



# PRO WOMEN

N° 14

AFRICAN WOMEN IN EDUCATION NETWORK BULLETIN

## Edito

8th March, International Women's Day:  
Investing in Women and Girls

### Editorial

Dear Readers,

Pro Women is back this time with the voice of all the female education sector in Africa.

This new edition is mainly devoted to the activities of the International Women's Day (IWD) celebrated on 8 March 2008 in the countries by female teachers trade unionists affiliated to Education International.

This year under the theme: «Investing in Women and Girls», the IWD called on both women and men concerned to aspire for a better world.

Apart from the celebration of the 8th March 2008, this news bulletin also feature the training sessions that were organised for female teacher trade unionists at the beginning of the year at the sub regional and national levels.

Enjoy your reading.



*A member of the women department of SNE Morocco addresses women on 8<sup>th</sup> Mars 2008*

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**FCE**  
FEDERATION  
CANADIENNE DES  
ENSEIGNANTES ET DES ENSEIGNANTS

# BURKINA FASO

## The International Women's Day 8th March 2008

### SNESS

The Women's Desk of the Syndicat National des Enseignants du Secondaire et du Supérieur National Union of Secondary and Higher Education Teachers (SNESS) celebrated in deferment on Thursday 27 March 2008, the International Women's Day.



The major activity programmed was a conference on the theme: « Protection of the Maternal Health: obstetrical and neonatal ».

The paper presented by Madame Zerbo Awa, Health Attaché and the facilitator of the conference, highlighted the fact that the life of the woman during childbirth and that of the new born is insecure in Burkina Faso despite the efforts being made by the Government. A woman and new born baby die in childbirth every three hours.

In order to protect the health of the mother and that of the child, the Government and the population should join their efforts in multi-sector actions involving all the stakeholders.

For the mean time, success has been recorded in the protection of the maternal health such as the creation of a Department of Health and Family, the subsidy of childbirth and caesarean surgery, the extension of mother-child protection to the districts, the increase in information, education and communication activities and the creation of micro enterprises.

*Mrs Zerbo Awa during her communication*

These actions are initiated in favour of Burkina Faso women, wage earners or not, city dwellers or rural populations.



*A cross section of the participants. At the front, Mrs Denise SANON, President of SNESS women committee*

# MOROCCO

SNE/FDT

The Women Desk of the Syndicat National de l'Enseignement (SNE/FDT) organised several events to mark the International Women's Day. Each section celebrated the 8th March in a peculiar manner.



In the grand Casablanca region, artistic activities were organised (music, theatre, poems...) for the occasion and a symbolic tribute was paid to two female activists of SNE who have just retired after 40 years of teaching.

At Agadir the women desk organised a sensitisation day on the new family code for pupils and female teachers.

*The assistance follows a sketch on Female Teachers' Rights*



At AZROU, a seminar on the theme «ethics of the teaching profession» brought together over 80 participants. Pupils and traditional dancing groups were also invited to the event.

## TOGO FESEN

A training seminar on the theme «documentation, research on internet, the Millennium Development Goals and NEPAD» brought together forty (40) participants, both women and men. The highest point of the celebration was Saturday 8th March 2008 with a conference/debate on the global theme: «Invest in women and girls ».

These various activities were carried out in a festive atmosphere and were used to build the capacities of female teachers on the major themes related to development and the challenges of information and communication technologies.



*The activists of FESEN in comnuter room*

It was done with the view of facilitating the full participation of women in the development of the country. The members of FESEN decided to implement the gains and serve as relay to their comrades who were not present during the proceedings, especially in their classrooms in order to sustain the work that has started.

**Questions on women issues were discussed all the women's week long. (IWW).**



## Gabon FESEENA

### **THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY with the Fédération Syndicale des Enseignants de l'Éducation Nationale (FESEENA) "Trade Union Federation of National Education Teachers" in Gabon**

The activities of the International Women's Day were officially launched on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2008 and ended on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2008 in the Teaching Hospital of Libreville (CHL). It was followed by a broadcast of the round table on "Women and HIV/AIDS" on the national Television and Radio Channel of Gabon.

