

ENGAGE

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ISSUE ELEVEN



Sports Day in Maronka Village, the girls are winning.

Vision: Quality Education for Every Child Everywhere

The
**STEVE
SINNOTT
FOUNDATION**

**“Received wisdom
is hard to shift”**

*Ann Cotton, Founder and President of the
Campaign for Female Education (Camfed)*

Foreword

Welcome to ENGAGE 11, published as we approach the seventh anniversary of NUT General Secretary, Steve Sinnott's untimely death and the sixth anniversary of the Official launch of the Foundation in his memory.

The Foundation is now firmly established with a growing worldwide reputation. This has been achieved as a result of the very tangible contributions it has made to the campaign for global primary education.

We have decided to make this edition of ENGAGE a little more controversial. We have done so by providing opportunities for contributors, including political contributors, to address issues around Education for All from their own viewpoint.

Change and how to achieve it is the theme of this edition. Contributors explore the important notion of understanding what works and the very many different types of change – including cultural, environmental, political and social which need to happen to achieve and underpin sustainable, universal education for all.

Enormous thanks to all for your continued support for the Foundation, in your many different ways. Your commitment has been, and is vital for sustaining and enhancing the Foundation.



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

Jerry Glazier

Chair, The Steve Sinnott Foundation

This magazine could not be published without its designers and printers at Paragraphics and at Ruskin Press.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

"RECEIVED WISDOM IS HARD TO SHIFT"

But shift it we can. Inspirational change maker and World Innovation Summit for Education 2014 award winner, **Ann Cotton** of Camfed describes how she challenged the international development establishment and catalysed a new movement

In October 2005, Ben Chama and I had a meeting with Steve Sinnott. We had expected it to be over in half an hour but two hours later Ben and I left after a warm and engaged conversation about education in Zambia. Ben said, "He was really knowledgeable", and then laughing, "And he didn't ask me about corruption". Ben Chama had come to the UK to speak at a number of events about his work as headmaster of a rural primary school with over a thousand pupils and Steve had shown the greatest interest of all we had met.

Ben's school was one of the partner schools with which Camfed worked across five countries in rural Africa. The work was born in 1990 when I went to Zimbabwe to do a study into why boys heavily outnumbered girls at school, particularly in rural areas. Since Independence in 1980, the government had expanded school places one thousand-fold and yet girls in rural areas were the most marginalised. The prevailing view in the international development sector was that families were resistant to the education of their daughters.

I was looking at the issue through the lens of one community – the village of Mola in the Nyaminyami District. This was one of the villages where the Tonga people had been forcibly resettled when the river was dammed at Kariba. Everything had been lost under the waters of the lake – the thatched homes, grain stores, cultivated fields, as well as fishing boats and nets. The community was impoverished by the move and had not recovered. Nothing that was promised by the colonial government had arrived – schools, clinics or roads. The dam was built to provide irrigation and electricity for the growing white population but even these resources were not provided to the Tonga and the electricity pylons marched across the countryside to the growing towns and cities.

The teachers, the parents, the children and the local traditional leader gave me the same message – that girls were not at secondary school because of poverty. Families did not have the means to meet the educational

costs for all their children; boys had the best chance of future paid work and were favoured. In an environment where the family is the safety net, the future of ageing parents is secured through the next generation. I heard of no resistance to the education of girls per se, only decisions that made sense and were based on economic realities. As a result however there were seven boys for every girl at Mola Secondary School.

When I came back to the UK, I did the rounds of international development organisations to explain my findings. I met scepticism at best. Yet money was being spent on posters and tv ads and jingles – on trying to persuade parents to send their daughters to school when they did not have the means. What if the circumstances in Mola were far more wide-ranging? There seemed at least a reason to examine received wisdom. I argued that habits born of economics were being interpreted as culturally embedded but I was a self-recognised novice.

The statement, "People told you what they thought you wanted to hear", made no sense to me and it made me angry, not because my ideas were being challenged but because the people of Mola were being distrusted. Received wisdom is hard to shift but, as Mark Twain wrote, 'Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect'.

There was no choice but to return to Mola and discuss with the community how we could work together to support the education of girls. Chief Mola called a meeting and hundreds of people came and sat in the sun all day discussing how we could make it work. That day in 1991 was the day the Camfed Model was designed. It has more bells and whistles now and is endlessly evolving but the principles of the Model remain constant, the primary one being that everything centres on the child. As our governance document – written by Lucy Lake, Camfed's CEO, two senior partners at Linklaters – Diana Good and Lance Crofoot Suede – and me – describes it, 'Accounting to the Child'.



The community of Mola spoke their own truths and catalysed a movement that now extends across Zimbabwe, Zambia, Ghana, Tanzania and Malawi through a network of 5085 partner schools. Camfed has supported the education of one million, two hundred thousand and sixty six children, the majority of them girls because the circumstances that were current in Mola in 1990 still exist and they remain the most excluded group. And if girls leave school prematurely, the inevitable truth is that another generation of boys and girls will be born into poverty.

