On the Move for Equality
EI’s First World Women’s Conference

20-23 January, 2011 – Bangkok, Thailand

Conference Report
Contents

1. On the Move for Equality: EI’s First World Women’s Conference ................................................................. 3
   Purpose of the Conference ...................................................................................................................... 3
   Programme Outline ............................................................................................................................... 5
   Participants, Speakers and Facilitators ............................................................................................... 6
2. Recommendations .................................................................................................................................. 7
3. Conference Proceedings ....................................................................................................................... 10
   Pre-Conference of Women’s Networks ............................................................................................... 10
   Opening Ceremony ............................................................................................................................. 10
   Taking Stock of the Status of Women in Today’s World (21 January 2011) ......................................... 11
   Advancing and Empowering Girls and Women in and through Education (22 January 2011) ............ 14
4. Evaluation by Participants .................................................................................................................. 19
5. List of documents ............................................................................................................................... 20
1. On the Move for Equality: EI’s First World Women’s Conference

Education International is the voice of the teaching profession across the globe. A global federation of about 400 unions in more than 170 countries and territories, it represents 30 million teachers and education employees in education organizations from early childhood to higher education. EI assists the development of independent democratic education unions and builds solidarity and cooperation among them. EI promotes the principle that quality education, funded publicly, should be available to every student in every country. EI advocates for socially just societies, in which the principle of equality is paramount; EI aims to combat racism and xenophobia, and to challenge discrimination on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and racial or ethnic origin or characteristics.

Working to achieve gender equality in unions, education and society has been a principal aim and a major work priority for EI since its Founding Congress in 1995, and this is reflected in the work of all five of EI’s regions. The main driving force for gender equality is the political leadership; an increasingly important force is the regional and sub-regional women’s networks: Latin America Education Workers Women’s Network; Pan African Women’s Education Network (AWEN); SAARC, ASEAN and COPE sub-regional networks in Asia-Pacific; Status of Women Committee of the Caribbean Union of Teachers; ETUCE Women’s Network in Europe. Developing a network for gender equality in the MENA geographic region has begun.

On the Move for Equality, EI’s first world women’s conference took place in Bangkok, Thailand, 20-23 January, 2011. It was jointly organized by the EI Asia Pacific Regional Office and EI Brussels, and hosted by the EI member organisations in Thailand: the National Thai Teachers Union NTTU, the Private School Teachers’ Association of Thailand PSTAT, The Education Society of Thailand EST, and the Federation of Elementary Education Teachers’ Associations of Thailand FEETAT.

The Conference was organised in accordance with a decision adopted by the 28th Executive Board Meeting, October 2006, on recommendation from the Status of Women Committee. The progress towards the Conference, including the development of the programme and support for the participation of network representatives, ensued over the intervening period, with full engagement of the Status of Women Committee and the Equality coordinators. Strong support from the Asia Pacific Regional Office, all Equality Coordinators, member organizations, particularly in the form of assistance to fund participation of Women’s Network members from all regions, from the secretariat, and from the leadership of EI as well as the Status of Women Committee were instrumental in making the Conference a reality and a success.

This report outlines the discussions and outcomes of this ground-breaking event. The first chapter describes the concept of the Conference; the second chapter shows the main outcome of a resolution on gender equality for consideration by EI’s 6th World Congress in July 2011; later chapters provide some detail on the discussions of the plenary and workshop sessions, and the last chapter gives an overview of participants’ evaluation of the Conference.
Purpose of the Conference

The Conference was intended to be participatory in nature, to create a space and bring together people representing the diverse membership of EI for in-depth discussion, analysis and reflection on the status of women in 2011 and the means of empowering women and girls. It was intended to serve as a vehicle to inform, stimulate and move forward in a significant way the collective means of achieving gender equality, particularly in unions, and through unions, in education and society. A revitalized, more visible, coherent and cohesive collective effort to empower girls and women and to achieve gender equality in unions, in education and in society was anticipated as an outcome.

The aims of the conference were:

- To create a joint understanding of the state of progress towards equality for women and men in unions, education and society;
- To advance and empower women and girls through education;
- To further the achievement of gender equality in unions and education, validate the effectiveness of the networks in the struggle for gender equality; and
- To bring together the regional and sub-regional networks in a global meeting.

The On the Move for Equality conference did provide the space and opportunity for participants to share and contribute to a forum, the outcomes of which will inform EI’s work on gender in the years to come. It will provide a basis for discussion at the 6th World Congress, to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, in July 2011, with consideration of the resolution on Gender Equality providing the starting point for the development of an EI Global Action Plan “On the Move for Equality”, aimed at setting the priorities and main areas of action for the next quadrennium period.

In brief, the Conference found among other conclusions that

- Gender stereotypes are present in schools in all regions and must be effectively addressed for empowerment of girls;
- Unions should reflect their principles and policies of equality, diversity and empowerment in their own actions;
- Women are not an homogeneous group; diversity within as well as among regions is important to recognize;
- Men are necessary and willing allies to institutionalise policies, programmes and action to achieve gender equality;
- Progress can be seen, but is slow, uneven and vulnerable to the global economic crisis, food and climate crises;
- More and concerted action is warranted to make equality on the ground a reality for women and men, boys and girls.

“An enjoyable and rewarding conference that has been extremely important to me as a teacher and union activist.”

