

ENGAGE

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ISSUE THREE



In this Issue:

Project Nepal reaches greater heights

Schools in UK and Nepal on the twinning programme

Special Feature - Education in areas of armed conflict

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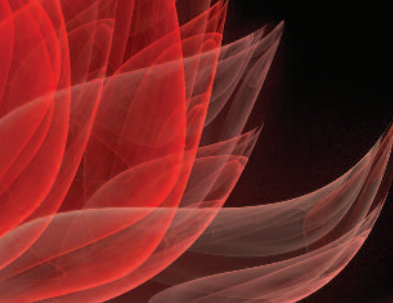


Education for all: a fairer future

The STEVE SINNOTT FOUNDATION

Vision:

To secure primary education by 2015 for each one of the 67 million children who are out of school across the world



Foreword

Welcome to the third edition of *Engage*, the official publication of the Steve Sinnott Foundation. Since its launch in May 2009, the Foundation has made good progress in securing tangible achievements in pursuit of its core values and objectives. This is highlighted by updates on Project Nepal and how the Foundation's website is hosting projects, forging contacts and enabling exchange of ideas, information and resources from around the world - all in pursuit of the achievement of Millennium Development Goal2.

Taking the theme of Education in Conflict and Education and Human Rights, in this edition, we seek to support understanding and hope while providing stark reminders that political repression, like poverty, needs eradicating to enable provision of fair access to education.

The work of the Foundation is dependent on the generosity of the time and energy of many people and also, by necessity, on financial support. On behalf of the Directors I wish to sincerely thank all who have shown their support for the Foundation and continue to do so.

While much of that support to date has come from within the National Union of Teachers (England & Wales) at national, local and individual level, we are heartened by growing support from education unions in the UK and internationally. The continued support from Teachers Group Educational Trust has been instrumental in getting Project Nepal off the ground - again grateful thanks.

We hope you find this edition of *Engage* stimulating reading; please visit our website at www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk and do all you can to support and develop the work of the Foundation & help maintain the momentum of Steve's passion for Education for All.



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This magazine could not be published without its designers and printers at Paragraphics and at Ruskin Press.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.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk to comment on this article

GET INSPIRED TO WORK WITH TEACHERS IN NEPAL

Educational reform in Nepal has led to an increase in access to education, yet the quality of education suffers due to lack of training and support for teachers. **Mary McKenna** of Tara Education (USA) and ex-director of New York's Bank Street College outreach project to Nepal and **Purna Shrestha** from NEST Nepal describe how project INSPIRE is helping teachers to implement child friendly practices in classrooms.



Nepal has seen a decade of extraordinary gains in education. In 2006-07 the Ministry of Education (MOE) abolished school fees which were a barrier to many students from marginalized populations and in remote areas. There are also now special scholarships to encourage families to enrol their female children. However, families must still be able to buy school uniforms, books and lunches - costs which still interfere with opportunities for the poorest, most marginalized children.

Despite much dedicated reform work in Nepal, change remains difficult to discern. Many of the reforms have been driven by the efforts of donor organizations supporting the MDGs but, in practice, it seems that some donors are emphasizing access without concurrent concern for quality and equity. Parents question the real value of 'low-cost' education with overcrowded classrooms, resource shortages and unmotivated teachers.

The Nepal MOE has invested in retraining. Donor funded Regional Centres were tasked with providing intensive primary teacher training. However, many trainers do not have appropriate training or experience. Teachers report that trainers follow what has been prescribed for them and are less attuned to helping teachers solve the real problems faced in classrooms.

There has also been an increasing emphasis that government teachers must have completed the initial certification course, but the course content needs updating to help Nepali teachers meet the needs of students in the 21st Century.

Project INSPIRE is about teaching teachers to implement child-friendly practices. The original project school, Prajwal School in a rural village outside of Hetauda, is managed as a charity and supported by NGOs including Tara Education (USA) and Everest of Apples (Japan).

Our dedicated volunteers use an intensive coaching strategy. Coaches either agree with the teachers' model strategies and curriculum, or the coaches and classroom teachers jointly prepare lessons, and the coach will assist the classroom teacher in delivery. Afterwards, both parties analyze the lesson and reflect on student learning.

