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Education



Special report:
Gender equality at the core of education

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Contents

> Education	
Impact of the economic crisis on education	3
OECD's Education at a Glance Report 2010	4
Finland: on top of world education	5
Chile: towards privatisation of education	6
G20 fails to invest in education	7
School leadership	8
Education funding in developing countries	9
World Teachers' Day 2010	10
Canada: Imagineaction	12
Denmark: Become a teacher, change lives	14
Quality Public Services Conference	15
World Day for Decent Work	16
European Day of Action	17
New Zealand: Teachers under pressure	18
> Equality	
MDGs summit supports girls education	19
Interview with Jan Eastman on gender equality	20
Gender justice: key to real progress	22
> Solidarity	
Unions fight HIV/AIDS in West Africa	24
Pakistan: Teachers help flood victims	25
Ireland/India: Global Schoolroom initiative	26
USA/Honduras: Educators study sustainable development models	27
Cyber-Harassment in Schools	28
Adobe: a global partner in education	29
Communicators' Network	30
> Sixth EI World Congress	31
> Calendar	31

Cover photo: Bangladeshi school children react to their teacher at a government run primary school in Dhaka

A 'green' profession



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The agreement reached at the UN climate conference in Cancun included demands for a just transition to a society which creates decent work and good quality environmentally-friendly jobs. These are essential for effective action on climate change. However, to achieve these, all governments – particularly the most developed – must commit to ambitious emission reductions under a legal framework by their next meeting in 2011. Finance for action on climate change must respond to the millions of workers and families whose lands and livelihood face destruction from extreme weather, just as 220 million are unemployed and desperate for secure, decent and 'green' jobs.

Jobs in a greener society require high-skilled workers and education systems with appropriate curricula and training programmes. To improve the quality of education, governments must ensure that there are sufficient qualified and effective teachers who understand the link between education and the environment. Their knowledge and skills should be developed and deployed to encourage and facilitate the creation of a low carbon economy. The teaching profession should be a truly 'green profession'.

In a world of rapid change it is essential that students learn to learn, and that schools provide a basis for them to engage in life-long learning. To meet these challenges, teachers must have sound preparation for their profession and have access to continuous professional development. They must be life-long learners themselves, able to develop the potential of each child to take their place as active citizens in communities promoting the green agenda, and who acquire the skills needed for the world of work in a low carbon emissions economy.

Education is about opportunity for all and education for all underpins democracy.

That is why education must be the responsibility of public authorities. To ensure opportunity for all, to foster social cohesion, and to ensure investment in the future prosperity of each nation through investment in green energy solutions and a low carbon emission economic environment, governments must pursue the appropriate 'green' economic policies and must provide the essential investment in public education. An involved, educated and skilled workforce will prove a powerful stimulus for growth in all economies and societies. For sustainable growth and prosperity in the future education is the best investment any society can make.

Fred van Leeuwen, EI General Secretary

Education

The impact of economic crisis on education

By Laura Figazzolo, Consultant to EI Research Institute

Since the onset of the global economic crisis, EI has been following the impact on education sectors around the world. Two surveys, conducted among EI's member organisations, are summarised in EI's *Report on the Impact of Economic Crisis on Education, Teachers and other Education Staff*.

The global economic crisis developed very rapidly in late 2009, and the reforms initiated in response to it began to make their actual impact in 2010. EI launched a follow-up survey to supplement the earlier data it had collected and to establish developments and effects on the education sector. The survey was based on updates by those 68 organisations that replied to the 2009 questionnaire and on 15 focused interviews with affiliate members in the global North and South. Results were collected from 24 unions in 23 countries.

Analysis of the data shows that in Europe the crisis has impacted national education budgets in different ways across the continent. Central and Eastern Europe have been the hardest hit with an immediate impact on education. In Western Europe, the negative impact on educational budgets are widespread and seem harsher in the South than in Scandinavian countries. In North America, the cuts have occurred in some parts of the USA and Canada, while in others, spending in education has not increased in line with the rising cost of living. The situation is critical in Asia and the Pacific, with the exception of Australia, where the education budget was increased as a result of the government's schools' infrastructure funding package.

Cuts impact on teachers

EI's member unions in a majority of European countries report that cuts in education spending have had an impact on teachers at school level (in France, Italy and Spain, unions have condemned massive lay-offs). In Central and Eastern Europe, teachers' salaries have shrunk as part of programmes designed to reduce basic pay across public sector employees. Similar consequences have been seen in Asia and the Pacific, where the effects at school level have been felt more recently. In North America, lay-offs have been reported mainly in the USA, where job losses have been concentrated in the area of school support personnel.

Gender impact

Only Italy and Japan have reported gender-biased effects. In Norway, where there is no evidence that the economic crisis has been having a disproportionate impact on women teachers or girl students, the government has not been willing to provide an additional grant earmarked to deliver equal pay, despite this issue being high on their political agenda.

A majority of unions have been involved in discussions with their government on budget cuts or stimulus packages in order to defend the public provision of education. In Central and Eastern Europe, and Latin America, countries secured different types of loans from the IMF in 2009. The conditionalities have largely demanded imposition of rigid fiscal measures with the objective of overcoming country debts, with inevitable consequences for education. The latest data available concerns Latvia, where IMF conditions have required further 'consolidation' of the budget in order to reach the level of deficit requested by the IMF.

Very little data is available on development aid. In the Netherlands, decreasing GDP figures have resulted in similar downward patterns in the budget for development aid. In Ireland, too, the budget allocation for the national overseas aid agency was cut in 2009 and 2010 by almost 30 per cent. III

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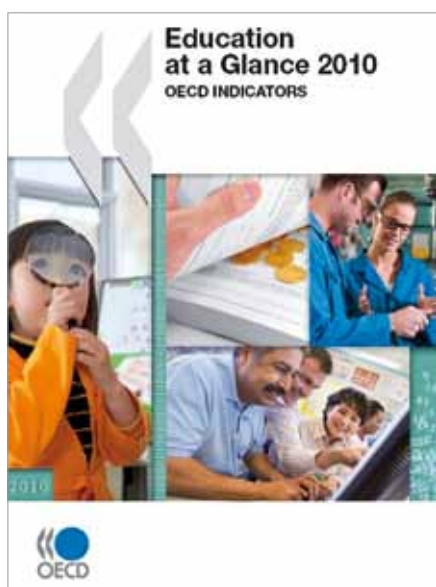
More information can be found at:
www.ei-ie.org/handsup

Education

OECD's Education at a Glance 2010: what can unions learn?

By Guntars Catlaks and Koen Goven

In its new report, *Education at a Glance 2010*, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) presents an array of statistics relating to education in its 33 member countries. The report should be given close scrutiny because it has been used to argue for more market mechanisms in public education. Paradoxically, the economic crisis seems to have strengthened this belief, even if unrestrained markets were a fundamental cause of the crisis. Unions can also use the statistics in the report to promote the sort of education system we want to have.



economic and social progress.' While it is hard to deny accountability of education professionals towards society, unions can present a different framework for the main goals of public policy, based on quality education and social benefits.

Social outcomes of education

A strong emphasis on social outcomes of education is the most welcome and helpful part of the report. The report suggests that it would be of interest for policy-makers working on education, health and social welfare to take into account the social outcomes of education. The report finds educational attainment is positively associated with good health, political interest and inter-personal trust.

Voice and exit in public education

The OECD makes a strong case that both school choice and parent voice can draw attention to a decline in school quality. 'Exit', the fact that a parent can withdraw their child from the school, can serve as a signal of dissatisfaction or decline, while 'voice' can provide specific details about the nature or reason for the perceived decline. This raises the key question about the relationship between a community and its school – is 'loyalty' an old-fashioned

concept of hierarchy or does it show commitment and responsibility? Unions should reject the underlying notion of schools as a commercial services' enterprise and vigorously defend them as common good institutions. There must be 'voice in' but no 'exit from' public education.

Turing around higher education

The data finally paints a more nuanced picture of the problems of access in higher education by including data on both access and completion. The report admits that tuition fees do not have a positive impact on completion rates. A deeper analysis can also show that those countries that recently introduced high tuition fees have a negative effect on domestic enrolment. For example, data shows that more than 20 per cent of Australia's students come from abroad, and that the enrolment figure for domestic students is in fact lower than in many other OECD countries. III

'Efficiency' of education

The report argues that improving the performance of education systems and raising value for money is the main task of public policy. Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary General, states in his foreword the 'future will measure the success of education systems no longer by how much countries spend on education or by how many individuals complete a degree, but by the educational outcomes achieved and by their impact on

INFO

More information
can be found at:
www.oecd.org/edu/eag2010

Education

Finland – on top of world education

By Ritva Semi, OAJ Union

More than 100 foreign delegations and governments visited Helsinki in 2009, hoping to learn the secret of Finland's schools' success. Many of those delegations met teacher trade unionists too.

In 2006, Finland's pupils scored the highest average results in science and reading in the whole of the developed world. In OECD exams for 15-year-olds, known as PISA, Finland also came second in maths, beaten only by teenagers in South Korea. This is not a one-off: in previous PISA tests Finland also came out top.

To understand the success of the Finnish education system one must look at the history and culture of the country.

Education is considered an important resource so a principle aim of educational policy has been to create equal opportunities for all children. High quality public education has opened its doors to social equality and equality between men and women. It is a key factor for the good economic status of the country and high technological success of Finland.

