meeting in Malaysia. The meeting formed a sub-committee comprising of Ms. Susan Hopgood, Mr. S Eswaran, Mr. P Ramanathan, Ms. Anah Suparneo and Mr. Mike Thruman to study the impact of EI activities in the Asia Pacific region and propose strategies to effectively address problems arising from the changes in government policies

The meeting proposed amendments to the EIAPR by-laws to bring it in accordance to the EI

constitution after the EI World Congress decision in Berlin to hold Congresses every four years.

In 2009, the Committee met in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 11-12 March and adopted resolution urging both sides in Sri Lanka to refrain immediately from violent response and find a lasting and peaceful solution to the conflict. The committee also adopted a resolution urging the Korean government to immediately reinstate teachers dismissed for refusing to test students using government standardised tests.

The committee welcomed the opportunity provided by the "World Conference on Women", scheduled to be held in the Asia Pacific region either in 2009 or 2010. The Conference is now scheduled to be held in Bangkok in May 2010.

The committee decided to hold the 6th EIAP Regional Conference under the theme "Asia Pacific Teacher Organizations' Response to the Global Crises" and directed the EI regional office to look into the possibilities of holding the Conference from 28-30 September 2009 in one of the following countries;- 1. Cambodia 2. Thailand 3. Malaysia 4. Singapore

Assessing Impact of EI activities in the Region

The EI regional office assisted the EI AP sub-committee formed during the last Committee Meeting in Chiang Mai to study the impact of EI activities and the development cooperation activities and propose strategies to more effectively address organisational problems as well as those arising from the changes in government policies. The sub-committee conducted a survey and met on 25-26th February 2009 in Singapore to analyse the findings. The preliminary findings were presented to the EIAPR Committee Meeting in Kuala Lumpur. The report will be discussed during the conference.

Cooperation with Other Organisations

EI and PSI on 8th May 2008 signed a Memorandum of Understanding to continue close cooperation in promoting quality public services, empowering members and taking advantages of working together locally, nationally, within and across regions, and globally. The cooperation will promote quality public services, economic and social justice, achievement of Millennium Development Goals, Human and trade union rights, gender equality, non-discrimination and equal opportunities, strengthening unions and international trade union movement.

EI continues close cooperation with the sub-regional groupings of the EI member organisations, the Council of Pacific Educators, ASEAN Council of Teachers, North Asia Forum and the SAARC Teachers' Federation.

In 2006, EI assisted the SAARC Teachers' Federation to organise a sub-regional seminar on HIV/AIDS and hold a conference in Colombo on 1-3 December 2006. In 2009, EI cooperated in organizing STF Conference in Kerala, India from 27-28 August 2009 under the theme "Global Economic Crisis; Achieving Education for All and Strengthening Teachers' Union to Meet the Challenges" and a workshop on the theme from 26-27 August 2009.

EI continues maintaining relations with the ASEAN Council of Teachers and attend meetings and conferences of the council. EI and ACT organised a Seminar on "ASEAN Teachers' Organisations Promoting Quality Education for All" and discussed Education Policies, Legislations and Practices, Resource Mobilisation, Curriculum, Textbooks and Education Materials, Teachers' Training and Support Services, and Social Dialogue.

EI participates in the regular meetings among the regional GUFs on various issues. EI continues to participate in the ITUC consultations. EI actively leads the ITUC/GUFs Tsunami Committee at the regional level. The ITUC-GUFs Workers Welfare Center in Aceh, Indonesia conducted a number of vocational and trade union trainings. The center donated computers and furniture to the unions, printed newsletter and the constitution of six unions for distribution. A Consultative Committee was established on 9 June 2007 to assist in identifying and implementing the post tsunami programmes.

EIAP participated in the ITUC seminar on "Core Labour Standards and IFIs" held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 12-13 March 2008. The seminar participated by 30 trade union leaders from Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan discussed the new IFI frameworks securing implementation of the core labour standards in the IFI projects. Representatives of PSI, ITF, IBW, and IMF also attended the programme. EI also participated in the ITUC seminar on "core labour standards" held in Selangor, Malaysia from 6-8 May 2009 along with the GUF representatives and the trade union centers from Malaysia, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Philippines, Singapore and Cambodia.

For the fifth year in a row, EI member organisations the Korean Federation of Teachers' Associations (KFTA) and the Japanese Teacher Union (NIKKYOSO) jointly held a three-day seminar on peace education together with the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU). Entitled "Sino-KoreanJapanese Teacher Unions' Exchange on History and Peace Education Material", the seminar was held for the first time in Beijing, China. The theme of this year's seminar was "classes about the Second World War and the Japanese Occupation". Representatives from each country made presentations on how classes were delivered about the subject in their country.

Representatives of EI and EI member organisations actively participated in the Commonwealth Teachers' Forum organised in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia prior to the Commonwealth Ministers' Meeting and made contributions in drafting a Commonwealth policy statement on education. Ms. Susan Hopgood Vice President of the EIAP Regional Committee was part of the delegation from the Australian Education Union to the Forum.