



Education International 6th World Congress - Monday, 25 July 2011

World Congress Newsletter

Building the future through quality education

www.ei-ie.org/congress6 • www.twitter.com/eduint • www.facebook.com/educationinternational • <http://go.ei-ie.org/flickr>

Breakout sessions help to transform policy into practice

The third day of the World Congress offered participants a series of opportunities to engage in discussion within breakout sessions that centred on the core education and trade union themes of the quadrennial gathering for teachers and education workers.

The global financial crisis served as an underlying theme in several sessions. In 'Future Financing of Education' (session 4), participants explored the consequences of the financial crisis and new methods of funding education, such as the Financial Transaction Tax and the role of international financial institutions in public education.

In 'Education as Part of the Solution to the Economic Crisis?' (session 8), speakers from the OECD and a variety of unions analysed how all levels of education contribute towards financial stability and encouraged education unions to lobby for social and



Panellists discuss during a breakout session.

economic justice through alliances with other civil society organisations, NGOs and governments.

'Implementing our education policy' (session 1) explored the detail of EI's new, comprehensive education policy, that was

approved by Congress on Saturday, and covered how to collaborate with other organisations to institutionalise education policies on international, national and local levels. Significantly, representatives of the World Bank expressed agreement with EI's definition of quality education.

Education is part of the solution to economic crisis

How can education contribute to tackling inequity and poverty and bring about social inclusion? What is the role of teachers and their unions? These were some of the questions debated by panellists and participants from all regions in one of yesterday's breakout sessions.

'The role of education is as much about contributing to economic development as it is about human rights, social cohesion and democratic participation,' said Patrick Roach of NASUWT (UK) who chaired the session.

'What kind of development do we want for our future? Should tomorrow's education merely strengthen economic markets or should it empower critical and engaged citizens?' asked Pedro Sanllorenti from CONADU (Argentina).

Discussion within the session also focused on ways to ensure long-term recovery and sustained funding for quality public education at all levels. The OECD's Dirk van Damme emphasised: 'It is not about whether there should be investments in education, but rather how to ensure those investments'.

Pat Forward of AEU (Australia), insisted that vocational education and training is critical to the economic recovery in all countries, while the Global Campaign for Education President, Camilla Croso, encouraged education unions to lobby for social and economic justice through alliances with other civil society organisations, NGOs and governments.

Today's programme

09.00–12.30 Congress Plenary Programme and Budget 2012-15 Resolutions

12.30–14.00 Lunch break

13.30–14.00 Presentation of VUE Project Video: A Wave of Solidarity

14.00–17.00 Congress Plenary Resolutions

**19.00–24.00 EI Awards Evening Reception
Awards Ceremony
Gala Dinner (ticket only)
Dancing and music**

Quiz of the day

1. How many years did Nelson Mandela spend in prison for resisting Apartheid in South Africa?
a. 24 b. 27 c. 30

2. What will the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012 focus on?
a. Skills development: Expanding opportunities for marginalised groups

b. The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education

c. Overcoming inequality: why governance matters

3. From which countries were the 2007 EI Congress Awardees Ernestine Akakpo-Gbofu, Racquel Castro and Samuel Morales?

a. India and Ethiopia b. Togo and Colombia c. Antigua & Barbuda and Algeria

Yesterday's quiz answers:

1.c; 2.a; 3.a

Winner: Farah Abdillahi Miguil (SYNESED, Djibouti)

Send your name and answers to: claud@ei-ie.org.

Campaign of the day

Global Education Program (Australia)

The Global Education Program (GEP) serves to raise awareness and understanding among Australian teachers and school students about international issues, development and poverty from a cross-curricular perspective. It empowers learners to become active citizens in an increasingly globalised world.

The GEP website provides background material on a range of issues supported by case studies, teaching activities and Australian learning quests. The website also contains country profiles, discussion groups, a monthly newsletter and links to selected resources that are valuable in the classroom.

With the UN General Assembly declaring 2011 as the 'International Year of Forests' to raise awareness of sustainable management, development and conservation of all types of forests, one example of how the GEP website acts as a global platform to celebrate people's action to sustainably manage the world's forests is the 'Forests: a global perspective' initiative.

