

ENGAGE

Price £1.00

ISSUE TEN



The
STEVE
SINNOTT
FOUNDATION

"Right next to the beauty of Sierra Leone is the desperate poverty of the city's dumps and shantytown. When we can take the children out of this and into school their lives are transformed"

Miriam Mason-Sesay MBE

Foreword

Welcome to ENGAGE 10, another milestone in the Foundation's progress.

This edition has impressive contributors who have, as many others have done in earlier editions, given freely of their time to show support for the Foundation. Inside are articles from the Director General of UNESCO, UNICEF's (and ex DFID) Jo Bourne, David Edwards from EI and an interesting piece from John Humphrys. A big thanks to you all!

Significantly, the humanitarian crisis that is the Ebola epidemic has served as a stark reminder of the vulnerability of developing countries, their infrastructure fragility and limited public health capacity exacerbated by lack of educational opportunity. With a focus on the impact in Sierra Leone, Miriam Mason-Sesay, makes the crucial point that with distrust in authorities coupled with adult literacy rates below 30% it is very difficult to get a common understanding of what Ebola is and how to protect oneself against it – with the tragic consequences so graphically seen.

In this edition of ENGAGE we announce 'Friends of the Foundation'. It's our scheme to bring teachers, educators and others together for education – for all. We ask those who can afford it to commit to just £3 per month to enhance and extend the work of the Foundation.



A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Jerry Glazier."

Jerry Glazier

Chair, The Steve Sinnott Foundation

Grateful thanks to photographer Dan Vernon and to EducAid Sierra Leone for permission to use the photo images on the front cover and on page 3 and to Chris Dawson for the use of his photo 'Cambodia Classroom' on the back cover.

This magazine could not be published without its designers and printers at Paragraphics and at Ruskin Press. Their expertise and patience is extraordinary. They do not just do the business for us, they are friends of the Foundation and supporters of our work. Ongoing thanks to them.

Visit the discussion forum at
www.ssf-community.org to comment on this article

TO HELP SIERRA LEONE STAND FIRM

Miriam Mason-Sesay MBE, on the vital contribution education has to make to beating Ebola

On 1st August 2014, the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone declared a State of Emergency due to the Ebola outbreak which had started to migrate from the East and South right across the country.

A key feature of the State of Emergency was the banning of all gatherings of more than five people, except for church, mosque and Ebola sensitization meetings. Not only does this mean people can no longer get together to watch or play football for example but it also, far more crucially, means no classes, informal or otherwise, no schools, colleges or universities until the State of Emergency is lifted.

The virologists are clear that Ebola is a very containable disease if the protocols are followed. In a country with adult literacy rates below 30% it is very difficult to get a common understanding of what Ebola is and

how to protect oneself against it. The disease continues to spread because people simply do not know what to believe and are loathe to trust authorities who they feel have been misleading them on so many other things for so long. Until the population has a reasonable level of education, we will continue to be vulnerable.

There are those that argue that the face of the poverty in Sierra Leone is the poor health care and the lack of justice and that the answer to both will be real thinking education. There are those that argue that only with real thinking education will Sierra Leone cease to be so vulnerable to every problem turning into a disaster.

The one thing, therefore, that will help Sierra Leone stand firm in the future is the first thing to be cancelled.

In EducAid, where last year 3000 children were catered for across nine schools, at the moment, we only have approximately 10% of the normal population i.e. those who did not go home for the summer holidays because EducAid is their home and family. So, while they felt hard done by at the time, they are now the only ones able to continue their education undisturbed.

Our top priorities for now are:

- To keep all staff and students healthy and safe with all the preventive interventions that we can.
- To keep all staff and students engaged with their studies. While most of our students have been in touch to plead with us to find ways of helping them continue with their studies, they are also the sort of youngsters who are likely to find it very difficult to re-engage with formal education if they are out of school and the school habit for too long. We had hoped to broadcast educational radio programmes but have not been allowed to

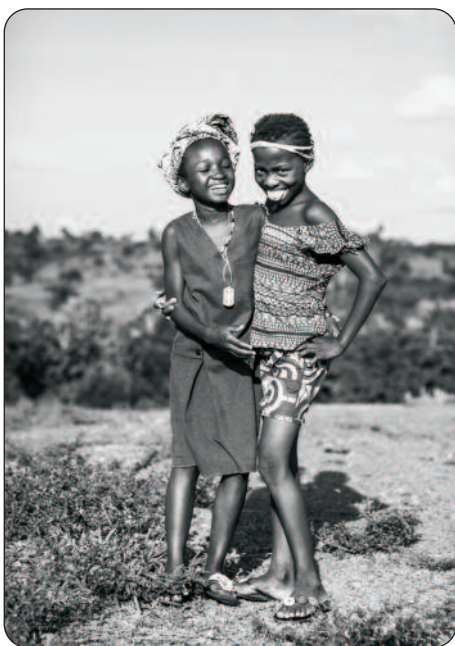


by the Ministry of Education. We are therefore hoping to upload the recorded lessons on CDs, memory sticks and MP3 players. We will also send them via WhatsApp and Bluetooth and any other media we can.

- To get ourselves ready for a post Ebola Sierra Leone – not only to bring back in our previous 3000 but also to be able to provide psychological support, a home, family and education for 200+ of the children who have been orphaned by Ebola.
- We are also looking at how we can continue our teacher training programme to support the enhancement of the teaching and learning in non EducAid schools in the Port Loko District.