Cooperation with stakeholders

Developing an education system based on assessments and research in cooperation with all stakeholders has also been vital. Close dialogue between the government, teachers' unions, parents, children and NGOs has been essential for success.

Finland's Education Minister, Henna Virkunen, is proud of her country's record but her next goal is to target the brightest pupils. "The Finnish system supports those pupils who have learning difficulties but we

have to pay more attention also to those pupils who are very talented. Now we have begun a pilot project about how to support those pupils who are very gifted."

According to the OECD, Finnish children spend the fewest number of hours in the classroom in the developed world, reflecting another important theme of Finnish education. Primary and secondary schooling is combined, so the pupils don't have to change schools at age 13. They avoid a potentially disruptive transition from one school to another.

High quality teachers

Teacher Marjaana Arovaara-Heikkinen believes keeping the same pupils in her classroom for several years also makes her job easier. "I grow up with my children. I see the problems they have when they are small and, after five years, I still know what has happened in their youth, and what the best things are that they can do. I tell them that I'm like their school mother."

Teaching is a prestigious career in Finland. Teachers are highly valued and standards are high. Good teachers, high quality teacher education and freedom of teachers are therefore a cornerstone to the success of Finland's education system.

Another tactic is the provision of an additional teacher who helps those who



Finnish teacher unionists meeting with national authorities to ensure quality training for teachers and high teaching standards

struggle in a particular subject. But the pupils are all kept in the same classroom, regardless of their ability in that particular subject.

Children also start school aged seven. The idea is that before then they learn best when they're playing and by the time they get to school they are keen to start learning. Finnish parents can obviously claim some credit for impressive school results. There is a culture of reading with children at home and families have regular contact with their children's teachers.

There are also cultural reasons for the educational system's success in Finland. Finland has low levels of immigration, so when pupils start school the majority have Finnish as their native language, thus eliminating an obstacle that other societies can often face. ■■■

Education

Chile: education thrown open to the market

By Mar Candela

“When it comes to education, Chile is the best of all possible worlds for the privileged.”

Fernando Atria, University of Chile

At the beginning of 1980s, Augusto Pinochet’s military dictatorship set in motion a process of privatisation and decentralisation of the education system in Chile. It was a real ideological and political transformation, breaking away from the popular educational proposals of the deposed President Salvador Allende. The policies continue until the present day because under the Constitution imposed by the dictator, education ceased to be a primordial function of the State.

Exclusive education

As a result, more than 50 per cent of the population in Chile are paying for education. The most vulnerable groups are concentrated in municipal public schools which cover just over a half of the registration fees. The rest go to private schools which are financed by the State and also receive direct payments from families.

Each school can define its own education project, including an admission standard for pupils. This allows them to select and discriminate arbitrarily on the basis of ability, socio-economic position of the family, religious belief, civil status of the parents and any other criterion that they care to lay down. It is not difficult to imagine the wide breach this system has opened up in Chilean society. Every pupil goes to the school that they can afford, and growing segregation is creat-

ing a category of students who are economically marginalised from childhood.

Public education is a right

In an article for the union Colegio de Profesores de Chile, Fernando Atria, a law professor at the University of Chile, argues that public education must be subject to a legal regime whereby it is open to all as citizens. He adds: “In principle, everyone must be admitted to the educational establishment on equal terms. Only in this way can education be guaranteed as a fundamental right.”

To understand the concept of public education as a right, Prof. Atria states, it is essential to understand the nature of the relationship between the citizen and the public and private spheres. “The general position of asymmetry in which the citizen stands in relation to the State means that the individual has rights and the State does not, because it is at the service of human beings. In relation to the private establishment, the individual is no longer a citizen but a contracting party. And between the contracting parties there is the symmetry of the contract and the market: no individual is at the service of another.”

Rebuilding popular education

The so-called Movimiento Pedagógico brings together teachers dedicated to the



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Students demonstrate in Chile and Chant that: “Education is a right, not a commodity”

search for alternative models to neo-liberal education policies. It is a quest to rekindle the memory of pedagogical efforts which have marked the history of Chile, and continue to inspire action in favour of the most vulnerable groups in the country. This was the case with the policies of Allende’s government, who tried to introduce a non-elitist education system open to the people, in order to guarantee their involvement within the decision-making processes. This endeavour was cut short by the military coup whose consequences are still felt today. As Mario Benedetti’s poem to Allende goes: “to kill the man who was a whole people, they had to leave the people behind.” ■■■

Education

G20 fails to address fundamentals – including investment in education

By Bob Harris, EI Senior Consultant

The G20 Summit in Seoul, South Korea, from 11-12 November, was marked by growing tensions between the world's two biggest economies – the United States and China – and a failure to address fundamental issues required for sustainable growth and prosperity, including investment in education.

After two days of meeting, the G20 leaders issued a Declaration which papered over their differences on trade and currency imbalances. They proposed 'a Seoul Action Plan' which made one reference to education and training.

The policy paper failed to recognise the role of education as an investment with importance beyond a narrow concept of skills for employability. EI believes the omission of education as a key factor in growth, prosperity and social justice does not measure up to trade union demands.

Overall, the most worrying part of the G20 Seoul Declaration is its recommitment to the G20 Toronto decisions to cut fiscal deficits by 50 per cent by 2013.

EI worked closely in Seoul with Global Unions and the Global Campaign on Education (GCE). EI President, Susan Hopgood, held a press conference widely reported in the Korean media. This followed meetings with EI affiliates KTU and KFTA, on the trade union rights situation in Korea and education issues. One positive outcome of the Global Unions meeting with the Korean President was a commitment from him to meet both Korean labour federations after the G20 in order to address outstanding trade union rights issues.

EI Asia and Pacific Region's Chair, Yuzuru Nakamura, also participated in a G20 La-



bour Summit beforehand. The strong union and EI presence in Seoul was critical in keeping open the door for further intervention on jobs, education, and the achievement of the MDGs. But the unsatisfactory G20 outcome also revealed the extent of the challenges that confront EI and its member organisations.

Commenting after the Summit, EI General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, said: "We must rethink how EI can work with member organisations to join global advocacy to

national and local action. This is the big challenge leading up to EI's World Congress in Cape Town, and beyond."

The next G20 Summit will be held in Cannes, France, from 3-4 November, 2011. EI will work closely with ITUC, TUAC and the GCE to press the case for education and teachers, while working with members in both G20 and non-G20 countries. ■■■

Education

School leaders call for protection of education budgets

By Dennis Sinyolo

School leaders from EI member organisations have raised serious concerns about the impact of the economic crisis on education budgets and trade union rights.

At the 'Empowering school leaders to meet present and future challenges' seminar, organised by EI in Paris, during October 2010, almost 50 school leaders and representatives of EI affiliates discussed the challenges facing schools. Notable concerns included shrinking school budgets as a result of austerity measures adopted by governments and the narrowing of curricula because of international assessments, standardised testing and the publication of league tables.

The participants also noted with concern the trend for authorities to use the economic crisis as cover for trampling on trade union rights and undermining quality education. They urged EI and its affiliates to intensify the campaign against the regressive measures being adopted by many governments in dealing with the crisis.

Union actions

EI Deputy General Secretary, Monique Foulhoux, used the event to brief participants about measures EI has taken in its campaign on the crisis, including regular surveys and organising conferences and training programmes for union leaders.

UNSA-Education General Secretary and EI Executive Board member, Patrick Gonthier, conveyed his concern about the French



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Head counsellor Allen Roberts from California's Silver Creek High School, in the USA, has been dealing with financial turmoil over the past few years

government's unilateral decision to raise the retirement age, from 65 to 67. This, and other austerity measures, would have a very negative impact on educational quality and equity in France.

Prof. Petros Pashiardis, a specialist in Educational Leadership at the Open University of Cyprus, argued that we lived in a "golden era of educational leadership," with more recognition given to the role of school leaders in achieving quality education. He shared research findings that showed how effective school leaders use a combination of five styles: instructional, participative, personnel development, entrepreneurial and structuring.

Way forward

The seminar concluded with a number of recommendations, emphasising the

need for EI and its member organisations to continue to move the school leadership agenda forward through research, advocacy, policy development and sharing of information. Participants stressed the importance of pedagogy, asserting that it should be at the core of the school leadership function. The seminar also urged EI and teachers' unions to develop strategies to protect workers' rights and education budgets while campaigning against regressive policy measures adopted by some national governments and international financial institutions in response to the economic crisis. ■■■

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A full list of recommendations from the seminar is available at: www.ei-ie.org/go/5

Education

EI campaigns to increase education funding in developing countries

By Dennis Sinyolo

EI has joined civil society groups including the Global Campaign for Education, its regional network Africa Network Campaign on Education For All, and ActionAid International (AAI), to build the capacity of teachers' union leaders and campaigners to harness their efforts in advocating for increased education financing.

As part of the campaign, members of the Education For All (EFA) country coalitions, including teachers' unions, undergo an intensive five-day training of trainers programme on macro-economics and education financing. This enables participants to develop their own capacity to understand macro-economic issues, analyse education budgets and replicate the workshop in their own country. The training also enables participants to understand and challenge negative policies of the International Monetary Fund, particularly the conditionalities attached to lending policy. The training also involves an analysis of World Bank policies, such as the promotion of privatisation and its impact on quality education.

The last two days of the workshop are dedicated to developing a national campaign, focusing on specific needs or priority areas identified by individual country teams. The campaign is followed-up by a national workshop and implemented



Participants celebrate the end of the 5-day training

jointly by the EFA country coalition partners. The training is based on a toolkit developed by EI and AAI in 2009, following the Parktonian Agreement.

