Global Action Week 2007
Education International
Activity Report

JOIN UP education rights now!
JOIN UP – Education rights now!

Note: all images have been provided by EI affiliates.
Education International (EI) and its affiliated unions are committed to promoting and upholding human rights and welcomed the focus of Global Action Week 2007. The theme ‘Join up: Education Rights Now!’ emphasised that education is not a privilege but a right.

Currently, many governments are not protecting the human rights of their citizens – 72 million children are out of school and a large number of adults are illiterate. Education International works together with their members and in cooperation with partners to guarantee Education for All for every child in all countries.

Our affiliates responded enthusiastically to the framework of Global Action Week by organising a wide range of activities. During Global Action Week teachers and union activists joined the “World’s Longest Chain” to send a message to world leaders about the importance education rights – and to remind politicians about their responsibility to provide education to every child.

We acknowledge and appreciate the teachers’ unions, parents, students and activists around the world who continue to show their support for and work to advance Education for All. The activities during Global Action Week are a celebration of the ongoing commitment throughout the course of the year.

Even though great advancements have been made there is still a long way to go. At Education International we will continue to assist teachers’ unions to carry out their essential advocacy work both at the community and national level all year around and in future Global Action Weeks.

Fred Van Leeuwen

General Secretary
Education International
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1. What is Global Action Week (GAW)?

Education International (EI) in cooperation with its partners at the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) has promoted Education for All (EFA) since 2001. Encouraged by positive feedback and promising results during previous Global Action Weeks, the coalition again invited teachers’ unions, educational workers, parents, students and civil society activists to lobby for action on pledges made by governments and international agencies on ensuring free, quality public Education for All.


2. 2007: “Education is a human right”

The ongoing process of advocating Education for All began in Dakar in 2000 and a target date of 2015 was set. In 2007, almost at the midpoint much work remains to be done and the campaign must overcome enormous challenges if EFA is to be realised on schedule. Currently, there are over 72 million children without access to education and there is mounting concern regarding the quality of education provision.

Article 26(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states that, “everyone has a right to education”. This highlights that access to education is not a privilege but a right, yet 60 years on millions of children around the world do not go to school and huge numbers of adults are illiterate. UNESCO* reports that achievements have been made worldwide towards ensuring Education for All. However the data masks disparity both within and between countries. Gender inequality, quantity at the expense of quality, and regionally variable enrolment and literacy rates all undermine the attainment of EFA. The chosen theme for 2007, “Education is a human right”, therefore aimed to remind governments and other stakeholders about their promises towards achieving Education for All by 2015.

Many unions around the globe organised or participated in Global Action Week activities and regional attendance was high with large numbers of student participating. For example in Kyrgyzstan over 160,000 children from some 711 education facilities institutions joined up to campaign for EFA. In Taiwan, the campaign was celebrated in 25 regions and in Zimbabwe each event was attended by 2,500 persons organized in all 10 union districts.

This year’s campaign was characterised by contextualised in-country campaigns whereby unions tailored suggestions received by the Global Campaign for Education to produce appropriate local slogans and activities and include important local stakeholders. The campaigns received significant local media coverage enabling people living outside the campaign areas to gain knowledge about EFA.

3. Teachers’ unions taking the lead

The Global Action Week would not be feasible without teacher unions’ strong effort in promoting, planning, implementing and driving the campaign. Just as in 2006 they took the lead advocating for direct attention and action on education rights. This was again facilitated by a wide network of local union branches. Unions strongly encouraged central stakeholders to seriously emphasize EFA goals through direct actions such as inviting representatives from educational institutions, ministries and governments to the campaign giving them the opportunity to listen to children’s demands for Education rights.

Important to the campaign’s impact was the strong cooperation between unions, international and local NGOs, UN agencies, donors and local ministries.

4. Global Action Week 2007: Main Activities

In line with previous years, the Global Campaign for Education proposed a number of activities that would be carried out before and during the events. In 2007 the main activities were divided in three stages:

1. Unions were encouraged to carry out local surveys prior to Global Action Week on the violation of the right to education.
2. During the week, one day was dedicated to the theme “Joining up Officials”. On this day campaigners had the opportunity to meet representatives from ministries and governments to ask them to sign pledges and promise a timely achievement of the EFA goals.
3. A “Big Chain Reaction” was initiated whereby children joined up for education rights by holding hands forming human chains, marching through the streets with educative banners and posters. Ideas included producing paper chains which were sent to governments and organising sessions with themed dances, songs and speeches.