It is obvious that Ebola is a health crisis but it is so much more. It has become a humanitarian crisis with far-reaching consequences too. Education is never a quick answer to a problem but it is very often the surest. With the political will and commitment, in a small country such as Sierra Leone, education could be revolutionised within a generation. EducAid commits, with the support of crucial partners such as the Steve Sinnott Foundation, to working to reduce Sierra Leone's vulnerability in the short, the medium and the long term.

Miriam Mason-Sesay MBE is founder and country Director EducAid Sierra Leone



Ready for a post ebola Sierra Leone



IRRATIONAL? DEFINITELY NOT

David Edwards, Deputy General Secretary of Education International remains determinedly optimistic about achieving quality education for all

At Education International, we began our Unite for Quality Education campaign nearly 18 months ago based on what economists might call “irrational exuberance.”

With nearly 60 million children out of school worldwide, why would any organization be optimistic? Our work on global education issues over the past two decades has made us realists about the challenges of meeting the goal of quality education for all.

But more importantly our work engages us in the future. You cannot work with young people every day without a belief that you are making today and tomorrow better than yesterday. Teachers who chart and blaze a path to success for students each year have a vision about what's needed to provide a quality education. It's this vision that fuels our campaign to influence the United Nations to focus on quality education as a defined goal for sustainable global development.

Our work is clearly paying off. The United Nations Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals has agreed on 17 goals in total, including a stand-alone goal on education.

There is still a long way to go – more than a year until the UN settles on a formal development agenda. But it is not too early to note that the progress to date has been accompanied by an unprecedented mobilization of EI affiliates in more than 170 nations representing some 30 million educators.

But our mobilization is only part of what can only be described as a global movement. In a world where deep-pocketed investors, some education corporations and not a few ideologues combine to propose variations of “teacherless” schooling while alternately undermining and laying claim to public investment in public education, powerful voices emerged on behalf of students, their families and teachers and the nations who depend on an educated populace.

This chorus of voices began at the top of the United Nations when Secretary General Ban Ki Moon chartered the Global Education First Initiative. Setting forth simple facts and high stakes, GEFI's seriousness was underscored when former British PM Gordon Brown agreed to lead the effort, and GEFI has tirelessly focused the world's attention on such things as the shortage of trained teachers, resources for teaching and learning and classrooms.

In September 2013, 16 organizations including EI jointly reiterated that education is a basic human right and said that a development agenda for education “must place teachers at the center of efforts to achieve quality by prioritizing teacher education and ongoing professional development for all levels of education... reducing class size, supplying teaching and learning resources, and improving salaries and general conditions of work.”

The following month, GEFI was there in New York when EI launched our Unite campaign, along with UNESCO, OECD, UNICEF, the Global Partnership for Education, the Global Campaign for Education, and a host of associations and NGOs.

In the ensuing months, scores of global events have highlighted the critical work of educators on behalf of quality education, but none so forcefully as last January's long-anticipated Global Monitoring Report entitled “Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality For All.”

The report said plainly that an education system is only as good as its teachers. It said teachers and their organizations have not been adequately consulted and heard and recommended efforts to attract the best candidates, provide professional training and development and incentives to stay in the profession, especially working in the areas of the greatest need.

I won't try to name all the organizations that have helped to elevate quality teaching,

resources and environments to front and center of the fight for education for all. But know that EI affiliates have engaged in massive mobilizations, notably in Australia and India, that private companies Discovery Communications and EI partner Intel have committed both time and money to teacher professionalism and equal educational opportunity, that NGOs like the Open Society Foundation support the sort of dialogue and storytelling that makes the truth about quality education available across the planet.

The path to a quality education for all has never run exclusively through a national capital or a boardroom, through an international organization or the meeting place of a particular group of governments, or even just a classroom. Each of these locations is critical; none can carry this movement alone. That is our strength. That is why we are optimists.

Irrational? Definitely not. But in the next year of very hard work with our partners, we will find out whether or not our exuberance is warranted or not.



MAKING THE LINK

Alison Leonard, describes her research for London University's Institute of Education on the gains to be had from school linking and partnerships.

My research examined how the process of Educational Linking has affected young people, their teachers and local communities in Ghana, Uganda and Tanzania. I visited urban and rural communities, interviewing students, classroom teachers, head teachers, Education Ministry spokespeople and others associated with these relationships. All nine schools were linked to UK schools. Two provided education for blind and visually impaired students.

In Uganda I visited a primary school and two secondary schools. In Ghana I visited schools that are part of a web of relationships. In Tanzania I visited a long-established partnership in Zanzibar, also travelling to the capital, Dodoma, to four schools near Buigiri.

Young people at four schools took part in focus groups, responding to the same questions asked of adults.



I interviewed 16 adults in both Uganda and Tanzania, amassing other data from MA students on the London University Institute of Education's MA in Development Education, including in-country British Council staff and NGO workers supporting Education in the global south. My findings also looked at the role of School Linking in promoting the MDGs. I found that girls in Ghana valued their educational opportunities more highly because of encounters with their UK counterparts,



even pressurising their parents to allow them to stay on in school to complete their secondary education.

Joint projects carried out by secondary students in the Ghanaian partnership investigated rubbish in their schools' environments, allowing students to work collaboratively. Teachers particularly valued the opportunities within their links to work collaboratively with other teachers.

In Zanzibar improvements in students' attainment in Mathematics were directly attributed to the process of linking. In all my schools students and teachers suggested that engagement in school activities brought benefits relating to spoken English and motivation. IT provision in some linked schools is an outcome supported by the process of linking; this was evident at a school in Zanzibar.