Regional workshops

The first sub-regional workshop for East Africa was held in Mombasa, Kenya, from 17–21 May 2010, followed by a workshop for Southern Africa in Blantyre, Malawi, from 9–13 August, and a workshop for Anglophone West Africa in The Gambia, from 27 September to 2 October. More sub-regional workshops will be held in Francophone and Lusophone Africa, Asia and Latin America over coming months.

The positive impact of trade unions working together with civil society organisations to advocate for increased funding for education and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and EFA targets has been noticeable in a number of countries. In Malawi, for example, the EFA coalition, working collaboratively with the Teachers' Union of Malawi has successfully increased the allocation for education from 14 per cent of the national budget in 2009 to almost 20 per cent in 2010. Meanwhile, in Uganda, the EFA coalition has been involved in budget tracking, resulting in more funding from central government reaching schools. III

Education

World Teachers' Day 2010: honouring unsung heroes in our society

By Harold Tor

Teachers are the guarantors of continuity during and after natural disasters and other crises. By giving hope for the future and providing structure and a sense of normality, they help to mitigate the effects of conflict, disaster and displacement. Teachers provide much-needed psychosocial support to ease the trauma of children and youths who have witnessed extreme violence, or lived through the destruction of homes and the loss of family members. In countries affected by conflict, teachers are instrumental in peace-building. In other words, *Recovery Begins With Teachers*.

World Teachers' Day is a chance to 'celebrate' and raise the attention of public authorities, parents, and general public to the key role teachers play in building strong and democratic societies through their teaching and guidance. At a time when the economic crisis is impacting on the whole of society, it is important to stress how important education and training are. They are at the core of economic growth, as well as social and cultural development for a sustainable future for all. And yet, despite this, with the commercialisation and privatisation of education, the teaching profession worldwide is facing the risk of casualisation.

Many teachers live with precarious working conditions on short-term contracts. Examples can be found where teachers and academics are being paid according to the learning outcomes of their students or the position of their educational institution in ranking tables. This goes against rights of teaching professionals, as stated in the 1966 and 1997 ILO/UNESCO Recommendations on the status of education personnel.

Despite their increasingly uncertain professional situation, teachers contribute to the society and community in which they live. It is therefore crucial to give teachers a voice in the decision-making processes.

Celebrating teachers

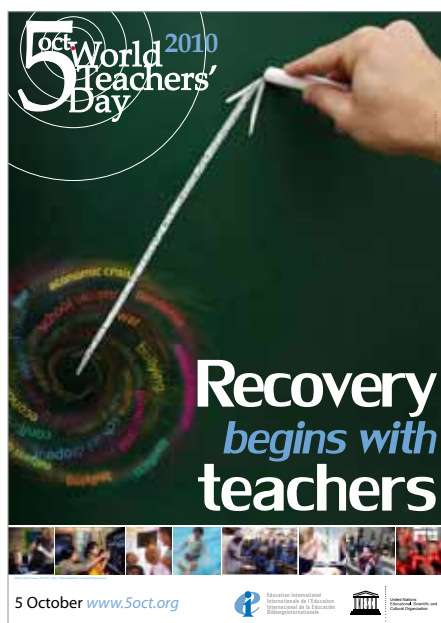
EI participated in UNESCO's World Teachers' Day event in Paris, where teachers from Haiti, Mali and Laos gave evidence on the role of teachers in recovery of their society. The event featured a 'Tribute to Teachers' photo exhibition, inaugurated by the UNESCO Director-General, and the official World Teachers' Day Ceremony was

broadcast online via podcasts and video interviews. EI, which co-signed the official statement with the ILO, UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF, also joined a panel discussion at this event.

Many EI member organisations also organised activities to celebrate the day. In Azerbaijan, Canada and Liberia, unions held events which gave recognition of



Educators in Africa celebrate World Teachers' Day



excellence or long-service awards to outstanding educators. In Taiwan, our member organisation gave a 'Super Teacher Award' to a teacher who is creative in the classroom and inspires other colleagues. The same happened in Uganda where President Yoweri Museveni declared that 5 October would become a national holiday. In Malaysia, teachers participated in their annual 'walkathon' and in St Lucia teachers took part in a national talent show.

Promoting rights

World Teachers' Day is also a time for teachers' unions to reaffirm their rights. In Cambodia, teachers marched through the capital to ask for better salaries and an increase in the education budget. In France, seven EI member unions sent a joint letter to the President Nicolas Sarkozy to denounce the reduction of teaching positions. Teacher organisations in Albania, Dominica, the Gambia and Sri Lanka organised media outreach events to publicise their demands for better teaching and learning conditions, while in Algeria, teacher unions organised a sit-in before their Education Minister to protest against low wages and rising inflation, as well as an increasing number of temporary contracts for teachers. Teaching and learning continued even on World Teachers' Day in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where a workshop was organised for teachers on the new education law. Teach-

ers and pupils used the day to remember those parts of the world where teaching and learning rights are denied. In Belgium, 97,312 pupils from 308 schools in Flanders rang their school bells at 3 o'clock in the afternoon to call for the Education For All goal to be met. Songs were also written for World Teachers' Day. In Singapore, a song called 'In this moment' was composed as a tribute to teachers. In Canada, teachers were honoured with a song entitled 'You have made a difference'. Available in both English and French, the song has already been played 135,000 times on YouTube.

Social media activity

By using social media such as Twitter and Flickr, EI accumulated hundreds of tweets on our Twitter board in the run-up to 5 October. These tweets not only drive traffic to the www.5octr.org website, but also to the links EI posts, such as those to the official statement and various UNESCO videos. Thousands of teachers and members of the public tweeted in their language, from Catalan to Norwegian, while bloggers blogged about World Teachers' Day and its importance.

Queen Rania of Jordan, who is an advocate of Education For All, also played her part by honouring the teaching profession. On World Teachers' Day, she tweeted in both Arabic and English that "Teachers have

been our guardians and guides for generations. Show a teacher your thanks on World Teachers' Day."

EI also translated the official World Teachers' Day poster into many languages including Hungarian, Slovenia, and Indonesian.

In the official EI press release for World Teachers' Day EI's General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, said: "At a time when the world faces an unprecedented shortage of qualified teachers, when 10 million more teachers must be recruited and trained to achieve internationally agreed goals of quality education for every child, marking World Teachers' Day is a small step to pay homage to millions of extraordinary heroes in our global community."

So, thank you, teachers for being such extraordinary heroes. ■■■



@cathlyns: "Thanking all teachers today! So appreciate Mrs. Ebersole in elementary, Mrs. Perdue in middle, and Mr. Griffiths in high school"

@nikkinoto: "Props to Ms. Roach my 8th grade English teacher, who inspired me to love Greek mythology, on this World Teacher's Day"

Education

Imagineaction

By Bob McGahey, Coordinator of Imagineaction

It was Paulo Freire, a Brazilian theorist of critical pedagogy, who called on educators to work with their students to create a problem-solving culture that would transform their world.



© CTF

The imagineaction website

Teachers know quality education is not about caching information in students so that it may be withdrawn at a later time – what Freire refers to as the ‘banking’ concept. Quality education is about giving students opportunities to infuse curriculum into real world situations. It is about being part of a child’s journey as a life-long learner and problem solver. It is about teaching students to be critical thinkers and find opportunities to apply their knowledge in transformative ways.

In September 2010, the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) launched a bilingual (English and French) program called *Imagineaction* to assist Canadian teachers and their students to move beyond the increasingly standards-based, test driven, education agenda set by federal government. What *Imagineaction* provides is the opportunity to link curricula to community-based projects aimed at transformation.

Evidence for action

Recent evidence supports the need for *Imagineaction*. The first is a workshop report conducted by Landon Pearson Resource Centre (LPRC) in Canada as part of their ‘Shaking the Movers’ initiative. The second is a CTF survey of teachers from six provinces and territories. The final evidence is analysis of a Canada-wide opinion poll. In her report for the LPRC, Ilana Lockwood summarised students’ perceptions about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. When commenting on the right to education and barriers to access, students pointed to the school and the community needing to be engaged as partners in young people’s lives. Students also called for education to provide them with the skills they need for active participation in society.

The evidence from CTF’s teacher survey bore striking similarities to the public opinion poll. Chart 1 shows the percentage of Canadian parents and teachers who *strongly agree or somewhat agree* that values and ethical behaviour, human rights, environmental protection, peacemaking and participatory democracy should be taught in the public school system. On teaching, Canadian students had numerous comments about inclusion and the teaching of civics. On engagement, students noted “you cannot be engaged when you are excluded,” and “people assume that if you’re not on the student council, you’re not involved. Give students a chance to show they care in other ways.”

Survey analysis

Further analysis from the survey showed:

- › 96 per cent of Canadian parents and teachers *somewhat agree or strongly agree* that schools should be involved in community projects;
- › 98 per cent of Canadian parents *strongly agree or somewhat agree* that when community organisations support school projects it fosters citizenship and nurtures relationships;
- › 96 per cent of Canadian parents *strongly or somewhat agree* it is possible that stu-



dent led projects will bring about positive change in a community;
 » 96 per cent of parents and 100 per cent of teachers believe it is *very important* or *somewhat important* to develop elementary and secondary students' critical thinking skills.

Canadian teachers clearly stated they required access to professional development opportunities and resources to help them introduce these complex topics to their students. Teachers also said they wanted resources to set up projects in their school. As a result the CTF has developed resources in partnership with the Critical Thinking Consortium.

