**Activity Report COM 2014**

*Unite for Quality Education Campaign*

The main task for the Communications Unit in 2014 was the on-going implementation of the Unite for Quality Education campaign. To this end, the unit developed, elaborated and executed the communications strategy for the campaign and led the design, development and deployment of the campaign hub, [www.unite4education.org](http://www.unite4education.org). In addition, the unit designed and produced collateral materials such as banners, posters, stickers and buttons etc., which were widely distributed in numerous events. The unit was also instrumental in facilitating the culmination events in six different locations of the world, developing materials and outreach activities.

The campaign hit full stride in 2014 and gathered momentum around the world. 80organisations in 61 countries held 391 Unite events throughout the year, which spread the message of the campaign and help solidify it as brand for quality education. Many of these events were turned into entries into the dedicated blog, thus multiplying their outreach to other members. The simple logo of three smiley faces, representing a positive way forward, along with the three pillars, was universally embraced by affiliates, partner organisations, and even governments, who integrated EI's line of argument into their own when discussing Post-2015 topics.

* *One million voices*

One of the main outreach initiatives for Unite involved the gathering of video messages supporting quality education from around the world. Education leaders, EI partners, and teachers submitted short video messages that were used to promote the campaign and its reach. A specific app was created for this purpose, which allowed the use of smartphones and other mobile devices, going beyond the computer-based communication, and thus reaching millions of users in the developing world who do not use computers but tablets or smartphones.

* *Montreal conference*

The Unite mid-term conference held in Montreal in May was a great success that brought together more than 360 participants dedicated to improving the quality of education. The event saw leaders of education delve into deep discussion and debate, resulting in four days of ideas, strategizing and networking. The event generated a large presence on twitter, with mentions and retweets totalling more than 3 million.

* *Culmination events*

To mark the first full year of Unite, the campaign embarked on a culmination tour that saw EI’s president and general secretary visit six countries on six continents over the course of two weeks. Beginning in Sydney, Australia, and touching down in Delhi, India, Pretoria, South Africa, Brussels, Belgium, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and finally New York, USA, the campaign events went truly global. Rallies turned out huge crowds, including 13,000 alone in India. In New York for the United Nations General Assembly, both EI and the Unite Campaign were front and centre at the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) high level meeting, where numerous world leaders freely integrated the campaign’s message into their remarks. The campaign’s presence set the stage for this year’s UN vote to finalise the next global development agenda.

The official Unite culmination event, where EI hosted affiliates, partners and political leaders in New York, was an opportunity to celebrate the success of the campaign to date, and provided the perfect opportunity to focus on the challenges ahead. Speakers, such as UN Global Education Envoy Gordon Brown, and the UN Secretary General Special Advisor on Education Amina Mohammad, were joined by classroom teachers from around the world. Each came to New York with their personal experiences of life at the head of the class, which participants were eager to hear.

* The campaign's first phase ended on World Teacher's Day. To this end, on www.5oct.org, an interactive online tool based on Ushahidi open-source software was developed, which captured messages of support for Quality Education. Over 750,000 tweets, email messages, and SMS messages were recorded and displayed on a map to showcase the universal support for Quality Education throughout the world.

*EI Main Web Portal*

The EI Web Portal aims to be the core channel of communications between Education International, its member organisations, individual education workers and the public. To this end, 376 news items were published on the main portal in the course of 2014. Moreover, the Communications Unit assisted in the development and implementation of 6 surveys, making use of the open-source on-line survey tool, Limesurvey, and the commercial tool, SurveyGizmo. Throughout the year, technical maintenance of the portal was undertaken to eliminate software bugs and further enhance usability both of the backend and the frontend.

*Worlds of Education and Regional Bulletins Online*

Education International's now fully online magazine *Worlds of Education* has reached its 44th edition. The magazine increases the impact of EI's work and gives it a strong argumentative and scientific support. Two issues have been launched in 2014, with contributions from academics and experts on educational subjects.

*Social Media and Online Services*

The impact social media can have for awareness-raising and community building makes engagement through the different channels and services available today essential for the success of advocacy work-flows. In the course of 2014, EI not only maintained its presence in established services such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Flickr, but also engaged with its target audiences by maintaining accounts with up-and-coming social media sites such as Google+, Pinterest and Tumblr. Timely updates to these accounts were ensured by refining and maintaining a dlvr.it instance and a Hootsuite account. The Twitter account for the General Secretary has also been updated on a continuous basis. Moreover, to make the presentation of EI publications more attractive and offer reading possibilities for users wishing to utilise tablet computers or e-readers, a number of EI publications were made available online through Issuu.

*Electronic Outreach*

In 2014, we continued sending out various electronic news briefs, such as In Focus, Staying United, CONNECT, the ETUCE Newsletter, and the ETUCE Press Releases. A new one was added, called 'e-Activist', in order to highlight specific campaigns and engage with our member organisations and affiliates on a direct basis, asking them to become active in the face of a certain issue, and not only passively receiving information. The total grand number of subscribers to our newsletters at the end of 2014 reached nearly 46,000 to which 398 newsletters overall were sent in the course of the year. Moreover, 12 press releases were issued electronically, making use of a global database of press contacts.