My research showed that other educational resources are sometimes aided by school partnerships, including books for libraries and equipment to support STEM and other subjects. The accompanying photo shows pupils at a children's centre using shapes and counters in a top infants Maths lesson, made by visiting teachers working alongside their Ugandan class teacher.

At a secondary school in Uganda students also gained experience in tailoring, in their school's

workshop, built and equipped as a result of their school link. Schools in the South and the North often engage in activities to fund such developments. In a Tanzanian school for the blind and visually impaired, students were linked with sighted peers at a UK primary school; students wrote to one another as pen-pals. Using special IT software in Buigiri, replies were then printed out in braille.



While there remains a risk that some of these links can consolidate negative stereotypes, the process of school linking can serve to promote critical thinking by students and adults alike, and challenge these misconceptions.



In association with Manisha Child Welfare Association Nepal, EducAid Sierra Leone and The Butterfly Tree, the Steve Sinnott Foundation operates a school partnership scheme. For more information contact postmaster@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk

A GLASS HALF FULL: WHY EDUCATION FOR ALL IS ALREADY A SUCCESS STORY

Ramani Chandramoham, a past winner of the Steve Sinnott Global Campaigner Award from the Send My Friend to School Campaign in the UK

When the Millennium Development Goals were first announced in 2000, even the most determined of optimists could not have been convinced of a successful outcome. As we reach the end of the cycle nearly 15 years later, now is a key time to reflect on the progress made so far, before the focus turns to implementing the post-2015 plans.

Of course, as with most projects in international development, it has been virtually impossible for every aspect of the MDGs to be delivered within the given timeframe, which leaves plenty of areas for critics to attack. However, such a cynical attitude does not do justice to how these global aims, with specific targets, have motivated both the international community and individual countries to tackle areas as diverse as environmental sustainability and maternal health, despite years of natural disasters, violent conflicts and political rifts

from 1990 (generally used as the starting point from which progress is measured) to 2014.

These achievements include the decision by countries such as Burundi, Kenya and Malawi to abolish the school fees that drain nearly a quarter of a poor family's income in sub-Saharan Africa, which led to huge surges in enrolment rates from 2003-2005. Across developing regions, enrolment rates in primary schools increased from 83% to 90% from 2000-2012, bringing these areas closer to universal primary education. Another positive sign is that more emphasis is being placed on quality education. For example, in Afghanistan, almost 140,000 teachers were trained between 2002 and 2012. Equally encouraging is the fact that youth literacy rates for 15-24 year olds worldwide jumped from 83% in 1990 to 89% in 2012, with adult literacy rates (15+) also going up by 8%.

Inevitably though, we cannot forget that such successes are accompanied by the same problems that continue to plague the future of Education for All. For instance, despite rising literacy rates, 774 million adults and 123 million youths across the world lacked basic reading and writing skills in 2013.

Dishearteningly, more than 60% of both illiterate populations are women. Evidently, the gender divide and other forms of discrimination still dominate, with rural children twice as likely to be out of school as their peers in urban areas. Although the number of children out of school plummeted from 100 million in 2000 to 60 million in 2007, progress has been agonisingly slow since, with 58 million children still unable to attend primary school in 2012.

Nevertheless, our awareness of such difficulties shows how, having made major steps forward, we can now look with perspective at the outstanding issues that must be addressed to emphatically secure universal primary education.

The progress achieved since 1990 will undoubtedly persuade the global community of pupils, teachers, NGOs, politicians and policymakers to ensure this last remaining year becomes a firm base to launch the post-2015 agenda from. This surely makes now the most exciting time to campaign for Education for All, as we witness the promise of our shared dream, established in 2000, evolving into a tangible reality for students across the world.

Find out more from these sources:
www.mdgmonitor.org; www.uisunesco.org;
www.un.org; www.unesco.org;
www.worldbank.org.

Ramani Chandramohan, is a Year 12 student at Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School in Kent



Ramani Chandramoham (right) and her co award winner Raina Bardhan make their presentation at the Steve Sinnott Foundation 2013 Education for All Day conference



Sign up your school now for Education for All Day 2015.
Email postmaster@stevesinnottfoundation for more information

BACKING THOSE THAT VAUNTETH NOT

Author, journalist and radio and TV presenter **John Humphrys**, reaching out from his Kitchen Table Charities Trust to the world's small charities supporting local groups and communities with education at the top of the list

When Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians a couple of millennia ago he had some interesting things to say about charity: "It vaunteth not itself... is not puffed up". I wonder what he would make of some of today's charitable organisations, the biggest of which do a great deal of vaunting and puffing up. The difference is that they call it marketing.

With some justification they would argue that they have no choice. There is only so much money out there being donated every year and if it goes to one charity it cannot go to another. And obviously each thinks there own cause is the most worthy. But as I write this I'm looking at a report by the think tank New Philanthropy Capital which concludes that one in three members of the public have little trust in charity. What they like least, according to the NPC, is big charities paying their senior staff such high salaries and what they like most are those that are run by volunteers and concentrate on offering services rather than raising awareness. They don't like charity vaunting itself.

At this point I must declare an interest. I set up my own charity a few years ago – the Kitchen Table Charities Trust (KTCT) – that has no offices (hence the "kitchen table" bit) and no paid staff. But don't misunderstand me. This is not a no holds barred attack on the big charities. God knows how many more people would be dying from ebola were it not for the incredibly brave staff of MSF. Rather, it is a defence of the small ones.