The launch of Camfed as an organisation took place at the Zimbabwe High Commission in London in November 1993. Judith Kumire, the late headmistress of Mola Secondary School spoke at the occasion that we called, 'Speaking for Ourselves'. In December last year, Angeline Murimirwa spoke at Brookings in Washington DC alongside global experts in education and just before First Lady Michelle Obama. Angeline is Camfed's Regional Director in Africa and one of the first thirty two girls supported. Angeline was a bright primary schoolgirl whose subsistence farming parents could not raise the money to pay for her uniform and school fees. She understands the psychological and material scars of poverty because she lived them and when you ask girls in poor rural areas about their future they say they "want to be like Angie".

Ben retired from his job and joined Camfed three years ago. He too understands poverty and reflects back to children their capabilities, their strengths. It was a meeting of minds that day when he met Steve in London and I was privileged to be there.

Ann Cotton is Founder and President of Camfed International and winner of the 2014 WISE Prize for Education



CHANGE AGAINST CHANGE

Former Irish President and UN Human Rights Commissioner, **Mary Robinson** writing now for her own Foundation looks to education for a new generation of change makers

As well as being a fundamental human right which is already well developed in the international framework, education is indispensable to a just society. Education draws those in receipt of it towards a fuller understanding of the world about them, deepening their awareness both of themselves and of those around them. Done well, it invites reflection on ethics and justice that make the well-educated also good citizens, both of their home state and (in these global times) of the world as well.

For me, education is central to addressing one of the key challenges of our time – climate change. The science is clear; the climate is changing, human activity is the primary cause of these changes and if we do not take action urgently we will irreparably damage the natural systems on which life depends.

A key principle of climate justice is Harnessing the Transformative Power of Education because as a global community, we must innovate now to enable us to leave the majority of the remaining fossil fuel reserves in the ground – driving our transition to a climate resilient future. We have known for many years that we must construct a future society where inclusive, low carbon growth advances development and human rights. That means fostering decent jobs and livelihoods, expanding people's access to sustainable energy and affordable nutritious food; supporting sustainable cities; maintaining forests and other vital eco-systems; and enhancing the health of both people and the planet. We also know that we must construct a future where vulnerable countries, communities and households are



sufficiently resilient to deal with the impacts of climate change.

To do this, we need change makers. Young people who have embraced teaching and learning methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behaviour and take action for sustainable development. We need education that champions key competencies such as critical thinking, imagining future scenarios and making decisions in a collaborative way.

Our young people are part of a generation who face an uncertain future in a climate stressed world. This is the context for their education. We need to enable them to be change makers.

The Mary Robinson Foundation "Climate Justice" is a centre for thought leadership, education and advocacy on the struggle to secure global justice for those people vulnerable to the impacts of climate change – the poor, the disempowered and the marginalised.

PETITIONING FOR CHANGE

Sarah Brown, President of Theirworld and co-founder of A World At School, opens a window of opportunity to persuade world leaders to keep their promises

As ENGAGE confronts the greatest challenges to education for all children the biggest new issue is the increase of attacks on school children. Girls and boys have faced nearly 10,000 individual attacks on their educational institutions in the past five years, including murder, arson, kidnapping and intimidation against girls simply for wanting to go to school. In 2012 alone there were 3,600 separate attacks against educational institutions, teachers and schools and there is every indication that this number will continue to rise. With over half of the world's out-of-school children and adults in conflict-affected areas, Safe Schools are essential if we are to achieve universal education.

In a few weeks time on 14th April we will mark the first anniversary of the abduction of the young Chibok girls in Nigeria who inspired the new Safe Schools programme in northeastern Nigeria. The initiative is supported by government, business and civil society working in partnership. New Safe School programmes are planned now for Pakistan as we respond to the calls of young people to remove the barriers they face as they attempt to get an education. Progress is now being made to create Safe Schools in Lebanon to include both Syrian refugees and any young Lebanese children whose circumstance mean that they have been missing out on learning. These are hard won achievements but there is more to do. With over half of the world's out-of-school children and adults in conflict-affected areas, Safe Schools are essential if we are to achieve universal education.

Gender disparity must also be addressed if we are to get all children into school. Of the 58 million children who are denied their right to education, 31 million are girls. More significantly more than 500 million girls will

drop out before completing their basic education. Poverty and discrimination mean that girls are the first to be taken out of school and are more likely to end up in exploitative work or married off at a young age, putting their health and economic future at grave risk. The goal of getting every child in to school will not be achieved without eliminating the barriers that continue to keep girls out of school.

In February 2015 A World at School published the MDG2 scorecard that shows how countries with more than half a million children are progressing with the goal of getting all children into school. The news was not good. Only two out of 29 countries were considered to be

making 'good progress' on education. But we need to see these statistics so we can learn what change is needed and where. Armed with this knowledge we can call on world leaders to act by signing up to the #UpForSchool petition which demands that every child has the chance to go to school and learn.

Young people are calling out their political leaders on education as never before. The #UpForSchool petition has amassed 3 million signatures, and 15 million more signatures have been pledged by supporting organisations to create the world's biggest petition for education. A World at School has backed 500 Global Youth Ambassadors to support their campaign work based in 80 countries. These young activists are smart, innovative and determined to be heard and make a difference. You can read their amazing stories on aworldatschool.org. And now Presidents and Prime Ministers are signing the petition themselves thanks to the determination of the Global Youth Ambassadors.