More information about the main activities is available here: http://www.campaignforesducation.org/action/2007/action.html
5. Description of activities and impacts by country

In the framework of GAW, unions made pledges and increased advocacy activities for EFA goals. Their work was facilitated by the support and partnership of the national coalitions united under the banner of the Global Campaign for Education. In general, all actors involved in 2007 made tremendous efforts to ensure that the voices of teachers and advocates of quality Education for All were heard. The overview below reflects only activities and impacts member organisations reported to EI. If you want to read more about GAW 2007 activities please consult the Big Book on www.globalactionweek.com
**Activities by country**

### Albania

**Trade Union Federation of Education and Science of Albania (FSASH) & Independent Trade Union of Education of Albania (SPASH)**

Prior to Global Action Week 2007 the Albanian coalition (FSASH and SPASH) held a press conference, and news from the event was broadcast in the main Albanian newspapers and by some 15 TV channels. The principle topic for this year’s agenda was: “Friendly schools for every Albanian child”. During the week a workshop was organised and 65 representatives from the Ministry of Education participated along with 14 members from both Albanian trade unions, UNICEF and several local NGOs. The participants presented reports about planned educational activities from all main cities. They discussed results from last year’s event and pointed out the obligation to provide friendly schools to children with a special focus on dropout rates in urban and remote areas of Albania. The official number is 7,000, however it is estimated to be much higher. FSASH also gathered some 40 teachers and pupils from local schools for a meeting in Tirana. Information was available about union work in the Tirana area. Additionally, both unions and the Ministry of Education and Science organised a final meeting broadcast by local media. It was attended by local union leaders, pupils and education sector members, and summarised necessary measures for realising EFA goals in Albania. Activities for 2007 reflected increased participation by teachers, pupils and NGOs and better communication between unions, ministries and local education bodies.

### Argentina

**Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina (CTERA) & Confederación de Educadores Argentinos (CEA)**

In Argentina, CTERA, the CEA and other unions took part in the campaign under the theme ‘Join us to claim your right to education. The earlier the better!’.

Under CTERA’s guidance, teachers in different towns and areas created a report on the first two stages of early education - crèche and nursery school. The information collected was sent to the Marina Vilde research institute for analysis and was then included in a leaflet based on the campaign slogan. This leaflet was distributed by CTERA in all schools across the country, to the organisations participating in the GAW 2007, as well as at the international book fair in Buenos Aires.

A play called ‘Embrace education’ written by CTERA and other NGOs was performed in numerous schools across the country. At a regional level, children illustrated the theme of the right to education through wall-painting, workshops and group activities were held in marginalised areas, and children symbolised solidarity with EFA through a chain of paper-made human silhouettes.
Bosnia Herzegovina
Independent Trade Union of Primary Schools in Education of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ITUPE BiH)

This year’s motto in Bosnia Herzegovina was: “Join up! – Education is our future!” Activities for the event were carried out by all cantons. In one area, children reminded adults of obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and unions successfully involved school management and students and attracted strong media interest. There was also a distribution of posters especially designed for the occasion to all cantons and trade union boards in the Federation. The main event organised for the Action Week was an exhibition of art made by students from the Sarajevo Canton. Attended by representatives from trade union boards and other union representatives, this gathering focused on support for children without access to primary education and drop-outs. The exhibition was open for three days and welcomed many visitors and prizes were awarded to the winning entries. Another function performed by the union was asking for support, prior to and during Action Week, from central governmental bodies. Information surrounding the week's programme of events was circulated to national media outlets. The campaign achieved high visibility demonstrated by follow-up letters of support from local authorities and NGOs to the unions involved.

Brasil
Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores em Educação (CNTE)

The CNTE brought together 20,000 teachers from its member unions across the country for a march on government institutions in Brasilia. Starting at the city’s cathedral, thousands of education workers walked to the seat of government to call for quality EFA and rallied around the theme ‘Pay our Salaries or Pay the Price’ (“Pague el Piso o Pague el Precio”). The workers also demanded a new set of rules for 30 hour weekly teaching assignments. The event took place as part of the 8th National Week for the Defence and Promotion of Public Education as well as GAW 2007 (VIII Semana Nacional en Defensa y Promoción de la Educación Pública).

Burundi
Syndicat Libre des Travailleurs de l’Enseignement (STEB)

El affiliate STEB participated in GAW under the BAFASHEBIGE coalition for EFA, which were also supported by the Ministry of Education, UNESCO, and local and international NGOs. Held in mid-May so that all partners could participate, the campaign focused largely on the dissemination of research on the needs of schools in 3 provinces. Awareness was raised through a televised debate on the research findings and letters to decision-makers. Thereafter, a series of workshops on pre-school, secondary education, and the ‘brain drain’ took place and culminated in a conference that included, a critical analysis of Burundian education system, the state of play for EFA in Burundi, and the impact of macroeconomic policy on EFA. BAFASHEBIGE also organized a 2km long human chain of school children, teachers, and the local population that marched with banners and placards illustrating the results of the research. The Minister for Education, present amongst the faces in the chain, was then hosted by two local schools where he was shown working and learning conditions.
### Canada
**Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) & Fédération Nationale des Enseignantes et Enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ-CSN)**

In Canada, EI affiliates organised a variety of awareness raising and lobbying activities around the theme of Education for All. The Quebec confederation CSQ recruited the active participation of affiliates in sending 425 copies of a letter to the Minister for International Cooperation Josée Verner recalling the responsibilities of the Canadian government in achieving EFA. The Quebec FNEEQ-CSN disseminated an article to all of its 79 union affiliates on obstacles and reasons for hope in the struggle for EFA. The article was also posted on the FNEEQ website.