Imagineaction is designed to help Canadian teachers meet the desire of parents, teachers and students to use a critical thinking model to teach citizenship through active participation in community projects. **Imagineaction** provides support for students and teachers in English and French schools across Canada to incorporate topics related to socially just citizenship. Support for Canadian teachers and their students is given in four ways: funding subsidies, access to expertise, professional development and a project showcase.

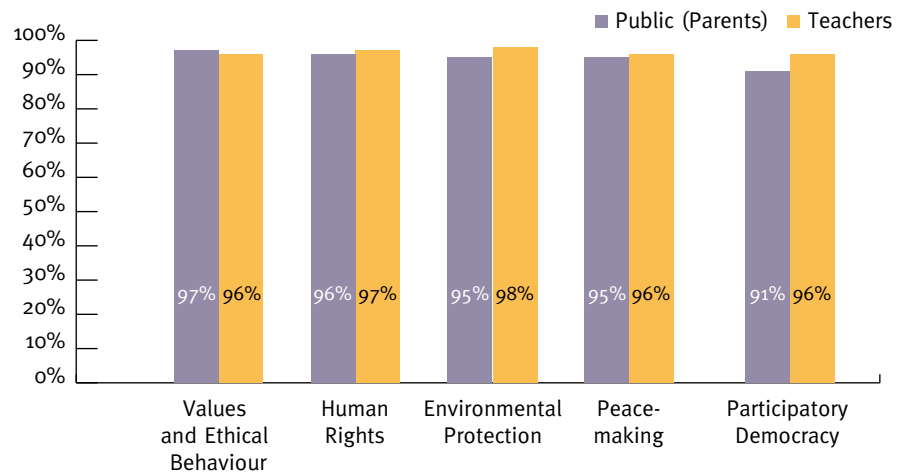


Chart 1 – Support for teaching topics in Canada's public school system

Funding opportunities are provided for Canadian school-community social action projects tied to **Imagineaction** themes of:

- » CONNECT [relationships]
- » ENGAGE [active and participatory democracy]
- » THRIVE [health and wellness]
- » LEAD [leadership]
- » LIVE [environmental sustainability]
- » CARE [poverty]

Canadian teachers are currently registering their projects and applying for subsidies to roll out their projects. They can also browse past and present projects in order to connect and share ideas with colleagues across Canada. III

INFO For more information about **Imagineaction** contact: info@imagine-action.ca

Education

Denmark: Become a teacher and change lives!

By Niels Gæmelke, Danish Union of Teachers



Since 2007 the Danish Union of Teachers (DLF) has conducted an annual study to show the number of teaching positions in public primary and lower secondary education institutions that are filled by staff with no formal training. The results, which are published in an annual report, show a startling picture of there being too few trained teachers to fill all the positions available in Denmark's public schools. Worryingly, the number of untrained teachers in schools has grown over the four years since the study began. Without intervention, the problem was set to worsen in years to come as a large number of trained teachers currently employed within the Danish public schools system are close to retirement age, while the number of teacher training college graduates is insufficient to fill the gap that natural turnover will create.

The DLF has always been clear that properly trained staff are an essential for delivering high quality in every industry. This includes education. In response to this

critical challenge, the Danish Ministry of Education, the Local Government Denmark, and the Danish Union of Student Teachers, joined with DLF to launch 'Become a Teacher' campaign in the spring of 2010.

Stakeholders engagement

Getting different stakeholders to agree their involvement was not an easy task, but what the DLF stressed was that for any such campaign to succeed there needed to be a real effort to set aside stakeholders' interests and differences relating to other issues, in order to concentrate on achieving the common goal.

The aim of the 'Become a Teacher' campaign was to get young people to consider teaching and to try and improve the public's image and status of the profession. The basic idea was to capitalise on the fact that almost everyone has a strong memory of at least one teacher that has made a difference in their lives.

If the campaign could make young people think about this, and the teachers who made a difference in their lives, then perhaps they would also be likely to convert the belief that teachers have a great opportunity to make a positive impact in peoples' lives by becoming one themselves.

A national campaign

The recruitment campaign was visible to the public through a strategy that included posters at bus stops in the major cities.



The concept of the posters was one of three Danish celebrities posing with their favourite teacher and stating how much the teacher had meant to them. In addition, there were street events in major cities, carried out by volunteer student teachers and young teachers. They succeeded in creating a positive aura around teacher training and the profession as a whole.

Finally, the campaign included an element launched through the Internet. People were asked to upload video clips of themselves talking about their favourite teacher on the campaign website: <http://www.bliv-laerer.dk/> Everyone who visited the site was also asked to vote for the best video clip. More than 3,000 video clips were uploaded.

Education union leadership

In the summer of 2010 it was clear that, for the first time in years, the number of people applying for training to become a teacher had not only kept pace with previous years, but had actually increased and the 'Become a Teacher' campaign was one of the reasons cited why more young people decided to become a teacher. The DLF was an integral player in this campaign which turned out to be a ray of sunshine in an otherwise bleak period hovering over the teaching profession in Denmark. III

INFO

For more information visit:
www.bliv-laerer.dk

Global Unions

Global unions demand investment in quality public services now!

By Pav Akhtar

In the face of cuts to public services, leaders of trade unions, governments and civil society have made the unprecedented joint commitment to work together.

The aim is to promote investment in quality public services backed by fair tax policies as the key solution to the economic crisis, and the best way to build peaceful, equitable, democratic and ecologically-sustainable societies.

It is “our turn, our future” concluded participants in the international Quality Public Services—Action Now! conference in Geneva, Switzerland, during October.

The Council of Global Unions (CGU), which sponsored the three-day event attended by 400 delegates, announced the launch of a major global campaign guided by a charter and an action plan to link local, national and international efforts to promote quality public services.

CGU chair, Aidan White, said: “This is a call to the trade union movement to advance its historic responsibility to work in broad social coalitions and act as a force for social change that improves the quality of life for all citizens. We don’t have time to lose.”

Executive Director of Greenpeace International, Kumi Naidoo, who also co-chairs the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, called for “a new activism” to back demands for quality public services as the foundation for social justice policies.

“History teaches us that when decent people take risks and engage in struggle peacefully, principally and courageously, pursuing civil disobedience where necessary, then those who occupy the instruments of power, in government or the financial sectors, listen and respond.”

EI President, Susan Hopgood, presented the Quality Public Services charter to the delegates and said: “We are conveying a powerful message in uniting as advocates for good schools, decent health services and social services, clean water and proper sanitation. Good quality public services provide the foundation for sustainable growth, equitably distributed, and the means for justice, good governance, and the exercise of democracy.”

International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITWF) General Secretary, David Cockroft, said the new campaign would start in selected cities as “a rallying point for the industrial and political power of the global union movement” and was needed “because public services benefit both private and public sector workers, our families and our communities.”

Public Services International (PSI) General Secretary, Peter Waldorff, said the campaign will show that as governments break collective agreements with impunity while



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EI’s Susan Hopgood presented the Charter for Quality Public Services

cutting public services and benefits, unions and allies are applying new strategies that will build a more sustainable world and ensure social protection for all. “It’s time for action now!” III

INFO

Visit the QPS campaign site for more activity:
www.qpsconference.org/home

Global Unions

World Day for Decent Work

By Matthieu Debroux, International Trade Union Confederation

Trade union organisations all over the world mobilised on the occasion of World Day for Decent Work, organised every 7 October by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). More than 400 activities, in almost 100 countries, were organised around three major demands with a view to economic recovery:

- › Growth and decent jobs, and not austerity, are essential to combat the crisis and finally put an end to it;
- › Quality public services are vital for a decent life and must not be sacrificed in the name of fiscal consolidation;
- › The financial sector must pay for the damage that it has caused.



One of the messages sent out by the ITUC on World Day for Decent Work was that the challenges facing the world at present cannot serve as a pretext for threatening and weakening internationally recognised working standards. It is up to trade union organisations to halt the drift towards precarious employment and insecurity and to fight relentlessly against attacks on workers' rights wherever they occur.

Among the events on 7 October were 50 actions in Japan; marches, conferences and meetings of young people in several African countries and meetings and mobilisations across Russia and Ukraine.

Among the actions organised in Latin America were initiatives taken by the trade unions of Peru and Chile, aimed at obtaining official government's recognition for the World Day for Decent Work.

These events followed mass demonstrations in Europe, a major march in the United States involving trade unions, civil society associations and human rights groups on 2 October, and actions carried out by education unions around the world on 5 October, World Teachers' Day.

Workers throughout the world spoke with one voice on this annual event to protest against the results of more than two decades of deregulation: growing insecurity, immense inequalities and the downward spiral brought about by world competition, which places profits above the fundamental rights of human beings.

ITUC General Secretary, Sharan Burrow, said: "The financial elites, whose greed, speculation and casino capitalism are at the root of the crisis, must contribute and pay something back. This third annual World Day for Decent Work is the culmination of 10 days of union mobilisation covering all the continents. It will increase pressure on governments to put in place positive solutions to the crisis, instead of simply slashing government spending to satisfy money markets." III

INFO

Further details about the day, and activities that were organised, can be found at: www.wddw.org



World Day for Decent Work: workers organised events worldwide.

Global Unions

European day of action: no cuts, more growth

By Mar Candela

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) staged a Day of Action on 29 September, 2010, to show unified opposition to austerity measures being adopted by governments across Europe.