Participants with the Thai Silk Conference bag
## Programme Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 January</td>
<td><strong>Networks Welcome</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 January</td>
<td><strong>Pre-Conference event:</strong> Connecting the EI Women's Networks through their Past and Future Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 January</td>
<td><strong>Taking Stock of the Status of Women in Today's World</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 January</td>
<td><strong>Advancing and Empowering Women and Girls through Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 January</td>
<td><strong>A Step Closer to Equality</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Morning Session
- Regional meetings of EI’s Women’s Networks

### Afternoon Session
- First Global Meeting of Regional Women’s Networks
- Workshop session I (11 choice workshops)
- Workshop session II (10 choice workshops)
- Workshop session III (11 choice workshops)
- Workshop session IV (10 choice workshops)

### Evening Programme
- Welcome and Introduction to the Conference for representatives of EI’s Women’s Networks
- Conference Opening: Fred van Leeuwen, Honourable Minister of Education Mr. Bunyakiat, Boonpun Sanbho, Susan Hopgood; Reception
- Cultural event; Reception and dinner
- Free evening

The **Conference documents** included the **Conference programme** and practical information, as well as a background document outlining the scope of issues and the latest developments in gender equality and women’s rights around the globe. The documents also included the **report of the EI survey on the status of women in unions, education and society**, and the brochure “**EI Regional and Sub-Regional Women’s Networks**”. Locally made vibrantly coloured Thai silk bags were a welcome addition.

All Conference documents, presentations, speeches and reports, as well as video footage and photos can be found at: [www.ei-ie.org/women2011](http://www.ei-ie.org/women2011). A **Facebook page** was created which lives on after the Conference, to update the EI equality Facebook community about global developments and activities on gender equality.

One other space for member organisations to share their experiences and inspiration for their activities was the Exhibition area, which gave the participants the opportunity to display materials of their unions’ activities and campaigns. Fifteen tables and ten notice boards overflowed with leaflets, brochures, t-shirts, stickers, buttons, banners, posters and photos of gender equality campaigns, actions and research performed by EI and its member organisations and its networks. The UN Girls’ Education Initiative and UNESCO also provided publications, quickly collected by the participants.
Participants, Speakers and Facilitators

Participants numbered 368, of whom 321 represented EI member organisations and a third of these participants were active in the regional and sub-regional EI women’s networks and took part in the pre-Conference event for the networks. Participants were mainly those responsible for the equality agenda and/or union leaders, at whom the conference was targeted. The vast majority were women but over 40 male unionists were welcome and active participants. The majority of participants came from the Asia-Pacific, Europe and Africa regions, although participation was representative of EI membership in each region.

Chart: Number of participants from each region

Nearly half of the 49 participants from Africa were members of the Africa Women’s Education Network (AWEN). The Asia-Pacific region, the most populous and diverse region amongst EI regions, was represented by 170 participants, almost a third of whom were members of one of the sub-regional networks, ASEAN, SAARC or COPE. European EI member organisations participated in the Conference with 89, a third of these participants being active in the ETUCE Women’s Network. The North America and Caribbean region was represented by 33 participants, five of whom came from the Caribbean Union of Teachers Status of Women Committee. Almost all of the 21 participants from Latin America were members of the Education Workers Women’s Network; the Middle East and North Africa region was represented by six participants.

Additionally a number of speakers, as well as guests from sister and partner organisations engaged in the Conference: EI Education and Solidarity Network; Global Union Federations PSI (Public Services International) and ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation); Government representatives of Thailand and Colombia; UN agencies including UNESCO, the UNICEF Girls’ Education Initiative, ILO; global civil society alliances such as the Global Call to Action Against Poverty.

Participants in the exhibition space
2. Recommendations

The EI Executive Board at their meeting of 22-24 March 2011 adopted the following recommendations arising from the On the Move for Equality Conference:

   That an EI Gender Equality Action Plan for the 2011 – 2015 period be developed, based on the collective thinking of and recommendations arising from the On the Move for Equality Conference 2011, for consideration by the EI Executive Board immediately following the 6th World Congress, such action plan to include an annual e-consultation forum among members and networks, and indicators to mark progress and examine success along the way.

2. That development of the plan be carried out through consultation with the Status of Women Committee, the Women’s Caucus, and with feedback from member organizations, and regional and sub-regional networks.

3. That the On the Move for Equality Conference 2 be convened.

That the following resolution on Gender Equality be recommended to the 6th WC etc as below 

6th World Congress of Education International (EI) meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, from 22-26 July 2011

1. Affirms that gender equality is a human right, and one that underpins human endeavor for sustainable development, social justice, peace and security, and quality education for all;
2. Affirms EI’s principle aim on the importance of equality, non-discrimination, respect for girls and women, and recognition of and respect for diversity;
3. Affirms EI’s commitment to gender equality and empowerment of women in unions, education and society;
4. Affirms the right of women to make decisions about their own lives;
5. Recognizes EI’s policy and programmatic efforts to achieve gender equality, engaging both men and women;
6. Recognizes also that persistent gender inequalities continue to exist, in unions, in education, and in society, despite international standards and agreements, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979), Education For All and Millennium Development Goals (EFA and MDG 2000); and United Nations world conferences and specific action plans, such as the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA 1995);
7. Notes progress, but also that no country has fully achieved gender equality despite enabling legislation;
8. Notes that global crises of finance, food security and climate change are exacerbating the situation of many women and girls;
9. Recognizes MDG and EFA goals will not be universally met by 2015, and that consideration to strategic action beyond 2015 must be given, so as to ensure implementation and sustainability;
10. Notes that women outnumber men in education union membership globally and in most countries, but that progress in women’s participation in union leadership is slow and uneven;
11. Believes that full representation and ensuring full participation of all members is the responsibility of the union;
12. Notes that diversity within countries and groups as well as among countries is important to consider in policy, programme and action;
13. Understands that collective responsibility and action are necessary to bring about significant change towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, and that the actions of member organizations largely determine what EI can achieve;
14. Affirms EI’s commitment to pursue non-discrimination and gender equality in all and through all its endeavours, globally, regionally and nationally.

**Purpose**
To build on the outcomes and the momentum created by EI’s first world women’s conference, **On the Move for Equality**, to revitalize, broaden and deepen collective union action in the struggle for gender equality, in unions, in education and in society.

