

-Women's Network in Africa-

The Promotion of Women in Education Network (PWE) in Africa is sponsored by CTF/FCE (Canada), Lärarförbundet (Sweden) and UEN (Norway). The network comprises **Benin, Burkina Faso, the Ivory Coast, Niger, Mali, Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Togo, Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Ghana and Nigeria.**

Between January and February 2005, funds were allocated to Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Sierra Leone and Gambia to finance National Training and sensitization campaigns aimed at creating women's awareness of their potential.

In March 2005 the EI Regional Office in Africa will also initiate a women's network in Central Africa comprising Gabon, Cameroon, Congo and DRC, Rwanda and Burundi.

-Moldova-

In cooperation with EI and UNSA-Education (France) and supported by the British Irish Group (ASTI and INTO (Ireland) and EIS (Scotland)), PESTU, the Moldovan teacher trade union, implemented a new stage of its training programme. Communication and negotiations were the main issues in seminars organized in Chisnau and other regions of the country. More than 200 teachers participated in these seminars. The participation of female teachers had been outstanding. Today many of these women occupy leading political and administrative positions within their unions. In 2005 similar results are expected.



-Ukraine-

The Ukrainian teacher's organisation (VPONU) continues to expand in the whole country. EI organized, in cooperation with national leaders of VPONU, two workshops on leadership training. Ten regions and more than twenty-five trade union leaders participated in these workshops that were held in Ternopil and Kirovohrad. The support of the British Irish Group has been decisive for the introduction of democracy and autonomy to the teacher trade union environment.

-Iraq-

The Iraqi teacher trade union, ITU, established cooperating relations with EI and AFT (USA). Training seminars were held in August 2004 and January 2005 and included as well members of the Kurdish teacher trade union, KTU. In February 2005 discussions started on the implementation of a joint project with EI that will focus on collective bargaining, gender and higher education.



-DC Meeting November 2004-

The annual EI Development Cooperation Meeting was held in Brussels from 17 to 18 November 2004. Staff from both the EI Head Office and all regional offices attended this meeting together with 25 representatives from AEU (Australia), AFT (USA), AOb (the Netherlands), CTF (Canada), DLF (Denmark), F.E.CC.OO. and FETE/UGT (Spain), FENPROF (Portugal), JTU (Japan), Lärarförbundet (Sweden), NEA (USA), NUT (UK), OAJ (Finland), SNES and UNSA-Education (France), and UEN (Norway). The open and constructive discussions covered issues such as communication strategies between cooperating partners, the integration of gender aspects in development cooperation projects, the definition and implementation of quality cooperation as well as financial aspects of development cooperation.

There was understanding among cooperating partners to reinforce communication and the exchange of information so as to avoid duplication of projects and financing and to increase transparency. For that purpose each organisation should share its work plan with EI Brussels and the relevant regional offices. Furthermore, it was agreed that objectives with regard to gender equality should be included in the development of all projects.

A planning committee for the preparation of next year's Development Cooperation meeting was set up. The committee is composed of Cassandra Hallet (CTF/FCE), Paula Nilsson (Lärarförbundet), Nicolás Richards (EI), Carmen Vieites (FETE/UGT) and Jefferson Pessi (EI Latin America). All cooperating partners are requested to send their ideas for the next DC meeting by April 2005.



<http://www.ei-ie.org>

It is very important for the development cooperation team to be in permanent contact with members of Education International. If you wish to share with us news, projects and programmes or give us your opinion, please feel free to contact us.

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The EI Solidarity Fund

The EI Assistance Programs Unit would like to thank all member organisations for contributing to the EI Solidarity Fund and thus expressing their solidarity with colleagues and their families affected by disasters in 2004.

In 2004 the world has witnessed traumatising events such as the massacre in Beslan, the hurricanes in the Caribbean and the tsunami disaster in Asia. Education International reacted to these catastrophes by deploying resources from the EI Solidarity Fund and hence provided emergency financial assistance to teachers affected. The following is a brief overview of the actions that were and will be taken by Education International in the affected regions.



-Tsunami Relief Program-

The tsunami disaster that struck all countries around the rim of the Indian Ocean on 26 Dec 2004 has had a devastating impact on education. Hundreds of thousands of students were affected, and so were about 75,000 teachers and their unions, either directly or indirectly. Hundreds of schools were also destroyed.