Tens of thousands of protesters took to the streets of Brussels, Belgium, with simultaneous protests in 37 different countries including Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Serbia, amongst others. The message from the union movement was for governments to give priority to recovery and jobs, instead of the early reduction of public deficits based on premature exit strategies from economic stimulus measures.

The debt snowball problem

In May 2010, the Greek government announced plans for €16bn cuts over four years, including cuts to pensions and raising the retirement age. It was the start of a snowball effect. The crisis in Greece rattled other European countries who followed with their own cuts to public service budgets.

In Britain, the Conservative government announced spending cuts of €93bn with the loss of 500,000 public sector jobs in order to reduce the budget deficit.

In Spain, austerity measures included cuts in teachers' pay and a pensions freeze, as well as an increase in the age of retirement to 67. With unemployment already at 20 per cent, 500,000 more people are set to lose their jobs while reforms erode the basis of collective bargaining agreements. Spanish unions held the first general

strike in eight years on the Day of Action. In France, state education has also been attacked as the Ministry of Education has forecast the loss of 9,000 jobs in primary education, despite pupil numbers set to increase by 4,000. As well as the increase in class sizes, schooling from the age of two will end, and adult education programmes will be reduced. Massive protests in France showed opposition to the attack on pensions and working conditions as well as the future prospects of young people.

Education must be saved

Teachers' unions recognise that a genuine resolution to the financial crisis is necessary but also believe it is crucial that social dialogue with governments helps to identify collectively bargained solutions. Consensus can avoid the risk of austerity measures opening the door to unbridled privatisation of vital public services like health and education.

EI General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, stated: "Measures have to be targeted at young people, to avoid having the next generation leave education and move into unemployment, or being passed over by employers when recovery comes."

What unions propose

As an alternative solution to austerity measures, trade unions have proposed growth policies based on keeping work-



©ETUC
Demonstrators gather in Brussels

ers in economic activity until investment measures make their impact. This is the path followed by Germany, where workers were kept employed until demand picked up, even short-time working, compensated by state support for training and retraining. This has led to the fastest levels of recovery in Europe.

Many governments' finances could also be bolstered by implementing a financial transactions tax (FTT) on banks and creating a fair and more equitable tax collection system. The FTT, a charge on specific types of financial transactions, could end the short-term speculation which created the financial mess in the first place. Figures show an FTT of 0.05% could generate €200bn every year. This would allow governments to repair the growing cost of the global economic crisis by reducing high rates of unemployment. EI also believes tax evasion by the richest members of society must be addressed because of its revenue-generating impact and the basic principle of social equity.

For trade unions, the European Day of Action was, beyond all else, a call for solidarity. In the words of ETUC General Secretary, John Monks: "Solidarity has been lacking in the EU during the past 12 months. Governments have listened too much to the markets – and not enough to the people." ■■■

Health and safety

New Zealand: Teachers under pressure

By Bianca Zander, New Zealand Educational Institute

In a recent survey of members, the New Zealand Education Institution (NZEI) was shocked to discover 86 per cent of teachers experience stress at work, while 24 per cent of respondents said stress levels are of concern or intolerable. The union is tackling this problem because everyone needs a way to release the pressure. Bianca Zander looks at teachers' favourite ways of dealing with stress.

Putting pedal to the metal of her Suzuki Bandit motorcycle does it for early childhood head teacher, Meg Moss. "When you're riding a motorbike, you have to give it 100 per cent concentration. Cornering, watching out for cars. It's physically challenging as well as enjoyable."

In the survey, almost 85 per cent of teachers said they used hobbies and interests – including music and arts – to reduce stress. Only one method was more popular, and that was spending time with friends and family.

Heart stopping

At least one teacher surveyed said they had little time for socialising once they'd met the commitments of the job. "The job is not 9-3, it is 7.30-6.30, plus 8-11 at night and one day per weekend."

Others have learnt that protecting time with family and friends is essential to lowering stress. Last year, South Island primary school teacher, Sally Smith, developed a heart condition from work-related stress. She ran up against a dictatorial boss who made her life a living hell – in and out of the classroom. For Sally the solution was counselling, which is an option used to reduce stress by seven per cent of those surveyed. Although counselling did not remove

her boss, Sally learned to react to her differently. And now, when they have a major dispute, Sally delegates the stress to her union. "I am not strong enough to question her on my own so I get the union to fight my battles when I need them to."

Quick fixes

Nearly 80 per cent of NZEI members said they made it through the school year by holding out for holidays and just over half said they reduced stress by getting away for the weekend. At least one teacher said that going away was not an option. Some blamed the sheer volume of work required, or the extra planning involved in implementing National Standards.

One third of those surveyed said they had used alcohol to reduce stress, and 10 per cent said they relied on prescription medication. Happily, social drinkers were in the minority. Many said they turned to sport and exercise for stress reduction.

Prevention

Meg Moss encourages colleagues at her Early Learning Centre to take an interest in each other's hobbies and tries to accommodate time off for staff to do what they need to. Among her team are an avid patchwork quilter and a martial arts enthusiast.

Meg emphasises that the best cure for stress is prevention. Her advice to new colleagues is to identify when they're feeling stressed and work out exactly what's causing it. "Communicate openly with yourself and colleagues about what's bothering you and see if anything can be done". ■■■

How teachers deal with stress

NZEI surveyed 240 educators about how they deal with stress. Many had more than one way of coping.

- › Exercise and sport – 78.6%
- › Hobbies and interests, including music and other arts – 83.6%
- › Yoga, tai chi or similar practices – 13%
- › Spending time with friends or family – 95.4%
- › Religion or other spiritual expression – 26.5%
- › Alcohol – 34.5%
- › Prescription medication – 9.7%
- › Alternative medicine – 16%
- › Peer counselling – 23.9%
- › Professional counselling – 7.1%
- › Holding on until the holidays – 78.6%
- › Raising the issue with school management – 53.4%
- › Going away for the weekend – 55%
- › Contacting the teachers' union – 17.2%

Equality

MDG summit reaffirms support for gender equity

By Claude Carroué

Heads of state and government joined international and research organisations, as well as civil society groups, trade unions, and the private sector, in New York, from 20-22 September, to check on progress made towards attainment of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



EI was represented at the summit by the President, Susan Hopgood, and EI's Chief Regional Coordinator for Africa, Assibi Napoe, who also chairs the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) of which EI is a founding member.

The GCE called on leaders to make funding for education a priority in order to meet the target of universal access to basic schooling by 2015. It argued that poor countries should spend 20 per cent of their national budget on education, abolish school fees and hire an additional 1.9 million teachers so that every child can have access to education.

GCE President, Kailash Satyarthi, said: "Girls are the real victims of the world's failure to invest in education with millions unable to enter school. The argument for prioritising education is clear. If scientists can genetically modify food and NASA can send missions to Mars, then politicians must be able to find the resources to get millions of children into school and change the fortunes of a generation."

In their final declaration, the heads of state recalled the commitments emanat-

ing from the Millennium Declaration and 'reaffirmed the resolve to work together for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples.'

Gender equity is key

They also recognised that 'achieving gender equality and empowering women is a key development goal and important means to achieving all of the MDGs.' They welcomed 'the establishment of UN Women and pledged to support its operations.' Leaders also committed themselves to accelerating progress in 'realising the right of everyone to education and re-emphasising that education shall be directed at the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity and shall strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.' They committed to achieving MDG 3 by 'ensuring access to education and successful schooling of girls by removing barriers and expanding support for girls' education.'

Over the past decade, many policy initiatives have led to real progress in the right of girls to receive an education, guided by international frameworks such as the

MDGs, and Education For All goals. These policy initiatives have been backed up by studies showing that educating girls can make more positive changes than any other single intervention – both for the individual and for society as a whole.

Each MDG can only be realised through substantial improvements in the field of gender equality and women's rights. As the UN's Fund for Women reported in 2008, 'women's empowerment is not a stand-alone goal. It is the driver of efforts to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, reduce child and maternal mortality, and fight against major diseases like HIV, AIDS and malaria. Women's empowerment is also a driver of sound environmental management and is essential for ensuring development aid reaches the poorest through making women a part of national poverty reduction planning and resource allocation.' III

INFO

For more information visit:
www.un.org/millenniumgoals/

Interview with

Jan Eastman

By Steve Snider and
Leona Hiraoka,
National Education
Association

“Education itself is a human right, a strong moral imperative, but evidence shows there is no tool for human development that is more effective than the education of girls and women.”

A teacher unionist dedicated to gender equality

Jan Eastman is EI's Deputy General Secretary with responsibility for human, trade union and equality rights. She is former chairperson of EI's Status of Women Committee.

Jan is a native of Tasmania. She taught English and Social Studies in Canada before specialising in educating students with learning disabilities. In this interview Jan answers questions about the challenges and opportunities that will be explored at EI's First World Women's Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, from 20-23 January, 2011.



Are we on track to achieve Millennium Development Goal 3 (gender equality)?

We can see progress on gender equality but it is uneven across the globe. Some countries are even regressing. If you put together internationally comparable data in the fields of education, economic activity and political empowerment, as done by Social Watch, the index shows the gender gap is not narrowing in many countries. Progress is held back by systemic issues of attitude and discrimination. It is insufficient to have a legislative rights framework or to write gender equity into the constitution. For example, despite legislation, no country has achieved real pay equity, even though ILO Convention 100 on equal remuneration has been ratified by almost all every ILO member state. What we need is an increase of political will, investment, and coordinated action. This is especially true now, in times of economic recession, which exacerbates precarious situations. We have high hopes for the efficacy of the new agency, UN Women.

