



asia-pacific Newsletter

EI: STOP MIXING EDUCATION WITH BUSINESS

Stop commercializing education for the future good of our children—this is a loud and clear message from the Education International (EI) Asia Pacific regional committee which met in Bali on September 27th and 28th, 2011. It unanimously urged all member organizations to take appropriate actions to put an end to this abuse.

The committee pointed out that the Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the field of education in most countries were eroding the government’s role in education.

AEU General Secretary and the President of EI, Ms. Susan Hopgood, felt that it was necessary to highlight the importance of quality public education in order to fight all forms of privatization and commercialization in Education.

She added that the main reasons why PPPs were flourishing was because parents were willing to pay more for the education of their children and governments

have failed to provide quality education.

Meanwhile, research has shown that there is no evidence that PPPs provide long-term cost savings for public budgets, nor do they provide greater efficiency, innovation, or superior discipline to government procurement.

The premises used to argue for the private operation of public schools are of doubtful validity and that the supposed benefits of private sector operating practice are unproven.

However, some governments in developing countries are constrained by high levels of public debt and have resorted to PPPs.

The EI Taskforce recommendations oppose the outsourcing of education and related services that are traditionally provided by public education systems and institutions.

The Taskforce also recommended that where governments persist with PPPs, education unions should endeavour to engage

with governments in order to safeguard working and learning conditions, professionalism, the ethos of public education, and to achieve transparency in PPP contracts.

It further recommended that affiliates which have not adopted a policy on PPPs in education, initiate policy development in this area as a matter of priority.

Another recommendation was that education unions should challenge the inappropriate use of the term "partnership" to disguise forms of commercialization and privatization.

"PPP is a move to help commercialization and privatization of our public education system."

It has also backed a campaign for the removal of limits on government borrowings for

the purpose of funding education infrastructure. EI and its member organizations emphasized that education and training were critical to economic recovery, and that the rights of the most vulnerable must be protected. There is a need to develop a protocol for participation in Multi Stakeholders' Partnerships in Education based on EI policies.

In another development, the All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF) workshop

"PPP is against children, parents and teachers"

on PPP held in Bihar, India has decided to oppose PPP. The workshop decided that protest on the PPP should begin by carrying out the following activities immediately in all states.

- Organize state level press conferences against PPP.
- Draft memorandums in each state and submit to the respective governors.
- Take civil society, political parties and community leaders, on board.
- Educate on the dangers of PPP.
- Organize state level protest rallies and signature and letter campaigns.
- Join hands with other forums through NCE in protesting PPP at the national level.
- Submit AIPTF position paper to the HRD Minister, President and Prime Minister of India.

"PPP is not a child friendly initiative."

Protecting Minority Rights & Promoting Dialogue and Understanding

E I Asia Pacific Regional office in consultation with the EIAPR Committee conducted a **Minority Rights seminar in India, and another seminar on promoting Dialogue and Understanding with the member organizations was held in Nepal.**

The Minority Rights seminar was attended by more than 30 leaders from All India Primary Teachers' Federation, All India Secondary Teachers' Federation, All India Federation of Teachers' Organisations and All India Association of Christian Higher Education. The seminar made recommendations to further discuss minority issues in India as it remains complicated due to religious, language and ethnic minorities, dalits and indigenous people.

The seminar to promote dialogue and understanding was held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 22-24 November 2011 and was attended by 24 leaders of Nepal National Teachers' Association and Nepal Teachers' Association from different ethnic and cultural groups. The seminar recommended the need for teachers' organizations to promote dialogue and improve understanding on educational issues in a federated state.

Kyrgyz Teachers Salary Doubled

Teachers in Kyrgyzstan have won a 70 - 100% increase in salaries following the successful lobbying, agitation and pressurising by EI affiliate - Trade Union of Education and Scientific Workers of Kyrgyzstan (TUESWK).