### Côte d’Ivoire

The four unions from the Ivory Coast cooperated in a joint campaign for Global Action Week. A pre-event report prepared by SNEPPCI described the current status of education provision in the Ivory Coast, and included the findings of a survey into attitudes towards education amongst members of the public. The major event took place on Tuesday 24th April where teachers, students, educational inspectors, parents, and politicians came together. Minister for Education, Gilbert Bleu-Lainé was among those who spoke, while Elie Jouen, representing EI, stressed that education must be recognised as a basic human right. A SNEPPCI film highlighting primary school provision throughout the country preceded a tour of student projects showing the difficulties of accessing quality education. The following day a press conference was held at SNEPPCI headquarters to maximise press coverage of Global Action Week and related education themes. The campaign was very useful for raising awareness amongst the parents of children out of school and obtaining the engagement of national authorities in the fight against illiteracy.
Democratic Republic Of Congo
Fédération Nationale des Enseignants du Congo (FENECO/UNTC) & Syndicat des Enseignants du Congo (SYECO)

EI’s affiliates in the Democratic Republic of Congo coordinated a highly publicised GAW with activities participated in by government, UN, NGO and union representatives. With the strong involvement of FENECO/UNTC and SYECO, events were held in the capital Kinshasa and in some of the country’s provinces. Launched by the Minister for Primary, Secondary and Professional Education at the dilapidated Wangata School in Kinshasa, the first activity of the week saw the Wangata students call on their Minister to address the deterioration of learning conditions. A workshop on providing free education also took place. This was followed by a televised debate covered by 7 national channels in which the role of Trade Unions, NGOs, education sector partners, UNESCO and UNICEF, Oxfam, and the Government was discussed. Finally, in the lead up to the march of a human chain of 1000+ students from 48 schools through Kinshasa, the offices of FENECO and UNESCO presented the 2007 World Report on EFA at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ethiopia
Ethiopian Teachers’ Association (ETA)

ETA followed the motto, “Join up For Education Right now!”, and organised two major events to encourage politicians to make personal commitments towards EFA goals, such as addressing access to education for adults and pre-school children. On 27th April, government officials, representatives from unions, teachers and students from eight schools attended the activities in Dale-Denbel, just north of Addis Ababa. Action Week material from ETA, EI and local schools were distributed and it was agreed that school is an important place for highlighting EFAIDS issues and for achieving EFA goals. The participants agreed on helping children to access quality public education, equipping schools and to lobby for further achievements in EFA. On 28th April a second gathering was organised in Awassa city attended by religious leaders, elders, parents, teachers and students. In addition to topics raised in Dale-Denbel it was mentioned how HIV/AIDS causes high drop-out rates, which is a barrier for the achievement of EFA goals. The participants underpinned the importance of continuous training for teachers. Several resolutions were made, such as an extension of ETA campaigns to rural areas; ETA embarking on family planning initiatives; advocating government action on EFA goals with a special focus on girls, disabled children and those affected by HIV/AIDS.
Finland
Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ)

OAJ contributed by producing an eight page supplement to its union magazine underpinning problems that hinders the implementation of EFA throughout the world. It was provided to 120 000 teachers, which covers 96% of all teachers in the country, and to members of parliament along with other decision members on national and local level. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs used this brochure during training seminars of EFA. Furthermore, the union continued its good work throughout the year such as hosting a seminar on EFA with participation from 30 NGOs.

Gabon
Syndicat des Enseignants de l’Education Nationale (SENA)

On April 24, SENA as a part of the national coalition (CONCEG) organised a press conference to launch Global Action Week in the Literacy Centre in Nkembo, Libreville. They also gathered testimonies from some 170 individuals during the week on the situation regarding education in Gabon. On April 27th they held the Big Chain Reaction at a public school in Libreville where 2,300 students and members of the public joined up for education.