When I decided to do my own thing, my first thought was to set up a school for poor children in sub-Saharan Africa. I plumped for Tanzania – a dirt poor country struggling towards a workable democracy. After my first meeting with the admirable British High Commissioner I realised it was a barmy idea: partly because getting through the bureaucratic hoops would take far more time and experience than I had, but mostly because the one thing countries like Tanzania does not lack is small charities and voluntary organisations.

They have all the dedication and energy and local knowledge in the world. What they do not have is the resources. Hence the KTCT. We

raise money and make grants to those charities or projects that meet our criteria. A perfect example is a small charity in Malawi that makes basic wheelchairs for disabled children. It meets three of our criteria: provides training and work for unemployed men; frees the child's mother of having to carry her child everywhere on her back and – most important of all – enables the child to go to school.

Education is at the top of our list for the very simply reason that children who can't even read and write have no chance of a new life. So we help build and equip small primary schools and, equally important, provide decent sanitation in existing schools. Decent toilets are vital. When girls reach puberty too many of them simply refuse to continue going to school unless the toilets offer them privacy and a little dignity, and who can blame them?

We have financed many hundreds of projects in the last seven years and, I believe, given new hope to tens of thousands of children who had none. But I must not boast. St Paul would not approve...



RUNNING FOR IT

Debbie Smith is running the 2015 London Marathon for the Steve Sinnott Foudation. Debbie works at the Children's Support Services Centre in Basildon, Essex and so is no stranger to a challenge but this is her first ever marathon. Any thing you can give to help motivate her would be much appreciated - you can sponsor Debbie here: <http://www.justgiving.com/Debbie-Smith33>



REFLECTIONS ON EDUCATION FOR ALL DAY AT RINGWOOD SCHOOL 2014

Teacher **Gill Hickman** and students **Lucy** and **Sophie Hines** share thoughts and experiences of the second EFA Day at their school.

Ringwood School's first Education for All Day in 2013 focussed on girls out of school. The day was a resounding success but by July 2014, there were still 57 million children denied an education, so for our second EFA Day we concentrated on children with visual disability.

Many youngsters care deeply about issues that affect them personally but we wanted our young people to imagine, and to a limited extent, to experience being partially sighted. Thus our day began with a visit from Guide Dogs for the Blind. The school recycles stamps for both this organisation and the RNIB. Students decided that a large donated collection of first edition stamps should go to Guide Dogs for the Blind. A puppy trainer and a Paul, who is visually disabled, explained to the rapt student audience how a dog makes a difference to someone's life. The dogs themselves called for immediate student engagement!

The role of our campaigning team

Twenty four students aged 14-18 constitute a team, the 'Global Campaigners' who now

took over the remaining parts of the day. Working with tutor groups, two Global Campaigners facilitated a sequence of experiments, gradually guiding students towards the less familiar with a good simulation of gradual blindness. They made 'feely bags with meaning' and had autonomy over the way in which they were used. Objects chosen were particularly significant for someone who was partially sighted. Finally the Campaigners introduced braille, giving students the opportunity to experience it themselves. The braille activity was provided by Sightsavers who gave a short presentation of what it is to be partially sighted in many countries in Africa. Students were asked to reflect on Paul's experiences with his guide dog and to consider how different it is from that of people in countries such as Rwanda.

Lucy Hines, one of our sixth form Global Campaigners, had visited Rwanda, experiencing not just the impact of the genocide but the education system. She was able to visit a school for the blind and gave a moving presentation to our students. Thus the young people's personal experiences and passions were gradually extended with a global dimension. There was next an opportunity to explore similarities and differences and links

between that young people's lives in UK with the lives of youngsters in communities elsewhere, including Rwanda.

The notion that sustainability is about care is familiar to teachers, but nowhere is it more significant than on an Education for All Day. Our students, through a range of activities, considered care for the individual, for communities and the environment. However, we thought that EFA Day, as with all global citizenship should also encompass change so we now required our students to take action. Still working with the Campaigner team, students were asked to move into advocacy for the 57 million children out of school, and in particular for those with disabilities.

Advocacy

Thus we now asked students to write persuasive letters or postcards to our MP, to David Cameron, to Justine Greening and Lynne Featherstone. Through the Campaigners they also tweeted to these people, DfID and a host of other bodies whose addresses we had found beforehand. A good helper: student ratio is helpful and allows discussion before any written statements are made. Our Global Campaigners were invaluable in this respect.



Lucy's thoughts

I am currently a member of the Global Campaigners Group at Ringwood School. The group aims to have a positive influence on a number of current world issues such as the governmental backing of child education in conflict zones and educating girls in less developed countries.

I have visited Rwanda with a charitable trust dedicated to alleviating poverty by supporting education, humanitarian and health projects. I have seen first-hand the issues faced by those with disabilities trying to gain an education in a third world country. Whilst in Rwanda I visited HPV Gatagara – a boarding school for those with visual impairment, this is one of just two schools for the visually impaired. Here they receive a good education with facilities adapted especially for the visually impaired; without access to a school like this the disabled often end up homeless due to stigmas associated with disabilities.

My trip to Rwanda and the places I visited fitted perfectly with our theme for the Education for All Day. It was a privilege to be able to share my experiences and educate the younger students about the difficulties faced by those with disabilities and the important role that the EFA Day plays in making an impact on society.

For me the day was interesting, educational and provided an opportunity to lead younger students and to share my experiences. I found it deeply rewarding to see other students' enthusiasm for bringing about a change.

Preparation such as this is essential as are tiny prompts for needier students.