**Recommends that EI**
1. Promote and implement an EI Gender Equality Plan of Action, such plan to include specific targets and measures of success; with focus on the short term, 2011-2015, and considering the longer term, to 2030;
2. Include in the plan five objectives based on the key areas below:
   - **Strengthen and democratize unions** through achieving gender equality in unions, with full participation of women in unions and in union leadership; full participation of men in promoting gender equality; support for the work of Women’s Networks; and ensure that EI policies and structures effectively support programmes and action that address gender justice and empowerment of girls and women;
   - **Ensure inclusive gender-sensitive quality public education**, with focus on the education of girls; on impediments such as child labour, stereotyping and gender based violence; and on the centrality of the role of the teacher;
   - **Mobilize Member Organizations** to advocate for and hold governments to account to meet MDG and EFA goals, ratify, implement and monitor treaties and conventions, improve the application of standards and enforce existing legal frameworks in order to advance gender equality in education and society at large;
   - **Build and maintain partnerships, alliances and coalitions that address public policy issues**, working with Global Unions, relevant international organizations including UN Women, UNESCO, ILO and nongovernmental organizations, at national and global levels, with emphasis on political and economic empowerment of women, through addressing pay equity, social protection and structural salary discrimination; an end to violence against women; and lead roles for women in building peace and security;
   - **Develop a communication and research strategy** to support the plan by making visible trade union practices that address gender discrimination, sharing knowledge through the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), enabling women’s networks to improve communication and networking skills, and undertaking a study to identify gains and gaps, in access to and participation in quality education and training leading to full employment and decent work for decent lives for women.
3. Promote gender balance in all EI structures and delegations; include gender perspective in all policy, programme, and activities; and develop guidelines and practical tools to implement gender mainstreaming;
4. Promote and disseminate good practices on gender equality, gender mainstreaming;
5. Support member organizations in holding their governments accountable to meet international commitments;
6. Build and support networks of women to create a global community of women activists;
7. Promote exchange and foster coordination among specific EI Committees, including the Status of Women, Early Childhood and Vocational education and training, Indigenous, and Higher Education;
8. Refocus the Quadrennial Survey to monitor and report on the achievement of the Action Plan on a biennial basis;

**Encourage member organisations to:**
1. Carry out the Action Plan at the national level to the greatest extent possible;
2. Monitor and report progress on recommendations from the EI World Women’s Conference and World Congresses;
3. Lobby for the ratification, implementation and monitoring of existing legal frameworks and improvement of the application of standards at the national level;
4. Hold governments to account to achieve and sustain international agreements, notably Millennium Development (MDG) and Education For All (EFA) goals;
5. Ensure labor standards apply equally to men and women and that terms and conditions of employment address women’s issues;
6. Include gender balance in all structures and delegations; include a gender perspective in all policy, programme and activities; and develop guidelines and practical tools to implement gender mainstreaming;
7. Provide training opportunities for women, including in leadership, negotiating skills and communications.
3. Conference Proceedings

Pre-Conference of Women’s Networks

On 20 January, over 100 representatives of EI’s regional and sub-regional Women’s Networks convened for the pre-Conference event “Connecting the EI Women’s Networks through their past and future strategies”. This Session aimed at celebrating successes, analysing old and new obstacles, and moving forward together with a powerful local, national, regional and global voice.

In regional meetings, the network representatives discussed their journeys to this point, their successes and challenges, and their current development. They defined priorities for coordinated equality work in their regions, and identified priority issues for global action.

For the first time the Network representatives came together in a global meeting of EI’s Women’s Networks. The overwhelming conclusion of the lively debate was that there are common issues despite regional and local differences, and that the Networks are a key vehicle for ensuring broad participation and women’s voice in the union’s struggle for gender equality.

It is clear that the financial crisis and economic recession has significantly impacted the provision of quality education in many places, and has served to set-back the pace of change for equality. Also clear from participants is the impact of the food security and climate change crises on achieving equality and quality education for all throughout life.

Opening Ceremony

The Conference opening took place on the evening of 20 January. This session provided the contextual frame for the On the Move for Equality Conference: Diversity and Gender Equality in EI: From the past to the future.

“A fantastic conference!”

The Conference was opened by Fred van Leeuwen, who pointed out that EI and its member organisations have been on the move for equality since EI’s creation in 1993. He explained that “On this journey I have become truly inspired by the many courageous, creative and determined women in our movement who stood up in their countries and communities, in their organisations and in their schools, against persistent discrimination and inequality.” The Honourable Mr. Chinnaworn Bunyakiat, Thai Minister of Education, welcomed the Conference participants to Thailand, and Boonpun Sanbho, from the Thai teacher organisation NTTU expressed greetings on behalf of the Thai EI member organisations.
The Executive Director of UN Women, Michelle Bachelet, welcomed the participants of the EI **On the Move for Equality** Conference through a video message. She said that quality education is a human right and key to equality, peace and development, and that the promotion of gender equality requires the commitment of many different stakeholders. This Conference is an important step to accelerate the momentum of action for real equality for girls and boys, women and men.

In her **opening address**, EI President Susan Hopgood gave an overview of the history of women’s struggle for justice, pointing out that much has been achieved, but that there is a mismatch between international standards and actual practices. She highlighted the role of education in empowering women, expressing the need for changing societal and cultural norms and attitudes which result in the subjugation of women and girls. She closed her speech with a call for action: “Now we must inspire ourselves and each other to reach our goal – in our workplaces, classrooms and communities, within our own unions, within our own lives, and within Education International. We are on the Move for Equality!”

**Taking Stock of the Status of Women in Today’s World (21 January 2011)**

Thirty years after the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and 15 years after the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) it is time to take stock. How far have women advanced in the workplace, in decision making bodies, in the education sector and in society? How can education unions contribute to equality, for women and men, girls and boys? The first Conference day was devoted to an analysis of these questions. The keynote speaker and panellists provided a valuable framework for a lively discussion, which was continued on more specific topics in the ensuing workshop sessions. This report provides an outline of the contributions and the main issues emerging from the plenary and workshop discussions.