This project seeks to engage teachers and students in a celebration of forests by increasing understanding of sustainable use of forests. The GEP site proposes activities and resources for students from various age groups, and includes:

- a schools calendar, including month-by-month 'Be a Detective' activities to encourage students to identify how forests and the environment are being protected;



Mountains stripped of forests for intensive agriculture. Photo by Patrick Durst

- Reading materials and quizzes about the planet's ancient forests and animals, as well as puzzles, interactive resources and games;

- Video resources on how society can combat climate change by conserving and managing existing forests, tackling causes of deforestation and planting new trees;

- an interactive Glossary of Planned Actions where students can share their ideas to save rainforests; and

- Forest photos to be used for educational purposes.

Greenpeace Executive Director, Kumi Naidoo, will be addressing Congress today at 11:00 after which delegates will debate the resolution on climate change.

To learn more about the Global Education project visit: <http://www.globaleducation.edna.edu.au/globaled/go>

To learn more about access the forests global project visit:

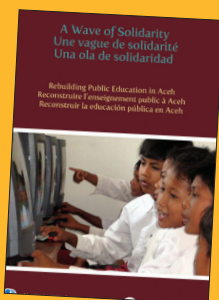
<http://www.ozprojects.edu.au/course/view.php?id=172>

Video of the Day

A wave of solidarity

10 min. EI VUE Project (EI – Oxfam Novib – Parachute Pictures). Showing today, 12.30–14.00 Plenary Hall

After the catastrophic tsunami of December 2004, EI undertook its most ambitious development cooperation project ever – to build and equip 35 schools in the devastated region of Aceh, Indonesia. In doing so, EI helped thousands of teachers and students to rebuild their lives and their hopes for the future. Watch this film to see the impact of teacher unions' support.



Swaziland

In April 2011, the Swazi regime brutally repressed a teachers' union demonstration which was calling for the repeal of a 1963 Public Order Act which restricts trade union activities, and the suspension of salary cuts in public services.

EI wants major changes to be enacted to enable the Swaziland National Association of Teachers to be a strong voice for fundamental rights and democracy.

You can use this postcard in your campaign and advocacy work.

Contact EI for support and get in touch with your union.



Teachers promote inclusive institutions

El Deputy General Secretary, Jan Eastman, encouraged participants in the inclusive education breakout session to devise practical union-based experiences that respect children's experiences and realities in order to secure Education for All (EFA).

Sylvia Borren, from Global Call to action Against Poverty, insisted that inclusive education was possible but more needed to be done to achieve it. She noted the leadership El was giving on the issue, through the comprehensive education policy, and challenged delegates to ensure inclusive education did not remain a 'dream' but the 'biggest ambition that El should foster on paper and in implementation'.

The gender gap, stereotypes and barriers in education were addressed by El's Co-ordinator for Arabic-speaking countries, Huda Khoury, who explained that EFA is a major challenge especially for girls and women. She encouraged participants and trade unions to: "invest in female education and help in social and economic development of countries."

Fatima da Silva, from CNTE (Brazil), described how teaching in a multicultural setting is increasingly important. "Inclusive



Participants listen to discussions during the breakout session on inclusive education..

education can be transformed into reality but teachers working in schools must be trained in public universities, and have access to continuous training."

Christine Blower, from NUT (UK), emphasised the role of unions in valuing diversity and respect: "As trade unionists, we must provide anti-racism awareness training, be visible at Black and LGBT prides, and link this to work that our unions do to oppose privatisation, because when you

move from public education, you are more likely to have a narrower curriculum that is not inclusive, and does not promote skills for problem-solving or working together." Carmen Vieites, from FETE-UGT (Spain), shared experiences of education unions and inter-cultural classrooms, before presenting her union's Aula Intercultural programme, which provides 4,000 resources on inclusive education, and uses technology for students to learn tolerance and respect towards each other.

El addresses teacher migration issues

Sunday's Teacher Migration Forum has provided a valuable platform for Congress participants to discuss El's new campaign on teacher migration and mobility, and to exchange views on the positive and negative aspects of migration.

