

# TSUNAMI: Schools are anchors for community development

**T**he school reconstruction programme which the teachers' unions are undertaking in Sri Lanka and Aceh, under the umbrella of EI with the Dutch development organisation NOVIB (Dutch branch of Oxfam), is aimed not only at providing educational facilities but also at restoring the livelihoods of the people affected by the tsunami.

The schools will be at the heart of the new community life. The local teachers' unions – PGRI in Indonesia and the teachers'

## Reconstruction begins in Sri Lanka

Angela Wijesinghe, the Chairperson of the Sri Lanka Joint Teachers Unions' Tsunami Relief Committee, is confident that the school programme will reach full speed soon. Twelve schools, some multi ethnic and multi religious, will provide education to over 8,000 children in Sri Lanka.

The EI/NOVIB programme aims to provide child-friendly well-equipped schools. Therefore the reconstruction scheme in-

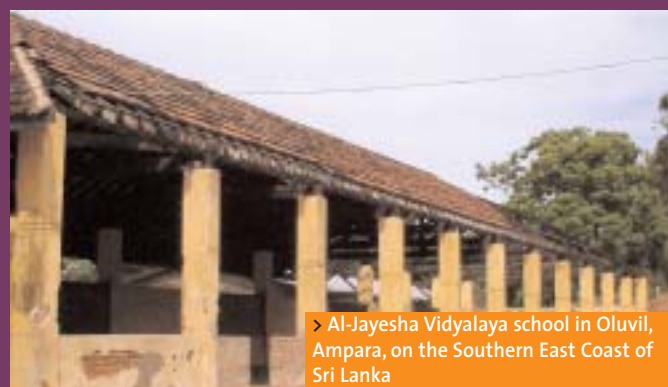
resistant.

In Aceh, EI and NOVIB signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 25 June with the heads of four district governments in this province of Indonesia to reconstruct about forty schools.

The main problem faced by the donor community in Aceh is the corruption. It is reported officially that almost 90% of the buildings in Aceh collapsed under the effects of the tsunami because of the low quality materials used and disregard of prescribed and approved building regulations. The EI local coordinator states that much time was spent on identifying suitable architects and engineers who could submit realistic proposals.

## Trauma counselling training for teachers

EI is also funding trauma counselling training for teachers. The training of 26 "trainers" started in Sri Lanka. The programme is sponsored by the Japan Teachers Union and aims to assist 200 teachers in Sri Lanka and 500 teachers in Aceh. This programme is carried out with the full cooperation of the Ministries of Education and Social Welfare together with local psychiatrists and psychologists.



> Al-Jayesha Vidyalaya school in Oluvil, Ampara, on the Southern East Coast of Sri Lanka

## → The schools rebuild by EI/NOVIB will provide education to over 8,000 children

union committee in Sri Lanka – will make sure that the restoration of all school buildings is done using locally sourced material and local people so as to create wealth within the communities. All the equipment will also remain with the local communities after the reconstruction, so that the programme truly contributes to the sustainable development of the communities.

cludes proper and safe play grounds, enough toilets for girls and boys, advanced

science labs and ICT rooms, libraries, staff rooms for the teachers and canteens. Those schools will also be earthquake



> Community meeting about the EI/NOVIB reconstruction project in Sri Lanka

## Glossary

- ACP** Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific
- AIDS** Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
- EFA** Education For All
- EI** Education International
- ETUC** European Trade Union Confederation
- ETUCE** European Trade Union Committee for Education
- EU** European Union
- FTI** Bank World's Fast Track Initiative
- GATS** General Agreement on Trade in Services
- GCAP** Global Call to Action against Poverty
- GCE** Global Campaign for Education
- GDP** Gross Domestic Product
- GIVE** Global Indigenous Voice on Education network
- GUFS** Global Union Federations
- G8** the eight most industrialised countries in the world
- HIPC** Highly Indebted Poor Countries
- HIV** Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- ICFTU** International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
- ILO** International Labour Organisation
- IMF** International Monetary Fund
- LGBT** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
- MDG** Millennium Development Goals
- NGO** Non Governmental Organisation
- NOVIB** Dutch branch of Oxfam
- ODA** Official Development Assistance
- OECD** Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
- PSI** Public Services International
- SAP** Structural Adjustment Programme
- TUAC** Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD
- UN** United Nations
- UNDP** United Nations Development Programme
- UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
- WB** World Bank
- WCT** World Confederation of Teachers
- WTD** World Teachers' Day
- WTO** World Trade Organisation



Education International is a world-wide trade union organisation of education personnel, whose **29** million members represent all sectors of education from pre-school to university in **348** national trade unions and associations in **166** countries and territories.

## colophon

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# WORLDS OF EDUCATION



5th World  
Teachers'  
Day

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## World Teachers' Day 5 October

World Teachers' Day provides the perfect opportunity for teachers' unions and education activists to urge their governments to provide the finances and resources so that the education sector can truly offer quality education for all.

This year, EI will focus on the need to provide teachers with the best possible training before and after they enter the classroom.

Teacher training – both initial and in-service – should be fully integrated aspects of national education policies, based on dialogue between the responsible education authorities, the institutions charged with teacher preparation, and education unions.

*"Investment in training is the key to developing a stronger teaching force, and to the genuine provision of Quality Education For All", say the general secretaries of EI and the World Confederation of Teachers in a joint declaration about World Teachers' Day.*



## We have to make sure that resolutions

**One year ago, you were elected as President, you then considered it both an honour and a challenge. What is your perception today?**

Allow me first to greet our nearly 30 million members worldwide, 30 million dedicated education personnel who defend social progress and fight for a better future. EFA's members are pivotal in the struggle for quality public education – after all, they have to deliver it.

on awareness and prevention campaigns. As educators, especially in the developing countries, we are on the front line fighting the pandemic and providing clarity and leadership in this matter. But despite our resolve, we have to double our effort to fight HIV/AIDS. I sometimes get frustrated, in Africa for example, with the lack of national effort to implement programmes. In developing countries, HIV/AIDS undermines

the future. Governments need to appreciate that resources used for proper training and support of educators is a long-term investment, and not simply a drain on the finances. Training and development empower educators to provide a quality service.

EFA is also a passionate advocate of quality education as a public good. We have highlighted the dangers of privatisation and commercialisation of education

There will be no quality education unless the basic conditions of education workers are addressed. In most developing



**For EFA's President, teachers' unions would gain from building alliances with civil society representatives to advance the cause of quality public education worldwide.**

social and educational progress.

Unions also have to develop strategies and structures to provide care and support to sick colleagues and learners. We have to campaign for appropriate medical treatment and defend the rights of colleagues and learners living with the disease. We have to speak out against prejudice and stigma.

**What about the struggle for quality public Education For All?**

Quality education, especially for girls and women, is the most powerful weapon to eradicate poverty, disease and hunger. Education and training are, as argued by EFA, an investment for

which would benefit only the rich and leave our societies more divided than ever.