**Keynote speech: Historical overview of women’s progress, changes and gains made globally**

By Susan Hopgood, President of EI

Ms. Hopgood reminded all participants of the movement for suffrage in England in the late 19th Century, tracing all the way to the latest instance of granting voting rights to women in Switzerland in 1973, as seminal to the present day progress in women’s status globally. She commended the Indian sisters for their ceaseless efforts to secure position of 10 million women in the parliament and the ongoing advocacy for 30 percent reservation for women in parliament. CEDAW (1979) has designated “discrimination” as a violation of human rights and advocated for free primary quality education. The central question she posed is: How do we measure progress? Is it measured by the Right to Life, the Right to Liberty and the Right to Security of the person? If so, how about infanticide, female foeticide, female genital mutilation, and violence against children, violence against women, which together with other forms of violence have increased across the globe, while 56 million children will still be out of school in 2015. She concluded that we are still on the move for equality, that trade unionists have a critical role to play, and this requires collaboration and solidarity.

**Legislative and corrective measures in the world of work**

By Christine Nathan, Senior Specialist on Workers’ Activities, ILO South-East Asia

Christine Nathan noted that we have reasons to celebrate. Since 1995, legislation and corrective measures to ensure gender equality have been put in place; there is a high rate of ratification of ILO Conventions 100 and 111; direct discrimination is being addressed; decreasing pay gaps are evident;
women’s career advancement is being promoted through affirmative action; wider opportunity choices are open for women; remuneration and recruitment are ensured without consideration of gender; decent work for domestic workers is being advocated. However, inequalities have been perpetuated due particularly to the financial crisis which has placed women’s progress at risk. Women are unequally represented in the informal sector; and therefore the need to fight for more legislation in this sector is obvious. Strong women need strong trade unions. It is necessary to break down walls of culture, tradition and religion; trade unions need to strengthen their power to organize and fight for the ratification of Gender Equality Conventions.

**Focus on women and politics**
By Fatima Aparecida da Silva, Vice President of EI regional committee in Latin America
Fatima Aparecida da Silva emphasized the crucial importance of women in politics and in the economy. Globally only one percent of women have land tenure and ownership, only 10% own any kind of property, and there are only 14% in leadership positions. Equality, solidarity and constant struggle for power is essential if women are to take public office and have a voice in decision-making. There is an urgent need to bring down ethnic and racial barriers. While there are many women in the banking and financial sectors, they are mainly in secondary positions. Women have to conquer the public sphere. It is not enough to elect women in leadership positions; they also need support in order to promote and further pursue the issues of gender equality.

**Strengthening the gender dimensions in economic empowerment issues**
By Gemma Adaba, former ITUC representative to the United Nations
Gemma Adaba elaborated on how connecting the global to national levels is crucial. In order to strengthen the gender dimensions in economic empowerment issues, it is essential to ensure that governments across the world take up internationally agreed upon documents at national levels. Trade unions have to fight for their ratification and implementation in order to reduce poverty and promote gender equality measures. The Doha Declaration of 2008 is strong on the gender perspectives: Article 12 asks for the: “realization of full productive employment”. Budget cuts induced by the financial crisis have had a negative impact on the provision of quality public services and thus led to setbacks on the promotion of gender equality provisions. The crux of the problem lies in the neo-liberal model of globalization which must be seriously countered. The ILO Jobs Pact and the 2009 ILO Resolution on Gender Equality are important documents to consider at a global level, expected to be implemented at national levels throughout.

**Results of EI Quadrennial Survey (2009/10) on Status of Women in Unions, Education and Society**
By Jan Eastman, Deputy General Secretary, EI
Jan Eastman presented the highlights of the report which analyzed gender equality within EI’s member organizations based on a survey among EI member organizations. 138 organizations from 95 countries responded to the survey, representing 34 percent of EI’s member organizations; these members represent 78 percent of individual members of EI. Some interesting findings were mentioned. Women constitute the majority of the teaching force and the union membership, but they are underrepresented in the union leadership; the higher the decision making body, the lower is the percentage of women.
Though half of the unions have mechanisms to ensure gender equality in high decision-making positions, there is no clear indication whether these mechanisms have improved the situation or not. The prevailing gap between gender existing laws in various countries and the reality is due to considerable impact of gender stereotypes, male networks and the unequal division of family responsibilities. Members see the most relevant barriers to education being related to child labour, lack of school infrastructure and gender stereotypes. With regard to priority issues and activities that EI should be working towards, the highest rated were quality public education for all, investment in education, women in higher education, gender equality education in curricula, schools as safe sanctuaries and gender stereotypes. This report is expected to provoke thinking on gender equality in the work of EI and its members.

**Power in numbers and need for women in leadership positions**

By Joyce Powell, Executive Committee Member of NEA, USA

Joyce Powell recounted the 154 years of history of union action for gender equality and women’s full participation in the National Education Association of the United States. In 1979, the first woman president of the union was elected at the local level. The Education Amendment (Title IX) came into force only in 1972, following the landmark Civil Rights Act in 1964. Access to educational programmes and opportunities have undoubtedly grown with even an opening of sports for women, yet only 20 percent of leaders in unions are women where 75 percent of unionised teachers are women. The models in leadership roles have now been forged by many, including Mary Futrell, Susan Hopgood and Sharan Burrow. There is power in numbers and more women in leadership positions is the aim, together with campaigns for a living wage and absolute prevention of sexual harassment and violence of all kinds. Trade unions have to improve the lives of women and children. Our societies must ensure every child an excellent public education with all its opportunities as well as challenges.