An international trade union fact-finding mission visited the two regions that were most devastated by the disaster, namely Aceh in Indonesia and Galle in Sri Lanka, on January 16-22. The mission was headed by EI General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen. He was accompanied by EI's Chief Regional Coordinator for Asia Pacific, Aloysius Mathews, and representatives of EI member organisations and other members of the international trade union movement.

Whilst meeting with trade union organisations and survivors of the tsunami disaster, the Global Unions' mission identified four important targets for trade union solidarity programmes in the area of relief provision:

- Assistance must be targeted at the re-establishment of the livelihoods of displaced persons as well as at their job recovery;
- Children affected by the disaster need to return to school as soon as possible as a way to help them overcome their trauma;
- The reconstruction or repair of workers' homes and of union offices is to be started immediately;
- Trade unions must help ensure a fair distribution of aid, fight exploitation and violations of human and trade union rights as these occur in the wake of the tsunami disaster.



The full mission report is available for download at EI's special Tsunami Relief Program web section: <http://www.ei-ie.org/tsunami>

Reconstruction begins

On its part, EI will focus specifically on programmes for the reconstruction or repair of school buildings and the supply of school furniture and materials.

On 24 February, EI and Oxfam Netherlands (NOVIb) signed an agreement with the government of Sri Lanka to assist in the reconstruction of 12 schools in various districts as part of Sri Lanka's Education Rehabilitation Programs.

The costs of this programme are estimated at 5.7 million euros and will be borne by both Oxfam Netherlands (NOVIb) and EI. The programme has been initiated by the member organisations of EI in Sri Lanka, namely ACUGET, ACUT, ACUT(G), CTTU, SLITU and USLTS. A committee was formed to monitor the programme and is chaired by the President of the All Ceylon Union of Teachers (ACUT), Angela Wijesinghe.

The reconstruction programme will also entail adoption and scholarship programmes, as well as crash courses for teachers in trauma counselling. Member organisations can participate in this programme by "adopting" schools, starting twinning programmes, or assisting in the provision of school supplies.

(...)

The EI Solidarity Fund

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In **Indonesia**, EI's Chief Regional Coordinator, Mr. Aloysius Mathews, who has just returned from a mission to the Aceh province will be coordinating reconstruction, orphans and scholarship programmes together with the EI's Indonesian member organisation PGRI.

-Beslan Trust Fund-

On World Teachers' Day (5 Oct 2004), EI General Secretary, Fred van Leeuwen, and the President of the Education and Science Employees' Union of Russia (ESEUR), Galina Merkulova visited the survivors of the terrorist attack on the school N1 in Beslan. After consulting with the surviving teachers and the families of



the teachers who were killed, both EI and ESEUR agreed to set up a Beslan Foundation. This Foundation will operate for a non-specific period of time and its purpose is to

contribute to the costs of educating the child victims of the Beslan massacre, in particular the children of teachers killed in the attack.

The foundation will be managed by a Board of directors that comprises at least 4 persons. Once the Board is appointed in May 2005, it will start to undertake the activities of the Foundation.

-Solidarity with the Caribbean-

Between August and October 2004 the Caribbean was hit by a series of hurricanes. Among Charley, Frances and Jeanne, hurricane Ivan was the most powerful hurricane the Caribbean experienced in ten years. The storm moved through the region for more than a week, damaging houses, buildings and infrastructure and causing at least 30 deaths. The islands most affected were **Haiti, Grenada, the Bahamas, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and Cuba**. Several teachers were killed and the homes of hundreds of teachers were destroyed.

On 21 November 2004 the Caribbean islands of **Dominica**, one of the poorest countries in the region, and **Guadeloupe** were shaken by a strong earthquake, killing at least one person and destroying numerous homes.

In **Guyana**, three days of torrential rains which began on 14 January 2005 caused serious flooding and affected more than 150,000 people. It marked the third time since late December that rains caused flooding in the country's capital, Georgetown, and other coastal towns. The Guyana Teachers' Union lost all its office equipment and documents as the office was completely flooded.

Such disasters have placed a tremendous burden on the human, financial and material resources of the small teacher trade unions in the region, affecting their capacity to carry out their work.

Thanks to substantial financial contributions from Education International and EI member organisations (NEA, Lärarförbundet,

and CTF/FCE), teachers in the affected regions are now able to rebuild their homes, schools and offices. However, teachers in **Guyana and Haiti** are still exposed to serious health risks resulting from the flooding.

The EI regional office in the Caribbean is working together with CUT to elaborate methods to prepare the leadership of teachers' unions to cope with and manage the impact of natural disasters. Disaster management is considered a priority issue for training teacher union leaders in the region. Union leaders and teachers need to be prepared to respond to the psychological, physical, social and economic impact of future catastrophes.