We are committed to networking around a set of common principles to guide reform efforts. By institutionalizing networking, using the USA 'Coalition of Essential Schools' as a template, we

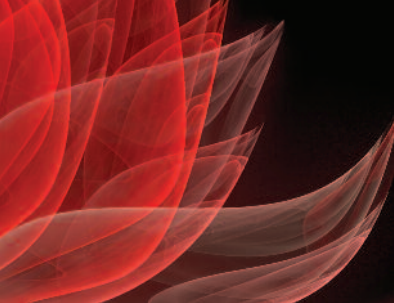
ensure that teachers who are trained in child-friendly pedagogies are not isolated but supported enabling them to develop into mentors for teachers who have not had the benefit of direct training.

Project INSPIRE was initiated by and is led by Nepali professionals, supported by the voluntary efforts of overseas NGOs and involvement of Kathmandu University. Donor funding now is recession hit, but with generous financial help support from the McKenna family the project can still sustain a full time project director and can continue to deploy volunteers as classroom and administrative coaches in Kathmandu and Hetauda. There are also multiple opportunities to teach short and long-term workshops and courses of two weeks to three months in all areas of the primary curriculum.

Our volunteers have found their zeal for education resuscitated and their creativity stimulated. Daily they see what can be achieved by teachers at the heart of educational enterprise. In time, we plan linkages between western educational institutions and our Nepali partners to promote sharing of strategies for combining reform at the school level with teaching training reforms.

To volunteer with Project INSPIRE in Nepal, please contact mary.l.mckenna@gmail.org or the Nepali coordinator pratisthaas@gmail.com





EDUCATION REAC

The Steve Sinnott Foundation and Manisha UK – MCWFN partnered project was initiated in Palpa, West Nepal in October last year. Within five months of its implementation, the project has achieved unprecedented success, offering for the first time quality education to children in this district and immense hope to their families and the local community. **Steve Tonry**, Chair of Manisha UK offers an assessment of the project.

Readers of *Engage* will no doubt have read Will Thomas's moving article in Issue 2, of our visit to Nepal in October 2009. This outlined the work of Mahendra Man Shakya, an ex-Gurkha and his dream to provide an education, via Manisha Child Welfare Foundation Nepal (MCWFN), to some of the most deprived children in Nepal, itself one of the poorest countries in the world.

In 2010, Manisha UK was established as a UK twin to MCWFN. Manisha UK promotes fundraising, volunteering and school twinning activities, in support of MCWFN. Manisha UK is also the interface to SSF, in a partnership that has borne tremendous fruits in its first year:

- The generous grant, made possible via SSF for Project Palpa in October 2010, has made a massive difference in delivering Mahendra's dream, to the first 3 of 16 schools currently supported;
- Volunteer numbers are up from 5 last year to 7 already planned for 2011;
- All 3 schools in Project Palpa are now twinned with UK schools, with another 5 UK schools identified for twinning, as the Project scope extends.

Project Palpa is making a real difference. Across all 3 schools currently being improved, pupil numbers are expected to increase, as the project to provide water tanks, electricity supply, medical centre, furniture and books proceeds, through to June 2011. Progress is summarised below:



Photo: Steve Tonry

HES HIGH PEAKS

Photo: Andy Langman



Photo: Steve Tonny



Pipal Danda School (125 pupils)

- The school was in very poor condition and deteriorating rapidly, so a new building is currently under construction. Foundations are now complete.
- A new teacher commenced 1/12/10.
- Mid-day meals were introduced in November, as pupils may walk 2 hours each way to school, previously with no food during the day and only a subsistence allowance at home. Children don't learn on empty stomachs!
- An increase in pupil numbers is anticipated as the project progresses.

Laharepipal (66 pupils) and Basantapur (45 pupils)

- Building improvements are planned to commence between February and March.

Other Activities

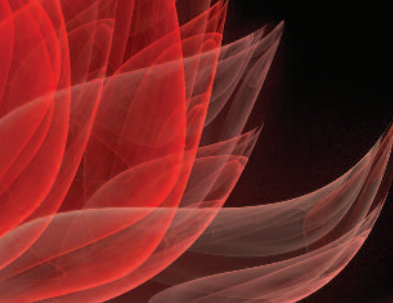
- MCWFN now has a small local office in Tansen, providing a communications hub for the Project Team, Manisha UK and Schools. Overheads are minimal, ensuring funds go directly to the schools and supporting community.
- Rollout of IT to schools planned, pending electricity supply provision.
- Teacher Education: Contact with Nepalese teaching unions is due to start this term. Teacher training strategy is being formulated.
- Health Education: Sessions are planned for all schools in March, targeting teachers, mothers' groups and parents.
- Part time Accountant and Project Manager appointed, to control expenditure and project work.
- Twinning between UK and Nepali schools is progressing, as are links with Nepali restaurants in the UK.
- Synergies with other Nepal-based charities are being explored.