Have we seen any progress in girl's access to education around the world?

There has been progress because developing regions are approaching gender parity. Around 96 girls for every 100 boys are in primary education, and 95 girls per 100 boys are in secondary education. That said, more remains to be done and it is doubtful if Education for All will be realised by 2015. Girls' access to education is lowest in Oceania, Sub-Saharan Africa, Southern and Western Asia. A range of barriers keep them out of school, including culture and tradition; safety to and in school, as well as a lack of schools in rural areas. Child labour, for girls often in hidden forms such as domestic labour, as well as situations of conflict and post-conflict, are major obstacles. Teachers are vital because it is the quality of education, dependent on the teacher, which determines if parents send and keep their girls in school.

EI has been integral to making the connection between inequality, injustice and the lack of education. Is education the key to alleviating these conditions?

EI believes quality public education has to be the main means of alleviating inequality and injustice. Education itself is a human right, a strong moral imperative, but evidence shows there is no tool for human development that is more effective than the education of girls and women. Educated women marry later, have fewer, healthier and better nourished children, who are more likely to go to school and less likely to be child labourers. Educated women are better informed about protecting themselves from diseases such as HIV, and have better access to quality public services. They earn higher wages and use a big share of their earnings to benefit their families and community. Women who are denied education are likely to perpetuate the vicious cycle of early marriage, infant mortality, poor health, and vulnerability to illness and poverty.

A big part of EI are the networks. What impact do they have?

Since 2007 regional and sub-regional EI networks have been developed and strengthened. I set a large store by the networks and see one of our roles being to support and encourage them at all levels. We see them as a valuable means of identifying the issues from the ground up, and an effective vehicle for implementing



C.CARROUE/EI

EI Deputy General Secretary, Jan Eastman

policy and making change, working with, and as part of the Union's goals. A key aim of EI's First World Women's Conference is to provide an opportunity for the networks to come together and create a global network focusing on common issues and challenges, planning and acting strategically based on shared experiences of each network. The networks bring the issues to the union, and together they have the capacity to scale up efforts to change attitudes, make space, advocate for economic and political empowerment and, of course, enable access and participation of girls and women in education and training throughout their lives, for full employment and decent work.

So much appears to depend on who is in the classroom and what is being taught. What matters most?

As a teacher, and for EI, it is fair to say that we need quality education for every child and that means many more teachers who are well qualified and supported to provide positive, welcoming and safe

learning environments, for girls and boys. Women teacher role-models for girls, at all levels and across curricular offerings, are essential, especially in maths, the sciences and technology. We also need more focus on gender sensitivity in teacher education, curricular and classroom materials that celebrate diversity and include a gender perspective. Investing in education must include good teacher education programmes, induction and continuing professional development, as well as fair remuneration and decent working conditions. Building inclusive education systems, schools and programmes is complex and demanding. Commitment and investment must be high but the rewards can be exponential if children and youth everywhere can learn to live and work together, not only inside the classroom but outside in the community. To have a new generation where gender equality is a fact of life would be a legacy indeed, and the classroom, the global classroom, might just be the most important place for that to begin. ■■■

Equality

Gender justice is key to real progress

By Rebeca Sevilla

In 2000 the Millennium Development Summit agreed to eradicate global poverty and save millions of lives through coordinated activity. In 2002, leaders of 189 countries agreed to achieve eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. Five years ahead of the deadline, progress has been uneven and the UN has issued a warning that many targets will not be met unless promises are kept through more equitable, gender-sensitive and pro-poor policies.

EI believes social, political and economic equality for women is integral to achieving all MDGs. This makes it essential to identify and address discrimination, with a focus on the situation of the most marginalised and impoverished ethnic diverse populations living in rural and urban areas. There is a need to address all legal gaps to enforce economic, social and cultural rights which enable meaningful participation by all, including education workers and learners. Guaranteed land rights for women and access to credit will make a difference to local agriculture and food security too.

E-Quality in Education

Investment in good quality, free public services is essential to achieving the MDGs and EI works with the ITUC and PSI to advance this agenda.

There is a correlation between poverty, social exclusion and low levels of education because 64 per cent of the world's illiterate are women (510,577 million) or young (131 million) people. Education is vital to alleviating poverty and discrimination, and building democracy and social cohesion, in the developing world. Ac-

cording to UNIFEM, women control a tiny fraction of the world's land and comprise more than half of those in vulnerable employment, yet decent work and economic assets remain out of reach for most women.

Ethnic diversity penalty

Girls from ethnic diverse groups such as indigenous, Roma, migrants or refugees, tend to have lower rates of schools enrolment and literacy, but higher dropout rates than boys from ethnic diverse groups, or groups of girls and boys of dominant group. In Ontario, Canada, 31 per cent of Native people living on reserves have no formal education compared with 10 per cent of the non-Native population. In Guatemala, 65 per cent of indigenous women in rural areas lack literacy skills, compared to 38 per cent of non-indigenous women, while 42 per cent of indigenous men cannot read or write, compared to 30 per cent of the rest of the rural male population. Alarming, 85 per cent of schools have inadequate space, classrooms and services such as electricity, drinking water and sanitation. Classes are overcrowded with a student-teacher ratio of 31:1.

In many cases indigenous women have higher levels of unemployment or paid less for their labour than both ethnic diverse groups of men, or men and women from the dominant population. The ILO estimates 100 million people work in domestic services, a majority of them women or girls aged 11-12, but some as young as seven, who migrate internally and from their home country in search of work. They remain overworked, underpaid and unprotected. Domestic labour is viewed as one of the worst forms of child labour, with physical and sexual abuse a daily part of the experience.

If ethnic diverse people become professionals teachers, their experiences of racism are denied, ignored or trivialised. In a study of Aboriginal teachers' knowledge and experience in Canadian schools, teachers reported occasions where their qualifications and capabilities, and Aboriginal content and perspectives were disregarded. There were also lower expectations of Aboriginal students, and a discounting of the effects of colonisation and oppression on Aboriginal people. Institutional responses to racism have been inadequate, leaving the burden for addressing racism to Aboriginal teachers.

PORTFOLIO OF WOMEN MINISTERS, JANUARY 2010



Women are twice as likely to be ministers for social sectors and welfare, than economy, trade and finance. (Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in Politics: 2010)

The most disadvantaged sections of the workforce: youth, women, migrants and indigenous people among other excluded groups, call for truly inclusive trade unions which respond to their needs.

UN Women

In July 2010, the UN General Assembly created the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) to oversee all UN programmes aimed at promoting women's rights and their full participation in global affairs. One of its goals will be to support the Commission on the Status of Women to devise policies. EI has welcomed the creation of the agency and the election of Chile's former President, Michelle Bachelet – a single mother and paediatrician who was imprisoned under Pinochet's dictatorship – as its first chief.

Ending sexual violence

The rights and opportunities of women and girls cannot be fulfilled unless the violence and fear they face in daily life is eradicated by the adoption and enforcement of national laws and action plans; increased public awareness among school communi-

ties, men and young people; in addition to a systematic address of sexual violence in conflicts and emergency areas. In Europe, migrant women are over-represented among those who access services for victims of gender-based violence, while a Fundamental Rights Agency report reveals that lesbians experience discrimination, bullying and harassment, as well as verbal and physical attacks across the continent.

In some places, education unions are at the forefront of preventing violence against women and girls. In 2009, the Cypriot teacher unions KTOEOS, KTÖS and United Cyprus Greek Cypriot Teachers' Initiative organised a Stop Violence! march. The UK's National Union of Teachers joined a Reclaim the Night march, while the NASUWT union promoted a White Ribbon Campaign for 25 November, International Day to End Violence Against Women. In Germany, the GEW union informed its members about the importance of education in preventing domestic violence.

On the Move for Equality

EI's First World Women's Conference in Bangkok from 20-23 January, 2011, will be preceded by EI's Women's Network

meetings and will give the opportunity for female leadership of the education trade union movement to become more visible, vibrant and global. The event will mark its impact on the agenda of EI's Sixth World Congress in South Africa, during July 2011.

According to EI's Equality Survey to be released at the EI Women's Conference, women represent the majority of union members in most regions, yet are under-represented among union leaderships. The evidence shows that the higher the decision-making body, the lower the percentage of women represented. Globally, the percentage of women decreases from 60 per cent of union membership to 50 per cent of conference delegates, and a further 40 per cent of unions' executive boards.

EI's Women's Conference is a major opportunity for women to discuss common lines of action, to go back home with many experiences and knowledge to share and make concrete demands of their unions and governments. Equality for women and girls is a basic human right, it is also a socio-economic imperative to progress Education for All, the MDGs, and the Beijing Plan of Action. ■■■

Solidarity

Unions commit to HIV activism to ensure quality education in West Africa

By Julie Kavanagh

Challenges to secure quality education in the West African countries of Senegal and Mali include overcrowded classes, over-stretched teachers and under-resourced schools. The impact of HIV and AIDS is another factor likely to complicate access and provision of education.

Unions working in the region under EI's EFAIDS programme are committed to addressing the HIV and AIDS pandemic as part of the goal of assuring quality Education for All. Maouloud Ben Kattrra, national coordinator of Mali's EFAIDS Programme, run by the SNEC union, believes it has been a "voice for the voiceless and has made real progress in advocating on behalf of people living with HIV." He notes that "due to EFAIDS work there is an increasing openness towards the epidemic in Mali's education sector and growing awareness that those who are not infected are still affected."