This year we have a window of opportunity to put the pressure on political leaders to keep their promise to get every child into school by 2015 when they meet at the United Nations in September. We can all stand #UpForSchool and ensure that they have the opportunity to grow, learn at school and lead. Please sign and share the global petition on upforschool.org



JUSTICE NOT CHARITY: WE MUST NOT LET THEM DOWN

Labour's prospective Secretary of State for International Development*, **Mary Creagh** wants not change but renewal of the world commitment to quality education for all with a new determination to deliver on the promises

Steve Sinnott was a true champion of international development and a great believer in social justice for all.

From building schools in Nepal, training teachers in Sierra Leone, to raising awareness across towns and cities in Britain, the Sinnott Foundation has honoured Steve's memory by improving education outcomes, and through solidarity across borders.

The last Labour government established the Department for International Development (DfID) at Cabinet level. We led the world in cancelling debt for poor nations, trebling the aid budget, brokered

ambitious deals on trade and climate change. Above all, our efforts have put 40 million children into school worldwide – a legacy Steve would have been proud of.

The next Labour government* will tackle global poverty and inequality because developing countries need justice, not charity.

Ensuring universal education is a Labour priority. This is most arduous in fragile and conflict affected states. We believe all children deserve to be in school, including children in refugee camps. At the moment, not enough is being done to ensure schooling continues and that families quickly move on from humanitarian support.

We want to ensure that children affected by conflict have the psycho-social services they need and the right to go to school, so that their lives can return to normal as soon as possible.

Gordon Brown recently highlighted the scale of this challenge. There are half a million child refugees in Lebanon, 300,000 of whom are not in school, even though the cost is only \$4 per day.

This is not because there are no schools for them to go. It is because international communities have failed to deliver their promised aid.

This year, as the world comes together to set out new Sustainable Development Goals, we have a once in a generation opportunity to ensure all children have the chance to enjoy an education. We must not let them down.

The next global agreement on aid must focus on inequality as well as poverty. Specifically that countries are supported to provide universal health coverage and that the rights of workers and women are protected.

Tackling these problems requires long-term commitment and resources. This is why Labour MPs voted in the House of Commons to commit future governments to spend 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income on international development late last year. Britain will be the first G7 country to meet the target.

I am enormously proud of this, not least because more Labour MPs than Coalition MPs were in Parliament to ensure this promise was fulfilled.

Eradicating poverty through education might seem idealism to some, but for those of us who believe in opportunity for all, we know it is within reach.

Together, let us fight the good fight against poverty and inequality worldwide, and deliver the justice that the world's poorest need.

*This article was written for publication prior to the UK's 2015 General Election when of course government may change



CHANGING LIVES

The office of the Steve Sinnott Foundation is in Watford in the UK. We took a look closer to home at what education can achieve. **Tracey Burke-Taylor** is Chief Executive at Watford Women's Centre where women facing life challenges go because they want some sort of change to happen. Here Tracey tells an inspiring story of how education changes lives.

Watford Women's Centre has been a change maker since 1989 for women in and around Watford in the county of Hertfordshire. We deliver learning to up to 600 women a year covering English, IT and Personal Development topics among a range of other services including counselling, employment support, legal advice sessions and education on Domestic Abuse.

Our learners come to us because they want some form of change to happen, they may want the change to be gaining skills to use the internet or gaining knowledge to leave an abusive relationship. They are often dealing with intensely challenging issues; addiction, abuse, poverty, mental and physical health issues. Issues that make the possibility of change seem unrealistic and at times, too daunting to begin. They need us to believe in them and in the potential for them to change their lives.

Change to us is a deeply individual and personal movement across time; sometimes it shows in objective, practical movement and development. Learners entrust us to provide the environment and activities that will facilitate them to change. It's easy to list the tangible elements that we provide; a classroom, course materials, lectures and sessions of learning, equipment to practice with, a teacher. We can quickly see this movement across time, when a learner is able to switch on a PC and create an excel sheet, it's an objective result.

Sometimes it is impossible to see, quantify or measure change: it can only be identified by personal, private experience. There is subjective, intangible change. It is this aspect

of change that challenges us most as makers of change and this is the aspect I would like to focus on.

It goes beyond our ability as educators, our resource bank of materials or our pristine course files. It's messy, confusing and emotionally draining at times; it calls on us as human beings to question ourselves and the quality of our interactions. It means sticking with it and holding onto an imagined picture of where we and our learners will be once they have moved through time and into the change. It asks us to transcend the reality of today.

There is a magical and elusive thing that we do to promote change; we believe that teachers, counsellors and advisors do this without realising it. We time travel!

- We move back into the past with the learner when we are considering their past learning, what prior knowledge and skills they are bringing. We use this knowledge to get to know them, how they learn best, what might prove difficult for them in the classroom. This can help us to plan for and manage difficulties, developing strategies to support their learning.
- We move into the future when we plan their learning and devise what we will deliver to help them achieve educational outcomes. We set SMART goals for them and try to anticipate what tasks will help them to gain skills or knowledge needed to achieve those goals.
- We spend time reflecting on where they will be in 6 months or a year or 6 years, thereby meeting their future self, the potential them.