Progress can be followed at www.mcwfnepal-uk.org, with links to the Palpa projects or at www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk/display/PROJECTS/Project+Nepal+-+an+SSF+partner+project

We are indebted to Steve Sinnott Foundation, TGET, other funders, volunteers and our UK twinned schools, for their generosity and support, which has made this project possible.



Photo: Steve Tonny

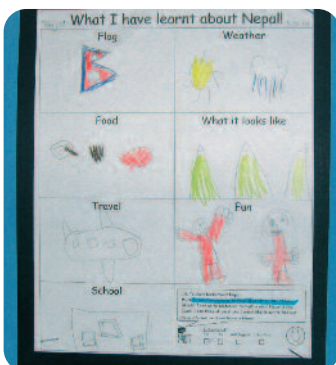
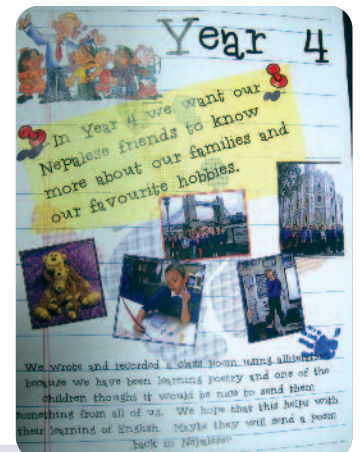


PARTNERS FOR CHANGE



The school twinning or partnership programme was started as a part of our project with Manisha Foundation in Nepal. Each project school in the Palpa district of Nepal was linked to one school in the UK with the intention of promoting diversity and global citizenship as well as supporting key areas of teaching and learning. The Steve Sinnott Foundation provides support to UK schools and their partner schools around the world in using the partnership as a learning tool and integrating issues of global development and cultural diversity. To get involved, please write to sam.tiwari@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk

"Creating a partnership with a school in Nepal has raised our children's awareness of their world and similarities and differences between different cultures." – Whitehall Infant School, UK



"The staff at Chalgrove Primary are very enthusiastic about the Nepal Project and see it as an opportunity to broaden the global awareness of our pupils." – Chalgrove Primary School, UK



"We are aiming to create a sustainable link with a school in Nepal that will allow us to learn as much from them as they can from us." – St. Paul's Primary School, UK.

ON THE SIDE OF THE CHILDREN

The UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report, launched on 1st March 2011, highlighted issues of education in regions where there is conflict. We asked four of our supporters with experience of conflict to write of their hopes and fears for the future and of their optimism for children learning together across the divides.

Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary of the Ulster Teachers' Union writes of risks still faced in Northern Ireland and the role of teachers in promoting peace and tolerance. **Rev Mark Wallace** of EducAid looks forward to a future of peace in Sierra Leone. **Audrey Osler**, Professor of Education at the University of Leeds stresses the

importance of Human Rights Education in avoiding conflict.

And for this page we reproduce an extract from the Richard Dimpleby lecture recently given by former children's laureate **Michael Morpurgo**, in which he spoke passionately of his hopes for the children of Israel and Palestine.

PALESTINE: "THEY WROTE SHALOM"

I think it was a documentary about the walls the Israelis were building on the West Bank and around Gaza that first gave me the idea for a story I might write. After a while it became a story I needed to write, had to write.

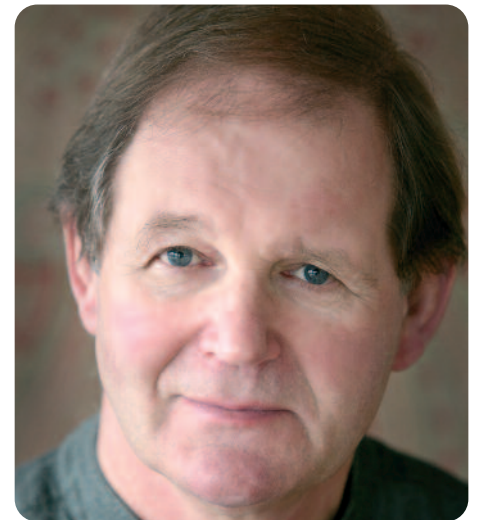
Difficult to imagine, but the Cold War had once seemed just as intractable as the conflict in the Middle East does now. Then one day in Berlin, quite suddenly it seemed at the time, people simply decided enough was enough and tore the wall down. Surely the same thing will happen one day in Israel and Palestine. So, in that hope, I wrote my story of the children living either side of the wall, their lives already scarred by tragedy. I called it *The Kites are Flying*.