If there is political will, funding can be found. Look at the amounts of money spent on wars which should have been invested in schools and peace education. In developing countries, the EFA goal of providing education to all children by 2015 seems bleak due to the lack of government funding. Teachers often sacrifice themselves by working longer hours with overcrowded classrooms. A lot of money is diverted from education due to corruption, foreign debt payments and policies designed to reduce the role of the state and cut back on public spending.

countries teachers' salaries and working conditions are still very poor. Sometimes teachers receive their salaries late or even have to forgo payments. In these conditions, it is very difficult to talk of quality public education for all.

**What can teachers' unions do to improve the working conditions of teachers?**

First, unions have to develop their capacity to negotiate. Not only for conditions of service but also on social and economic issues. Unions need to develop an expertise on complex issues such as commercialisation, otherwise, what will they do once they are being called to the negotiation table? As far as EFA is concerned, it must continue to engage with the World Bank in order to stay abreast of the Fast Track Initiative to fund EFA.

Where public provision of education is well established, unions have to mobilise to

And yes, last year in Brazil, the representatives of the teachers and education workers of the world developed policies and strategies to take forward the cause of quality public education and the interests of education workers. They also chose to elect, as President, a candidate from the south. I think it is very important and I thank all EFA member organisations for their support.

**You identified four cross-cutting themes for teachers' unions: the first one was the threat of HIV/AIDS.**

EFA can be very proud of its record

# THULAS NXESI

## are matched with action

defend it against those who seek to undermine it. Teachers' unions also have to build alliances with NGOs to argue for improved spending on development aid and achieve the target of 0.7% of GDP for development assistance and cooperation. EI affiliates built a successful coalition in the spring with other trade unions and civil society organisations under the Global Call for Action against Poverty<sup>1</sup>.

**You also mentioned the search for a new global order based on peace, social justice, security and commitment to defend human and trade union rights.**

EI is part of a global awakening of progressive forces for social change and justice. We can take hope from the resilience of the international labour movement which refuses to lie down in the face of corporate globalisation. We take hope from the emergence of new social movements on the ground representing the dispossessed and oppressed. In some instances, we can also celebrate the democratic election of governments committed to social justice – such as my own government in South Africa. We should not be afraid to support such governments, whilst remaining vigilant in the defence of our members' interests.

The EI World Congress brought to the fore issues of world peace and security. War and insecurity render the goals of EFA and social progress unattainable particularly in parts of Africa and the Middle East. We need strong multilateral institutions which can facilitate negotiated settlements, promote good governance and ensure aid is forthcoming to devastated nations. EI is also very clearly expressing its revulsion against terrorism in all its guises – whether state terrorism or that carried out

by irregular forces. Education should preach peaceful values and conflict resolution to children.

EI decisively speaks out on human rights abuses: including political and labour rights, women's rights and the rights of children. Trade unionists who are persecuted, learners that are abused, women educators who face oppression, and those who suffer discrimination of any kind deserve our urgent attention and solidarity.

**The last theme was building teacher unity to improve the conditions of education workers.**

The 4th World Congress voted overwhelmingly in favour of the admission into EI of our colleagues from the European affiliates of the World Confederation of Teachers.

EI has also to engage with teachers' movements in China, in the Middle East, in Cuba. You cannot leave 10 million teachers in China outside. We must accept that we live in a globalised world and we should not be arrogant: the different ideologies should not lead us to leave them in isolation. If we want to attain the unity of the teachers' movement, we should be able to influence the social movement in that part of the world. If investors are now massively moving to China, EI needs to find ways to engage with independent union movements in mainland China. How you then define the formal relations is another question, but EI needs to engage in a dialogue.

**You are a fervent promoter of alliances with other social groups.**

Yes, as a South African I know the power of uniting with the student movement and community organisations, as we did to undermine the Apartheid rule in the 1980s. Teachers' unions have to take interest in social and po-

litical issues to ensure that we have good governance, especially in democratising societies. Unions need to lobby their governments and influence policies on a daily basis. We need to build alliances with church groups, parents movements, progressive social groups on issues of common interest. We cannot win the battle for quality public education for all on our own. Therefore, the Global Campaign for Education is a good example where EI and the teachers' unions are a leading force, because unions are about mass powers.

Let me make myself clear here, some NGOs only represent a handful of activists. As trade unionists our basic philosophy and vision does not change: principles of solidarity, equality, democracy, social progress and worker control are as relevant today as always. But strategy and tactics must always be reviewed and changed to meet new circumstances.

**What is your vision of EI in 10 years?**

Our voice must be strengthened. All labour leaders – both at the international and at national level – have to open an organisational and political debate to analyse exactly where we are now and where we want to be in the medium to longer term. The teachers' movement also faces the challenges of globalisation, neo-liberalism and attacks on public services. We have witnessed major economic restructuring in recent decades accompanied by the growth of new kinds of workers – often without a trade union ethos. At the same time older sectors – mining, agriculture and heavy manufacturing – have declined often resulting in declining employment and falling trade union membership. As a move-

ment we have to ask whether we have made the necessary changes to meet these new challenges.

It is important for us not to lose sight of the big picture – that as trade unionists and educationists – in order to win our goals for better conditions and quality education, we have to engage with the wider movement for social progress.

Development cooperation also needs to be supported. Northern countries have a duty to support their colleagues from the South. Just to mention my own experience. In the 1980s and 90s when we were building South Africa's first non-racial teacher union, we relied heavily on solidarity and funding from unions in the North. We launched SADTU in 1990 with this kind of support. I am happy to announce that 15 years later the union is self-sufficient. With 220,000 members we make a major contribution to the wider South African labour movement and we export development cooperation aid to unions in the neighbouring countries. Solidarity is also about sharing knowledge, skills, expertise and human resources. The North could learn a lot from the human values of the so-called South.

Finally, EI and its member organisations have to make sure that resolutions are matched with action. We cannot keep resolving. We need to act decisively.

<sup>1</sup> See article pages 4-5

## European hearing on education

**1.3** billion euros is the sum being devoted by the European Union to the field of education in the period 2002-2007. This is according to figures communicated by Louis Michel, the European

much. Little, because in his own words, *"there is no alternative to education in the eradication of poverty. [...] Education is the basis of prosperity [...] Education is the cement which holds democracy together. However, 800 million adults can neither read nor write*



Dozens of "Friends" picturing children not attending school were handed over to the EU Commissioner for Development

Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, at a hearing in the European Parliament organised by EI and its partners in the Global Campaign for Education. The hearing, organised on 22 June, aimed to assess the progress made by the European Union in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for education. Along with the European Commissioner and moderator MEP Glenys Kinnock, also participating in the hearing as experts were the Minister of Basic Education of Burkina Faso Mathieu Ouedraogo, ActionAid's campaign director David Archer from Britain, and EI's regional coordinator for Africa, Assibi Napoe. As former teachers, they all insisted on the crucial role of teachers in contributing to the provision of quality education for all children.