We ask them to share their future hopes and dreams, where they would like to be and what change would look like.

- We hold our image of their potential, so that if they wobble, we can remind them of where they are going and that the road to dreams or change is never straightforward or without obstacles.
- Sometimes, particularly when our learners are struggling with challenges in life, we hold the hope that there can be change; it won't always be so difficult. This can be the hardest part of our work; not giving up on someone when they have given up on themselves.
- We bring our past self into the room, when using our own experience to highlight how change can happen.

One of our learners told us, "I have completed 3 computer courses at WWC, which I passed. They gave me self confidence and new skills which enabled me to go back to work after my children were older. Try anything, feel better about yourself, go forward with your life".

Her teacher was able to consider where she had been, where she wanted to get to and supported her movement through time and into change so that she could go forward with life.

LET'S ALL WORK TOGETHER

Ann Beatty is the Steve Sinnott Foundation's Senior Manager with a special responsibility for developing our community activity and our Friends of the Foundation scheme. She joined the Foundation in December 2014. She has been getting to know people and she'll be meeting many more at the 2015 Conferences of UK teacher organisations, the National Union of Teachers, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers and the Ulster Teachers Union.

I recently joined the Steve Sinnott Foundation at an exciting and challenging time. I'm looking forward to working alongside other international agencies to do our bit to help achieve the Education for All (EFA) goals.

With a general election coming up in the UK, it has been interesting for me to see where each party places the importance of education and international development in their manifestos. As we eagerly await the outcomes from the post 2015 talks on Sustainable Development Goals, I thought it important that I should learn about the work of some of our many partners and supporters and the different organisations both locally and internationally who are all contributing to the common purpose of Education For All. I've been meeting some of them.

These meetings have proved very productive so far. They have further inspired me in achieving the goals of the Foundation while keeping in mind our core values. I have been particularly fortunate to meet many people who knew Steve Sinnott personally. They were able to give me an insight into the person he was and some idea of his values and passions. Steve's passion and commitment for the cause of education combined with his friendly down-to-earth attitude has left a very impressionable mark on the colleagues he worked with. I have also been finding that out from some of the articles in this edition of Engage.

Despite the fact that the goal of primary education for every child has not been met and there are still some 58 million children not going to school around the world, it has been a positive and heartening experience for me to see so many people promoting EFA across the UK and internationally. There are so many organisations that are supportive of each other and wanting to collaborate to achieve common goals of getting more children into school around the world, raising awareness of the barriers and arming our young future leaders with an understanding of how life is in other parts of the world and how it compares to their own reality. Some promote EFA amongst pupils and students by



providing classroom resources and certification, through campaigning and one-off events days. Others aim to get schools thinking about the issues throughout the school year and make EFA studies a part of daily school life.

At the Steve Sinnott Foundation we ask ourselves on a daily basis "Is this work going to get another child into school, and not just into a classroom?" We don't just want to count bums on seats, we want every child to get a quality and holistic education that is fit for purpose and that will ensure all these children and young people can take an active and healthy part in their communities, gain real employment and play their part in wider society.

When visiting the National Union of Teachers (NUT), the largest organisation for teachers in England and Wales, I found that education internationally is not that different from education requirements here in the UK. The NUT's Stand up for Education campaign highlights some of the same things teachers all around the world want: a wider vision of learning and achievement, qualified teachers, more child places, an end to child poverty, mending a fractured education system, more and better focused investment and a determination to make teaching an attractive

profession.

At the Steve Sinnott Foundation we believe the challenges are not insurmountable. With proper investment in quality education and early child development that is fit for purpose, the provision of quality teachers and resources, a commitment to tackling gender discrimination and child labour, Education for All can be achieved.

One of our major contributions to UK school events is EFA day. This was set up to reflect Steve's passion for Education For All. I have been wondering if he would be proud of the work achieved so far by the Foundation? When I have asked some of his colleagues they say yes he would but he would say don't stand still, keep working together to get more children into school and don't give up. Solidarity and perseverance were values he believed in. With 58 million children not in school and something like 25 million who may never get to school, there are some countries who have a lot more work to do and that's where all the organisations who can raise awareness of this mighty challenge come into play.

We see a positive future for Education for All in reaching more rural communities and ensuring gender equality, through collaborative working, the sharing of resources and better use of technology to achieve economies of scale. As an experienced Community Development Practitioner, I feel strongly about Community Engagement. Our special approach at the Foundation means reaching out to teachers, to local communities and their schools with our unique background in the collective activity of the trade union movement. We mean to bring this approach into working collaboratively with other organisations contributing to the EFA cause.

I've already been in touch with several of these organisations. I was very lucky to be invited to "We Day" a USA and UK schools initiative organised by Free the Children. Tickets cannot be purchased. You get invited after by doing one local and one global event towards EFA. It was really inspirational to see

so many young people who really get what EFA is about and are doing amazing things in their communities.

Meeting with and finding out about the work of Unesco Aspnet Award, Send My Friend to School (GCE Coalition), Amnesty International Human Rights Friendly Schools

and UNICEF Rights Respecting Award International really inspired me that there are so many groups of like-minded people out there working to achieve Education for All.