We also wanted to support the Send My Friend to School Campaign whose focus on disability this year coincided with our own. Thus creative juices flowed as students wrote messages to Desmond Swayne, our MP, on their beautifully decorated cardboard figurines. After a group photo for 270, the figures were collected and displayed in long lines along the entire length of both sides of a long corridor. They will shortly be taken to Desmond Swayne.

What did students get out of it?

For a few students EFA Day provided time for reflection: what would it be like if they had no school? While that prospect might fill them with immediate joy, after reflection, almost all students recognised the impact this would have!

We hope that Global Campaigners' skills (and those of their teachers) provided the confidence and knowledge to help students to apply their

Sophie's thoughts

I joined the Global Campaigners group in June this year so participated in leading the 'Education for All' Day. I found it to be a highly valuable and interesting experience in that I learned many new things about the lack of education in impoverished areas and what we, as a school and the wider community, are able to do about it. I think it is essential that everyone should be aware of how important education is and that what many of us take for granted would be a 'dream come true' for someone who has never before had access to an education. In my role as student organiser and leader, I found the day really eye-opening and I am going to continue being a part of the Global Campaigners group as I think the group is really working to make a difference and improve lives all around the world.

natural concerns, about for instance, unemployment, inequality and education itself, to a broader global perspective.

Considering values such as fairness, justice and equality is part of adolescent experience. We know that our EFA Day allowed youngsters to think about these values in different contexts and it allows a teacher to experience children's responses. They are sometimes very different to those we see in a 'normal' lesson. Critically for students, the day supported their understanding of what's

going on in the wider world. As a teacher I feel I have a remit to broaden youngsters' perspective and to weave a global dimension into mainstream work with young people. Our EFA Day certainly provided opportunity for this and added value to my everyday practice with children.

Final words rest with Sophie Hines, Year 10, who had watched her sister Lucy work with the Global Campaigners throughout 2014. Sophie had the opportunity to join.



For the second consecutive year, Teachers Assurance has worked closely with The Steve Sinnott Foundation to reach out to schools and promote its EFA Day, launching a competition for the event on 20th June 2014 to recognise schools who actively participate in raising awareness for the campaign. From the 125 schools that participated, Teachers Assurance selected four regional winners:

- Cherbourg Primary in Eastleigh for organising a talk from a guest speaker from Uganda and inviting their local MP to collect their petition from the school
- Hafod Primary School in Swansea for their petition and campaigning letters to the Prime Minister and Malala Yousafzai
- King James School in Knaresborough for providing a day of activities, lessons and workshops for three other primary schools
- Ringwood School in Hampshire for raising awareness with EFA Day workshops, guest speakers from SSF and Oxfam, as well as organising a competition with five other schools

As the overall winner, Cherbourg Primary wins a double prize fund of £500 and each of the other schools win £250 to enable them to improve education across the globe, through initiatives like providing material resources to an African school, sponsoring a teacher in India or providing school lunches for children in Nepal.

Teachers Assurance 
 Savings • Investments • Insurance



STILL GOING STRONG

Our Charity, inspired by the NUT's involvement in the Make Poverty History campaign in 2005, has made good progress since becoming a registered charity in 2008. We have raised almost £250,000 and built 58 classrooms in 26 schools. In the last three years our fundraising efforts have been greatly boosted by the support of Teachers Group Educational Trust (TGET) enabling us to build a minimum of two more classrooms per year.

Originally intended to be a curriculum-driven project in our 2005 – 2006 School Development Plan as an enrichment activity for our students, the 'Africa Project' (as it was originally called) quickly assumed a fundraising focus. Although there were some initial regrets that we had gone down this route there are none whatsoever now after witnessing how our students' education has been enriched and enlightened. It has been a

steep but very rewarding learning curve. We have learnt much over the last seven years that we are more than happy to share with others seeking to do something similar.

We now have an open and transparent application process so that all schools in the area of Kenya in which we operate are eligible to apply. Hitherto it was left to one person to decide which led to a lot of pressure on that person. We now have a Management Team comprising two Headteachers and a local politician who oversee the application process and monitor and inspect the building programme. They disburse funds in stages i.e. after each phase of the building work has been inspected and approved by the Ministry of Public Buildings & Works. Each school selected has to commit to contribute a minimum of 5% of the total cost and to appoint a building committee who commission and monitor the building



work. This enables the schools and their local communities to be much more involved and to ensure that there is no slippage in the building timetable. Previously one person tried to be site manager for four schools at once which led to long delays and caused a lot of frustration for all the interested parties.

Our inroads into a poor area of rural Kenya via Classrooms for Kenya has opened up many more opportunities, not just for my school but for many other schools in West Sussex through the British Council's Global School Partnerships and Connecting Classrooms programmes. So the original intention to establish curriculum-driven partnerships has also been achieved.

Classrooms for Kenya and The Steve Sinnott Foundation are together preparing a manual based on the Classrooms for Kenya experience describing how other schools can go about setting up similar school support schemes in Africa. In the meantime anyone wanting to know more is very welcome to email Malcolm Peppiatt at mpeppiatt@theweald.org.uk.

CREATING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR EDUCATION

The Haller Foundation provides and promotes a model for economic development that is sustainable and environmentally sound, based on the work of Dr Rene Haller, a United Nations Global Laureate with over 50 years experience in the successful transformation of degraded landscapes into thriving and productive eco-systems. Our model involves setting up a 5-year partnership with communities consisting of farmers who live below the poverty threshold. We equip them with the skills to work in harmony with the environment and build sustainable livelihoods

Lives are improved with water and food but to take ownership of their future, people also require basic literacy skills and good health. The Haller model focuses on disease prevention and primary healthcare and gives access to primary education for all in the community. As communities progress, they help them use their talent, food surplus and alternative energy sources to set up small income-generating enterprises so they can

become economically independent.