Participants learned how international labour mobility, and teacher migration, could benefit individual migrants, their social networks, and their countries of origin and destination. However, movement was not without implications for migrants' working conditions, labour rights and social protection. This impeded progress towards the decent work agenda for all.

Moderating the Forum, NEA (USA) President, Dennis Van Roekel, said: "Many migrants do not fully benefit from their employment rights, because of the absence of regulations and protection for migrant workers. Exploitation of migrant teachers often occurs at the hands of employers and



Congress hears the stories of exploited migrant teachers

recruitment agencies, mainly as a result of unethical recruitment and employment practices. This includes charging exorbitant fees, poor pay, and loss of qualified teacher status or even harassment, all of which leave women migrants particularly vulnerable."

Van Roekel also shared his recent experiences of defending the rights of NEA members who are migrant teachers.

The Forum focused its deliberations on the education unions' response to migration, and discussed the new Migration Campaign that was adopted by El's Executive Board.

News in brief

Vocational Education

El's Vocational Education and Training (VET) Taskforce met with Congress participants yesterday to discuss goals for the year ahead and re-visit guidelines in the context of recent trends in vocational education. A policy document outlining the guiding principles was adopted, and discussion centred on how to best implement the policies internationally.

Commonwealth Teachers

The Commonwealth Teachers' Group (CTG) convention brought together EI affiliates in Commonwealth countries to discuss experiences towards achieving Education for All through the economic crisis, access to quality teacher training and equality, while preparations for the upcoming Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers' (CCEM) and Teachers' Forum also featured on the agenda. The CTG also elected new officers.

Francophone education

The Comité syndical francophone de l'éducation et de la formation (CSFEF) met yesterday evening to discuss education and trade union issues in francophone nations, and to co-ordinate action at an international level. Panellists include union representatives from Africa, Europe and the Caribbean, as well as the EI Executive Board, who discussed the need for francophone trade unions' voice at the international level.

Delegate of the day

Yamile Socolovsky (CONADU, Argentina)

Political Philosophy tutor and General Coordinator of CONADU's Study and Training Institute

What are the biggest challenges to higher education in Latin America?

The biggest threat comes from those who are trying to apply market rules to academic activity. Our challenge is to strengthen public higher education systems and promote regional integration, underpinned by the principles of solidarity and democracy.

What impact are these challenges having on higher education in Latin America?

The segmented expansion of our systems tends to reproduce social inequalities in education. International pressure on academic activity imposes criteria that limit national sovereignty and our capacity



to define our own goals and models for higher education and research.

What will happen at the 2012 higher education conference in Buenos Aires?

The conference will give an interesting context for our debates because it will be held in a region where an important political process is underway for those of us who are fighting for equality and democracy. It will also be a major stimulus for the trade union coordination we are working for in Latin America.

Panellists share strategies for building better unions

Facing political, economic and ideological attacks, how can we become stronger together? Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the ITUC, explored this question with four panellists:

EI Vice-President, Juçara Dutra Vieira, spoke of the effort to organise more than 400 municipal, provincial and national unions into a single coalition. Along with civil society groups, they mounted a campaign to highlight the links between national external debt and a decline in educational opportunities for the nation's children.

Mariama Chipkaou, Secretary General of SNEN in Niger, spoke of the difficulties in countries with a multiplicity of education unions. While some leaders struggle to unite teacher unions under a single banner, she described how it is all too easy for governments to undermine these efforts and manipulate one union against the others. The experience in Niger illustrates the importance of unity, she said.

Anders Bondo Christensen, Chairman of the Danish Teachers' Union, described how even though there are many teachers' organisations in Denmark, they have



A delegate shares his views on building union membership

created structures and coalitions to cooperate on collective bargaining and policy development. If problems arise, they are resolved through discussion based on shared union values.

Roustan Job, President of the Caribbean Union of Teachers, described how the teacher unions co-operate on youth training programs and solidarity work. He also explored the practical role of educators, especially after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, where Caribbean teachers worked together to help victims of the disaster.