The Commissioner Louis Michel acknowledged that European aid represented both little and

*and 100 million children do not go to school. These figures are overwhelming and I can draw only one conclusion: progress towards the Millennium Goals has been insufficient."*

The Commissioner recalled that in bilateral aid, the beneficiary countries decide on the priorities according to the principle of aid appropriation, but only 20 ACP countries have chosen education as a priority. Consequently aid for education in the bilateral aid allocated to the ACP countries only amounts to 464 million euros, or 5.5% of total aid.

Because of the lack of flexibility in the long term programming of European aid, little additional funding – barely 35 million euros for two countries, Burkina and Niger – has been mobilised for the fast track initiative for education.

The European Union has undertaken to increase its public development aid which will rise

from the current level of 0.36% of gross national product to 0.56% in 2010 and 0.7% by 2015. The result will be an additional annual amount of 20 million euros and the Commissioner emphasised *"that part of this windfall will of course benefit education"*. At the same time, the Commission will work out a *"strategy for Africa"* aiming to contribute to achieving the MDGs on the continent and *"here too, education will be central"*, the Commissioner affirmed.



European Commissioner for Development Louis Michel



Global Unions' meeting with Tony Blair as G8 Host

**This G8 showed that EI and its member unions can make a difference, through advocacy and mobilisation in coalition with other organisations of civil society.**

The summit broke new ground by bringing poverty campaigners and leaders from developing countries face to face with the world's leaders. They have set an important precedent which could lead to further developments over the course of the year.

Now, whether the G8 summit was a success depends on the standards you use to measure it. Certainly by the standards of previous G8 summits this one has achieved a great deal. But the additional funds announced for Education for All and other Millennium Development Goals in Africa

are subject to conditions that need close examination, and may work against public education. Also the complexity of the deal underlines the high risk that commitments may not be implemented as stated.

Experts are poring over the communiqué, in order to analyze and understand the financial commitments made. The G8 Research Centre at the University of Toronto arrives at a total of US\$ 204.7 billion pledged for at the Gleneagles Summit. US\$ 100 billion comes from a commitment by the European Union to double foreign aid by 2015. Another





## EI advocacy gets results at G8 on EFA for Africa – but promises must be kept!



UK's teachers' union participation in the GCAP

➤ US\$ 55 billion comes from the G7 Finance Ministers' announcement to write off debt for HIPC countries at the IMF and the World Bank group, as well as the African Development Fund. Another US\$ 17 billion comes from a separate deal at the Paris Club on Nigerian debt. The USA and Japan announced doubling of their aid for Africa, under different conditions, and Russia will provide HIPC debt relief on non-ODA loans.

### Promises on EFA and HIV/AIDS

In the agreements from G8 leaders on Africa<sup>1</sup>, there was a firm and clear commitment "to ensure that by 2015 all children have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality". Like EI, the G8 leaders point to the need to link action on EFA with action to combat HIV/AIDS and other preventable diseases. However, EI is surprised by the lack of reference to the combat against child labour.

In the meeting with Tony Blair, on 28 June, Fred van Leeuwen underlined the need to achieve EFA through public education of quality. The G8 Communiqué does not quite say this, but the terms "free" and "compulsory" come close. On higher education and research, however, they refer to "private and public sectors".

The problem of brain drain was referenced in the TUAC paper. The G8 Communiqué

the private and public sectors. But we have to be careful about how G8 governments interpret those concepts and impose their own conditionalities. There are also several references to the key role of the World Bank, in particular to its Fast Track Initiative in Education, and the HIPC, where EI and GCE have expressed concern over bias towards the private sector, and the possible negative impact on teachers conditions of work.

The Gleneagles G8 Summit shows significant results for the advocacy and mobilisation of EI and member unions, as part of major trade union and NGO coalitions. But careful analysis also reveals many areas where the G8 leaders failed to make commitments, including:

- putting an end to child labour
- promoting decent work
- seeking equity for women
- financing development in poor countries outside Africa

calls for "its most capable citizens, including teachers and health care workers, [to] see a long-term future on the continent".

### Conclusion

G8 chose to focus on Africa, but the needs of other poor developing countries must not

**Summits have to go beyond mere statements of intent and rich countries must avoid backsliding on their commitments.**

Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary Education International

### Conditions

EI and the GCE will be especially attentive to the conditions inherent in the announcements. There is much about promoting democracy and combating corruption. Both issues were underscored in the TUAC input, with special emphasis on the important role of trade unions representing people who work in both

be forgotten. For all these reasons, the mobilisation of education unions and their coalition partners must be not only maintained but intensified.

<sup>1</sup> For the discussion on Africa, the G8 leaders were joined by the leaders of Algeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania and by the heads of the African Union Commission, International Monetary Fund, United Nations and the World Bank.

1%

Less than 1% of girls in Southern Sudan finish primary school. The conflict which lasted for two decades, killed 2 million people and displaced several million more, has left little trace of school infrastructure or institutions. A survey in December 2004 showed that education was the most urgent priority for the inhabitants of Southern Sudan. Thanks to UNICEF, initiatives are being taken to promote girls' schooling. When consulted, the communities asked for the schools to be situated in the neighbourhood of the pupils' homes to reduce the need for long walks which could expose the girls to aggression.

# EI supports Beslan's grieving families

**One year after the tragic events that shook School No.1 in Beslan, Russia, grieving families will at least feel relieved about one thing: the education of orphans will be easier thanks to the generosity of EI affiliates.**

Just a few hours after the Beslan tragedy, when terrorist and the Russian army battled in a school, leading to 300 deaths – 11 teachers and 23 children of teachers were killed –, EI took steps to help the victims. In a few weeks, over 160,000 euros were donated to a special EI bank account for the education of Beslan's children.

Today, a charity foundation has been set up to manage the money in EI's solidarity account. The foundation will be administered by two Russians: Galina Merkoulouva, Chair of the Russian teachers' union (ESEUR) and Emma Kolova, who heads Beslan's section of the ESEUR, and also

## Deep scars

As the Russian authorities are handling the primary and secondary education of most children, the foundation will concentrate its aid on orphan children. For instance, a little 3-year-old girl lost all members of her family in Beslan except for her grandmother. The foundation will try to provide support for several children who were extremely traumatized by events and will need special psychological support during all of their schooling.

The scars of this tragedy will probably never heal for those who were present during the hostage-taking. In fact, most

rities have built a new cemetery that will be officially inaugurated on 3 September 2005 in the presence of Thulas Nxesi, EI's President, invited by the regional authorities and by the teachers' union.