Told in part by Max, a journalist visiting the Palestinian side of the wall for the first time, it is the story of Said, a young shepherd boy, who has not spoken a word since he witnessed the death of his brother, killed by an Israeli soldier while out flying his kites. Said becomes obsessed with the making of kites, and when the wind is right sends them off over the wall to an Israeli girl in a wheelchair – injured when her family car was blown up by Palestinians and her mother killed. Each of Said's kites has a message of peace written on it.

At the end of the story, Max is about to leave Said for the last time. Said is sitting on the hillside making his next kite, with his sheep all around him. This is what happens:

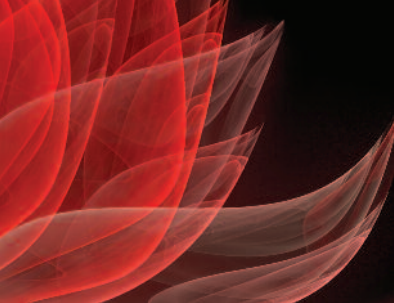
'I was just about organised and ready to film him again when Said sprang to his feet. The sheep were bounding away from him, scattering over the hillside. Then I saw the kites. The sky above the Israeli settlement was full of them, dozens of them, all colours and shapes, a kaleidoscope of kites. Like butterflies they danced and whirled around each other as they rose into the air. I could hear shrieks of joy, all coming from the other side of the wall. I saw the crowd of children gathered there, every one of them flying a kite. Then, one after the other, the kites were released, and left to the wind, and on the wind they flew out over the wall towards us. From behind us now, from Said's village, the people came running out as the kites began to land in amongst us, and amongst the terrified sheep too. Uncle Yassa picked up one of them. "You see what they wrote? Shalom," he said. "They wrote, Shalom. Can you believe that?"

'All around me Said's family and many of the other villagers, mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, began to clap, hesitantly at first. But I noticed then



that it was only the children who were whooping and whistling and laughing. The hillside rang with their jubilation, with their exultation. It seemed to me like a glorious symphony of hope.'

So, when on my return I was asked to give this lecture, I knew immediately that I would take this opportunity to speak out about the rights of all children everywhere. I'm sure some people will accuse me of taking sides in this conflict but let me make it quite clear that I am simply on the side of the children, all of them, from whichever country – for children in any conflict are always the innocent victims. It is not children who make wars.



NORTHERN IRELAND: NO MORE TROUBLES



Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary, Ulster Teachers' Union

Northern Ireland is today a very different place from what it once was. The "Troubles" are to a large extent, behind us and our politicians are grappling with the difficult business of working together for the good of all. The devolved Assembly has completed its first full term and politicians themselves would admit that it has been a huge learning curve. As we go to the polls in May to elect a new batch of Members to our Legislative Assembly (MLAs) it is perhaps a time to reflect not only on where we have come from, but on where we want to go.

During the "Troubles" schools were havens of peace and stability for generations of children, many of whom were living through trauma within their own communities. Teachers were accustomed to children coming into school and drawing pictures portraying tanks, guns and soldiers or writing essays about the riots they had experienced in their street the night before.

Teachers today rarely see any evidence of this type of activity, although that is not to say that we do not have our fair share of the "normal" type of traumas that are present in any society – domestic abuse, drugs, alcoholism to mention only a few.

Occasionally something will erupt to disturb the calm. The dissident threat is never far away and there have been a few instances recently which breached the unwritten rule that schools were to be exempt from political violence. Schooling was disrupted for several days recently when a bomb was left in the grounds of a school. Just as it was dealt with another bomb was left at a

school on the opposite side of the sectarian divide. Thankfully this has not been repeated, possibly because of the huge condemnation these attacks engendered from across the population.

The huge fear that we have is that the cuts to the budget that have come about as a result of the Coalition Government's austerity measures will create a situation where violence may well return to Northern Ireland. If people see no future then they may revert to paramilitary activity to fill the vacuum, particularly if there is a dismantling of the welfare state.