Georgia
Educators and Scientists Free Trade Union of Georgia (ESFTUG)

Prior to Action Week, ESFTUG held a peaceful demonstration in front of the State Chancellery with the stated theme of; “Education is a Human right”. Later during Global Action Week it hosted students from a conflict area called Gali for one day. Knowing that many children in Georgia do not have school books and that poor quality in public schools causes few entrants at Universities, ESFTUG also arranged a meeting attended by its own representatives, the media, NGOs and school councils. During the session a documentary reflecting the reality of Georgia’s education system was shown together with a presentation of pictures made by children. The participants saw the importance of a coalition and agreed on a higher degree of cooperation. An exhibition of children’s paintings was held with awards for the winners. To further spread awareness about Global Action Week, activity summaries along with children’s letters were published in local newspapers.
**Germany**

**Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft (GEW)**

GEW was involved in the funding, planning and implementation of several activities in Germany during Global Action Week 2007. A large event attended by over 100 children and covered by media giants such as Reuters, APTV and DPA Radio, focused on giving a message to the G8 for more funding for EFA. The children held hands in solidarity and symbolically pushed an inflatable globe through the Brandenburg Gate. Additionally, thousands of paper-chains were delivered from other countries asking the German chancellor for more action. In Leipzig over 150 children with the cooperation of teachers and adults organised a “Join Up” event close to a busy market area raising awareness on the importance of EFA. With banners saying; “We need education – Now!” they sent a message to politicians asking for more action.

**Ghana**

**Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) & Teachers and Educational Workers’ Union (TEWU)**

As a part of the national coalition both unions participated during Action Week under the theme “Join Up For Education Rights Now” concentrating on the new national Education Reforms for Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education. The event was launched in Accra by the Director of Education, Sports and Science on behalf of the Ghana Education Service. An important activity during the celebration of Global Action Week took place in Ankamu Community in Gomoa District in the Central Region attended by politicians, traditional rulers and educationalists where the coalition presented findings from a research carried out prior to GAW presenting the district’s poor results in basic education. A Member of Parliament then promised to find solutions for ensuring children in Gomoa district have access to quality education. The event came to a climax when teachers and school children joined up for a “Big Chain Reaction” in Accra presenting a petition to participating Ministers and to Ghana’s parliament.

**Haiti**

**Confédération Nationale des Éducateurs d’Haïti (CNEH)**

The CNEH, in partnership with the Haitian UNESCO representation, staged a variety of high-impact events for GAW 2008, which, in order to coincide with May Day and the National Day of Agriculture, was rescheduled for the first week of May. The campaign was launched at a girls’ school in Port-au-Prince by CNEH General Secretary Jean Lavaud Frederick and the Minister for Education. The following day EFA activists in GAW T-shirts filed past thousands of their compatriots who had descended on the capital for International Workers Day. The occasion was also used to show photos of the dilapidated conditions of many schools in the country. Activities received wide media coverage, with coordinators of the campaign having been inundated with press enquiries in the days leading up to GAW. The final and most feted moment came when the CNEH delivered the EFA report to MPs in Parliament, with each union representative present at the handover of the dossier accompanied by a child from his constituency.
JOIN UP – Education rights now!
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India
All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF)
& All India Association for Christian Higher Education (AIACHE)

Both AIPTF and AIACHE had important roles in India’s coalition activities. Global Action Week 2007 events took place in 13 states and an estimated 5,000 people participated including Members of Parliament, children from many states, lawyers, activists, educationalists and teachers. The coalition pushed forward several demands during Action Week: recognition of education as a fundamental right, the banning of child labour and child trafficking, a minimum spend of 6% GDP for education, provision of scholarships, school material and free EFA, proper working conditions for teachers, 220 teaching days a year and 40:1 pupil/teacher ratio, a community monitoring system on education, gender equality and the establishment of a National Commission on Education. Teachers, women and school dropouts were invited to the AIACHE centre where education rights for girls, continuous training for teachers and policies to reduce dropout rates were discussed. The various stakeholders’ responsibilities for implementing EFA were underpinned, especially each parent’s and citizen’s roles. Students shared their point of view by singing songs on the theme and pledged to support the cause. AIPTF invited officials to schools and meetings and urged for press releases on the subject by local media. The union also printed wall posters in English.

Ireland
Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT)
& Teachers’ Union of Ireland (TUI)

In a letter sent to the Irish Minister of State, Mr Conor Lenihan, IFUT encouraged representatives from the State of Ireland to join up for education rights in the framework of Global Campaign for Education. IFUT also emphasised the importance for governments to keep their promises on education and therefore invited the Minister to attend a conference in Brussels on 2nd May 2007, which had this topic on the agenda. A similar letter was also sent by TUI to the Irish Minister for Education & Science, Ms. Mary Hanafin. Members of the Irish Coalition of GCE attended the launch of Global Action Week 2007 whereby EFA was discussed with Minister Lenihan. Students and teachers celebrated the event by creating hand made card chains illustrating the year’s theme “Join Up”, and sending them to the GCE coalition in Germany where such material was used for awareness raising on EFA prior to the G8 summit. GAW promotional material was distributed to all national youth and student councils (members of the Irish coalition) and the coalition’s website was upgraded allowing for schools and groups to register.
Kiribati
Kiribati National Union of Teachers (KNUT)

During Global Action Week, KNUT focused on “Education as a Human Right” through a wide range of events. 13 Primary schools from Tawara Island participated and were responsible for their own activities. Each school had for instance designed posters for central buildings. This gained much attention displaying brief and conceptive slogans such as; Send us to school; Parents and guardians provide us with basic needs for Education and Government provide us with well qualified teachers. On 25th April, a major gathering was arranged in Bairiki, Tarawa, where all schools presented their contributions urging for immediate and specific approaches to meet EFA goals. A representative from the Ministry of Education said the government and leaders from local organizations took on board the shared concerns of teachers, pupils and parents and would speed up EFA initiatives. The union also sponsored a radio channel for broadcasting a campaign program every day throughout the week. This catered to communities on remote islands, enabling them to participate and increased their knowledge about EFA.