Education underpins all of our programmes. In 2006 we set up the award-winning Nguuni Education Centre. It is a multi-facility building, housing Kenya's first children's community library, an auditorium for theatre, film and debating, vocational workshops and the British Airways IT Centre. Children from 63 neighbouring schools visit the facilities weekly and the centre offers on-going support to 3 community schools. In the past year Haller have had over 15,000 additional visitors to the Centre from over 100 schools and 20 higher learning institutions. The British Airways IT Centre houses 8 computers with wifi access together with an interactive whiteboard and gives visitors the opportunity to gain IT skills. Less than 5% of those who visit the education centre have direct access to a computer and, for many, it is the first time they have used one.

This year, capitalising on the widespread use of mobile phones in rural communities, we

are launching the Haller Farmers App – the first mobile app for farmer training which will give farmers across Africa the opportunity of learning basic agricultural techniques through cutting edge technological design. Designed by Pearlfisher and Red Badger, it is graphic, visually rich and highly practical. For more information please visit the Haller Foundation website www.haller.org.uk.



THEIR SITUATION WAS DESPERATE!

The Steve Sinnott Foundation reaches out to people striving for positive change sometimes against the most difficult odds, extraordinary ordinary people working in their own local communities making their contribution to a better world. Steve himself spoke of them in these terms: "People who exude hope and optimism generate the energy and stimulate the progress that we in education work for. I find such people are as fascinated as I think I am by the liberating power of education across the world."

One such person is **Angel Kirabo**, the founder of Seeds of Hope Limited Uganda. This is her story and her request.



Seeds of Hope Ltd started with the modest voluntary activities of the founder member Angel B. Kirabo who at the time was living in the remote village of Hima, Kasese more than 300 kms away from Kampala City. In the early 2000s there was a great influx of refugees in the area from the Democratic Republic of Congo which was (and still is) being ravaged by war, and these mostly included women and children.

Their situation was desperate and they settled in some of the worst unoccupied areas in Hima. This area was very close to where she lived. Seeing the destitution, poverty and levels of despair that they lived in, she started a voluntary programme named Sunbeam Project and started to appeal to family, friends, well-wishers, everybody and anybody for any kind of help that she could extend to these women and children. Many were willing to help, but very few were able to help. However, with the little that was given, she managed to provide some food and clothing for some of the women and mostly children, give some funding to others and above all network with organizations that would be able to help in a more consistent way.

As the numbers in need of aid increased and quantities willing to donate grew, the Sunbeam Project being voluntary could not meet the financial costs related to transporting these valuable donations from abroad. It became necessary to open an official organization whose major activities would cater to reaching out to the vulnerable, sharing and sowing seeds of hope in their lives and also be able to absorb the demand from both sides. This was the beginning of Seeds of Hope Ltd which is a fully registered organization designed to cater to their needs with a particular empathy towards women, children and people with disabilities (PWD's); and through which organizations and individuals alike can

partner with to help provide some solutions in our communities that alleviate the desperation in and around us.

Seeds of Hope recognizes that one of the main ways to poverty eradication is through education, and especially creating education opportunities to the poorest members of the communities who without a helping hand have no hope to growing into major contributors to any society.

Through our various educational support programmes, we aim to reach out at all levels particularly to disadvantaged and underprivileged children and students and support them through these critical areas of the different educational levels. In addition to this, we will encourage them to engage in activities that build them all round and discover new skills e.g. sports, the

environment, music etc so that they have a more holistic education rather than a strictly academic career which at the moment in Uganda's case is not translating into employment. With a concerted effort, we will realize a reduction in child absenteeism, an increase in the number of children attending both primary and secondary education, be able to influence an improvement in quality of education, and also uplift girl education related to these factors.

We need, however, more partnering with individuals/organisations/ associations for support in expertise, training, logistics, funding, donations of scholastic materials, accountability for progress, provision of necessary social and emotional support as well as exposure to numerous activities which help the children to expand their vision and reach out for wider goals.



CELEBRATING SUCCESSES, EMBRACING THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

Irina Bokova Director-General of UNESCO writing exclusively for ENGAGE anticipates the World Education Forum 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea in May 2015 when UNESCO will deliver the message that **"education is a political imperative, a security imperative and a development imperative"**

For over two decades, since Governments committed in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 and Dakar, Senegal in 2000 to fulfill the right to education of all children, youth and adults, a broad partnership known as the Education for All movement, steered by UNESCO, has been boosting efforts to meet a set of global education goals.

This has made a real difference.

We have witnessed historic progress in all regions of the world. In the space of one decade, the number of children out of primary school fell almost by half, from 107 million to 57 million. Indonesia, Laos, Rwanda and Vietnam have cut their out of school numbers by 84%. India has reduced its out of school population by 4.5 million.

This has happened through abolishing school fees, a major barrier to children's schooling, especially for the most disadvantaged – as in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda.

This has happened through targeted measures like conditional cash transfer schemes aimed at families, schools and communities to keep girls in school – most notably, Bangladesh has achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education.

The importance of starting right and early has gained ground. Since 2000, pre-primary education has also expanded considerably, with the number of children enrolled in pre-primary schools growing by almost 60 million. All evidence shows that these children have a better chance to successfully complete the formal primary school cycle and to continue their education at higher levels.