Teachers will, of course, continue to act as pillars to their communities and will try their best to provide a safe and secure environment within which tolerance and respect for others is promoted and the human rights of all are paramount.

SIERRA LEONE: FIRST, EDUCATE THE CHILDREN

Rev Mark Wallace, Trustee, EducAid



Sierra Leone is a country scarred by its long civil war. Thousands of children were affected, many as combatants, all were victims in one way or another. EducAid Sierra Leone is a charity set up by two British students, James Boardman and Swithun Mason, who visited the country at the height of the war in the mid-1990s. Faced with the enormity of the country's problems, they asked the question, 'What can anyone do to help these people?' The beginning of the answer was in helping to educate children: education would provide the route to a functioning, peaceful civil society and away from poverty and civil war.

EducAid founded its first secondary school in 2001, shortly after the ceasefire, when Miriam Mason-Sesay, a secondary school teacher based in Brixton, moved to the capital Freetown. From small beginnings, the charity now has three secondary schools and one primary school, and has just set up another secondary in partnership with another charity. We look after over 1,700 students, many from remote parts of the country. Our aim from the start was to make education completely free for the students: they do not wear uniforms (which marks us out from most other schools) and we provide lunch for all our students, as we identified both of these as potential barriers to entry. Students without accommodation can live on-site.

The schools have faced many challenges. Building a well-motivated, hard-working indigenous teaching staff was something we considered essential. In local state schools, the culture was one where teachers did not turn up if they were not paid, which was frequently the case. We developed a system of performance-related rewards which was very successful, and over the years we have invested in the team to the extent that all our schools are now managed from day to day by a local Leadership Team.

One major cultural issue we have tackled is how to encourage girls into education. We hired and trained some excellent female teachers, but also visited parents in their homes to make the case for educating girls. We have seen tremendous results with more and more girls joining us. We also face ever-present corruption: our students graduate from us only to face demands for bribes in order to pass university exams. In spite of all these challenges, we still manage to provide excellent education for around £10 per student per month.

For more information visit www.eduaid.org.uk and www.eduaid.blogspot.com



STORIES, POWER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Audrey Osler



Stories carry special power and enable us to communicate across boundaries, including the national, cultural, religious and sometimes the political. They carry special potency in situations of conflict and can make a significant contribution to education for peace and reconciliation. As a mature adult, I still recall the storyteller-librarian who visited my primary school, enchanting us with tales from the Caribbean and evoking new and vivid sounds, colours and music. She extended the horizons of us children, none of whom, I suspect, had yet ventured far from home or had any real idea how other people lived.

I've always sensed stories' power to address questions of justice, but it was only at the 2006 Commonwealth Education Ministers' Conference in Cape Town, South Africa that I experienced that power. The conference theme was 'Access to Quality Education' and I used the occasion to argue that an essential element of quality schooling is education in, for and about human rights. I

began my lecture with a story from the award-winning South African film *Yesterday*, which explores the impact of HIV/AIDS on one family. The expressions on the faces of the international audience convinced me of stories' powerful potential, enabling us to help identify with our fellow humanity anywhere.

The vision of human rights for all, encapsulated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, has a similar power. The UDHR came into being following the devastation of World War II, in which millions suffered not just at the hands of the enemy, but their own governments. It established that rights are not held by individuals through our citizenship or nationality, but derive from our very humanity. They belong to all, deserving and 'undeserving'.

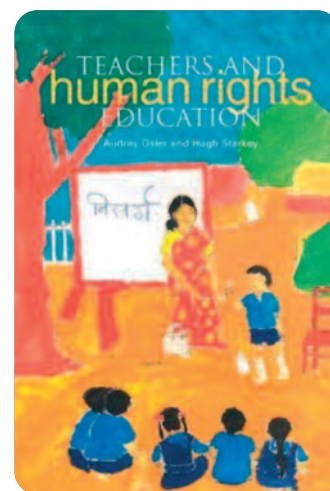
Education is an essential feature of the human rights project. It was envisaged the UDHR would be placed on every classroom wall. Under the UDHR and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child all children have not just the right to education but also to an education in human rights, which equips them to defend others' human rights. Yet the challenge remains of making human rights meaningful to people's everyday lives. This is where stories come in.

Many teachers tell the stories of inspiring characters, such as Martin Luther King, Mohandas Gandhi, Nelson Mandela or Aung San Suu Kyi. Learners can also

examine the articles of the UDHR to establish which rights these leaders fought for and which rights they found to be in tension in their struggles for justice. Films and books can be used to introduce other characters engaged in everyday struggles for rights, such as the heroine of *Yesterday*. Importantly, learners can also tell their individual and collective stories and struggles for justice. In this way, teachers are playing a vital role in realising justice and peace in the world.