Korea (Republic of)
Korean Teachers and Education Workers’ Union (KTU) JFON-GYO-JO

The union together with local NGOs and coalitions actively took part in activities for Global Action Week 2007. In March, a law of No Discrimination against Disabled People was passed as a result of hard work by KTU and volunteers. They established night schools for students with disabilities and put in place shared transport thanks to government funding. Members from KTU and the Coalition for Disabled People’s Education Rights (CDPER) also demonstrated the need for national legislation on the rights of disabled people to education by coordinating a sit-in strike for two weeks in the Building of the National Rights Committee and on 14th April they staged a rally in front of the National Assembly in which 3,000 people participated. As a result they succeeded in passing a new law supporting the right to education of people with disabilities at the National Assembly on April 30 2007 and furthermore urged the Ministry of Education and Education Board in each city to allocate necessary resources for its implementation.
Kyrgyzstan
Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Kyrgyzstan (TUESWK)

To mark Global Action Week, TUESWK organized activities in preschools and secondary schools all over the country with the theme; “Chain of real people joining hands”. EI material was translated into local languages and 3000 copies of posters and flyers in two selected languages were printed and distributed to schools resulting in 169,397 participating children from 711 education facilities. Furthermore, a drawing competition was organised for children visiting schools together with the creation of paper chains illustrating the selected Action Week theme and winners were awarded with prizes and gifts. The events were followed by the Ministry of Education and Science, local educational boards and participating teachers. Local newspapers published articles with information from the events including pictures of children forming human chains holding homemade paper chains and “Join Up” posters. Also radio and TV channels broadcasted the activities.

Liberia
Liberia National Educational Workers Union (LINEWU) & National Teachers’ Association of Liberia (NTAL)

The two EI affiliates under a national coalition (LETCOM) successfully involved numerous students and teachers in the Liberian Global Action Week. A press release launched the week by highlighting the planned events. In response to the EFA framework the coalition had designed three objectives to be accomplished: Writing off examination fees for grade 6; a yearly payment of education tax of $10 Liberian Dollars by gainfully employed residents and decentralizing the current payment system for Public School Teachers. Banners and posters reflecting these issues were distributed throughout the country and a parade was organized whereby teachers, students, coalition members, community leaders and parents marched through the streets of Monrovia carrying placards bearing the three objectives. They formed a human chain to illustrate that education is everybody’s right. This event was followed by a gathering at the University of Liberia attended by hundreds of children, local NGOs and other partner organisations where the dual themes of access to and quality of education was addressed particularly. The lack of trained teachers and the increasing numbers of private schools were highlighted. EI’s African coordinator, Emanuel Fatoma, was present and used the opportunity to inform the audience about EI’s commitment to Global Action Week, GCE and the relevance of establishing strong national coalitions. Furthermore the unions visited many schools and communities to talk about the three objectives.
Mali
Syndicat National de l’Education et de la Culture UNTM (SNEC/UNTM)

Trade unionists from SNEC/UNTM took part in a variety of activities organised by the Malian Coalition of CSOs for Education (COSC). The Global Action Week and the UNESCO slogan ‘Join Up for Education, Reach for Rights Now!’ (‘engagez-vous davantage pour le respect des droits éducatifs maintenant’) was embraced at both the national and regional level, with the COSC engaging politicians directly and raising awareness on EFA amongst the broader population. Launched on 24 April at the Labour Exchange in Bamako alongside representatives from the Education Ministry, the 2007 EFA campaign saw solidarity actions such as the distribution of learning materials to National Institute for the Blind in Mali, a rally in the capital, radio shows on EFA, and lobbying through the submission of a report on EFA to the Minister for Education. These actions were supported by a series of regional mobilizations and lobbying activities in the towns of Ségou and Mopti. In some of the northern regions of Mali the COSC presented some of the questions relating to gender and EFA through theatre and radio. Having obtained commitment towards working towards EFA from many institutional figures, the COSC promised to continue to campaign to make EFA a reality in Mali.