The teachers in Kyrgyzstan due to the TUESWK's continuous pressure have won 15% increase in salaries in 2005, 20% increase in 2006 and 20% increase in 2007. The teachers also won a case in the Court and received seniority payments, which were paid off by 2010. However, these increases were just enough to offset the 17% inflation rate in the country. An agreement has been reached with the government that may increase the initial salary of a teacher by up to 200%.

TUESWK President, Mr. Asylbek Toktogulov, who is also a member of the EIAP Regional Committee said that Teachers' salaries were doubled in recent negotiations after 100,000 union members threatened to demonstrate. "The EI/Consortium programme has helped us become successful. The impact of the programme is immense and should be shared" he said.

Meanwhile, Ms, Maira Amantaeva, President of the Allied Trade Union of Education and Scientific Workers of Kazakhstan (ATUESWK) said that the salaries of teachers in Kazakhstan also increased by 30 percent and these successful experiences should be shared among the other teachers organisations as well.

TUESWK and ATUESWK are among the EI affiliates participating in the EI Central Asian Consortium programme supported by the Lararforbundet of Sweden, Union of Education Norway, OAJ of Finland and Australian Education Union. Under the programme, a training session for trainers and 10 workshops were held in Kyrgyzstan with the aim to enhance the role of teachers' organizations in the market economy and trade union leadership.

Employment, Education and Quality Public Service for Global Recovery

Education International (EI) and the other Global Unions issued a statement to the G20 leaders' meeting in Cannes, France, on 3rd and 4th November 2011, advocating the development of a global jobs and recovery plan as well as a reform of the financial sector, including the establishment of a financial transaction tax.

Highlighting the 200 million global unemployment rate and the 1.4 billion people currently living in extreme poverty, the Global Unions have condemned the short-sighted austerity measures which are affecting public education and other public services worldwide and have stated that employment, education and quality public services are to be at the heart of any global recovery plan.

Killing Of Teachers

The Alliance of Concerned Teachers reported the brutal killing of Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) Vice President, Attorney Augusto F. Cezar, on 12 October 2011, and demanded immediate actions to find the killers. A number of Teacher activists were killed in the Philippines last year. Also demanding justice for the brutal killing of another activist – Italian anti-mining militant Father Fausto 'Pops' Tentorio – the ACT General Secretary, Mrs France Castro, said: "Teachers are alarmed by the continuing persecutions and killings of individuals and organisations fighting for peoples' rights.

How can teachers encourage students to stand for their and people's rights, in these conditions?" she added

Independent trade unionism in danger

The military government in Fiji continues violation of international labour standards that are directly impacting EI affiliates, the Fijian Teachers' Association (FTA) and the Fiji Teachers' Union (FTU), and the entire labour movement in Fiji. The police have been given powers to detain, question and charge union officials with 'unlawful assembly', even when this relates to holding meetings to prepare for collective bargaining negotiations.

Issued in August 2011, The Essential National Industries Employment Decree voids existing collective bargaining agreements and eliminates the right to strike in any industry that the government may designate.

EI has joined the international call for the restoration of trade union and democratic freedoms in Fiji where the government continues to refuse talking with the teachers unions. The teachers' salaries have not been adjusted since 2005.

Campaigns for Better Maternity Protection Benefits bear fruits

In India, the women employees are entitled to maternity benefits at an average daily wage for a period of six weeks from a day before the delivery.

The benefits were enhanced following the recommendations of the 5th Central Pay Commission in 1997. Majority of the states implemented the recommendations that allows for 135 days maternity leave and 15 days paternity leave.

In 2006, the 6th Central Pay Commission recommended further increase in the maternity leave to 180 days and introduced provision of two year's child care leave for the central government employees.

Some states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Meghalaya did not implement the act earlier but due to SAARC Women's Network's partner organisations' relentless campaign for better maternity protection on par with other states in the country they have since done so.

In 2009 Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh increased the benefits and two years later Orissa and Tamil Nadu followed suit. Campaigns in Meghalaya are being continued.