The OYANE 4 Public School (in the Department of Komo) and the building of the gynaecology department of CHL served as the venue of the events which were organised under the patronage of Mme the Minister of Family and Women Promotion.

**The delegates of FESEENA who were specially invited to the events, seized this opportunity to sensitise their colleagues female teachers of the OYANE 4 Public School on HIV/AIDS.**



Oyane 4 Women folkloric group

Lectures followed by discussions animated by various personalities of the health department and free medical services such as consultations, cervical cancer, HIV/AIDS, and trypanosomiasis tests and children immunisation programmes were the events organised in the two days. The populations, village associations of OYANE 4 and the women of Libreville greatly appreciated the occasion.



# CONGO BRAZZAVILLE

## FETRASSEIC

On the occasion of the celebration of the International Women's Day, Fédération des Travailleurs de la Science, des Sports, de l'Enseignement, de l'Information et de la Culture (FETRASSEIC)



*1<sup>st</sup> at left, Mrs. Clotilde Mandimba, Pt. of FETRASSEIC Women Committee*

organised a lecture followed by debates on the global theme : « Invest in Women and Girls »

which was identified by United Nations for the year 2008. About 40 female participants took part in debate which also covered also: **Women Workers Rights.**

Female members of FETRASSEIC present at this meeting interpreted investing in women and girls to *development of women and their self-realisation of their human, civil, economic and political rights.*

However, the image is gloomy, because it is obvious that most of the women in Congo-Brazzaville and in all the socio-professional components do not know their rights. However, these rights are those which are contained in the 1948 declaration of human rights, in the labour and family code, etc...

The conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the articles of the 1948 Declaration, the Labour and Family Code in favour of women, were hence cited and the participants took good note of them.

Participants were later onvited to the "Maison de la Famille" (Department created by the Ministry of Women Affairs) for useful information to guide the future women; "workers or farmers."

The General Secretary of FETRASSEIC ceased the opportunity to urge women to further involve themselves into trade union activities. He concluded by asking "who will talk about your rights and who will defend them?"



*A cross section of the participants.*

*A cross section of the participants.*

## 8th March, a day of reflection and action!

In Africa and elsewhere, women and girls continue to be victims of discrimination and are bending under the yoke of inequality and injustice.

They remain the main victims of poverty and armed conflicts, with limited or unequal access to property, employment, education. Over 2/3 of the children who are not in schools in the world are girls.

Halfway to the evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals, even if progress are made especially at the political level, there is no doubt that the ambitions of women are far from been achieved!

Like those who lost their lives for equal rights and the respect of their rights throughout the centuries and nations, today, women should be courageous and make more effort.

Singing and dancing ..., on 8th March! Of course, to celebrate victories and progress made. But, the International Women Day, or the International Women Week should also be a day or 7 days of assessment, reflections and recommendations. It should remain a day of action, a day of faith which will more than ever carry the will of women to forge ahead and get to the end, up to the total respect for their rights, to equality and freedom.

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## "Invest in women and girls": Why not?

For over a century now, history has focussed on women.

Considered for a long time as useless investment for the society, women have today turned the page and the events of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Europe and United States of America are the signs of the new role that women henceforth intend to play in the society.

In fact, they only want to play their role in a world which more than ever needs the contribution of everyone, both men and women.

Mr Ban Ki Moon, Secretary General of UN during the celebration of the International Women

Day on 8 March 2008, declared: « the world has in women, the most important and the less exploited potential for peace building »

Women contribution and participation in the development process are in fact a reality which is increasingly recognised today. Women are today indispensable in the management of the world, in peace building, in the protection of the environment, in the fight against poverty and HIV/AIDS, etc...

However, they are still very few who can make their voices heard, who can overcome hunger and cold, diseases and war. They are very few who can claim for

their rights and those of their daughters. Nevertheless, they are all strong; they are capable of giving the best of themselves and carry the world towards what they strongly believe: peace, health, education, wellbeing....

They only need to be given the opportunity, the same that is given to others. They only need to be trusted and to benefit from resources to succeed, the possibility to excel, not to compete with whosoever, but just to let open in its fullness, their strength and powers.