The EI delegation talked to representatives of the district's and of the school's administrations. They then met North Ossetia's Prime Minister and the Chair of the commission that was set up to organize the distribution of aid to the



**The school gym's floor, where 1,400 people were kept hostage, is being covered with bottles, in remembrance of the fact that the hostages were not given water by their kidnappers.**



by EI's General Secretary and EI's co-ordinator for Europe.

Mrs. Kolova will identify the educational needs of the people affected by the tragedy and make recommendations for approval by the four administrators of the foundation, who will authorize payment of the grants.

teachers and pupils of School No. 1 have chosen to stay together and to attend School No. 2 for mutual reassurance.

In June, an EI mission went to North Ossetia to talk to the families of the teachers who died and to pay tribute to the victims. Along the road from the airport of Vladikavkaz, the Republic's capital, the autho-

## A hard-hit community

In the cemetery, the presence of many vaults containing the graves of several members of the same family, sisters, brothers, a mother and her children, a grandmother and her grandson, or even six children from a single family, show how great the impact of this tragedy has been on this small community. The graves of the teachers and school staff are dotted among those of parents and pupils. Moslem grave markers and Armenian crosses are a reminder that all religious communities have been much affected by the tragedy.

victims. The delegation met teacher representatives from the area and spoke to teachers of the school who were present during the hostage-taking. It also took part in a meeting of the area's ESEUR members.

*"To go to Beslan after this tragedy is a deeply moving experience", explained Charlie Lennon, EI's regional co-ordinator for Europe. "It's obvious that the tragedy is still part of everyday life and will remain so for a long time."*

## El steps up democratisation efforts in Central Asia

**Because of political instability, training seminars in 2005 took place in Kazakhstan, but activities are now scheduled to resume in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.**

In 2005, EI has already organised two workshops on training in union matters in Almaty and Astana, Kazakhstan's new capital;

This country, with a population of 17 million inhabitants, has 800,000 teachers and education workers. Almost all of them – 95% – are members of the KNTUTSW, an EI affiliate, since membership was mandatory in the soviet system, as the unions were transmission belt of the regime.

The workshops targeting leaders of the union's provincial sections (the Oblasts) aim to help the teachers' union to function in a market economy and in a democratic context.

*"The union's representatives are very receptive,"* explains

Rey Dolot, EI's regional coordinator in charge of training in the STAN countries. *"They see everyday the impact of the market economy on education since many schools have been privatised."* Union leaders also note that union practices have changed. Members are now requesting services and, above all, transparency and efficiency in exchange for their membership dues which are still deducted from their pay.



Pupils from the desert zone of Kara Kum au Kazakhstan  
©PhotoNews

### > An unstable region

Because of the very volatile situation in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, EI's training activities had to be suspended. A meeting is scheduled for the autumn with donor organisations to look into ways of resuming training. Uzbekistan is a key country in the area which, via its capital Tashkent, opens access to all other countries in Central Asia. As for Tajikistan's teachers' union, which is a WCT affiliate, it is likely to become an EI member in view of increasing co-operation between the two organisations. However, neither EI nor the WCT have yet managed to develop fruitful contacts with Turkmenistan's union, which is the most inaccessible country in the subregion. This large country, situated in the desert and with a population of barely 4.5 million, remains very isolated and under a Stalinist dictatorship.



EI, ICFTU, ETUC and ETUCE staff members showed their solidarity with victims of London blasts.

### STATEMENT ON TERRORIST BOMBS IN LONDON

As in 2001 after New York and in 2004 after Madrid, EI expressed its sincere sympathies to the people of London who were victims of a terrorist attack in July, targeted to cause the maximum loss of life and injury. *"There is no political, religious or other cause which can justify such wanton destruction of human lives,"* said EI in a statement.

The National Union of Teachers also issued a statement stressing the role of teachers in *"creating a world where terrorism and poverty truly become history"*. *"Teachers know that their responsibility is to encourage an understanding of peace and justice. This starts in the classroom. Nothing will deflect us from meeting that challenge,"* said Steve Sinnott, the NUT General Secretary.

In the name of its 29 million members, EI expressed its condolences to the relatives of those who were killed and to its members in the UK.

Most provincial leaders are very determined women. In fact, a woman is leading the teachers' union affiliated to EI at the moment: Mayra Amantayeva. *"Unlike in other countries, we don't need to set quotas for female participation, or deplore their lack of involvement in workshops,"* Rey is pleased to say.

EI's training workshops started in 2003 with the financial backing of Laraforbundet Sweden and the Norwegian central labour body, LO. Three-day training

sessions are given by Rey Dolot in English in the presence of a local interpreter.



Mayra Amantayeva, General Secretary of Kazakhstan's teachers' union



## Tackling barriers to achieve inclusive societies

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) students and teachers have the right to a safe learning and working environment.**

**However, there is a gap between public policies and reality.**

**EI is encouraging teachers' unions to defend the right to education of all students through the Education For All programme. In Chile, EI is supporting a national awareness-raising campaign by gay and lesbian students who were expelled from their schools.**

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) students and teachers have the right to a safe learning and working environment. However, there is a gap between public policies and reality. EI is encouraging teachers' unions to defend the right to

standards that fail to recognise, include and respect students' differences. EI affiliate, NEA/USA estimates that 160,000 students miss school every day from fear of attack or intimidation by other students<sup>1</sup>.

In Chile, some gay and lesbian students, who were expelled from different schools due to their sexual orientation, started a "students' brigade" to promote discussion about homosexuality. As part of a pilot project in Santiago, they are visiting 12 schools - six municipal and six private. The project involves students between the ages of 16 and 18 years, parents' associations, teachers and specialists.

The project is supported by the Chilean Education Minister, Sergio Bitar, who will soon issue a work plan about sexual education based on guidelines developed by a Commission of Experts<sup>2</sup>. The Ministry will promote the inclusion of homosexuality in the policies for all schools to help combat discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Teacher training is also among the Minister's priorities.

The Minister supports the right of lobby groups to defend their rights so long as the students' education is not jeopardized and that there are not subjected to propaganda. Jorge Pavez,

President of the Chilean teachers' union CPC and EI Executive Board member, finds that the government does not go far enough to tackle the intolerance within Chilean society. *"The presence of de facto powers, the inefficiency of the State and intolerance do not create the conditions so that the community, without fear and prejudice, can develop spaces free of discrimination, as should the schools be,"* explains Jorge Pavez.

### What can unions do?

Education unions must promote and help develop education programmes aimed at fighting intolerance and prejudice and provide professional guidance to classroom teachers. Some solutions are complex and require a combination of legislation, quality education, proactive intervention and the involvement of interest groups.

In 2004, EI and Public Services International (PSI) launched a Global LGBT Forum to assist unions to better advocate LGBT rights in their daily work. Requests and suggestions can be addressed to the EI Secretariat at: [lgbt@ei-ie.org](mailto:lgbt@ei-ie.org).