TAMIL NADU TEACHERS REJOICE

Meanwhile, the the Tamil Nadu Elementary Teachers' Federation, was also demanding for 15 days paternity leave and

two years for child care leave. "The TESTF is meanwhile happy for its women members and teachers in the state and will continue its efforts to get the remaining demands fulfilled", said Mr. N. Rengarajan, the General Secretary of TESTF.

Ms. Rama Devi, who had been on the forefront during the entire campaign, expressed her gratitude to the Chief Minister of the state and thanked whole heartedly the SAARC Women's Network, AIPTF, Eland CTF for the support and guidance given to the TESTF throughout its struggle.

NZ Government Takes Up Teachers' Concerns About Workload

The New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA) President, Robin Duff, has welcomed the Minister of Education's positive response to teachers' concerns about workload in relation to the country's national certificate of educational achievement (NCEA).

Duff added that the PPTA, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and the Ministry of Education have worked together over the last year to find practical solutions to the increasing NCEA

workload faced by secondary school teachers.

"The work does not stop here. It is an on-going process to deliver what's best for our members and students. We look forward to continued work with NZQA and the ministry" he said.

Meanwhile, in Kuwait, EI-affiliated Kuwait Teachers' Society (KTS) have voiced their opposition to proposals to extend the number of school opening hours by protesting in front of the Ministry of Education.

The KTS Committee's Chairman, Abdul Rahman Al Jasser, criticised the Kuwaiti authorities' move because of the absence of social dialogue and consultation with professionals working in schools.

"The decision to extend school hours has been taken without any consultation with staff or any research into the matter. Teachers' opinions on the subject should have been taken into consideration," Al Jasser said.

Education Is A Human Right And A Public Good

More than 1500 teacher leaders from 396 teachers' organizations in 171 countries representing 30 million education workers attended the World EI Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, underscoring that Education is a Human Right and a Public Good.

The idea that education is a human right and not a tradable commodity and should be guaranteed by the state is central to the first EI Policy on Education, adoption of which is testament to the immense success of Education International in a short time of 18 years since its establishment. The five EI World Congresses and myriad of meetings over the years have been

vital in enabling teacher unions across the world to get to know one another and learn about the nature of each other's education systems. Most importantly, this has involved recognising the common values and beliefs about the future of education that our members share. EI's first Policy Paper on Education, is a distillation of those deep and continuing discussions.

In short, it is a paper at the cutting edge of the global educational debate and covers topics ranging from teacher quality to evaluating schools.

The adoption of the EI Policy provides many EI member organizations in developing countries with the capacity to advocate policy matters. They are poised to play a much important role in the determination of national education policies in their respective countries.

The EI Asia Pacific Regional Committee meeting in Bali pointed out the need to educate union members on EI Education Policy for effective policy advocacy at all levels and to conclusively establish that **Education is a Human Right and a Public Good.**

Cambodian Teachers lobby for representation in LEG

Following calls from EI, its affiliate in Cambodia, the Cambodian Independent Teachers' Association (CITA) is lobbying for participation in the Cambodian Local Education Group (LEG) and in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) /LEG on the basis of the Cambodian Constitution, Education Law 2007, ILO/ UNESCO Status of Teachers and ILO Conventions 87 and 98 in order to contribute and strengthen the GPE process.

Speaking on the issue, President of CITA Mr. Rong Chhun said, "The lobbying for a place in the GPE fits into our "Give Teachers' a Voice Campaign" which is focused on the implementation of the ILO Conventions 87 and 98 and ILO/UNESCO

recommendation on the Status of Teachers. Through this campaign we are seeking formal recognition from all Education Stakeholders and to become active participants of ESWG/LEG.

EI's objective in the GPE is to ensure that it benefits the teaching profession and delivers sustainable progress in expanding access to quality public education. The GPE allocates funding to the country for the implementation of activities on the basis of requests made by the LEG. It is therefore essential that teachers' organization be involved in LEG and have the opportunity to contribute to the discussions, defend the interests of teachers and ensure transparency and accountability in the use of external funds for education.