The Steve Sinnott Foundation's Education for All Day this year is centred on Friday 19th June. Please sign up and order your resource

pack at <http://www.educationforallday.org/>

If you would like one of our team to visit your school please email me at ann.beatty@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk – and do your bit for Education for All by promoting the cause whenever the opportunity arises.

UNESCO AND THE FOUNDATION, PARTNERS FOR CHANGE

The Steve Sinnott Foundation's **Jasmine Jones** has recently taken over the coordination of the UK's UNESCO Associated Schools Programme (ASPnet). Jasmine was the Foundation's Projects Manager until October 2014. Now in her new role with the Foundation she describes what the ASPnet project is all about and calls on UK schools to get involved

The UNESCO ASPnet was founded in 1953 and today is a global network of 10,000 educational institutions in 181 countries. It promotes UNESCO's Education for All goals. They encourage schools to contribute to international understanding and peace and they place emphasis on UNESCO ideals and the four pillars of Learning for the 21st Century: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together.

I am excited about this new role in the Steve Sinnott Foundation/UNESCO UK partnership. It ties in perfectly with the Foundation's existing work. It will build on our shared commitment to raising the profile of international development in education and at the same time highlight the vitally important work of the UK National Commission for UNESCO.

Gary Brace was the Chief Executive of the General Teaching Council for Wales. He is now the Education Director of the UK National Commission for UNESCO. Here's how Gary looks forward to working with the Steve Sinnott Foundation:

"As we move towards the new post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals for education, UNESCO Associated Schools in the UK have a great opportunity to play their part in making 'education

for all' real for their pupils. Never has there been a time when 'learning to live together', one of the Network's four pillars of learning, has been more important for young people. We have every confidence that the Steve Sinnott Foundation will rise to the challenge and enable the Network to thrive in the UK. I am greatly looking forward to working with the Foundation over the coming year".

Our aim is that this partnership will signal a new phase for the ASPnet in the UK. My own unique position will allow me to harness the Steve Sinnott Foundation's educational resources and global schools networks to strengthen ASPnet here in the UK. We'll be developing and growing the UK Network in 2015.

If you would like to learn more about or join the Associated Schools Programme then please visit www.unesco.org.uk/unesco_associated_schools or contact me at jasmine.jones@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk

Join the UNESCO Associated Schools Programme today and your school can:

- Be part of a global network of schools directly linked with the UN system
- Participate in seminars and conferences in the UK and internationally
- Receive a diploma signed by the UNESCO Director General to display in your school
- Receive teaching materials on the UN system and global issues
- Expect regular newsletters with updates on resources and activities
- Access materials developed by various UN organisations
- Access expert speakers on UN issues

It is easy to join UNESCO Associated Schools in the UK. I can advise you on completing the application form, outlining how the values of UNESCO will be integrated within the curriculum at your school and how you can plan to take forward one or more of the four UNESCO study themes.



HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

Dr Ann-Marie Wilson, Founder and Executive Director at 28 Too Many an organisation working to end female genital mutilation, believes in education as the means to make change happen – in this case ending a harmful traditional practice with a 2000 year history.

Whilst working in Kenya I met a Maasai community that used to practice female genital mutilation (FGM) but has now abandoned it. This was due to two girls attending school and joining a health club. The girls learnt about the harm caused by FGM and when the time came for them to be cut, they ran away to avoid FGM and continue their education. After safely returning to their village with assurances they would not be cut, the girls began to educate their community about FGM and persuaded others to stop this harmful practice in their village. This was more than seven years ago and since then no girl has been cut. This is how change happens, starting with

education and providing the knowledge for people to make informed decisions.

FGM is a harmful traditional practice dating back more than 2,000 years. It is thought to have originated in ancient Egypt/Sudan and is most prevalent in Africa with over 90 million girls and women living with FGM in Africa alone. Globally more than 140 million girls and women have undergone FGM and the practice has been reported in more than 40 countries including parts of the Middle East, South East Asia and in diaspora communities in Europe, the Americas and Australasia. Over 3 million girls are at risk of FGM each year which is equivalent to a girl being cut every 10 seconds.

To create a social change to end FGM, we need a multi-layered strategy which supports change at all levels in society. At 28 Too Many we start with our research programme and we prepare detailed country profiles. With the findings from our research we engage with those who can create the environment for change. We work with political and religious leaders, participate in high level UN events such as the Commission on the Status of Women and advocate for the inclusion of legislation and other programmes which support the prevention of FGM and support for survivors of the practice. There is a growing international movement to end FGM and the new policies and programmes arising from this must be based on research and reliable data.

This however is only part of the solution. We also need to empower those working at community level. Many activists have limited access to research data and due to their remote locations can be isolated from others working against FGM. 28 Too Many makes our eight completed research reports freely

and widely available. We also partner with in country activists and organisations to help them form networks through which they can share information, support each other and work collaboratively to develop effective local strategies against FGM.

Lasting change to end FGM will only happen when those within the community are educated on the harm of FGM and attitudes change. Our recent project in Laikipia, Kenya with the Maasai Cricket Warriors and Cricket Without Boundaries showed the potential of having ambassadors within the community acting as champions for change and in bringing people together, in this case through sport, to deliver education on girls' empowerment and FGM.