<sup>1</sup> NEA Focus on GLBT, 2004-2005

<sup>2</sup> Comisión de Evaluación y recomendaciones sobre educación sexual, MINE-DUC, March 2005, 140 p. - not yet official



education of all students through the Education For All programme. In Chile, EI is supporting a national awareness-raising campaign by gay and lesbian students who were expelled from their schools.

National school systems treat students differently, depending on their gender, social status, ethnic background, sexual orientation or gender identity. Significant gaps in academic achievement persist among these groups. Curriculum is often driven by mandates and stan-

**Lesbian • Gay • Bisexual • Transgender**

## El protests

### Guatemala

In Guatemala on 25-26 May, an attack was launched on the headquarters of the Education Workers' Union (STEG). All communications equipment and archives were stolen. EI's regional office in Latin America immediately wrote to the President of Guatemala, urging him to ensure the safety of trade union leaders and guarantee the safe operation of the union.

### Macedonia

EI has again supported its Macedonian affiliate in its fight to have the government comply with

the terms of the collective agreement. The President of the teachers' union SONK, Dojcin Cvetanoski, says teachers are receiving strong public support. *"The popular rally held on 22 June was the biggest protest movement supported by all social groups since the country's independence."* Thousands of protesters, including teachers, parents and students, filled the streets of Macedonia, threatening strike action if the government failed to implement the agreement on salary and working conditions. *"Although the negotiations will be complex, we're confident we'll achieve important working rights and democracy in the Republic of Macedonia,"* Dojcin Cvetanoski said.

### Colombia

The Parliament of Colombia has adopted a law on "Justice and Peace" to permit the paramilitaries to reintegrate into society. EI, Colombian teachers' unions, the ICFTU, PSI, and other Global Unions have strongly condemned the law, arguing it is inadequate to secure peace and reconciliation in the country. The government has been condemned for passing the law on 22 June without securing a popular consensus within the country. EI has also denounced what it believes will be the "shamefully lenient" sentences predicted for the paramilitaries who have been brought to

justice. The paramilitaries were responsible for the murder of thousands of trade unionists, particularly teachers. The law fails to adequately address reparations for victims and falls far short of the demands on the Colombian government by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

EI is an active member of the Working group on Colombia, which is coordinated by the ICFTU. In February, EI, PSI and the ICFTU launched a *"Campaign opposing violence against women trade unionists"*.

## Turkey under scrutiny of the European Union



**EI** has called for international support for its Turkish affiliate, EGITIM SEN, after its offices were closed on the orders of the Turkish Supreme Court.

After a long legal battle with the Attorney General, the Court on 25 May, ordered

EGITIM SEN to close, because a clause in the union's statutes was found to be in breach of Article 3 and 42 of the Turkish Constitution. The clause defends *"the right of every person to education in their mother tongue and to develop their own culture"*.

On 3 July 2005, during an EGITIM SEN Extraordinary Congress, delegates voted to delete the clause from the union's statutes. EGITIM SEN believes the move now means there is no longer any legal grounds to close the union and that the court case against it should be dismissed.

International support is needed to pressure the Labour Court, which will adjudicate on the issue. EGITIM

SEN is the biggest union in Turkey and is also seeking an urgent examination of the case by the European Court of Human Rights.

EI has alerted European authorities to the situation in Turkey. As a result, Olli Rehn, Member of the Commission responsible for the enlargement policy of the European Union has promised *"a full assessment of trade union rights in Turkey will be included in the next report on Turkey"*. The report is due in November.





## CANADIAN TEACHERS' WORKING CONDITIONS WORSEN

for teachers to maintain quality learning environments for their students.

The President of the CTF, Terry Price (picture), released the preliminary findings of the survey at the federation's Annual General Meeting in July. "Teachers' working conditions are our children's learning conditions," she said.

*"Research shows that one of the key elements affecting student achievement is the conditions under which learning occurs and teachers teach. Teachers are telling us that, compared to four years ago, they are working longer hours and their workload is significantly greater."*

Ms Price said working hours and conditions had to be addressed if teachers are to remain in the profession and new teachers are to be recruited.

*"Teachers need resources and support to serve all students well. Without comprehensive and sustained efforts to improve teachers' working conditions, many of our efforts to help children reach their full potential will go unfulfilled,"* Ms Price said.

The survey found that, in 2005, teachers worked an average of over 55 hours a week. This included classroom instruction, course preparation, grading and reporting, help for individual students, meetings, parent in-

terviews and supervision of students. In the 2001 survey, teachers worked an average week of over 51 hours.

According to the survey, 51% of teachers say the size of their classes have grown over the last two years, with only one in 10 reporting smaller classes. It found that 74% of teachers reported an increase in the number of integrated, exceptional students in their classes over the same period.

CTF is the national voice of over 213,000 teachers across Canada. The survey involved 1,103 teachers in every province and territory.

**T**eachers in Canada are working longer hours and under worse conditions than they did four years ago, according to a survey by EI's Canadian affiliate, the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF).

The worsening conditions are making it increasingly difficult

## ZAMBIA: GOVERNMENT OWES TEACHERS MILLIONS IN ARREARS

**T**he Zambian government owes teachers 99.2 million in housing allowance arrears, according to EI's affiliate, the Zambia National Union of Teachers (ZNUT).

ZNUT's General Secretary, Roy Mwaba, (pictured) has written to the Zambian Finance Minister, Ng'andu Magande, urging the government to pay the 52 billion kwacha owed to teachers.

*"We are talking about housing. The situation here is very politically sensitive and we don't need a teachers' strike which could be misunderstood."*

According to the union's figures, the government owes teachers K52 billion in housing allowance arrears. *"Teachers in Copperbelt Province alone, are owed K28 billion. The government only paid K2 billion to teachers, which has angered the teachers in the province."*

He said each of the teachers was owed K5 million, but received just K65,000. The government's failure to pay the teachers has meant that many were now unable to pay their rent.

Mr Mwaba said the government had so failed to deliver on a promised pay rise for teachers.

The Zambian government's failure to pay teachers' housing allowances has been a recurring problem. In September 2004,



**ZNUT General Secretary Roy Mwaba**

ZNUT took strike action over the non payment of more than two years of housing allowances.

## CIVIL SERVANTS' STRIKE IN TONGA



**> EI's Chief Regional Coordinator, Aloysius Mathews, says the strike is not just about pay.**

**T**he Friendly Island Teachers' Association, affiliated to EI, is leading a major strike by civil servants on the Pacific island of Tonga.

Tonga's 3,000 public servants, including 1,400 teachers, took strike action after senior government officials were awarded pay rises of up to 80%. The lowest paid public servants, who earn as little as \$47 a week, received rises as low as one percent.

EI's Chief Regional Coordinator, Aloysius Mathews, says the strike is not just about pay.