Malaysia
National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP)

In Malaysia, this year’s activities were celebrated at three events. 650 children and 40 teachers “Joined Up For Education Right Now” through an art competition with the objective of raising awareness among children, especially girls, on education being a fundamental right. The school principal referred to the national agreement on free compulsory education in primary school from year 1 to 6 and it was stressed that many parents still keep their children home. NUTP conducted a visit to an indigenous settlement where 540 children, 30 teachers and 40 parents joined the activities. Children where informed about Global Action Week and learned its reason through an art competition with the theme “We Must Go To School” and by creating paper chains to symbolize that right. In a dialogue with union representatives 106 parents shared their concerns on indigenous peoples/children issues and later received information about children’s rights to education and how parents can be a part of this. A special assembly was held for 900 pupils and 60 teachers briefing about Global Action Week’s objectives and the participants were given a global overview regarding access to education.
Morocco
Syndicat National de l’Enseignement (SNE-FDT)
& Fédération Autonome de l’Enseignement (FAE-UGTM)

Global Action Week had a good start in Morocco and all activities were well attended. First there was an opening session in Meknes marking the importance of EFA. About 800 people attended with representatives of the Government (Director of Academy, the local Ministry of Education), parents’ organisations, students and representatives from SNE-FDT and FAE-UGTM. For the first time in Morocco, a march to lobby for universal education was planned. However, due to rainfall, the event was replaced by a visit to a secondary school nearby the conference hall. The second activity took place in Fez attended by 500 people, again with broad representation from the GAW coalition and other stakeholders in education. First, there were some speeches and later a march via the local offices of SNE and FAE to the local government’s Education office. The events were also attended by EI’s representative, Gaston De La Haye.

Netherlands
Algemene Onderwijsbond (AOb
& CNV Onderwijs (CNV-O)

As a part of the Dutch coalition both CNV-O and AOb encouraged teachers and children to carry out activities in the name Global Action Week. The launch took place in The Hague and was attended by teachers, students, coalition representatives, Minister Koenders of Development Co-operation, by Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands and by members of the public. The Netherlands is a major contributor to EFA globally, the coalition asked the minister to encourage other nations to support the campaign for EFA. Together with some one hundred children the princess rolled a big inflatable globe across a square as a reminder for the MDG; “every girl and boy in school”. During the week, one group of pupils joined up for education rights in Groningen by marching through the streets dressed up in colourful t-shirts, carrying posters and signs” They also pushed a big inflatable globe in front of themselves and afterwards it was fully covered with signatures from people that had participated in the event. Similar events were carried out by teachers and children from other areas.
Niger
Syndicat National des Enseignants du Niger (SNEN)
& Syndicat National des Agents de la Jeunesse, de l’Education, de la Culture, et des Sports (SYNAJECs)

Niger affiliates SNEM and SYNAJECs, in alliance with the national coalition for EFA, began the week with a large press conference announcing the week’s activities and taking stock of developments since GAW 2006. After a conference on the theme of ‘Commitments made towards schools and schooling – results after 2007’ the coalition then organised a mass visit of 80 MPs and education ministry representatives to 10 different schools in the capital Niamey, during which the visitors were briefed by children on life in Niger’s schools. The week ended with a human chain and rally in the national stadium in Niamey, where over 2,000 children marched before 50 state officials: These children called loud and clear for free and quality public education and adequate financing of the education system in Niger.

Nigeria
Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT)

This year’s event was arranged in May due to elections and school vacations in April. Consequently, more than 2,000 people participated, such as 500 children and 250 teachers from Abuja schools organized by the Civil Society Action Coalition on EFA (Federal Ministry of Education, NGOs, multilateral and civil society organizations and all national officers from NUT). The main activities were a Ministerial Press Briefing, a live transmission from GAW on Nigerian television and roundtable events. A funwalk ended up at the Women Development Centre in Abuja where the round table features were held. Students from a local boys’ college sang a theme song, coalition members shared their view on EFA and papers on the theme were presented by invited professors. In celebration of GAW 2007 an essay and poetry competition had previously been held and winners were awarded prizes on behalf of NUT. During the week school children and National officers were given T-shirts and caps illustrated with the GAW theme. The activities had a positive impact enabling the government and other stakeholders to assess current efforts towards achieving EFA and the MDGs by 2015.

Philippines
Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT)
Teachers’ Organisation of the Philippine Public Sector (TOPPS)

In the Philippines both of EI’s affiliates took part in the Global Campaign for Education. The chairman of the ACT used the opportunity to remind the Philippine government about their commitments to achieve EFA by 2015. Referring to this year’s campaign demands ACT called for a legal promise of free and compulsory primary education for all; 6 percent of GDP to be spent on education, with half of this to be used for basic education and for 20 percent of the national budget allocated to education. TOPPS, in coordination with the Local Department of Education, conducted a regional campaign in Zamboanga City and during a Teacher’s Forum the representatives from these agencies discussed issues and proposals raised by teachers and other participants of the campaign.
Poland
Związek Nauczycielstwa Polskiego (ZNP)