So, why not try to accept their differences and believe in what they want and what they can offer to humanity?

# WOMEN IN ACTION

## WOMEN ACTIVITIES IN NETWORKS

*The year 2006 was the year for assessment and evaluation of the project on the promotion of women in education. 2007 was the year of revitalising women's sub regional networks, a year during which recommendations made in 2006 were implemented. To that effect, the sub-regional training sessions and the establishment of women networks in Central Africa, Eastern Africa, Northern Africa and West Africa are tangible examples.*

*2008 is the year of the reinforcement of the grassroots for an impetus towards an effective autonomy and a full union and socio-professional development of female staff in education.*

- *Sub-regional network of Women Network in Eastern Africa (WNEA) in Kampala (Uganda)*

The activity was held from 7th to 11th January 2008 at Green Valley Hotel in Kampala, Uganda, the first workshop of the year 2008 for women. It brought together 17 female participants, members of the WNEA coordinating committee, from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Zanzibar. The aim of this meeting was to build the capacity of female leaders in leadership which will allow them to develop strategies for an efficient promotion of the sub-regional network at the national level. The various themes covered during the workshop are: gender equality and women autonomy, roles and responsibilities of leaders, advocacy, ICTs, networking, etc. IERAF was represented in the workshop by the Regional Coordinator, Richard Eringu.

WNEA leaders left the workshop well equipped in research on internet and in leadership. They are equipped for the implementation of the plan of

action of the network prepared at the sub-regional and national levels.

- *National training workshop for the grassroots members of l'UNPEF – Algiers (Algeria)*

From 19th to 21st February this workshop brought together 33 female members of the Union Nationale des Personnels de l'Education et de la Formation (UNPEF) at the Friederich Ebert Foundation in Alger.

The aim of the workshop was to build the capacities of the female leaders and facilitate the integration and further participation of women in trade union activities. Women involvement is still very low within l'UNPEF.

The major themes debated by female and male participants were: the challenges to the integration of women into the trade union movement, trade union leadership, oral and written communication, and advocacy.

The Chief Coordinator of IERAF and the officer in charge of Education and Promotion at Friederich Ebert Foundation led the deliberations which ended in a plan of action and recommendations made by the participants. Among other recommendations, the creation of a national network, the participation of at least one woman in the delegation of the Wilayas boards (zones / départements), to the next UNPEF congress.

- **Sub-regional training workshop of the Central African Network for Female Trade Union Teachers (RESAC) in Douala - Cameroon**



*Activistes of RESAC at the workshop*

In order to take up the challenges of communication observed during the June 2007 session, a sub-regional training workshop on written communication, ICTs and project management was organised in Douala. It brought together members of

- **National training workshop for SGEB AND FGESRS-Sousse (Tunisia)**

The training workshop for female members of the Syndicat Général de l'Enseignement de Base (SGEB) and the Syndicat Général de l'Enseignement Supérieur (FGESRS) was held from 28th to 30th April 2008 at Sousse, a 120 km town from Tunis. 5 men with 30 of their female colleagues took part in the workshop which was essentially focused on the techniques of negotiation and communication. Moreover, Participants went through the obstacles to the unionisation of the women. They proposed some solutions approaches which are among them : women capacity building in order to minimise their inferiority complex, the provision of social structures and

infrastructures aiming to reduce the tasks rising from triple role of the women: wife/mother, worker and citizen. Besides, they recommended the creation of a space for the women in the decision making structures of unions at all the levels. Above all, Sousse was a right place where differences at professional, social and economic levels, such as gender considerations were discussed. In the evenings, women and men were together talking about the problems of their everyday life, sharing cultural diversity, through the songs and the anecdotes. The Chief Coordinator of EIRAF has a good memory of it, and wishes that the recommendations become actions.

the RESAC coordinating committee and female delegates from teachers unions in Cameroon affiliated to EI. A total of 11 organisations from 7 Central African countries participated in the meeting held at Saffana Hotel from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

The various themes were presented by experienced resource persons through various and pertinent teaching techniques.