*"It's a protest by the Tongan people against the widening gap between rich and poor in the nation. Emotions are quite high in Tonga and tension is growing."*

EI's representative Govind Singh was in Tonga in August to address strike rallies and hold talks with union officials. He was not given the opportunity to meet with government ministers.

The union moderated its demands in an attempt to persuade the government to enter into meaningful negotiations. However, the government has refused to take part in genuine

talks which could resolve the dispute. The government had already rejected an offer by the South Pacific and Oceanic Council of Trade Union (SPOCTU) to mediate the conflict.

Tonga is a monarchy and government ministers are appointed by the king. The king also appoints nine nobles to sit in the parliament. Nine other MPs are elected by the people but decisions must be approved by cabinet. The king's youngest son is Prime Minister.

## Time is running out for the **NAMIBIAN** government

**T**he Namibia National Teachers' Union (NANTU) has given the Namibian government an ultimatum: reform appointment arrangements for new teachers or face action.

Teachers are angry at the government's decision to implement a system where

new recruits are paid more than experienced teachers.

NANTU's Secretary General, Miriam Hamutenya, says *"qualified and experienced teachers are resigning because the government has decided to pay new recruits higher salaries at the expense of experienced teachers."* She says the pa-



## **AUSTRALIA'S** conservative move

The union movement in Australia is fighting a raft of new anti-union laws being pushed by the country's conservative government.

The President of the ICFTU, and former Vice President of EI, Sharan Burrow, told a 1 July rally of over 250,000 Australian workers that, *"no worker should be treated like a commodity"*.

The government plans to remove protection from unfair dismissal for most workers, impose heavy restrictions on union organising and collective bargaining rights, force workers on to individual employment contracts and weaken minimum wage safeguards. The ILO has already criticised the existing anti-union measures introduced by the Howard government.

EI affiliate, the Australian Education Union was a strong supporter of the 'Week of Action for Workers' Rights' organised by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU).

Acting Federal President of the 169,000-strong AEU, Angelo Gavrielatos, says *"Australian students deserve a high quality public education system, where funding is assured and not tied to legislation that undermines the employment conditions of their teachers."*

He says: *"teachers feel they are being disrespected by this government. Australia, under the Howard government, is currently facing a significant teacher shortage."*

Mr Gavrielatos says rather than investing in the profession, *"all we see from this government is an attempt to reduce teachers' working conditions and undermine collegiality in schools and colleges"*.

tience of NANTU members has reached its limit.

Ms Hamutenya says the union issued its ultimatum to the government in June, but by 15 August, the government had still not responded.

She says graduates are being placed in higher salary brackets than continuing teachers, forcing some teachers to quit and then rejoin the profession on the higher salary bracket.

It is understood the government planned to increase the wages of all teachers, but abandoned the plan when it realised that the additional costs had not been included in its budget.

Ms Hamutenya called on the union's branches in individual schools to consider appropriate action should the government fail to meet NANTU's ultimatum.

## **UK: EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE FOR GRADUATE TEACHERS**

**T**he British government is being urged to provide newly qualified teachers with a guaranteed job so that they can complete their induction.

The General Secretary of EI affiliate NASUWT, Chris Keates, says many newly qualified teachers are unable to gain employment in some parts of the United Kingdom.

Mr Keates says in Scotland, newly qualified teachers are guaranteed employment in their first year to ensure that they have a stable and supportive start to their career. The high standard and quality of teaching in Scotland is universally recognised and, he says, this positive start must be a contributing factor.

*"All other parts of the UK should adopt this approach. Not only would this ensure that public funding invested in teacher training is put to good use, it would also provide a major recruitment incentive for high-quality graduates considering teaching as a career,"* Mr Keates says.

NASUWT will formally raise this proposal in the discussions with the government on the 'New Professionalism' agenda due to begin in the autumn term.

## **BURUNDI TEACHERS DENOUNCE BROKEN PROMISES**

Teachers in Burundi took strike action in June after the government again failed to honour an agreement for better pay and conditions.

The government has now twice refused to abide by agreements with teachers since 2002.

The latest dispute is over the government's failure to implement part of the Ministerial

Ordonnance signed on 17 June 2002 promising better pay and working conditions.

After a strike by members of the teachers' union STEB, a new agreement was drawn up on 31 January 2005. The government's refusal to implement the new agreement has already cost teachers 17 million francs.

EI has condemned the government and strongly supported its affiliate, the *Syndicat des travailleurs de l'enseignement du Burundi* (STEB).



# BALKANS

## Concrete examples of reconciliation

**A new multi-ethnic union center is set to open soon in Kosovo after many years of union work to bring closer together the Albanian and Serbian communities. EI is also coordinating a reconciliation program in Vukovar, Croatia.**



In Kosovo, EI has been working with two teachers' unions: the SBASHK, which gathers teachers from the Albanian, Turkish and Bosnian communities of Kosovo, and the SOK, the Serbian teachers' union, whose local branch represents Kosovo's teachers from the Serbian enclaves.

Since 1999, EI, in cooperation with the AOb of the Netherlands and Norway's UtdanningsForbundet, has continued to help the SBASHK to develop and has provided the SOK with communication tools which have contributed to bring the teachers from the Serbian enclaves together and to bring them out of the isolation caused by the political situation in the region.

The aims of this union cooperation program were to help the unions to develop their organizational skills and to empower them to promote the right to education.

### **The multi-ethnic union center**

*"To open a trade union center that will organise bilingual training sessions for teachers is a victory for tolerance,"* exclaimed Nicolas Richards, EI coordinator responsible for development cooperation. Working with other union officials involved in development cooperation, such as André Dumont of AOb Netherlands, Nicolas is proud of the progress

achieved by Kosovo's Serbian and Kosovo's activists. Distrust was paramount and resentment persistent. Today, dialogue is possible between the teachers.

The training center, whose location is not yet determined, will include other minorities such as Kosovo's Moslem Serbs (known as "Goranis"), the Roma and the "Egyptians". The multi-ethnic center benefits from financial support from EI and AOb Netherlands.

### **Reconciliation program in Vukovar, Croatia**

After the war at the beginning of the 1990s, the relationship between the Croatian and Serbian communities remained tense for many years. In association with GEW of Germany and AOb of the Netherlands, EI has cooperated with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) to organise seminars in the Vukovar region, the Croatian town besieged in 1991.

Twenty-odd Croatian and Serbian teacher, in equal proportions, have been meeting since 2002 at Osijek's peace center. Three week-ends per year, they devise modules together on which they will be able to work with pupils and school communities. The purpose of these seminars was to prove that it was possible to live together while defending the rights of minorities in the region.

This pilot project is a great success.

For the past few months, the Missouri branch of American union NEA has been helping an interethnic school in Kosovo. After several consultations, EI suggested that the program might focus on the Fazli Graicevci primary school (in Albanian, or Dositele Obradovic in Serbian) in the village of Palaj (Vodice in Serbian), a few kilometers away from the capital, Pristina.