Speaking during a participatory workshop in Bamako, Mali, to evaluate the work of the EFAIDS programme, Ben Kattrra stated that "the union is committed to actively seeking to improve national education by defining and defending a vision of quality education and not simply reacting to individual government initiatives."

Ami Sidibé Coulibaly, a representative of Mali's Network of Persons Living with HIV (AFAS-AMAS), a partner of Mali's EFAIDS programme, also stressed that supporting those living with HIV and breaking down discrimination was a collective responsibility that must include those living with HIV. Coulibaly, who has lived openly with HIV since she discovered her status in 1998, was applauded by fellow participants for her courage and commitment.

Moral support in Senegal

Developing advocacy for teachers living with HIV is a cornerstone of Senegal's EFAIDS programme implemented by six teacher unions under the collective of COSSEL. Partnering UNESCO-BREDA, the Senegalese unions have nurtured the CARVEE network which coordinates practical and moral support to those living with HIV across the education sector.

While reported levels of HIV prevalence in Senegal and Mali are relatively low to the profile of the epidemic across Sub-Saharan Africa, vigilance is crucial to preventing dramatic increases in HIV rates which could severely affect socio-economic developments, not least in education.

Evaluating success

Participants in the evaluation of Senegal's EFAIDS programme debated milestones crucial to minimising the burden of HIV on an already under-resourced education system. Union advocacy to achieve universal access to treatment and rolling-out



Teacher trade unionists at an EFAIDS workshop in Bamako, Mali

voluntary testing in school spaces was highlighted. Equally, training more than 6,000 teachers and empowering them with skills to teach HIV prevention and sexual health education in schools across the country was seen as a major achievement in mitigating the impact of HIV on the education sector. III

INFO

EI member organisations marked World AIDS Day on 1 December. The AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) pandemic continues to ravage communities around the world. For more information about EI's EFAIDS programme please contact: delphine.sanglan@ei-ie.org

Solidarity

Pakistan: Teachers come to the rescue of flood victims

By Pav Akhtar

Liaqat Babar, in Pakistan's southern province of Sindh, sees just one escape from the hunger, loss and torment inflicted by the recent catastrophic floods in his country. Suicide.

"When I see my children, I feel like killing myself," he says. "We are powerless. We just keep quiet and ask God for death. I tell them God will send someone very kind, and I send them to sleep. In the morning they ask again for food, and I say again that God will send someone."

Five months after the flooding which affected 20 million people and one fifth of the country, Liaqat has no home, no hope and no answers for his children.

Lack of donations

The UN World Food Programme (WFP) has been coordinating the international response, but it fears that the challenge is too big. "It is heartbreaking," said WFP's Dorte Jessen. "The need is so big, and you want to help everyone." Despite the need, the WFP says it will have to cut rations by half because of a lack of donations from the international community.

Education in Pakistan has also been severely disrupted. The number of teachers in need of humanitarian aid is estimated to be almost 100,000.

EI intervention

With EI's help, three Pakistani teachers' organisations are supporting thousands of educators who lost their homes and personal belongings. They are providing up to 30,000 victims with aid supplies including



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clean water, clothing and tents. The Pakistan Teachers' Organisation Council, the All Pakistan Government School Teachers' Association and the Central Organisation of Teachers are using their extensive national networks to distribute aid, concentrating on the provinces of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber and Azad Kashmir which were worst affected by the deadliest floods in 80 years.

The humanitarian aid program, for which EI has opened its solidarity fund, includes healthcare services and trauma counselling for more than 1,000 victims.

EI General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, and Chief Regional Coordinator, Aloysius Mathews, flew to Karachi in August to help coordinate the response of educators to the crisis. Addressing teacher union leaders, van Leeuwen said: "This program is more

than a token of solidarity with our teacher colleagues in Pakistan. Teachers will play a significant role in recovery from this crisis. They will be setting up schools in refugee camps and providing education in affected areas. I strongly encourage EI affiliate members to do what they can to help." ■■■

EI is accepting donations for the Pakistan floods appeal'. Please send your donations to:

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Development Cooperation

Solidarity in the Global Schoolroom

By Jim Higgins, Irish National Teachers' Organisation

Irish trade unionists are playing a valuable solidarity role in developing and sharing teacher training experiences in North East India.

Global Schoolroom was founded by two teachers from Dublin, Dr. Garret Campbell and Gwen Brennan, as an initiative designed to help Irish teachers share their educational experience with counterparts in North East India and vice versa. It is dedicated to eradicating poverty, promoting economic development and supporting sustainable communities. The Global Classroom's guiding principle is that education has the power to expand each individual's scope for opportunity, so respectful links between educational partners can deliver mutual benefits. Sharing good practices also enriches the collective educational experience and widens the cultural horizons of everyone involved, while working directly with teachers and communities builds a strong framework for high standards of teacher training.

The journey so far

In 2006, building on years of experience working in Assam Province, Fr. Anthony Valluran, helped set up a series of teacher training workshops in India. Campbell and Brennan spent four weeks facilitating these workshops for local teachers. Over the next two years, Irish teachers were recruited to continue the teacher training. In 2007, the programme saw eight Irish teachers work with almost 400 Indian teachers in seven locations across North East India. By 2008, Global Schoolroom

had become a registered charity and established a partnership with University College Dublin to develop a Diploma in Teacher Education for Indian professionals who completed the programme. In 2010, the first diplomas were awarded to those Indian teachers who successfully completed the required modules.

Looking to the future

By 2011 the number of sites where training is delivered will have doubled in North East India, and two new sites have been identified in Uganda. The teacher-led initiative will give some Indian teachers an opportunity to join an exchange programme to Ireland to share their experience with teachers and students in Irish schools.

Challenges facing schools

INTO President, Jim Higgins, described "the dignity, enthusiasm and warmth of welcome" he received from the communities and explained the challenges faced by teachers in many schools. "Frequently, they are so poorly paid that many leave teaching to take up better paid jobs in finance and health. With limited resources and large class sizes, and almost no support for special educational needs, learning support teachers are also still a dream."

Annual Conference of Indian Teachers

As well as sharing pedagogical experiences, Irish teachers have utilised their trade union skills to help build education unions' capacity for negotiations and were invited to participate in the National Conference of Indian Teachers in May 2010.

Higgins describe how: "Over 200 teachers from across the region attended the conference, which was more of an intensive three day training course for teachers. One objective was to emphasise the importance of best teaching methodologies and disciplinary processes which respect the dignity of each child."

ASTI President, Joe Moran, delivered a presentation which he summed up by stating: "You cannot have a strong education system unless you have an able and professional teaching profession. It is in the interests of everyone that you organise effectively and positively influence policy developments. A professional teacher is justified in seeking increased resources for education, security of employment and decent pay." ■■■

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A full length version of this article is available on: www.into.ie

Development Cooperation

Educators study sustainable development models

By Rebeca Logan, National Education Association

How do you take topics like poverty, social justice and global development and make them come alive for your students? How do you encourage them to develop a global perspective? To see themselves, and their actions, as part of a community that extends beyond their own borders? How do you, as an educator, become a catalyst for change towards a more equal and sustainable world?

These are some of the questions that a group of educators from the National Education Association (NEA) in the USA, set out to answer as they took part in a study tour of Honduras, organised by the NEA Foundation and Heifer International, an organisation dedicated to poverty alleviation and community empowerment.

Meaningful interactions

Through a series of workshops, project visits, cultural-historical experiences and interactions with teachers, union leaders, education professionals and their students, NEA members witnessed first hand the conditions of poverty, injustice and inadequate resources that afflict communities which have been marginalised for decades. The group also explored a sometimes conflicting relationship between the USA and Honduras, and how neo-liberal policies were trying to dismantle public education and teachers' unions in the Central American country. Another element of the study tour was to visit the ancient ruins of Copan, where the American educators gained an appreciation of the architectural, cultural and linguistic

richness of the Mayas, in order to draw lessons for the students of today.

Profound diversity

The study group counted a school librarian, algebra teacher, and a social worker who helps refugee children, among its members, and they all slept in a camp, travelled long distances to isolated communities and shared in local meals.

Writing about her experience, NEA Vice-President, Lily Eskelsen, said: "It has profoundly changed the way I look at my day job. It has profoundly changed my thinking. It has profoundly changed my life.

One of the most valuable lessons was the knowledge that when it comes to improving dire conditions, community empowerment and participation is essential."

She went on to explain that: "Dropping in an expert to solve a problem within a system is doomed to fail. No matter how many poverty experts were available to consult on how to build economies, train workers, or 'fix' families so they changed the work ethic and values, it failed. It didn't even matter if they were right. It failed because the assumption was that the community itself was the problem."

Empowerment is the solution

"These villagers were not the problem. The solutions didn't come from the real experts. Their lives are being transformed, not by the modest resources provided, but by empowering them to see their situation



R. LOGAN/NEA

NEA participants visited the ancient ruins of Copan to gain an appreciation of the Mayas

with new eyes and to look within themselves for the solutions," Eskelsen added.

Some solutions are already being implemented in projects that the educators visited. They include a bee cooperative which provides supplementary income for families and ensures that women are part of the leadership and a farming community where livestock is passed on to those with the greatest need.

A key element of this program was to ensure other educators could benefit from the experience so a resource guide and series of lesson plans and videos have been made available online by the NEA. III

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For more information please visit:
www.edvoices.com/

Technology in Education

Cyber-Harassment in Schools

By Susan Flocken and Cecilia Logo-Koefoed, ETUCE

In recent years, a new form of harassment has appeared in schools and has become a health and safety hazard for many teachers. *Cyber-harassment* is a rapidly growing problem and threatens not only teachers' wellbeing, but also their current and future employment opportunities, and professional reputation.