Audrey Osler is Professor of Education, University of Leeds. She has published widely on social justice and human rights, including *Teachers, Human Rights and Diversity* (2005) and *Teachers and Human Rights Education* (2010), dedicated to the memory of Steve Sinnott.

***Yesterday* was produced by Anant Singh and directed by Darrell James Roodt.**



I am delighted that we are able to publish these four articles from people with experience of conflict and hope for the future of education. People have spoken of Steve's passionate belief that education systems and teachers have key roles in helping to resolve the world's conflicts and to challenge the prejudices and narratives they have generated. Speaking at the Holocaust Educational Trust in 2006 Steve said, "Education has a crucial role to play in contributing towards greater equality and justice

within society and in reminding us of the vulnerability of freedom".

I believe that both Audrey Osler's and Michael Morpurgo's books carry powerful messages of hope for the future. They echo the belief of the Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks that, "Groups can survive only on the basis of reciprocity and trust... the logic of cooperation". Audrey's book should be in every school staffroom and Michael's on every school curriculum.

Mary Sinnott, Director, Steve Sinnott Foundation

INVESTING IN EDUCATION FOR LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Baroness Verma, DFID Spokesperson in the House of Lords, shares her views on the importance of girls' education and the need to continue aid for education globally

Education is the great un-locker of not just potential, talent and aspiration it is the key to economic growth and prosperity, the key to stability and happiness. This fact is as relevant to those facing the problems that the turbulent economic conditions bring here in the UK as it is to the millions facing harsher hardships in the developing nations.

The facts are stark and worrying that whilst much progress has been made on the Millennium Development Goals, many countries are far from achieving them. 67 million children are still not receiving any education at all with the proportion of girls higher than boys.

There are many arguing that whilst we deal with financial constraints at home it is wrong to ring fence the budget for International Aid, I don't agree, I am pleased the Prime Minister has seen the wisdom in ensuring that our aid continues to support aid programmes that can make such positive differences to countries who without aid would fall further in to chaos and despair.

However in committing to safe guarding the aid budget poses a strong duty on the department to ensure that the best possible outcomes are being achieved and therefore it is right that the Secretary of State has asked for a review of all DFID funded bilateral and multilateral programmes. We must ensure we are achieving the maximum positive outcomes for those that are recipient of our funding.

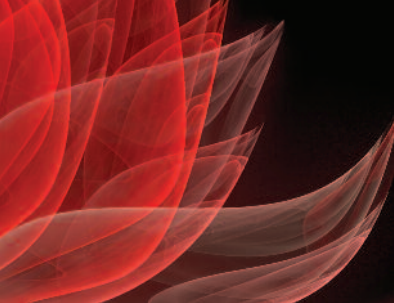
I suspect it is hard to imagine how tough it must be to grow up with no hope, in an environment that offers little comfort or affection, when I visit places where being born a girl is almost the gravest sin you can do, it is only right that we battle on for the voices of the voiceless.

Each time a disaster occurs in the world this country rises to the occasion and I am so proud that we lead the world in our efforts and often it is those with the least that dig into their pockets first. But if that goodwill is to really make a difference we must work with governments and local communities to ensure that the benefits are reaching everyone.

By putting girls and women at the heart of our priorities in DFID, we clearly wish to ensure that to see long term social and cultural changes that will enable greater access to better education and health services, the population needs to enjoy good quality education and skills learning.

Education is the greater deliverer of mobility in society and surely a right that everyone should be entitled too.





MDGS AND EDUCATION



Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for International Development and Shadow Deputy Prime Minister writing on the importance of education

Eleven years ago world leaders came together at the United Nations in New York and promised to ensure that by 2015 all children were able to complete their primary education. With only four years left and with 67 million children not in school there is an urgent need for increased action to reach that goal – Millennium Development Goal 2.

That action must come from governments in the developed and the developing world, from civil society, from business, from faith groups and from the public.

Not only is education a right that everybody is entitled to but it is also vital for tackling poverty. Education boosts jobs and economic growth, reduces inequality and combats malnutrition, maternal and infant mortality and HIV/Aids. Quite simply it is one of the best investments that can be made.