*"Members of NEA Missouri wanted to support Albanian and Serbian teachers who taught together,"* explains Joanne Eide from NEA's international department. Most of the time, the schools are divided, pupils and teachers do not use the same classrooms, or at different schedules.

Since 1999, over 300 pupils from three communities have been attending the school: Albanians, Egyptians and Serbs. All 48 teachers are taking part in the sponsored project, whose purpose is to provide the school with a common documentation center.

Pupils and teachers have committed themselves to this project from the outset, when equipment was bought (shelves, tables, chairs) and books for all communities were chosen. Both teachers' unions, SBASHK and SOK, were very enthusiastic about this project that shows in a concrete way what a reconciliation process is about.

*"EI is very proud to have helped turn this nice idea of teachers in Missouri into reality. This project makes it possible to build bridges between the communities,"* explains Nicolas Richards, EI coordinator for development cooperation.



➤ The SBASHK President Ali Shabaji with AOb International Secretary André Dumont and interpreter in front of the SBASHK headquarters in Pristina

## Combating sexual harassment in schools

The sensitive issue of relationships between teachers and students was raised at a regional seminar held as part of EI's AIDS/Education For All programme. The unions are agreed that only a zero-tolerance approach will

work, particularly since this issue is threatening the image and credibility of the teaching profession. EI therefore encourages its affiliates to condemn such breaches of ethical standards clearly and publicly. Last April, the Centrale des syndicats de Québec (CSQ) organised a seminar in Gabon specifically on sexual harassment. The following article is based on a report from Luc Allaire, of the CSQ.



► Christiane Bitougat, General Secretary of SENA, Honorine Nzet Bitéghe, President of the Women's Rights Observatory, and Léa Mefane, Chair of the SENA Women's Committee, attending the CSQ training seminar on sexual harassment.

The idea of organising a training programme on sexual harassment in schools was suggested to the CSQ by the Women's Committee of the Syndicat de l'éducation nationale (SENA), which considers that sexual harassment is sullyng relations between colleagues, between teachers and school principals as well as between teachers and pupils.

While in Gabon to report on the situation, Luc Allaire spoke with some final year students at the Lycée Joseph-Ambouroué-Avaro, in the town of Port-Gentil. The boys and some of the girls vocally claimed that sexual harassment took place in both directions. "Often it is the girls who tempt the men by wearing sexy clothes", said a student. "These teachers are men after all, and the girls use their charms to get better marks," added a schoolmate of his. A third boy remarked crudely, "Last year our maths teacher had to clap his hands together during lessons to prompt the girls wearing mini-skirts to close their legs."

"We have nothing to do with it," said a girl student. "Sexual harassment comes from teachers in the first place, and it

*happens even when we wear our uniform. If a girl has poor grades, the teacher goes to see her and tells her how she can improve her results. Even girls who are fairly good students get harassed."*

As far as SENA Vice-President Yolande Bilouka is concerned, the situation is clear: "As teachers we are prohibited from having relationships with students. If a student makes a pass at her teacher, he should behave responsibly and act in a mature manner. The way a student dresses is no justification for pouncing on her. If a student behaves improperly, he should call her to order. If she persists, he should refer the matter to the school board, which will decide whether a meeting with the parents is necessary to draw their attention to this kind of behaviour."

Several teachers recognised that sexual harassment is widespread in schools. "In Western countries, the authorities intervene," said biology teacher Raymond D'Engozoo. "But things are different here. There is no legislation in this area and some teachers believe they have sexual rights over their students."

In the opinion of Mr Abdoul, who teaches French, the State has some responsibility: "When you send a young trainee teacher to a boarding school where there are 240 young girls, and he lives on the premises, and he is not getting a salary, and neither the school management nor the parents are keeping an eye on things, is it surprising that this young teacher hesitates between accepting the advances of a student and reaching for his red pen?"

The question of pay is also relevant to this issue. Mr Abdoul explained that he had joined the union because he had received no pay during his first three years of teaching. This

pointed out Yolande Bilouka, who is also responsible for SENA's anti-AIDS programme. This improvement results from numerous education and awareness campaigns conducted by teachers, NGOs and the Health Ministry, which has implemented a national programme to combat the disease in cooperation with UNAIDS. Thus, mobile treatment centres – providing AIDS testing and affordable therapies – have been established in several regions.

The training seminar organised by the CSQ led to a proposed action plan, which will be discussed by the SENA Congress. Many different ways of reducing sexual harassment

### Several teachers recognised that sexual harassment is widespread in schools.

practice is widespread in Gabon in the case of young teachers so that, to make ends meet, some of them offer private lessons to students in difficulty. Parents are usually prepared to pay for private lessons for the boys, but often tell their daughters to fend for themselves ...

The AIDS pandemic, which affects 10% of the population in Port-Gentil, makes the struggle against sexual harassment even more urgent. "We have seen a slight slowdown in the spread of AIDS,"

have been suggested: setting up outreach centres, organising debates, adopting an ethical code, lobbying the government to enact legislation, etc. The Chair of the SENA Women's Committee, Léa Mefane, is aware that the union must adopt a collaborative approach, working together with all stakeholders, including school boards, the Education and Family Ministries, and parents' associations. SENA knows that it can rely on the support of the CSQ and EI.



# PUBLICATIONS

## Education is the key to prosperity

In the midst of the Global Call for Action against Poverty euphoria, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) released two extensive research papers questioning the utility of the financial development aid to reduce poverty. The argument developed by the IMF is that financial assistance does not boost economic growth.

For EI, while it is obvious that financial assistance is not a solution in itself, aid used wisely and through a transparent process contributes to poverty reduction. Of course, financial assistance can be used to buy F16s, to fuel bank accounts in Switzerland, or can be equally invested in the building of schools and the training and appropriate payment of skilled and qualified teachers.

Investing in quality public education, accessible to all - boys and girls, rich and poor, in cities and remote rural areas - is the key to prosperity for all countries. Many studies and statis-

tics illustrate the link between a good level of education, especially at the secondary stage, and higher growth rates.

In developed countries, the average school attendance expectancy is 15.9 years, for 7.1 in sub-Saharan Africa. There is no developed, industrialised, democratic country in the world today without highly developed and universally attended general secondary/vocational education systems. Why should we think that African countries should be different? Enrolment in secondary education in developed countries is 90%, versus 21% in sub-Saharan Africa. Enrolment in tertiary education in developed countries is 55%, in sub-Saharan Africa - 2.5% (no increase).

### Investing in human capital

EI insists particularly on the improvement of the quality of education, and not only on the issue of access. EI has recognised that the majority of deve-

lopment aid is labelled for primary education to increase the school attendance rates.