However, the surge in access has all too often come at the expense of quality, with a shortage of qualified, well trained teachers.

An extra 1.4 million teachers are needed to achieve universal primary education by the 2015 target date, and 3.4 million additional teachers are needed by 2030. Again, we have seen many countries put in place successful policies to recruit teachers and fill the gaps, but more must be done.

The challenge is to cater to diversity and to have equity and learning as measures of success. The best systems are the most inclusive ones, that nurture the potential that lies in every learner, whatever their background. We need to make education meaningful and responsive to today's challenges – this is the importance of education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

The bottom line is that education is not a choice. It is a human right and a catalyst for sustainable development. It is a public responsibility and a societal responsibility. The power of education is resounding, with direct impacts on health, age of marriage, earnings and economic growth. It is estimated, for example, that the lives of 2.1 million children under 5 were saved between 1990 and 2009 because of improvements in girls' education.

As coordinator and leader of the EFA movement, UNESCO works with its 195 member states, UN partner agencies, a network of 300 NGOs as well as the private sector to mobilise political and financial commitment and to raise awareness about the central role of education and lifelong



learning for transforming people's lives and creating peaceful, sustainable societies.

The Education for All drive will continue as UNESCO prepares for convening the World Education Forum 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea in May 2015. The Forum will bring together the world community to agree on a framework for action to support and guide the implementation of the new global education agenda up until 2030. Our common message must be that education is a political imperative, a security imperative and a development imperative. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize 2014 to two ardent defenders of education – Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi – is eloquent proof that education is a foundation for peace, and that civic engagement can better the lives of millions of children and youth. I see this as an encouragement to redouble efforts so that no child is deprived of the treasure of education.

EDUCATION FOR ALL: A LESSON FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Jo Bourne, UNICEF's Associate Director for Education looks at the lessons learned as the 2015 deadline approaches

As the 2015 deadline for the Education for All (EFA) goals draws ever nearer, now is a good time to pause and reflect on the considerable achievements of the movement. EFA sought to expand access to education from pre-school to university, not only for children but for young people and adults too. It placed a strong emphasis on equity for girls, and fairness for vulnerable and disadvantaged students.

As such, EFA has to be commended for the breadth and depth of its ambition. An ambition that has resulted in 17 million more children across Africa learning the basics – an increase of 45 per cent since 2000. An ambition that has seen a significant rise in the number of secondary students – secondary schools have seen their pupil numbers increase at four times the rate of primary schools. An ambition that has ensured that more girls than ever before have enrolled in school, from primary through to tertiary institutions.

We should also celebrate the considerable convening power of the EFA, which brought together the diverse – and at times divided – global education community around the six goals set out in the Dakar Framework for Action of 2000. We should note too that the Millennium Development Goals – more widely known but less inspired and less comprehensive than their EFA counterparts – drew heavily on the EFA agenda. It is both positive and healthy that Muscat Agreement is influencing the post-2015 discourse on education.

There is much we can and should learn from the EFA as we come to finalise the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The focus on equity, spearheaded by EFA, has to be central to any education settlement. Improving the learning outcomes for the poorest and most vulnerable children is not only a moral imperative, it's a practical

way to accelerate progress not just in education but also in health, sanitation, poverty alleviation and protection issues such as the prevention of early child marriage and female genital cutting.

The EFA has taught us that more attention needs to be paid to learning outcomes. Access is easier to measure but when we have a situation in which 125 million children are in school but not learning basic reading, writing and arithmetic it becomes clear that simply increasing classroom attendance is not nearly enough.

Building on the lessons from the MDGs and EFA goals, the education community recognises that in 2015 it is imperative that we coalesce around one ambitious education goal supported by a framework for action that includes a clear set of measurable targets and indicators, reflective of national realities, and aligned with national budgets and local planning processes. The EFA Global Monitoring Report has demonstrated the desirability and necessity of tracking progress and its mandate should be renewed and extended when the SDG framework comes into being. The EFA has taught us that we should measure what we value, and value what we can measure.

Jo Bourne photo ©UNICEF/2013/Susan Markisz



Sign up your school now for Education for All Day 2015.
Email postmaster@stevesinnottfoundation for more information

A SHIFT IN CONSCIOUSNESS

Steve Tonry of the Manisha Child Welfare Foundation, SSF's partner organisation in Nepal, argues for a new way of thinking to help achieve Education for All

Most of us think in the same linear and restricted way. The simplest example, often half jokingly used, is that of the person who stands with feet 18" apart. When asked how far apart are their feet, 99% of people will fail to realise that from their outer edge, they are also 40075 km apart.

Such linear thinking offers no optimism for solving the multitude of current world crises, largely self-inflicted. Think economy, climate, environment, poverty, inequality, war, food insecurity. This apparently disparate list seems endless but they are all a result of abysmally limited and structured thinking skills, which resemble my old school report – "Could do better!"

Einstein said " You can never solve a problem at the same level of thinking that created it". And yet that's precisely what we continue to do, perversely expecting different outcomes. Our educational system eschews creative thinking and the need to see the world differently.

Many of our current paradigms are clearly flawed and outdated and no longer fit for purpose. It seems axiomatic that we urgently need a new mental model and one which provides a positive view of the future, to which this and future generations can aspire. We need to focus on what we want, not what we don't want (media –please note!).

As long ago as 1943, psychologists reflected on "mental models" as a means of explaining how human beings view and explain the complex world around them. American computer scientist Jay Wright Forrester described these models: "*The image of the world around us, which we carry in our head,*

is just a model. Nobody in his head imagines all the world, government or country. He has only selected concepts and relationships between them, and uses those to represent the real system."