Through its members, RESAC has the ambition to be a platform for exchange of ideas and experiences and of real development of women in education in Central Africa. To that effect, it can take care of itself. A plan of action was therefore prepared for the two coming years and recommendations formulated for the partners and local organisations, who should, according to the participants, further support women

activities at the national level.



*A group photo - Members of SGEB and FGESRS 28th - 30th April 2008*



# Cholesterol

## *Importance of prevention*

**Today, cholesterol is increasingly known and thanks to efficient drugs, we know how to reduce its level in the body. But, is it not better to play the card of prevention? What type of food should be eaten? Which behaviour to adopt in order to prevent it rather than cure it?**

There is no mystery: one should have a regular physical activity, walk everyday, but also and especially eat healthy food; these are the keys to prevention

### **Be careful about your medical history**

If it is important to adopt sound health hygiene rules, it is also necessary to have a personal medical check up of the risk factors: are there people who suffer from hypercholesterolemia in your family? Were your parents victims of stroke? Maybe these diseases are provoked by excess of cholesterol. Is your food too rich in saturated fat? Do you have a problem of overweight? One single positive answer to these questions will make you adopt a particular behaviour.

Resolution number one: practice a regular sport activity, if your resources and time can allow it. Have a 30 minutes walk everyday, practice cycling or swimming, everybody should find the activity which is suitable for him/her. Most importantly, you should not neglect your body!

Resolution number two: eat better, chose your food.

### **Food: a key factor of prevention!**

To eat better especially means to choose one's lipid and caloric intake! The first rule consists in balancing your diet. All food components must be present and there is no question of preventing yourself of fat because in your family there is a cholesterol history. Only the excess should be banned. You shall also ensure that you eat a lot of fruits and vegetables and especially vary them. The whole problem is a question of choice and

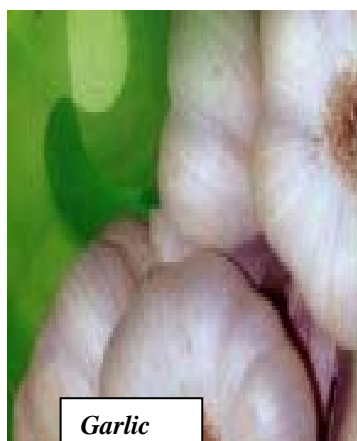
you can eat everything, but be careful of the quantity and especially the quality of the food. A good diet is the one which avoids frustration.

To cook, you should apply the same basic rules. Cook

varied and use preferably vegetable cooking oil for your foods, these are simple gestures which will help you to prevent risks of excess of cholesterol.

### **Other ideas to fight excess of cholesterol**

Go regularly for check ups! It is better to act. Sometimes, simple dietetic measures can help to regulate a recent malfunctioning which is not too serious, whereas a more serious treatment shall be necessary if you allow the problems to worsen. Testing is a simple gesture that you can make yourself with the tests sold in pharmacy. If the results reveal a quantity of too much cholesterol, you then have to consult a medical doctor who will prescribe laboratory tests and where applicable, medical treatment. In any case, he will surely ask you to initiate a more balance diet and to choose adapted and varied food.



Garlic



Lemon

# GENDER QUIZ

Take your time and Test you knowledge on Gender issues. You will find answers in the next Pro Women.

1. If sex refers to the biological differences between men and women, gender refers to...

- a) Socially constructed roles and responsibilities of men and women
- b) A concept that may change over time and vary within and between cultures
- c) Feminity and masculinity
- d) All of the above
- e) Sex and gender have the same meaning and can be used interchangeably

2. Gender equality is an issue that is relevant to:

- a) Girls and women; it is a women's issue
- b) Developing countries; it is only there that gender gaps exist
- c) All societies, women and men alike

3. Which Millennium Development Goal (MDG) focuses on gender?

- a) MDG 1
- b) MDG 3
- c) MDG 5

4. Why are girls more likely than boys to miss out on secondary education in the developing world?

- a) Because of high school fees, only boys go to school
- b) Many adolescent girls are expected to help out at home
- c) Child marriage restricts girls' mobility and freedom
- d) All of the above

5. What is the proportion of girls in the developing world who get married before the age of 18?

- a) 12%
- b) 25%
- c) 36%
- d) 54%

6. Many women who are infected or at risk of becoming infected with HIV do not practice high-risk behaviours, and are frequently married or in a monogamous relationship.