**Some conclusions from the discussions in the workshops:**

**Unions as places of equality, diversity and empowerment**

In terms of diversity and equality, unions have to be role models for society. In order to be representative and credible, unions need to implement their values in their own structures. Attention must be given to gender equality as well as diversity, including sexual diversity, ethnic background, religion and cultural heritage. How can unions increase the number of women active in leadership structures? It is not enough to reserve spaces and elect women; they also need mentoring and support once they are in leadership positions. Similarly, equality committees, networks and offices need to be equipped with appropriate power and resources. Organising an internal gender audit can help unions identify the main areas of action for achieving gender equality within the union structures, policies, programme and budget. In order to recruit young women, unions can organise them around issues that are relevant to their needs. Only when young female union members see that they can enter leadership structures and that their voice is heard, will they become an active part of the union. Actively engaging men in discussions and trainings on gender equality as well as women is essential to effectively carrying out the work and integrating equality issues in the daily work of the union.
**Closing the implementation gap: From on paper to in practice**

Although international and national legislation for gender equality exists, it is too often not implemented, or not implemented effectively, or enforced. And too often it is the first to be reduced in the face of cutbacks. Within the ILO there is a complaints process and action available to assist in furthering the implementation process at the national level. But these provisions are ineffective unless unions take the initiative to set the process in motion and make use of the structures available. Another tool to make institutions accountable for their gender equality policies is to analyse their budgets through the gender lens. Budgets are policies in numbers, and these numbers have to reflect political commitments. The economic crisis has weakened achievements, and caused reduced spending on equality and development goals. A response to the policies following the crisis has to be formulated in the framework of seriously countering the neoliberal model of globalisation, and denouncing economic interests that lead to more inequality.

“**The conference has also nailed the myth that the women in the global south are ‘victims’ and ‘helpless’.”**

**Relieving women of the double burden of employment and family responsibilities**

Women still shoulder the brunt of unpaid housework and care responsibilities. Unions can contribute to a fair sharing of these tasks by advocating for paid parental leave which is equally available to women and men. Once these provisions are in place, it is necessary to encourage men to use them. This requires challenging traditional role models that are anchored in culture and tradition.

**Advancing and Empowering Girls and Women in and through Education (22 January 2011)**

Education is one of the most effective means of breaking the cycle of poverty. However, gender inequalities continue to threaten the wellbeing and dignity of girls and women within schools as well as in societies. The Beijing Platform for Action, the Education for All goals and the Millennium Development Goals have increased attention and aided progress – but not yet enough. The right to education has to be translated into rights through education. What strategies can educators and their unions create and employ to achieve real, innovative and lasting change towards and beyond 2015? On the second Conference day, participants analysed how to advance and empower women and girls through education. The keynote speaker and panellists framed the theme by presenting the most important issues and global institutions. On this basis, participants discussed access to, gender justice within, and opportunities through education. The plenary contributions are shortly described below, followed by an outline of the main issues emerging for EI’s future strategies and priorities.

**Keynote speech: Advancing gender equality through education as a basic human right, translating the right to education into rights through education using diverse strategies – investing in high quality education and motivated teachers**

By Saniye Gulser Corat, Director of Division for Gender Equality, UNESCO

Saniye Gulser Corat presented a comprehensive overview of UNESCO’s vision, mission and values in promoting gender equality through and in education, supported by ample statistical data and good practice cases from different countries around the globe. She attributed credit to Amartya Sen for demonstrating the holistic benefits of education for empowerment. She recounted her personal history of empowerment through good quality education and a vision inspired by her firm conviction that education is a basic human right for all, not a luxury. For
UNESCO, gender equality is a global priority, recognizing various shapes of discrimination and marginalization that touch different girls in different ways. She emphasized that equality in education has been repeatedly guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Millennium Development Goals and the Beijing Conference. But many objectives only remain words; the marginalized remain the hardest to reach. It is now time to renew efforts and achieve promises. Gender is a complex dynamic structure, not a simple dichotomy and as such inequities are hard to address. Gender parity at school can easily mask great inequalities. Equal numbers do not ensure equality in the quality of life or the opportunities available. One missing link in moving from the right to education to rights through education is rights in education itself – the quality of education being a fertile ground for women’s empowerment. Three dimensions of quality education lie in (i) where education takes place, (ii) the curriculum, and (iii) the teachers – all must be gender sensitive. UNESCO focuses on both training and professional development of teachers as well as the conditions of work for teachers. Teachers are the most precious resource linking society at large and the children and families, and they need to be celebrated and kept motivated. It is necessary to ensure that there are enough teachers and that teachers enjoy good status, stable and fair salaries and be valued as resources. The financial crisis should not be used as an excuse to cut education budgets.

**Gender stereotypes in schools and how to remove them through a supportive environment**

By Carolyn Hannan, former Director UN Division for the Advancement of Women

Carolyn Hannan first gave examples of how gender stereotypes operate in schools: girls work harder; boys need more attention because they tend to misbehave; teachers may use good girls as buffers for boys who are difficult to control; their feelings of security and satisfaction are lower; girls’ capacity to take leadership roles is questioned; and girls are considered good only in limited subjects, not including science and technology. Such stereotypes can be removed by changes in curricula, gender-responsive school policies, text books without discriminatory language and pictures as well as a variety of roles and function reversals, gender sensitive training, to name some. Low expectations of girls in science and technology may be a reason why girls are not accessing ICT to the same extent as boys, and why home computers are used more by boys than girls. A range of strategies could be used to counteract this. There could be initiatives to organize science paths for girls in atypical areas, use role models to inspire girls, revise training and teaching materials to make them appropriate and attractive to girls; and work with gifted girls to take leadership roles. A supportive environment for raising self-esteem and confidence boosting could also be created through after-school networks, safe space talking environment, improved library facilities and access to sports and other leisure activities. Unions can advocate for stricter laws on demeaning portrayal of women in media and advertising. The presentation also briefly addressed violence, harassment and sexual exploitation that girls face.