There are many challenges in ending FGM and inevitable resistance to changing a deeply rooted practice. However, progress is being seen across Africa and this needs to be supported by national leadership against FGM, effective research-based programming and long term funding commitments.

My dream is to save one girl from FGM. That girl can then grow into a mother who protects her daughters and become a grandmother with three generations of uncut women in her family. Change to end FGM will be achieved one girl at a time.

28 Too Many is a charity working to end female genital mutilation (FGM). It researches FGM and supports local initiatives to end FGM in the 28 African countries where it is practised and across the diaspora. The charity also advocates for the global eradication of FGM, working closely with other charities/NGOs in the violence against women sector. For more information please visit www.28toomany.org



MEASURING CHANGE

Alix Zwane, Executive Director of Evidence Action asks the crucial questions: What works and how do we turn promising programs into global action?

For some time now, evidence-based development has been all the rage. Rigorous evidence about whether an intervention or program works, and for whom and why is a growing focus of attention. We have seen tremendous growth in so-called impact evaluations of social development interventions and policies to understand whether they work, and significant interest in considering rigorous evidence in making program and policy decisions. In an era of tight budgets, sceptical voters, and big aspirations, governments the world over are being challenged to demonstrate the value for money of their programs. It's a welcome and important trend.

But it is easy for this conversation to miss an important element of evidence based development – the process by which results about “what works” translate into action. How do programs and policies that have been proven to work based on rigorous research studies, in fact, reach millions if not billions of people? Evidence presented in policy briefs and journal articles is not enough for busy, risk averse firms and governments no matter how committed they

are to cost effectiveness. There is a missing middle, a gap, in the simplest “theory of change” of evidence-based aid and development.

The growth in the ‘rigorous evidence’ zeitgeist has been noticeable. There are research organisations, many affiliated with universities and networks of renowned development economists, that are devoted to ‘finding what works.’ There is a growing number of funders that have made evidence-based development a cornerstone of their grant making.

And governments are starting to take note as well. The Indian state of Gujarat reformed its environmental auditing system just last month based on findings from a large-scale rigorous evaluation study conducted in partnership with economists affiliated with JPAL.

With our support, Kenya started a national school-based de-worming program in 2011 and India followed suit this year with a national program targeting 241 million children. De-worming is a textbook example of a evidence-based program and policy.

There is a significant body of rigorous evidence by researchers that shows that treating kids for worms of course helps them feel better but also supports weight gain, brain development, and productivity in school and later in life.

But the question remains: How do we get from a 2004 study on the effect of de-worming in school attendance in Kenya to 241 millions children targeted for de-worming in India in 2014? What is the path from promising evidence in a research study to sustainable programs that reach millions?

We at Evidence Action believe that reducing poverty and spurring growth in developing countries requires strategic, high-value investment of scarce resources. We develop and de-risk business models for such programs that allow tens of millions of people to be served, and the return on investment to be measured. We bridge the gap between rigorous research and pilot programs on the one hand, and institutionalised programming on the other.

We are now pressure-testing promising new interventions to see whether they are suitable for scale-up. We take on questions such as whether a program is grounded in rigorous evidence of effectiveness, whether it has a credible path to a cost-effective service delivery model that contextualises essential research results without sacrificing impact, whether it provides a credible path to serving millions of people in the event that the business model can be fully articulated, and whether it avoids displacing activities or investment that would otherwise be made by others.

We love the fact that rigorously-evaluated evidence of impact is beginning to be a significant criterion in social development programs and policies worldwide. But let's not rest there. Let's also show that what has been proven to work for a few can do so cost-effectively and sustainably for millions of people.

The organisation Evidence Action was launched formally in 2013 to scale programs with sustainable business models that have been proven to be effective so that they benefit millions of people.



CHANGING ATTITUDES AND QUESTIONING ASSUMPTIONS

Simon Griffiths, Team Leader for the Evaluation Manager for the Girls' Education Challenge Fund at Coffey International faces up to the obligation to recognise the changing environment for development

Since 2000, the year the millennium development goals (MDGs) were launched, governments and aid agencies have been striving to achieve 'universal primary education' – children everywhere being able to complete a full course of primary schooling. The MDGs will be built upon in the sustainable development goals (SDGs), which will frame the agendas and political policies of governments and aid agencies over the next 15 years. Crucially, the SDGs will seek to address the perceived failings of the MDGs in that these considered neither the root causes of poverty and gender inequality nor the holistic nature of development.

DFID's Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) is a £355 million global fund that aims to support up to a million of the world's poorest girls to get into school, stay in school and learn. Coffey has been evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the GEC, and our baseline research is about to be published. The baseline research involved the collection of data at an unprecedented scale, by Coffey and by 34 GEC-funded projects across 22 countries. It included surveys of 56,000 households as well as literacy and numeracy tests of 70,000 marginalised girls.



Our research showed that although girls' enrolment in primary and secondary schools is a problem, this is not 'universally' the case. We found enough differences between different contexts to suggest that in some areas enrolment is not as much of an issue as originally thought. Similarly, we found that girls were not 'systematically' more disadvantaged than boys in terms of enrolment in school or their level of learning. In some areas boys were more disadvantaged than girls. In short, some assumptions about girls' (and boys') education that have framed development over the past 15 years have evidently changed. So it is increasingly important that we are aware of the differences between specific groups of disadvantaged people.