- a) True; women are vulnerable largely because of their limited autonomy and external factors, including violence against women and social and economic inequities beyond their control
- b) False; marriage alone guarantees protection from HIV infection

7. What fraction of the world's working hours are worked by women and girls?

- a) 1/4
- b) 1/2

c) 2/3

d) 3/4

8. As of 2007, how many countries worldwide have met the goal of having women comprise a critical mass of 30% of parliamentarians?

- a) 19
- b) 29
- c) 39
- d) 49

9. Obstacles faced by women entering the world of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) include:

- a) Women's limited access to financial resources for buying ICT equipment
- b) Unequal access to education and training
- c) Isolation of women in their homes or in remote places
- d) All of the above

10. Looking at the issue of violence against women from a gender perspective recognizes that...

- a) Male violence towards women is instinctive. Women have to accept a certain degree of violence
- b) Violence against women is a manifestation of prevailing unequal power relations between women and men
- c) It is also women's fault if men are violent with women.

11. In 2000, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325, a historical Resolution that calls for ...

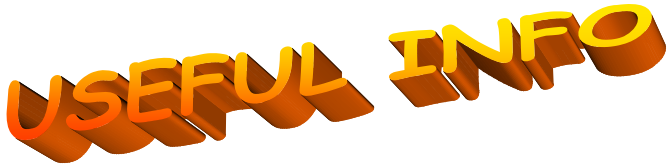
- a) The exclusion of women from all combating forces, both in military and para-military structures
- b) The full and equal participation of women in all peace and security initiatives
- c) Women's equal participation in efforts of war
- d) The exclusion of men from all formal peace building processes

12. Which strategies help women become more socially and economically empowered?

- a) Women working together to challenge discrimination
- b) More income sources for women
- c) Improved access to education
- d) All of the above

13. Gender equality supports:

- a) Poverty eradication
- b) Education for All goals
- c) Reduction of HIV infections
- d) Increase in family income
- e) All of the above



## WOMEN IN EDUCATION NETWORKS

***They are now operational in Africa!***

- The Network of Women in Education of Northern Africa (RFEAN). It is composed of 11 female/male teacher organisations from 7 countries which are: Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya\*, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.
- The Network of Female Teacher Trade Unionists of Central Africa (RESAC). It is composed of 18 female/male teacher organisations in 9 countries which are: Angola\*, Burundi, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Republic of Central Africa Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome Principe and Chad.
- Women Network in Eastern Africa (WNEA). It is composed of 10 female/male teacher organisations in 8 countries which are: Djibouti\*, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Somalia, Tanzania, and Zanzibar.
- Western African Women in Education Network (WAWEN). It is the pioneer network known as PFE (Women Promotion Project). It is composed of 36 female/male teacher organisations in 16 countries which are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde\*, Ivory Cost, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.
- Southern Africa Women Network shall be established in 28<sup>th</sup> May 2008 at Pretoria, South Africa. 23 female/male teacher organisations from 11 countries are expected. They are: Botswana, Mauritius\*, Madagascar \*Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

## AWEN, ONE NETWORK FOR WOMEN!

The African Women in Education Network (AWEN) is the dream of all the female trade unionists in Africa! It is the platform par excellence where they could share their experiences and their actions for one and the same objective, that of being heard at the trade union and socio-professional levels.

The network shall be launched from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008, in Cotonou, Benin. And for the first time, women from the five African sub-regional networks shall commit themselves together.

Safe journey AWEN!

### PRO WOMEN

BP : 14058 Lomé – TOGO  
Tél. : +228 223 12 70 Fax : 221 28 48  
Fax : +228 221 28 48  
E-mail : [airaoffice@ei-ie.org](mailto:airaoffice@ei-ie.org)

Directrice de publication  
Assibi NAPOE

Secretariat  
Rosette SITTI

Imprimerie Arc En Ciel  
Cel : +228 904 61 61  
Lomé - Togo