Labour recognised that when we were in government. We had pledged to spend £8.5 billion on education by 2015 and championed the importance of education on the world stage. The new government are currently reviewing all of the money the UK spends on international development. When they publish their reviews we want to see that commitment to education continued.

Development aid really does get results. The children who are sitting at school desks in Kenya, Mozambique and Rwanda are proof of that. That is why we have launched a campaign to make sure the government keeps the promise of spending .7% on aid by 2013. By keeping the .7/2013 promise the government can help ensure many more children can go to school.

With many developed countries failing to keep the promises they made to the poorest countries the Tory-led coalition Government must also lead

internationally and keep the pressure on to ensure children in the developing world do not suffer because of the global financial crisis.

The Government must also make sure that our aid is spent in a way that makes the biggest difference. Two thirds of out-of-school children are girls and one third are disabled. We must act specifically to tackle that. Sometimes, the smallest things can make the biggest difference, for example it has been shown that ensuring access to separate toilets for girls and boys has helped get more girls in school.

Our action must not just be about getting children into school but ensuring they continue their schooling and have the chance to fulfil their full potential all the way through to higher education. By helping developing countries make sure education is free for all, by training new teachers and providing them with the resources they need we can make sure that every child, no matter where they are born, has the education they deserve. The children of today are the engineers, teachers and leaders of tomorrow. We must support them now.

LEARNING BY NUMBERS

Statistics about progress towards the MDGs are often disputed. Some are upbeat about progress in Ethiopia. Others don't share that optimism. **Gemoraw Kassa**, Co-ordinator of the National Teachers Association in Ethiopia (Formerly the Ethiopian Teachers Association – ETA), offers his assessment

Despite the recent growth of its economy, Ethiopia remains one of the poorest countries in the world ranking 157 out of 169 countries on the recent Human Development Index. 53.7% of the 84.9 million population is illiterate. This illiteracy is widely responsible for exacerbated poverty and pandemics throughout the country. There are numerous challenges in achieving Education for All in Ethiopia, a few of which I discuss in this article.

From a GDP of USD 28.9 billion, only 5.5% is allocated to the education expenditure (World Bank, 2009) which accounts for a very small portion of the overall budget and falls massively short of what is needed to deliver quality education for all citizens.

Poverty forces many children to work rather than go to school. A former ETA study paper (2008) revealed that in 2001/2, out of 13 million children of school going age, over 11 million children aged 5-17 could not go to school because of being forced to work to sustain their families. There were 96,000 children in Ethiopia living with HIV/AIDS in 2003/04. Out of the estimated 4.6 million orphaned children in the country about 537,000 were orphaned due to HIV/AIDS. There are hardly any avenues for these children to pursue education.

Wide gender inequality in education further undermines the goals of Education for All. The Gender Parity Index for primary school is 0.77% and secondary 0.57%. This means that the number of boys is higher by 23% and 43% than girls in primary and secondary schools respectively. The GPI is even higher in tertiary education.

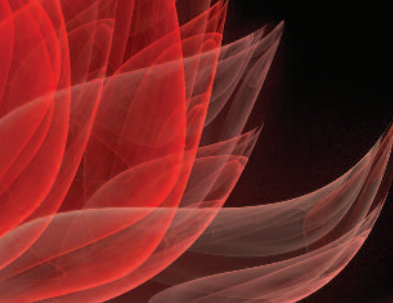
While there has been a surge in enrolment, 20% children drop out after their first year of school. At the same time, the quality of education has suffered in coping with the increased financial and human investment required for making education accessible to all. There is an imminent need for revising the education policy, developing new curriculum and providing training & professional development to teachers.

The second cycle of primary education (5-8) suffered from critical shortage of qualified teachers in 2003/04, when only 32.1% teachers were qualified. The pupil-textbook ratio on average was 4:1 and pupil-teacher ratio 70 while the standard in Ethiopia is 50 per classroom.

My organisation also believes that teacher dissatisfaction has a negative effect on the teaching and learning process. In its treatment of my organisation, the Ethiopian Government is in violation of UN International Labour Organisation conventions which guarantee rights of free association and collective bargaining. We believe that assuring teachers of a free and independent voice is essential to the kind of progress and development needed to secure education for all.

All these problems have weakened the Ethiopian education system and extended illiteracy dominance contributing to poverty, disease and injustice. That is why the core mission of the Steve Sinnott Foundation, the Education For All Campaign, is desperately needed in developing countries like Ethiopia. There is no better master key than education to change the miserable life conditions of the needy across the globe.