The problem seems to be much more specific to the context of a particular area than it was in 2000. For this reason, the change from the MDG goal of 'universal primary education' to the SDG goal of inclusive and equitable access to education supporting the fundamental principle that no child is left behind, is the right one. It's clear from the evidence collected by us and others that a one-size-fits-all approach to a global education goal would not capture the complexity of the situations that girls, boys, families and communities face in such fast-changing environments.

A refocus on the 'quality' of education in the new SDG for education is another change that

is absolutely appropriate. We found that almost universally, girls' levels of literacy are far lower than generally expected. On average, we found that girls only achieve a basic level of reading and comprehension once they reach secondary school. We also found that girls generally fall further and further behind in their reading ability as they progress through school, compared to where they should be given the grade they are in. This situation is made worse by evidence that on average girls in secondary school are two grades behind where they should be for their age. Julia Gillard, the chair of the Global Partnership for Education, called this a 'learning quality crisis'. Our evidence supports this and her view that there is no point getting children into "something called a school if they are not learning."

School-based factors such as a lack of facilities, teachers and equipment stood out in our research as critical barriers to learning. However, the relationships between root causes and good quality learning are complex and subject to a wide range of conditions that are difficult to identify, unpack and understand. This means that we, the global development community, have an obligation to the families who are making huge sacrifices to get their children into school to make sure that our assumptions about the problems that they face still hold true in the face of constant change.

PARTNERS PROJECT UPDATE MARCH 2015

EducAid Sierra Leone

Ebola State of Emergency has been in place in Sierra Leone since 1st August 2014. The key effect of this is that there can be no gathering of numbers greater than 5 and movement between districts and at times villages / towns and sometimes even house to house has been restricted.

Accordingly, schools have been closed throughout this period which means that, on the one hand, teachers would be available for training but actually, in practice, gathering them has been almost impossible a.) because it is against the State of Emergency laws and b.) because some teachers got stuck in different parts of the country when quarantines were imposed and anyway, moving from the communities where they currently are is very difficult.

In particular, in the Port Loko District which was the district most affected by Ebola, second only to the Freetown Area. Controls were even more strictly imposed here than elsewhere. Despite the State of Emergency EducAid has managed to carry out training this year for 90 teachers and this will continue with earnest in the coming months as the controls are lifted.



Photo by Educaid

The rural version: Participants from the Buya Romende chiefdom in Port Loko district, working on an activity about female participation in school

Manisha UK Nepal

Some highlights of the last 6 months and aspirations for the year ahead:

- The final completion of Navadurga school, Pipaldanda, which had the official open day last week, with c100 attendees. The school also incorporates 8 shop units, aimed at encouraging sustainability within the community.
- Teacher training courses have gone very well, today's course is centred around tourism and sustainability, to broaden thinking skills and encourage the community and schools, to become self-sufficient. Other teacher training courses, included Leadership/Planning and creative working in Lower Primary English.
- The roof at Batase school was replaced after a storm, funded by a rapid fundraising response by it's twinned UK school, Guston Primary.
- Fundraising by West Derby and King's Lynn Academy, also raised funds for their respective twins, Okhaldunga and Amrit, aiding improvements to classroom facilities.
- In order to facilitate succession planning, previous and current NQTs have been invited to join Manisha UK as trustees and three have expressed a strong interest. Still tbc.



Photo by Manisha

- We have selected 2 female NQTs for the 2015/16 placements, helping to reinforce our commitment to gender equality. Our current 8 twinned schools, have c50% representation of both boys and girls.
- Re healthcare, we are raising the need for a duty of care by teachers towards pupils re health issues, currently not viewed as their responsibility. We have identified children with previously undiagnosed and potentially serious eye conditions, for referral to the eye hospital in Tansen. Eye test charts have also been supplied to schools.
- We plan to increase our focus on the needs of excluded children, due to either SEN or caste issues, to further our Education for All aims.
- We are currently assessing the requirements to register as an NGO in Nepal, to further aid our future work in Palpa District.



Photo by Manisha

WE CAN, SO WE MUST

Richard Harrington, Conservative Member of Parliament for Watford* where Steve lived and where the Steve Sinnott Foundation has its office, expresses his friendship for the Foundation and adds his own slogan for inspiring change

The Steve Sinnott Foundation is close to my heart as the Member of Parliament for Watford, being a Watford-based charity established in the memory of Watford resident, Steve Sinnott.

As a result the Foundation is well-established here, and many of our schools took part in the Foundation's Education for All Day, which has been endorsed by the Prime Minister.*

We are lucky in the UK to have a very good educational system and one that is constantly improving. Therefore it's right to look abroad and use our influence and foreign aid to create good educational systems elsewhere.

Education policy is a key battleground in politics because of its sheer importance. Education is the key to so much opportunity, and to overcoming so many problems.

Britain's children stay in education until they are 18 which is an incredible feat, when hundreds of millions of children worldwide leave school in their early teens, if they go at all.