Since the latest reform of GPE's structure EI represents the teaching profession in the Board of Directors of the GPE and helps shape the international debate on education policies and aid.

Summary of the EI Education Policy

- (I) Education is a human right and a public good; it must be publicly funded and publicly regulated.
- (II) Public authorities must provide a legal framework for education in their countries which sets out the principles of fairness, equity and quality, which should underpin education.
- (III) Public authorities should respect and implement the international conventions on the rights of education employees to organise and bargain collectively and on the status of teachers and other education employees at all levels.
- (IV) Public authorities should spend at least 6 % of their GDP on education.
- (V) Every person has a fundamental right to an appropriate education which will enable that person to achieve their own maximum potential and become a responsible citizen.
- (VI) Education should be of high quality for all.
- (VII) Every student should be entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum in their schools and educational institutions.
- (VIII) Quality education is defined in terms of context and culture. Quality is neither one-dimensional nor straightforward. Quality education is defined by its inputs (including students' background, teachers' qualifications, working conditions, class-size and investment in education); by the education process (including teaching, parenting and related processes of learning) and by projected outcomes (including the extent to which it meets individual, social, cultural, economic and environmental needs). A contextual approach to quality is never deterministic, as it is contingent upon creativity and constant development. Quality education for all should be established and improved on the basis of best practices, professional experiences and relevant educational research.
- (IX) Teachers should maintain high professional standards and should be accountable to society. The evaluation of teachers should be undertaken in collaboration with peers and competent professionals. It should be based on trust and should help teachers identify their professional development needs.
- (X) The education of teachers should be of high quality and with opportunities to achieve post-graduate level. It should be followed by a period of structured induction into the profession with the support by a mentor. The teachers should be supported throughout their careers by an entitlement to fully funded continuous high quality professional development.
- (XI) Teachers should be accorded a high professional status in society commensurate with their professional responsibilities, qualifications and skills, and the contribution which their profession make to the development of society.
- (XII) The salaries, pension schemes and conditions of service for those working in education should be comparable with those available to other groups in society with similar qualifications.
- (XIII) Education should be provided on the basis of equality of access and opportunity for all. There should be no discrimination, including that based on gender, disability, faith, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, cultural or economic background or personal characteristics.
- (XIV) Education should be inclusive and instil concepts of equality, tolerance and respect for diversity.
- (XV) Higher education must be accessible to all who meet entry required criteria without financial or social barriers. It must be protected from commercialisation and competition.
- (XVI) Education should pay particular attention to issues relating to gender, and, in particular, issues relating to gender-stereotyping and gender-based impediments to participation in education, since these affect all students and education employees.
- (XVII) Teaching at all levels should be recognised as a professional activity and accorded the same respect and status as other similar professions in society.
- (XVIII) Teachers should adhere to a code of professional ethics and values to enhance their status.
- (XIX) Education employees should share in the responsibility for the governance of their institutions and their professional development. They should engage in partnership with other stakeholders, such as parents and students, to improve and develop their educational institutions.
- (XX) Independent, democratic and representative education unions have a vital role to play in the development and provision of high quality education in society. They should be granted a full role in the debates on the provision and quality of education and should be recognised for the purposes of collective bargaining as the official representatives of teachers and other education employees.
- (XXI) International solidarity and partnership in EI with its own member organisations and globally with the inter governmental institutions which develop education policies has a major contribution to make to the development and provision of quality Education for All.
- (XXII) Modern technologies can be aids and supplements to teaching and learning in order to enhance the quality of education. They must be made accessible to all.
- (XXIII) Education should be provided for people throughout their lives and should promote healthy and sustainable living.

EI Resolves

In Promoting Education as a Human Right and a Public Good', EI will campaign for public investment in education of at least 6% of GDP as well as increasing Official Development Assistance (ODA) for education, despite the global financial and economic crisis. It will advocate against privatising and commercialising education, commission research and publish discussion papers.