**Challenges faced by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and how they are addressed**

By Assibi Napoe, Chair of the Board of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and EI Chief Regional Coordinator Africa

Assibi Napoe explained that the GCE has contributed to increased access to education for both girls and boys but the full aim has not been achieved yet. In sub-Saharan Africa education remains a luxury. It is not considered necessary for girls to be educated because husbands can support them. Even
after secondary education, girls are trafficked from Western Africa to Central Africa, and to Nigeria to work in coffee plantations. They are often sold as domestic servants and the money thus acquired is used to pay for boys’ education. Child trafficking is also a serious problem in Africa. There have been efforts to collect disaggregated data to identify the situation and needs of girls in education. Education Watch programmes have been launched for drawing attention to the need for girls to attend school. There is an urgent need to develop more effective advocacy for girls’ education and strengthen the gender dimensions of existing educational institutions and their infrastructure. Pressure is being placed on different countries in Africa to promote education and necessary infrastructure for girls’ education.

Collective advocacy and partnerships as strategies for advancement of gender equality in education
By Maki Hayashikawa, Education Specialist UN Girls’ Education Initiative, South-East Asia

Maki Hayashikawa provided a brief overview of the strategies used by the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) to help advance girls’ education. UNGEI was launched in 2000 in Dakar, Senegal and focuses on the critical importance of prioritizing girls’ education in order to narrow gender gaps in primary and secondary education so as to achieve the goal set out for 2015. In the First Global Declaration on Gender Equality and Empowerment, the aim expressed was to make gender equality in education a higher priority both internally and externally within the broader concept of gender equality. Collective advocacy is a very strong strategy advocated and used. Strategic partnerships with local communities, civil society and other stakeholders are used as an anchorage to leverage influence on governments and academic institutions. There is a serious need for recognition of the critical role played by teachers. Teachers are seen as providing highly feminized care. Unless all teachers are made more aware of gender issues, education may suffer from lack of gender sensitivity and gender responsiveness in its teaching methods and treatment of students, both girls and boys. Teacher unions must focus on strategic partnerships with the community, civil society and other stakeholders to help achieve the educational goals of gender equality in education set out for 2015.

Indivisibility of human rights needs to be respected. Right to Education will be achieved only if all other rights are equally promoted
By Stella Maldonado, Secretary General of CTERA, Argentina

Stella Maldonado brought a different perspective to bear on achieving the right to education. She argued that the rights to health, to work, to security and protection are all related dimensions of a social environment that needs to be created to achieve the right to education. She emphasized the importance of strengthening unions to look at the political perspectives of education policies and social inclusion. Institutional and educational practices for gender equality need to be closely scrutinized. It is not enough only to focus on inclusion and participation of all girls. It is equally important to ensure that the fight against violence and sexual stereotypes continues consistently. Quality education is possible if we do away with practices of teachers doing multiple jobs because there are no assurances of good salary and good health benefits. Working conditions for teachers must be included in collective bargaining processes, and unions must be stronger to address all these issues. Decent working conditions are absolutely essential to produce good learning and teaching environments. Early childhood education is equally important as secondary education: Many teenagers leave schools to look after their siblings.

“Thank you EI, I am proud to be here in this conference.”
Some conclusions from the discussions in the workshops:

It’s a right, make it right: Guaranteeing girls’ access to education
The importance of girls’ access to education is beyond dispute, yet the Education for All targets for 2010 have not been reached, and will likely not be reached by 2015. Political commitment and financial contributions are not sufficient, and are being further challenged by the global economic crisis, the effects of which are hardest on the most marginalised. Unions have the task to hold governments responsible for their commitments. To this end, strategic partnerships with communities and other stakeholders are key. Union advocacy for increasing girls’ participation in education has to include safety in schools, and the quality and relevance of education – if these are not apparent, parents tend to take girls out of school. In many places, boys still retain precedence over girls for opportunities to go to school, with cultural and traditional attitudes and values remaining the prevailing norm. Can unions offer a challenge to these through promoting inclusive quality education free of gender stereotypes? Unions from Latin America, UK and Australia reported special programmes to support pregnant and parenting girls in completing their education.

Framing the discussion around boys’ underachievement
The problem of boys’ underachievement in school has different dimensions in different regions: Caribbean unions mentioned that boys’ underachievement and their involvement in criminal activities goes hand in hand; in Central Asia boys tend to opt out of tertiary education; in South East Asia they drop out of school at earlier ages. It is an issue of increasing concern in Europe. Strategies to overcome this problem therefore have to be formulated within the regional cultural context. But it is very important to maintain perspective: Women still represent two thirds of illiterate adults, and more than half of out of school children are girls. When girls have access, they achieve. Tackling boys’ underachievement therefore must not be done at the expense of focusing on girls’ access to education. The phenomenon reflects complex social behaviours, and cultural norms, deeply rooted in relationships and institutions. It is therefore important to challenge arguments that quickly blame, for example, female teachers, without analysing the root causes of the problem, and proposing holistic measures to address, for the benefit of boys and girls.

Teacher competencies for equality and diversity and promoting a gender sensitive approach
Gender parity in education can easily mask other inequalities in school, which create a disempowering environment of girls by reproducing gender stereotypes and exposing girls to violence. Unions can develop gender sensitive teaching materials and advocate for the inclusion of a gender equality dimension in curricula, particularly through sexuality education and HIV/AIDS education. Sports and physical education can also play a strong role in empowering girls and overcoming gender stereotypes. The most important resource is always the teacher, and teacher education and training should equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to deal with dynamics of sexism, racism or homophobia in the classroom. Unions can develop teacher competency profiles that include gender and diversity competencies. This is particularly important for early childhood, primary and adolescent years.

“Will train young women in my country.”

The final plenary session of the Conference on 23 January aimed at providing a broad foundation on which EI and its member organisations can set future directions and build an enabling action plan working with other trade unions, NGOs, UN agencies and the international community to achieve gender equality within unions, in education and society. A presentation of the main outcomes of the Conference built the basis for a lively and focused plenary discussion on EI’s future strategies and
priorities. It was clear that there is a commonality of issues, much motivation and an appreciation of the opportunity to come together at this Conference.