This was ZNP’s third participation in Global Action Week, and actively involved children, teachers, parents and guests all around Poland to “Join up For Education Rights”. The activities focused on creating greater awareness among local authorities on GAW. ZNP’s union newspaper was for example sent to the Minister of Education. EI material was translated into Polish and sent to some dozen schools and educational institutions, and detailed information was available on the union’s website and on a large internet portal. Just as last year, pupils from kindergartens were eager to participate demonstrating that teachers recognise the importance of informing children about their educational rights as early as possible. Furthermore, a school joined eTwinning, which is an online collaboration between European partner schools. The program also focuses on Global Action Week and as a result the Polish school sent an open letter to the German Chancellor asking her to remind world leaders of the importance of Educational rights and asking them to keep their promises by allocating more resources to educational sectors. Several schools invited authorities, officials, celebrities and union representatives enabling children to ask questions about the campaign. The children also encouraged them to sign pledges for supporting GAW. Extensive media coverage on the campaign led to increased awareness nationwide about the campaign.

Spain
La Federación de Enseñanza de Comisiones Obreras (FE.CC.OO.)

The FE.CC.OO and its trade union and NGO partners in the Spanish Coalition successfully secured the participation of 170,000 students from over 700 colleges around the country. The coalition received endorsement of their campaign from over 100 politicians. Through FE.CC.OO’s coordination, human chains took to the streets in 173 towns, 16 autonomous communities to lobby for EFA. Adopting the slogan “¡Únete, por el derecho a la educación, ya!” (Support the right to education, join us now!), students, education workers and activists wrapped themselves symbolically around famous buildings and landmarks in major cities.

Sweden
Swedish Teachers’ Union (Lärarförbundet)

During Global Action Week 2007 the Swedish union, together with other organizations, emphasised the importance of Education for All by sending a letter to the Swedish Minister for International Cooperation highlighting the importance of rich countries’ immediate commitment towards achieving the MDGs by 2015. It was therefore emphasized that rich countries should target EFA by adding more resources to the cause. Lärarförbundet also informed their local branches on GAW in the union’s electronic forum by offering them EI material. Additionally, GAW material received from EI was sent out and was used in union activities all across Sweden to call for attention on EFA. In Norrkoping there was an Open Forum lasting for two days where participants discussed how to rally interest in EFA events, whilst in Hoor members participated in a poster exhibition.
Swaziland
Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT)

The Global Action Week 2007 was promoted by local media and became a success both regionally and nationally. Prior to events, representatives from 12 local SNAT branches conducted research at school level to find out how many children do not receive education and why. One reason is that government funds mostly vulnerable and orphaned children leaving many aside. The results showed that children are left out of school due to diverse factors including child abuse, early pregnancies, poverty, and lack of educational infrastructure. A union magazine and a special newsletter on EFA were produced.

At the regional level SNAT involved learners, teachers, parents, police, street vendors, government officials and other stakeholders in dialogue on topics such as “Education as a Human Right” and encouraged them to organise marches to highlight slogans such as “Solidarity in Education”; “Join up for Education Rights Now”; “Every Child needs a teacher” and “Educate to end poverty”. On 27th April SNAT organised a national event (an open talk show) with the participation of 100 campaigners from schools, parents, Parliament, the National Curriculum Centre and the Ministry of Education. It was launched by SNAT’s General Secretary who applauded the campaign for including regions in GAW 2007 ensuring a greater awareness of Education Rights. Campaign t-shirts were distributed for the occasion and students from high school performed a drama. The event resulted in a pledge from a retired teacher to open an adult literacy program in the Hhohho region. The panels encouraged the union to keep working for EFA by 2015 by actively engaging government and teachers.

Taiwan (R.O.C.)
National Teachers’ Association (NTA)

Regional attendance in Taiwan was high with 25 regions participating with the main goal of demanding the Government to implement EFA goals. The main activities were a meeting, “Sign-up for children around the world” attended by representatives from 25 regional teachers’ associations. Additionally, two children were chosen as spokespersons for the campaign and newspapers did interviews. NTA planned an “Official Back to School Day” inviting representatives from administration and legislators to join hands with students and promise their action for EFA by signing pledges in front of the children. They promised to raise the education budget, improve teachers’ working conditions and increase pre-school education.

Togo
Fédération des Syndicats de l’Éducation Nationale (FESEN)

In Togo, FESEN ran two main activities in the northern Togolese city of Dapaong with the following GAW coalition partners: 3 national union confederations, large international NGO partners such as Care, Plan and Action Aid, and a handful of grass-roots organizations from Dapaong. A press conference that was well publicised by state and private radio and television was followed by a rally attended by activists highlighting EFA slogans. FESEN reports that the 7,000 strong march through the city was well received by the state authorities and the local population.
Uganda
Uganda National Teachers’ Union (UNATU) & National Union of Educational Institutions (NUEI)