In this context, cyber-harassment is to be understood as the use of information and communication technologies such as email, chatrooms, discussion groups, instant messaging, mobile phones or short message services, for repeatedly deliberate and hostile behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of harming or maligning others.

The Cyber-Harassment project

Securing a safe and healthy workplace for teachers is a great concern for ETUCE. Therefore a project was launched in November 2009 to prevent cyber-harassment in schools. This project was carried out by a steering group composed of EI-ETUCE member organisations including FECCOO (Spain), GEW (Germany), NASUWT (UK), OAJ (Finland), and OZPŠaV (Slovakia).

The project, entitled '*Teacher Trade Unions concerned about Violence at school II*', is a continuation of ETUCE's previous violence in schools project, which showed that cyber-harassment has become more prominent in schools. The follow up project had the objective of raising awareness of the issue, exchanging good practices of teacher trade unions and supporting ETUCE member unions to establish na-

tional strategies to tackle cyber-harassment against teachers.

Events, surveys and publications

Two surveys were conducted to investigate the actual status and measures taken on anti-cyber-harassment by ETUCE member organisations in their countries at the level of trade unions. Both surveys were followed by a conference, the first was in Brussels, the second was in Bratislava. At both conferences the results of the survey were discussed, and participants had the opportunity to exchange the good practices of national teacher unions and develop anti-cyber-harassment measures in schools.

As the project concludes, two publications will present the result of the work: *The Updated ETUCE Action Plan on Preventing and Tackling Violence in Schools*, and, *Practical Guidelines for Anti-Cyber Harassment Measures in Education*.

The *Action Plan* was originally developed for the 'violence in schools' project but with the rise of cyber-harassment, there has been a necessity to update it accordingly. This revision was carried out by the steering group of the Cyber-Harassment in Schools project. In October 2010 the



Poster of the activity which received financial support from the European Commission

EI-ETUCE bureau approved the updated Action Plan and submitted it to the EI Pan-European Committee/ETUCE Executive Board meeting in November 2010. III

INFO

Both publications are available on the Teachers' Occupational Safety and Health website: www.edu-osh.eu

Technology in Education

Adobe – a global partner in education

By Christine Silbermann

In the last issue of *Worlds of Education* magazine, we presented the Adobe Education Leaders (AEL) initiative. This is a community of teachers that excel in student-centred use of Adobe's software solutions, AELs have the possibility to follow extensive training and share their experiences with other teachers across the globe.

AELs also have access to online learning resources dedicated to weekly seminars. The AELs play an important advisory role in developing harmonised programmes and course material offered by Adobe worldwide. The AELs are also the first to try out new products and check the possibilities of using them in class.

Once a year, Adobe organises a conference of AELs where they take part in several training courses, hold exchanges with other members and present their projects. These annual conferences play an important role for the worldwide AEL community. The active exchange of ideas and concepts provides inspiration and motivation and allows for even closer collaboration.

David Schneider, an American AEL, says: "Following my participation in the programme, I have obtained so much recognition for my work that I now organise workshops and presentations at the level of my own school district, the state and the country."

Ross Wallis, a British AEL, has launched a project entitled Photoshop PingPong, through which his pupils work with other pupils in Australia, Canada and the USA.

He explains: "I gained an enormous amount from my participation in the AEL programme, especially from the network of fellow teachers who have confirmed and enriched my work. I have been challenged, encouraged and informed and the perceived value of my work has improved."

Collaborative working

Ian Usher, another British AEL, has collaborated with two other members to develop a course on game design through which pupils are involved in learning activities on both sides of the Atlantic. He emphasises that: "The power of the community comes from its ability to enable us to benefit from the experience of people in a professional situation similar to mine – and also to get an idea of how Adobe projects could develop in future."

The AEL programme offers teachers all over the world the possibility of widening their knowledge and enhancing their abilities in the field of education. Participation in the programme is conditional upon the fact that the knowledge and discoveries of teachers are actively shared with other AEL members, and in the school environment. The programme aims to encourage the pleasure of experimentation with the



© ADOBE
A school teacher uses photoshop

support of technology in the classroom, together with innovation in general.

Dave Forrester, from Olympia School District in the USA, illustrates this project and describes his experience as an AEL: "I think that now I am working differently due to the fact that I am no longer afraid of doing the impossible, the unexpected." III

INFO

More information is available on Adobe TV for education at: tv.adobe.com/channel/students-educators/

ComNet

Communications specialists gather to promote teacher unions

By Claude Carroué

EI's Communication's unit brought together counterparts from affiliate members in Europe and North America at the annual EI Communicators' Network (ComNet) meeting in Brussels, Belgium, from 21-22 September 2010.

The communications specialists used the meeting to share their unions' work and to discuss the strategic approaches EI was taking to engage and support affiliate members to articulate key challenges being experienced by educators around the world.

EI Deputy General Secretary, Charlie Lennon, used his opening address to introduce members of the EI Communications' Unit to participants before articulating key challenges, both structural and political, that educators faced around the world. He reaffirmed the importance of ComNet members as a key tool to promoting education unions.

Planning for Congress

A special session was held to plan communication activity in the run up to Congress, in Cape Town in July 2011 and to explore what messages and highlights would be likely to emerge from event.

A presentation on the art of emotional online communications was given by web designer and developer, Aral Balkan, who challenged participants to think about user-centred websites, new and social media, including Twitter and Facebook, for campaigning purposes.

Graziella Guarguaglini and Stephanie de Munter of PR Newswire presented their database of 50,000 journalists in more than



150 countries and how this was being used to communicate important union stories.

EI Deputy General Secretary, Jan Eastman, with Human and Trade Union Rights Unit Senior Coordinator, Dominique Marlet, told participants what the hotspots were for teacher trade unionists around the world and to preview EI's First World Women's Conference in Bangkok in January 2011.

Recruiting young members

Kristin Blom from the ITUC Campaigns Unit presented her work to reach the next generation of young trade unionists in a session on running campaigns in a multimedia age.

Education and Employment Unit Coordinator, Harold Tor, gave a presentation on the

Global Campaign for Education, previewed EI's World Teachers' Day and challenged participants to think about how to articulate pro-union narratives in response to the economic crisis.

EI General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, shared his views of the global challenges that educators and affiliate unions faced in securing a strong, stable and prosperous profession that was fit for purpose. He articulated the struggle to recruit and retain young qualified professionals into the public education system as part of the lifeline to keep our campaigns strong, and to ensure that unions remained relevant to the world in which our affiliates and members live and work.

Participants also took the opportunity to reflect on the learning they had shared and to look towards developing a ComNet action plan for the year ahead. III

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To get involved with EI's Communicators' Network, or to sign up for regular email communication, please send your name, member organisation and, where applicable, your position to: editor@ei-ie.org

EI's Executive Board decisions

The member-led Executive Board of EI met in Brussels from 26-28 October to agree strategic policy decisions that will guide the work of the global union over the next three months.

Among the decisions that were taken, the Board appointed Randi Weingarten, President of AFT (USA), and Patrick Roach, Deputy General Secretary of NASUWT (UK), as new Board members, to replace Ed McElroy, former President of AFT, and Jerry Bartlett, former Deputy General Secretary of NASUWT.

EI President, Susan Hopgood, reminded Board members of the theme for World Congress: Building the Future through Quality Education, and led a discussion on the outcomes of the consultation with affiliate members about a comprehensive statement of education policy for EI. A revised draft has been circulated for further consultation among affiliates before it is submitted to Congress. The Board also agreed to present policy resolutions to Congress on topics including: the future of the teaching profession; the economic crisis; climate change; funding of public education; migration; support staff; trade unionism; diversity, equality and solidarity.



Randi Weingarten



Patrick Roach

We welcome your comments.
Please write to: editor@ei-ie.org

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CALENDAR

January 2011

- 18-20** Global Union Federations/International Financial Institutions high level meetings – Washington, USA
- 20-23** EI First World Women's Conference – Bangkok, Thailand
- 24-25** 5th Annual Meeting of the Council of Global Unions – Paris, France
- 26-30** World Economic Forum – Davos, Switzerland

February 2011

- 8** European Trade Union Committee for Education – Brussels, Belgium
- 20** World Day for Social Justice – Worldwide
- 22** 55th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women – New York, USA

March 2011

- 7-8** EI Higher Education and Research Standing Committee meeting – Copenhagen, Denmark
- 8** International Women's Day – Worldwide
- 8-9** EI Research Network meeting – Brussels, Belgium
- 16-17** International Summit on the Teaching profession – New-York, USA
- 24-25** 118th session of the Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee of the Organisation for Economic and Co-operation Development – Paris, France

Worlds of Education is published by Education International, the global union federation representing 30 million teachers and education workers from pre-school to university in more than 170 countries around the globe.

To learn more about EI, go to: www.ei-ie.org



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El calls on member organisations and activists to protest against the continuing detention of Miguel Ángel Beltrán Villegas, a Colombian professor and trade unionist, who has been imprisoned on charges that violate his exercise of academic freedom.

You can send an appeal from El's website, in a variety of languages, to urge the Colombian authorities to release Professor Beltrán and to respect academic freedom and right to expression.



To learn more about Professor Beltrán's case and to show solidarity with him, please visit: www.ei-ie.org/beltran



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