*EI Subsites and Online Campaigns*

World Congress 2015 – Website and Registration System

The huge success of the World Congress in Cape Town in 2011 established the web as primary communications channel for Congress preparation, publicity and organisation. To streamline this facility even further, the Communications Unit has started refining the usability design and information architecture of the different modules and features.

World Congress 2015 – Mobile app

Development has started on a mobile application (Android, iOS, Windows Phone, Windows 8) for Congress.

ETUCE Special Conference 2014 – Website and Registration System

Mirroring the experience of Congress and the previous Regional Conference, this system was developed to facilitate registration and participant information in much the same way.

On the move for Equality – Website and Registration System

Mirroring the experience of Congress and Regional Conferences in the European Region, this system was developed to facilitate registration and participant information in much the same way.

Online Campaigns

The web is an important platform for campaigning and EI ensures that all its campaign efforts contain a strong web element. Examples of EI campaigns such as Global Action Week, World Day Against Child Labour or World AIDS Day all made use the web as an interactive tool to communicate with member organisations. Other campaigns made use of dedicated web properties in a variety of ways to increase EI’s visibility and expand its support base further into the education community, such as the following:

* *World Teachers’ Day* Over the last years, EI has received increasing feedback from grassroots teachers and students during WTD. This year, the unit cooperated closely with UNESCO to facilitate the launch of a new WTD page, www.worldteachersday.org
* *Teacher Migration* The 6th World Congress mandated the EI Secretariat to develop a campaign around the issues of migrant teachers. The Communications Unit facilitates and accompanies the design and development of the campaign website.
* *Teachers Advancing a Rights Culture* EI partnered with the American Federation of Teachers to initiate an international project o advance human and trade union rights. As one of the three main pillars of the project, communication and community building (especially through social media) are essential and important elements of the TARC project and will receive special attention in the evaluation of the project. The Communications Unit developed a web space to provide a place where information about activities and resources may be aggregated, not only in order to make information accessible and to facilitate reporting, but also to provide a platform to give global visibility to national activities (without national partners losing ownership or project partners being excluded) and to archive all materials and reports on outcomes. Based on the EI web portal’s infrastructure, the proposed web space has a modular, networked structure. As the cultural, organisational and technical situation in the project countries will vary considerably, the country modules can be adapted to the needs of the cooperating partners in the countries concerned. They can be revised and integrated subsequently into the existing global structures. Complimentary to these information hubs, social media streams can be developed and implemented to take advantage of opportunities for participating in both national and global social media.

*Events coverage*

* *On the move for equality* The unit developed a communications plan including social media (Twitter and Facebook) and collateral for the conference. Three news items were issued, a photographer hired and several videos shot on Unite and gender equity policies.
* *Global Education Conference*

The Communications Unit facilitated and accompanied the design and development of the conference website. In addition, the unit developed a communications plan and collateral for the conference.

* *Unite for Education culmination events*

- In Brussels, Belgium: the EI COM unit helped ETUCE create a video presenting the various Unite activities throughout European affiliates in 2014, and shoot footage at the event for a global video presenting Unite campaign culmination events worldwide. The unit developed a communications plan including social media (Twitter and Facebook) and collateral for the event.

- In Buenos Aires, Argentina: the EI COM unit participated in the event on site, working together with the Latin American regional office.

* *WTD*

An EI delegation was present at the UNESCO headquarters on 6-7 October to celebrate World Teachers’ Day. The video “One Day in the Life” linked to the EI Unite for Quality Education campaign was screened. At this occasion, EI, together with Oxfam-Novib, also received the UNESCO-Hamdan Prize for their joint programme, “Quality Educators for All”, in Mali and Uganda.

* *Second EI ACCRS Conference*

The unit developed a communications plan including social media (Twitter and Facebook) and collateral for the conference. Three news items were issued, and several interviews with key trade union leaders from the region.

* *Montreal Conference* (see above)

*Publications*

The unit contributed to the editing and lay-out of several print publications released by diverse EI Units. It also published the 2013 EI Annual Report. The Unit was also instrumental in publishing featured articles in advocacy publications such as G7, G20, OECD Yearbook, and the MDG Summit.

*Documentary film - A Day in the Life*

This year also brought the completion and release of EI’s anticipated documentary film “A Day in the Life,” which profiled and followed six teachers from around the world for one day. The film was quickly celebrated for its in-depth look at the realities, positive and otherwise, that teachers are facing in their work. Affiliates and partners of EI were eager to share the film that “positively revealed the tireless work that teachers carry out, no matter the conditions, or in some cases, lack of resources.”

The film was also a resource in itself as two of the teachers featured were invited to join EI in New York for the Unite for Quality Education Culmination event.

The communication team is continuing to find future opportunities to showcase the film and continue its positive message.

*Outreach activities*

The EI COM unit was present at two national congresses of our affiliates in the USA: AFT and NEA, with a booth in the exhibition area. It allowed to reach out to over 4000 members and to include them in the campaign through video statements.

*ComNet*

A successful ComNet meeting brought together a large number of Communication Officers from EI affiliates to join forces for the Unite campaign and share experience and best practices.