*"It becomes obvious for all countries that the focus must be put on the quality of education. On quality education for all,"* recalled the EI Chief Regional Coordinator for Africa, Assibi Napoe, at the hearing on EFA at the European Parliament (see pages 4-5).

While a large amount of development aid devoted to education is earmarked for basic education, a large number of pupils drop out in 5th year in developing countries. Almost half of the pupils registered do not complete primary education. Among the multitude of factors, the reality that school is not always relevant and does not equate to the sacrifices made by parents who send their children to the school.

### Short-term and poorly coordinated assistance

The main problem why aid does not show significant so-

cial improvements is, in the first instance, the shortage of funds. Secondly, funding is often earmarked for projects that may not be priority for that region. ActionAid says that 80% of financial assistance to education is returned to the donor country.

Further, the assistance is often allocated in the very short term. The objective of achieving Education For All by 2015 should allow governments to plan for the long term, for example, by hiring teachers. But to do that, developing countries need a guarantee that they will have the funds available to pay them. Currently the development aid is scheduled for a 2 or 3 year period.

Public education delivered on a national scale is the most important investment in human capital and economic growth.

## calendar

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| 33rd UNESCO General Conference – Paris, France  | 3-21 October      |
| WORLD TEACHERS' DAY   | 5 October         |
| EI Pan-European Round Table for Central and Eastern Europe – Belgrade, Serbia           | 6-9 October       |
| EFA/HIV-AIDS International Conference – Utrecht, The Netherlands                        | 7-8 October       |
| EI Pan-European Round Table on Life Long Learning – Brussels, Belgium                   | 17 October        |
| EI Pan-European Round Table on Early Childhood Education – Sofia, Bulgaria              | 24-25 October     |
| EI/ETUCE Bureau – Brussels, Belgium   | 3 November        |
| TUAC 115th Plenary Session – Paris, France  | 3-4 November      |
| OECD/TUAC Liaison Committees – Paris, France  | 4 November        |
| EI regional and headquarters coordination meeting – Brussels, Belgium                   | 7-9 November      |
| EI Annual Development Cooperation Meeting – Brussels, Belgium                           | 10-11 November    |
| EI/ETUCE Pan-European Round Table on Equal Opportunities – Prague, Czech Republic       | 14-15 November    |
| TUAC Working Group on Education, Training and Employment – Paris, France                | 22-23 November    |
| World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education – Aotearoa, New Zealand                | 27 Nov/1 December |
| High Level Group on EFA – Beijing, China  | 28-30 November    |
| EI Pan-European Committee / ETUCE Executive Board – Luxemburg                           | 6-7 December      |
| OECD Education Committee – Paris, France  | 7-8 December      |
| 5th EI International Conference on Higher Education and Research – Melbourne, Australia | 7-9 December      |
| HUMAN RIGHTS DAY  | 10 DECEMBER       |
| 6th WTO Ministerial meeting – Hong Kong   | 13-18 December    |

# RESEARCH

## Research pays dividends

**I**ndependent research into education issues is an area yet to be explored by many EI affiliates. However affiliates who have carried out their own research have discovered that it can be a powerful tool when debating with governments how best to provide quality education. Independent research provides teachers' unions with scientifically verified results that can support their policies and opinions.

Recently, the Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) conducted a study into the living and working conditions of teachers in Tanzania. The findings provided strong support for the union's efforts to shift the focus of local debate from mere increases in primary school student enrolments to how best to achieve quality education in the country.

Tanzania introduced free primary education in 2002. This led to a considerable increase in the number of pupils in the school system. It is expected that by 2006 all eligible school age children will be enrolled in primary school.

### Burden on teachers

At national and international levels the Government of Tanzania has received high praise for this initiative. Norway's Minister for Development Cooperation has publicly commended the Tanzanian Government for making education more accessible to its people. However, universal access is just a first step. Those who have praised the work in Tanzania, have not commented on the impact the Government's programme has

had on teachers, or the quality of education the new students have been offered. Numbers of students in education have taken precedence over the quality of education the system is providing them. Numbers, not quality, has been the preoccupation of the Tanzanian Government and international authorities.

The research initiated by the TTU demonstrated a reality far removed from the positive image promoted by the Tanzanian Government and other authorities, it showed the plight of Tanzanian teachers and the poor quality of the education offered the country's children.

The study identified low wages, heavy workloads and a level of disrespect for the teaching profession that was new to Tanzanian society. The research made it clear that by ignoring the needs of teachers, education authorities were causing the quality of education to deteriorate.

Ted Mhagama, a senior official in the Ministry of Education, recognises that teachers are not paid as well as other professionals. He says: *"In other professions, like accountants, bankers, medical doctors and lawyers graduates earn up to \$US4000 a month. But not teachers."* In contrast, secondary school teachers are paid about \$US150 a month and primary school teachers receive less than \$US80 a month.

### Decline of the teachers' status

The study also reveals that becoming a teacher was a "last

resort" for many new entrants into the profession. This represents a major change of attitude in Tanzanian society. A similar study in 1990 showed that many people entered the teaching profession "to build the nation". More than 40% of teachers say that they would not advise their children to take up teaching. Many said they only became teachers after failing to find employment in other areas.

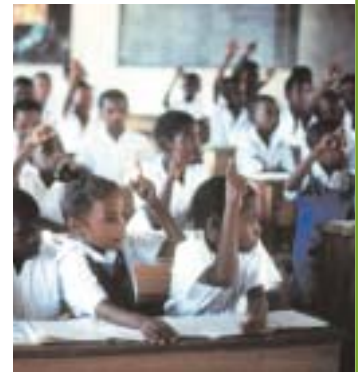
Another finding of major concern was the lack of qualifica-

### Numbers, not quality, has been the preoccupation of the Tanzanian Government and international authorities.

tions of many primary school teachers. Nearly half of primary school teachers had not received a formal education above that of the children they were teaching.

With these teachers, in-service training may provide assistance. But, the study found that *"in practice, there is no organised, sustained effort to develop and further teachers' professional development."*

There was also a major link between achieving the goals of Education For All and the impact of HIV/AIDS on teaching and learning. One teacher observed: *"HIV/AIDS has created lots of problems for us. If a teacher is absent for a long time, her or his classes are allocated to other teachers and increasing their workload."* Another reported: *"We have more than 100 pupils in this*



*school who are AIDS orphans. These children need not only financial support but also love and care. I try and do as much as possible, but it is not adequate."*

A lack of housing, delays in salary payment and transfers added to the difficulties faced by Tanzanian teachers. The re-

cent TTU Congress examined in-depth how best to deal with these challenges and put in place a series of initiatives for further action.

This important study assisted the TTU to bring fundamental issues to the forefront of public debate. It also demonstrates to all EI affiliates the importance of undertaking independent research.

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To download a copy of the TTU's study, go to: [www.hakielimu.org](http://www.hakielimu.org)