In Improving the Quality of Education', EI will lobby international organisations such as the OECD, the IMF and the World Bank to acknowledge a more contextual definition of quality education and to change their standardised assessment systems. It will commission research and publish discussion papers.

In Promoting Equality through Inclusive Education', EI will advocate for the goal of inclusive education. It will commission research and publish discussion papers. EI will not only take up the responsibility in this matter, but will also ensure that conditions are matched to this purpose in staffing and educational means. EI will take into account the SALAMANCA statement and framework for action of UNESCO on special needs education adopted by the world conference on special needs education: access and quality (Salamanca, Spain, 7 – 10 June 1994)

In Promoting Teaching as a Profession', EI will promote its code of ethics and professional standards as well as commission research and publish papers.

In Strengthening Education trade Unions as Essential Partners in Civil Society', EI will reinvigorate a culture of organising in its activities. It will develop material to help recruitment efforts and continue to provide union development programmes.

In Promoting Solidarity in Education at the International Level', EI will implement its policy document on development cooperation and advocate for developing the capacity of trade unions within development cooperation programmes.

In Using Technology for Quality Education', EI will commission research and publish papers on the digital divide and on how to increase the use of technology to support teachers and education employees.

In Promoting Education for Living and For Life', EI will emphasise the need for lifelong learning in knowledge based societies and commission research and publish papers.

Right to Education is a Reality now! What Next?

(Following is an excerpt of an article from Mr. DV Pandit, General Secretary of AIFTO and EIAPR Committee member)

Almost 19 percent of the world's children are in India. Providing education to all of the 220 million children between the ages of 6-14 is a huge task in a diverse country like India.

There are many hindrances in implementing the Right to Education Act, which came in effect from 1st April 2010. There are clauses in the Act which does not allow children of any age to enter any grade. Only 13 states had adopted the "Model rules" required for the implementation of the Act within six months. There are possibilities that some states would not be able to fund 30-35 percent of the total cost for the implementation. Estimates show that around 51 billion USD is required over the next five year period for the full implementation of the Act and the resources available at this point of time is only about 20 billion USD.

Estimates put that from 8 – 40 million children are out of school. Primary school enrolment in 2009-2010 dropped by 2.6 million

and the dropout rate by class 1 to 8 has been between 30-33 percent. Retention of children in school is a major challenge. 1.3 million new and trained teachers are required to attain 1:30 teacher pupil ratio and about 19 percent of the existing teaching force is untrained. There is a need to stop recruiting untrained teachers and training more teachers.

Girls education is at perils. Almost 60 percent out of school children are girls. Their enrolment has increased by meager numbers, from 48.22 in class 1 to 5 in 2007-08 to 48.46 in 2009-10. Only 9 out of 12 girls live to see the 15th birthday. It is estimated that every 6th death is due to gender discrimination. Thousands of female fetus and infant girls are killed every year. 41.18 percent schools in the country did not have toilet facilities for women/girls in 2009. The Right to Education is a Reality in Law and it needs all of us to work together in overcoming the above hindrances to ensure that all children are able to benefit from the provisions of the law.

Lack of Schools and Teachers in Remote Areas

In Indonesia, Teachers prefer to work in private schools in urban areas although they offer poor working conditions and are reluctant to work in public schools in rural areas, according to Ms. Unifah Rosyidi, EIAP regional Committee member from the PGRI in Indonesia.

"Lack of schools and lack of quality teachers in remote areas have reduced access to quality public education", she added.

Recruiting New Members

The National Education Association for Development in Cambodia in cooperation with the Lararforbundet of Sweden and EI conducted a recruitment of 3,000 new members this year and collect dues from all members. The recruitment campaign comprised of 12 trainings, 3 publications, 27 visits to schools and 5 meetings with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and civil society organizations.

CALLING FOR ARTICLES & COMMENTS

EI would like to invite members to contribute articles to the newsletter. Comments on its present contents are also welcomed. Please send your articles and news items together with photographs to the EI Regional Office at the following address:



EI represents over 30 million members through 402 member organisations in 173 countries and territories.

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