Organisations like the Steve Sinnott

Foundation are essential to expanding educational provision across the world. But I also believe that governments in developed nations like ours must do their bit too. I sat on the UK Parliament's International Development Select Committee for two years, scrutinising the work of the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID). As part of that we went to South Sudan where more than 80% of the population cannot read or write, if the children of South Sudan are not educated, then the country will have no future. British aid has been training teachers and funding schools out there and the committee went to see the proceeds of this work. As the nation had been created just a year before, there was very little infrastructure, indeed the children walked for hours each day to learn from their British-funded teacher, who could barely read and write, and sat together learning under a big tree. I believe when it comes to international aid that 'we can, so we must'.

Over the last 5 years, 200,000 teachers have been trained and 11 million children have been supported through primary and



secondary schools across the world. We are aiming to get 1 million more girls into school. You will all be aware that sadly the Millennium Development Goal to get every single child into primary education by 2015 has not been met, although the number of children who do not go to school has been halved. However, we can't give up and this must form part of the Post-2015 MDGs.

I believe that this government's educational reforms are something we can be proud of, and the level of investment has been huge – into buildings alone £18 billion has been spent. I will be helping to break the ground on a £20 million new school for Watford this month. Knowing that children around the world consider a tree to be their school will really put that into perspective.

**This article was written and first published prior to the UK's 2015 General Election when of course government and Members of Parliament may change.*

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GETTING INVOLVED

To the casual observer, the Steve Sinnott Foundation is an organisation of a dozen or so people including just two paid employees operating out of one small office in Watford, Hertfordshire, England.

But we're not. We're part of a family of millions.

It's a family of people with a dedication to teaching and learning, to education that Steve himself called 'the great liberator. It works on the best of close knit family values, the same values that have inspired the trade union movement in Britain and around the world, the belief that by working together so much can be achieved.

The work that the Foundation's employees,



Shaista Khan

I recently moved from Australia to London and am actively looking for work. As I continue my search, I felt it is best to volunteer my time and skills to a worthy cause. With my background in international development and teacher training and marketing communications I was lucky to have been referred to the Steve Sinnott Foundation. I was very pleased to have found a local not for profit organisation that worked globally. I am impressed with the ideals and goals of the Foundation. Also, the team of friendly and passionate community minded staff has helped me keep motivated. I feel good that my skills are recognised and the volunteering experience has helped me to understand the local work culture as well. I consider myself fortunate to be able to do my bit for the Education For All Program.

directors and support team members do is multiplied over and over again by the hour or so here or the occasional day that selfless people give as volunteers to help and support what we do. They include activists within the UK teachers organisations, and classroom teachers, not only education professionals but many different talented people who choose not to mass wealth for themselves but to do good for us all.

The more of those people there are, the more we can achieve. From retired and newly qualified teachers, solicitors, administrators to experienced fundraisers, we need a broad range of skills to deliver our goals. Regardless of your previous experience or skill set, we welcome anyone who could spare a few hours a week to join us and get involved.

What's in it for me? With training and support you will be making a genuine difference to those who need it most. You will also gain valuable skills for the future.

But perhaps more important even than that is that you will be "participating", taking part in a great leap forward, helping to bring about an educated world.

Get in touch now and find out what you can do and start a volunteering adventure.

Community Fundraising

Why not challenge yourself this year with a fundraising event? From a physically challenging event to arranging a community event in your school or organization we need your help!

In these changing times when funding from other sources is becoming increasingly difficult, we are reliant upon new and innovative ideas and your help can make all the difference.

Be Our Friend

Signing a Standing Order to help us with just £3.00 per month makes you a Friend of the Foundation. We'll respond by helping you to introduce EFA issues into your work, teachers providing their pupils and students with different perspectives on the world, sharing new experiences with children in far away places, members of other professions and



Debbie Smith

Debbie Smith will be running the London Marathon on Sunday 26th April to raise funds for the Foundation. This is Debbie's 2nd marathon and we are very privileged to have her support. Debbie has been training hard and she completed a half marathon at Silverstone on Sunday 15th March. Debbie says, "It went really well and I got a time of 1.50.52 so I am really happy with that. The race was well organised with plenty of drink and music and marshals were cheering everyone on. It was a lovely event and has prepared me for the Big One.

I have raised £912 so far, please support me further by making a donation on my Just Giving page."

<https://www.justgiving.com/Debbie-Smith33>

workforces becoming part of a worldwide effort introducing new understandings and new purpose. Please go online to www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk to sign up.

For more information on getting involved with the Foundations work call Ann Beatty on 01923 431653 or email Ann at ann.beatty@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk

A photograph of two young girls in a classroom. The girl in the foreground is wearing a pink shirt and a black headband, leaning over a desk and writing with a yellow pencil. The girl behind her has braided hair and is also looking down at her work. The background is slightly blurred, showing a window with a grid pattern.

Be our friend Let's work together

Please visit our website to find out more about our work and sign up to become a Friend of the Foundation. Support us with just £3 a month and you will make a big difference investing in working together to achieve quality education for all.

Or talk to us by getting in touch at www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk email ann.beatty@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk Telephone 01923 431653



The
STEVE
SINNOTT
FOUNDATION

QUALITY EDUCATION FOR EVERY CHILD EVERYWHERE

Photo by Dan Vernon

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