**Report on conference outcomes**
By Teopista Birungi, EI Executive Board member Africa
Teopista Birungi presented a first overview of Conference outcomes. She pointed out that as trade unionists we have a critical role to play, and for this we need to hold on to each other and work together in solidarity. Collaboration between teacher unions has to take place at the local, regional and global level. Her report grouped the ideas and suggestions that were formulated during the plenary discussions and the workshop sessions under the themes of:
- Making unions places of equality, diversity and empowerment
- Closing the implementation gap and realising women’s human rights
- Overcoming gender stereotypes through education and union action
- Guaranteeing the right to quality education for all, girls and boys, women and men.

**Networking for joint action towards gender equality**
The EI regional and sub-regional women’s networks are a necessary vehicle for implementing gender equality policies and organising activities. In strengthening processes for monitoring the implementation of equality policies, global tools of communication and information exchange offer potential for visibility and accessibility of resources, and participants argued for using social networking tools for organising and connecting with each other, and even for convening an “On the Move for Equality II” Conference.

**Panel of respondents to conference outcomes**
Milagros Ogalinda, Asia-Pacific Regional Committee, commended EI for the amazing job undertaken to bring together opinions from different cultures, different regions and different perspectives. Despite differences, there are many grounds for sharing commonalities. Gloria Inés Ramiréz, Senate of the Republic of Colombia, commended the work of the EI Women’s Networks and added that success in institutionalizing such networks will lead further to promote training policies for women to develop their capabilities further and create another world of gender equality. Lorretta Johnson, AFT Executive Vice President, said that this Conference has provided a unique opportunity to discuss various challenges such as gender based violence, pay equity, declining respect for teachers. Now, we must harness our energies and carry on the momentum by moving into concrete action.

**Closing remarks: A Step Closer to Equality**
Susan Hopgood reflected that this journey for gender equality since 1993 has been full of challenges. Women’s representation in EI bodies has been enshrined in the Constitution, the Women’s Committee and Caucuses have been enshrined in EI policies. But these have not come easily. It is important to consider what has been actually achieved, and what is still to be achieved. The institutionalisation of Women’s Networks is a critical factor. Some have seen it as a threat. The Pre-Conference meetings have given network representatives an opportunity to analyze regional priorities. A review of the three days’ meetings and the outcomes shows that EI can now move forward in developing joint strategies. She assured the participants that the report and its conclusions will definitely be taken as the basis for future action. “Have we succeeded in our expectations of this Conference?” Susan asked and replied herself, “We have exceeded.”
4. Evaluation by Participants

The conference aimed to be participatory and to include the diversity of EI’s membership – it succeeded in that aim. Feedback received from the participants, speakers and guests was positive throughout and following the conference, including the responses received on the evaluation questionnaire.

The questionnaire included four main areas with sub questions:
1. What did the participants like the most about the Conference?
2. What would participants want to add to a future conference?
3. What would participants want to change?
4. Additional comments and suggestions

88% of responding participants rated the program of the conference as ‘excellent’ in terms of workshop themes, content, speakers, arrangements; 63% of the participants rated the workshop themes as excellent and very useful for the work that their respective unions are doing and for which the individual equality officers are responsible.

Both female and male participants indicated they had opportunity to voice their concerns about the challenges and difficulties they face in their work environment due to social, economic or political pressures in their countries. Women especially found the workshops a valuable opportunity to share experiences, good and bad practices, and to network.

The participants noted that the conference had an optimistic and inclusive atmosphere with a sense of solidarity, universality and strong engagement to move forward together and effectively for real gender equality in and through unions and education.

Participants urged EI to hold a second women’s conference, and this was articulated by several plenary speakers. It has subsequently been endorsed by the Executive Board, March, 2011.

“Thank you for the marvellous EI Women’s Conference in Bangkok. It was really inspiring and exciting and I am already emailing women to follow up issues”

Barb Jennings, Women’s Officer AEU Victorian Branch
5. List of documents

Conference website: www.ei-ie.org/women2011

Conference Kit
Brochure about EI’s regional and sub-regional women’s networks: http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/Networks%20EN.pdf

Plenary Sessions

“Opening Plenary” – 20 January 2011
Opening address by Fred van Leeuwen, EI General Secretary http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/20opening%20fred%20speech%20EN.pdf
Welcome speech by Boonpun Sanbho, NTTU/Thailand http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/20opening%20NTTU%20welcome%20speech%20EN.pdf
Video address by Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women http://www.youtube.com/user/EduInternational?blend=1&ob=5#p/u/7/7jq3iija65w

“Financing Gender Equality for full employment and decent work for women” by Gemma Adaba, former ITUC Representative to the United Nations http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/21plenary%20gemma%20ppt%20EN.ppt
“EI Quadrennial Report on The Status of Women in Unions, Education and Society, and conclusions of the Pre-Conference of Networks” by Jan Eastman, EI Deputy General Secretary http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/21plenary%20jan%20survey%20EN.ppt
“Union action to achieve gender equality and full participation of women” by Joyce Powell, NEA Executive Board http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/21plenary%20joyce%20ppt%20EN.ppt
“La mujer y las relaciones de poder en la sociedad” by Jucara Dutra Vieira, EI Vice-President Latin America

Day 2 – 22 January: “Advancing and Empowering Women in and through Education”
“Empowering women and girls through education – gains and gaps” by Carolyn Hannan, former Director UN Division for the Advancement of Women http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22plenary%20hannan%20speech%20EN.pdf
“Progress through GCE for girls in education – what are the challenges and are we addressing them?” by Assibi Napoe, Chair of the Board of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) and EI Chief Regional Coordinator Africa http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22plenary%20assibi%20speech%20FR.pdf
“Advancing the right of girls to education through UNGEI” by Maki Hayashikawa, Education Specialist UN Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) UNICEF
http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22plenary%20UNGEI%20talking%20points%20EN.pdf

Day 3 – 23 January “A Step Closer to Equality”
“Report on Conference outcomes” by Teopista Birungi, EI Executive Board Africa
“Response to Conference outcomes” by Lorretta Johnson, AFT Executive Vice-President
http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/23plenary%20lorretta%20speech%20EN.pdf
“Response to Conference outcomes” by Milagros Ogalinda, EI Asia-Pacific Regional Committee
“Response to Conference outcomes” by Gloria Ramirez, Senate of the Republic of Colombia
“Message to the Conference participants” by Monia Cheikh, FGESRS/Tunisia