Latin America

The impact of bilateral and multilateral cooperation on public education in Latin America

The EI regional office in Latin America has initiated a programme to evaluate the impact of projects on education in Latin America approved and financed by two International Financial Institutions, namely the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. The programme will also monitor the bilateral cooperation between European governments and the government of each country in the Latin American region since 1990.

The aim of this programme is to measure the impact of the multilateral and bilateral cooperation in the range of education in a period in which education reforms were carried out in Latin America.

Latin America has experienced a deterioration of public education during the last 15 years. Since 1990 the International Financial Institutions financed various programmes and projects designed to decentralize and reform the education system arguing that public education has to be privatized and commercialized.

To what extent has the multilateral and bilateral cooperation contributed to the deterioration of the public education system in Latin America? is the main question to which the new evaluation programme seeks to answer.

With the financial support of the Norwegian teacher trade union UEN and the Dutch trade union centre FNV, the impact of projects financed by the World Bank in **Nicaragua, Honduras and Bolivia** will be the first to be investigated. These three countries were chosen as they were just recently appointed by the World Bank as priority countries for the implementation of new projects in the framework of the Fast Track Initiative of the Education For All (EFA) goal.

The results of the evaluation will certainly help Latin American teacher trade unions affiliated to EI to counteract any negative effects of the projects carried out by the International Financial Institution in the field of education.

Central and Eastern Europe

-Reconciliation Process in the Balkan Region-

Even though the intensity of ethnical tensions in the Balkan region has diminished over the last years, there has still a lot to be done in the education sector regarding the reconciliation process.

In **Croatia**, a programme was implemented in 2004 to establish links in the field of education between Serbian and Croatian communities in the Vukovar region. This programme was coordinated by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and supported by EI and two of its affiliates AOb (Netherlands) and GEW (Germany). An evaluation of this project will be carried out in the first half of 2005. The project has served as a positive example for other trade unions in the region.

In **Kosovo**, a region that is still facing severe social tensions, a reconciliation process in the education sector has started due to the cooperation between the Serbian teacher trade union SOK and the Albanian teacher trade union SBASHK. In September 2004 a delegation of teacher trade unions, headed by EI, visited Kosovo. The delegation composed of representatives from DLF (Denmark), AFT (USA), UEN (Norway), AOb (Netherlands) and



EI, met with the highest authorities of the country: the Prime Minister, representatives of the Parliament, the Minister of Education and representatives of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). In these meetings the delegation defended the right of all students in Kosovo to receive a quality education that respects the essential values of their respective cultures. The delegation further expressed its concerns about the violence against ethnical minorities.

The teacher trade unions from Kosovo assured that they would foster the reconciliation process and proposed to create a multicultural centre. SOK and SBASHK decided to make their cooperation public by giving a press conference.

Meanwhile, SBASHK continues to implement its programme of collecting membership fees. This programme is supported by UEN, AOb and EI. In January, only three months after the programme has been implemented, 70% of the regional teacher trade unions started to collect membership fees and almost 30% of the teachers of the whole region are now paying members.

Asia-Pacific

-Strengthening teachers' rights in Cambodia-

Promoting teachers' rights is one of the prime concerns in Cambodia. Trade union leaders have been killed with impunity; members of the Cambodian Independent Teachers' Association (CITA) threatened, intimidated and harassed by the government for joining the association.

Thanks to the support of Education International and Lärarförbundet of Sweden, CITA has been strengthened and was able to expand its organisation. Branches are now established in 19 out of the 22 provinces. Membership has grown from 300 in the year 2000 to 6000 in 2004. "We are much stronger and not intimidated by the government harassment," said the newly elected General Secretary of CITA, Mr. Knoung Noug, immediately after the second CITA Congress in November 2004.

To address issues arising from the rapid growth of the organisation

and to promote internal democracy (fundamental in promoting teachers rights in the country), it was agreed that CITA's constitution, drafted in 2000, has to be amended. The newly elected executive committee asked EI and Lärarförbundet to assist the union in modifying the constitution in 2005.

Following the request of the executive committee, it was decided that the constitution will be redrafted in a series of workshops that involve both national and provincial leaders. Drafts of the constitution will be circulated among CITA leaders and members for their input ahead of the extraordinary congress, to be held September 2005.

It was also agreed that EI and Lärarförbundet will assist CITA by providing human and financial resources to successfully complete the adoption of a new constitution.