OUR GROWING COMMUNITY

The Steve Sinnott Foundation's website now hosts more than seventy education projects from all over the world, giving you the opportunity to engage with them and make a difference. **Sam Tiwari** presents an overview of some of these projects below.

The Steve Sinnott Foundation's website was developed not just as an online identity for the organisation but also as an online portal for sharing, learning and building a movement in support of the Millennium Development Goals for Education.

Within a year of its launch, the website has attracted over 70 projects from various parts of the world, each of them an effort to realise the objective of education for those children who miss out due to poverty, disability, disease, conflict and war.

While the Foundation partners selected projects to support and promote, it invites people and organisations across the world to use its website as an online platform to spread awareness about their initiatives and seek support for their cause. Here are just a few examples.

The Rural Development Centre in Belo, Cameroon cares for orphans and destitute children who have lost their parents to HIV/AIDS. The organisation provides education, health care and basic subsistence to 52 orphans across the Belo area; fieldworkers walk up to 3 hours to reach some of the children in the hilly Kom region. Two motorbikes would greatly enhance their ability to distribute books and medicines and see the children regularly. www.rudec.org



The CharChar Trust distributes educational materials to disadvantaged schools in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Uganda. They are looking for authors and illustrators to waive copyright for Southern Africa and donate stories for primary and secondary school children. We recently raised funds for the CharChar trust from Usborne Publishers in the UK.

www.thecharchartrust.org

In rural Ghana, the **Matassa Hope Foundation** works to provide basic health needs and education for vulnerable and orphaned children. They welcome donations of educational materials such as books, pens, pencils, notebooks and computers. They are also raising funds to construct a classroom block in Ave – Afiadenyigba that will cater for children from a number of surrounding villages.

www.matassahope.org



Visit the discussion forum at
www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk to comment on this article

- YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN



Cecily's Fund enables almost 10,000 Zambian children and young people, who have been orphaned or made vulnerable by AIDS, to go to school and college, and become peer health educators. They work through well-run Zambian partner organisations to buy and distribute shoes, uniforms, books and pens and contribute towards school fees, without which children are simply unable to go to school. They support them right through to the end of school, and offer some the opportunity to train as teachers or as peer health educators, running school workshops on HIV. Cecily's Fund is based in Oxfordshire and is keen to connect with schools and colleges across the country. www.cecilysfund.org



ALISOD works in Tanzania to promote education through providing free library services to the community and ICT (Information & Communication Technology) training free of cost. They have been selected by the US Naval Academy to receive a container of 25,000 books. 40% of these books are suitable for O-level and A-level students and 60% for College, University and general readers. They need to raise \$4500 to ship the container from the USA to Tanzania. www.alisod.org

The Integrated Rural development Society (IRDS) in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, India, runs a Girl Child Education and Development Centre for orphaned and HIV-AIDS affected girl children from remote villages around the district. They need sponsors to provide for the girls' schooling, lodging and vocational training for out-of-school girls. www.irdsngo.org

Our aim is for these and all other projects on our website to connect with each other, with potential donors and with teachers and educators around the world. Become a part of this worldwide online community at www.stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk and help support a project that appeals the most to you.

*To find out more write to
sam.tiwari@stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk*





Street to School

At Aviva, we're committed to making a difference in our communities. **Aviva Street to School** is our international community investment programme, which will provide support for street children projects in the UK and in our 27 other markets around the world.

Our customers buy insurance, savings and investments to look after themselves and their families. But sadly, many street children have no-one to protect and care for them.

Every year in the UK, it is estimated that 100,000 children run away* because they're unwanted, unloved or abused. Many are never even reported missing. That's why we've chosen to support **Railway Children**, one of the key charities working across the UK with these uniquely vulnerable children.

Aviva's Street to School programme believes these children should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential and together with **Railway Children**, is working to get them back into everyday life.

If you'd like to help too, you can by:

- donating directly via:
www.railwaychildren.org.uk
- texting the word 'AVIVA' to 70099 to donate £2 to Railway Children**
- signing our online petition at:
www.aviva-street-to-school.co.uk to help influence long-term policy change.

*Still Running, Children's Society, 2005.

**Texts cost £2 plus one message at your standard rate. A minimum of £1.48 will go to Railway Children. Railway Children Registered Charity No. 1058991.



Street
to School



aviva-street-to-school.co.uk

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