Reports of Plenary Sessions
- Taking Stock of the Status of Women in Today’s World (21 January)
- Advancing and Empowering Girls and Women in and through Education (22 January)
- A Step Closer to Equality (23 January)

Workshops

Taking Stock of the Status of Women in Today’s World: 21 January
- Women in unions reconciling work and family responsibilities: presentation
  http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/21.1.7%20reconcile%20work-family%20-%20ppt.ppt
- Gender equity and employment in education and research: handout
- Gender Audit as a tool for mainstreaming gender equality: presentation
  http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/21.1.6%20gender%20audit%20-%20ppt.ppt
- Ageing and the teaching profession: presentation
  http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/21.2.4%20ageing%20-%20ppt.pptx
- Women and HIV in Africa: handout
- Perspectivas de género respecto al el VIH, America Latina: presentation
- Addressing violence against women through promotion of women’s rights in the workplace: presentation
- Gender and climate change: presentation, presentation 2
- Las mujeres como fuerza de paz y desarrollo: presentation
- Las mujeres en el proceso politico: handout 1, handout 2
  http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/21.2.9%20women%20political%20process%20-%20handout%20-%20S.doc
Advancing and Empowering Girls and Women in and through Education: 22 January

- Teacher competencies with gender perspective: presentation

- Teacher competencies to enhance gender justice in education: presentation

- Sexuality education as a vehicle for girls’ empowerment: presentation, handout
  [http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.2.8%20sexuality%20education%20-%20ppt.ppt](http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.2.8%20sexuality%20education%20-%20ppt.ppt)

- Digital media: Harnessing its power to promote women’s issues inside and outside the classroom: handout
  [http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.2.5%20digital%20media%20-%20handout.pdf](http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.2.5%20digital%20media%20-%20handout.pdf)

- A future for girls: education, not child labour: list of documents, presentations on Albania, Ethiopia, India, Morocco, Nepal, USA, Zimbabwe

- Creating an equality index for the education sector with focus on pay equity: presentation
  [http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.1.5%20equality%20index%20pay%20eq%20-%20ppt.ppt](http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.1.5%20equality%20index%20pay%20eq%20-%20ppt.ppt)

- Gender equality: The struggle in countries with reservations to CEDAW: presentation, handout 1, handout 2, handout 3

- Linking the union to the community: presentation, handout
  [http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.2.7%20union%20community%20-%20ppt.ppt](http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.2.7%20union%20community%20-%20ppt.ppt)

- Niñas indígenas: género, etnicidad y educación: presentation

- La educación: ¿reproduce o transforma los estereotipos de género?: presentation
Enseñanza para la diversidad: sexismo, racismo y homofobia en la enseñanza secundaria: presentation
http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.2.9%20teaching4diversity%20-%20ppt%20-%20E-S.ppt

L'éducation physique et le sport à l'école pour l'autonomie des petites filles: handout
http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/22.2.9%20teaching4diversity%20-%20ppt%20-%20E-S.ppt

Media Library

Conference Newsletters

- Newsletter Day 3 - 23 January 2011
  http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/EI1_WWC_newsletter_4_Sunday23_final_en.pdf
- Newsletter Day 2 - 22 January 2011
  http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/EI1_WWC_newsletter_3_Saturday22_final_en.pdf
- Newsletter Day 1 - 21 January 2011
  http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/EI1_WWC_newsletter_3_Saturday22_final_en.pdf
- Newsletter Pre-conference - 20 January 2011
  http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/EI1_WWC_newsletter_1_Thursday20_final_EN.pdf

Videos

- On the Move for Equality: Slideshow for EI's First World Women’s Conference
  http://youtu.be/xdU6pHi7TGQ
- Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, addresses the EI World Women’s Conference: http://youtu.be/7jq3ixa65w
- Teresa Cabrera, the first female president of the Dominican Teacher’s Union (source: NEA/USA): http://youtu.be/lMcjTdhwbWI
- Gender Equality with a Global Perspective: Interview with Jan Eastman, EI Deputy General Secretary (source: NEA/USA): http://youtu.be/xDo-0-3eEgw
- Statement by Trudy Kerperien (AOB, Netherlands) on EI's 1st World Women's Conference (English): http://youtu.be/rPZLp5l3T_4
- Statement by Odile Cordelier (SNES-FSU, France) on EI's 1st World Women's Conference (French): http://youtu.be/BPoVMmAvc-g
- Statement by Sonia Fernandez Casal (STEs, Spain) on EI's 1st World Women's Conference (Spanish): http://youtu.be/YAKQlzCZxtA
- Statement by Gitta Franke-Zollmer (VBE, Germany) on EI's 1st World Women’s Conference (English): http://youtu.be/H4le_1r8lCE
- Statement by Beatrice Rogere-Pignolet (SER, Switzerland) on EI's 1st World Women's Conference (French): http://youtu.be/DsQ8rlpN3yc
- Statement by Maria Arminda Braganca (FNE, Portugal) on EI's 1st World Women's Conference (English): http://youtu.be/q5nzdjXBnWM
- Statement by Ilze Trapenciere (LIZDA, Latvia) on EI's 1st World Women's Conference (English): http://youtu.be/X_m94bFmMC0
- Statement by Britta Sjostrom (Lararforbundet, Sweden) on EI's 1st World Women’s Conference (English): http://youtu.be/hSUeBP48Ftw
- Statement by Marilo Reina (F.E.CC.OO, Spain) on EI's 1st World Women’s Conference (Spanish): http://youtu.be/lwl5q-He7g
- Statement by Kounka Damianova (SEB, Bulgaria) on EI's 1st World Women's Conference (French): http://youtu.be/J0bPDLygl7Y