There is a mental model within which, most of us currently reside. It is one in which there is a mindset of competitiveness and survival of the fittest, an aggressive "me first" mentality, that permeates society from individuals to corporations and governments. An assumption of dominion over nature takes this a step further and provides the rationale for destroying the planet for profit. The view that we are all separate and different, leads to racial, sexual and religious discrimination and ultimately wars. We can trace many of our failings to our misplaced beliefs, values, assumptions etc, largely operating subconsciously. But what if "dominion" has been a mistranslation of "stewardship" and we are really all the same and not all different?

There is another model, which proposes another way of seeing. It is based on the inter-connectivity of everything, primarily at the fundamental quantum level but building up to material "reality". It honours wisdom and past learnings, often lost or ignored in our myopic rush for profit. It looks holistically, not in the reductionism mode of thinking inherent in our currently prevailing model, but in a spirit of inter-connected co-operation. It builds on the wisdom of adopting nature's 3.8 billion year success story, as a teaching resource and not an excuse to plunder its output. It asks "What would nature do to solve this problem?" (biomimicry). Success is defined by harmony and not dollar signs.



This model is alternative but it is not outlandish. There is already considerable progress with companies such as Interface, the world's largest carpet company, leading from the front and incorporating alternative model thinking into a hugely successful, environmentally positive and visionary business.

We can apply these principles to the achievement of Education for All. We can value rich cultures in the developing world, alongside the material wealth of the west and by doing so, build confidence in reciprocal knowledge, learning and teaching, without being led by an all encompassing obsession with money. With a different perception of how we in the wealthy "west" should give our support to education and development, we can open the gates for others to enjoy the benefits, without assuming that our current model is the correct or only version.

Sir Bob Geldof, in his Engage article (Issue 8), wrote that teachers have a huge role to play in an evolutionary change in thinking, as their students can only solve world problems through being taught humanity. Our second mental model is all about humanity and unity – and humility, but it requires a shift in consciousness to achieve it. I sincerely hope that educationalists will rise to the challenge.

BE OUR FRIEND – JOIN IN THE WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR EDUCATION

Since the Steve Sinnott Foundation was established after Steve's death in 2008 we set out to do something a little different. We've been working hard to build the Foundation's standing and profile as an organisation promoting the Millennium Development Goals for education on the basis of Steve's own values.

Steve was passionate about education. He spoke of it as 'the great liberator'. He thrilled at the idea of putting knowledge in young minds, and was excited about what education can achieve for peace and prosperity. He was very proud to be a teacher.

Steve believed in 'working together'. He adopted that as his personal slogan. He delighted in what could be achieved by people working for a good common purpose and cause.

We believe as Steve believed that Education for All can be achieved if everyone with good intent works together. That means reaching out around the world to organisations, large and small, country or village, everywhere that effort is being poured into giving children access to knowledge and learning – for their futures and ours. We are constituted as a UK charity, but we never view education as something to be supported from the loose change that people in the cash rich world find in their pockets. It is a right of all children which we all have a duty to ensure.

We do not donate. We invest and we share. When we provide money, books, computers teaching aids and materials, we are rewarded with the riches of other cultures, their songs their stories, their traditions and the eagerness of children and young people with new hope.

We aim to pool the wealth of education in all its forms.

We launched the Steve Sinnott Foundation in the UK Parliament in December 2009. Since then we have published 10 issues of this magazine ENGAGE with challenging articles from leading politicians and leading campaigners alongside pieces from small project leaders and enthusiastic UK pupils and students. We have assisted projects in Nepal and Sierra Leone and we have established our Education for All Days in schools all over the UK so far reaching 100s of teachers and 1000s of pupils. We maintain an online community of Education for All project leaders with over 2500 members in over 40 countries.

We have a small office in Watford. We started with just one employee, our Project Manager and we now have two, our Projects Manager and our Community Manager. Our identity is firmly established. We have been supported by two UK House of Commons motions and in the course of a House of Lords debate. We have endorsements from the leaders of the three main political parties at Westminster and their colleagues in Education and International Development. The Steve Sinnott Foundation has secured influence. Now we must make impact. There are still 57 million children out of school.

In this edition of ENGAGE we announce 'Friends of the Foundation'. It's our scheme to bring teachers, educators and others together for education – for all. We ask those who can afford it to commit to just £3 per month. With just 1500 subscribing 'friends', and supported by UK Gift Aid, we can keep the Foundation running. With 3000 subscribing friends, our




target for 2015, we can give direct assistance to projects all over the world, we can lobby for governments to meet the targets set by the United Nations in 2000, we can make an impact in the name of every 'friend'.

It's easy to sign up. Visit www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk, click GETTING INVOLVED and sign up on line. Alternatively download a Standing Order Form or email us at postmaster@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk. To subscribing friends we'll send issues of ENGAGE and we'll send email newsletters to all friends. ENGAGE will also be available on line.

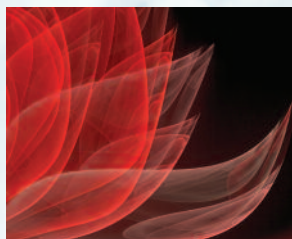
There are a number of other ways you can also support the Foundation's work by signing your school up for Education for All Day (visit www.educationforallday to sign up), go to www.ssf-community.org to share your ideas and/or follow us on Twitter at @SSFfoundation

BE OUR FRIEND. LET'S WORK TOGETHER



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