The Ugandan Global Action Week 2007 was launched in Teso sub-region at Tubur Primary School by UNATU in conjunction with NUEI, UNICEF, WFP and several local organizations. The theme for 2007 was “Go to School, Stay in School, Back to School” and over 2,000 children and 1,500 community members, 5 district officials, and regional Members of Parliament got involved. Global Action Week was launched in Teso to highlight the high level of out of school children and low completion rates in the region. Awareness about the campaign was spread to UNATU branches countrywide by publishing a newspaper supplement in the ‘Weekly Observer’. Pre-launch activities were important to the success of GAW and involved many actors. Campaign material was produced such as T-shirts, caps and posters which helped to mobilise communities, school children, civil society organisations, leaders and other stakeholders. A novel and highly effective approach led to children identifying other children who were out of school. The main events were an exhibition and distribution of campaign material, the planting of a “campaign tree”, a presentation by girls highlighting their right to education and protection from abuse and other performances such as speeches, songs and poems in support of Education For All. In addition there was a session where teachers from other parts of the countries shared their experiences and the presentation of school materials to children. Participants and representatives promised to follow up their commitments towards EFA goals such as promoting teacher professionalism and ethical behaviour, protection of girls, strengthening of local structures, psychological support to children and teachers, advocacy for compulsory school attendance and establishing coordination mechanisms between stakeholders in achieving educational rights.

United Kingdom
National Union of Teachers (NUT-UK) National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) Scottish Secondary Teachers’ Association (SSTA)

On 2nd May 2007 a Donor Conference was held in Brussels for ministers from Northern countries to make funds available for achieving EFA goals. EI invited teachers’ unions to urge their Ministries to attend the meeting and to discuss with them the importance of additional financial support for education. To celebrate the Global Campaign for Education, EI’s affiliates in UK therefore signed a letter from the GCE UK coalition that was sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer requesting a meeting prior to 2nd of May. The coalition hoped to work together with the UK government to table a shared EFA agenda and referred to the worldwide lack of teachers and several immediate needs such as more aid for basic education and core education packages for poor families. The coalition held an initiative during Global Action Week to unite teachers and children both nationally and internationally under the theme “Send My Friend to School”. The coalition urged the Chancellor to accelerate initiatives as there was a growing concern among supporters that more should be done. During the GCE UK Action Week, NUT supported a parliamentary seminar in the House of Commons, entitled “Making Them Keep Their Promises”, attended by other coalition members and 20 MPs. During the event several speeches were held outlining current results and future challenges by among others the General Secretary of NUT, a TV presenter and young campaigners who shared their experience from education projects in Kenya and Ghana.
United States of America
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
& National Education Association (NEA)

The Global Action Week 2007 was widely celebrated in the United States. AFT and NEA supported the campaign by urging teachers and students to take action in classrooms and schools. In the union newsletter, NEA invited teachers to help students in their schools to make posters for addressing Education for All as a human right. Both unions also promoted the Global Education Week 2007 on websites specifically created for the occasion.

Zambia
Zambia National Union of Teachers (ZNUT)

In Zambia, EI’s affiliate in collaboration with the Zambian Education Coalition involved local people by broadcasting two TV programs presenting discussions with the theme “Education as a Human Right” in two local languages. Other activities, such as a meeting between college Head teachers from Chaliambana College, the Director and the National Coordinator for Gender was held to discuss the importance of Education in society. The Minister of Education supported a march by Lusaka female students and addressed them at their school. Union representatives also met teachers living with HIV/AIDS thereby honouring their efforts to fight the pandemic. A second meeting was held for Chaliambana College teachers opened by ZNUT’s General Secretary and attended by union representatives.
Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe Teachers’ Association (ZIMTA)

In Zimbabwe the attendance during Global Action Week was particularly high because ZIMTA organised activities to mark the campaign in all 72 union districts and in all 10 ZIMTA provinces. Each province had some 2,500 participants while the national event in Gutu district saw some 5,600 people taking part. During the campaign, ZIMTA members, teachers, parents and learners had the opportunity to advocate for Quality Education for All to authorities in the Zimbabwean Education system with the theme: “Join Up for Education Rights Now”. The events were attended by educational stakeholders such as Ministry of Education, several central NGOs and civil organizations. Their presence strongly motivated activists to speed up work for EFA. The ceremonies were designed to follow a similar pattern in all provinces whereby each event was attended by a ZIMTA member. People walked through town centres carrying banners and posters with slogans such as, “Mend the broken chain”; “We want better schools”; “Give us textbooks, relevant syllabi and willing teachers”; “Take our education to Greater Heights” “Ensure Equal Education For All”; “Teachers, cry for incentives” and gathered for a central event. Invited guests could see dances, songs, poetry and drama performed by students from various schools. The children handed over dossiers to authorities and Joined Up for Education Rights by holding hands with each other to symbolise their need for Education. ZIMTA representatives also held an advocacy speech at every campaign location. Moreover, the Action Week through strong coalitions between participating institutions and children was successful in receiving the authorities’ attention.
6. Conclusion

In more than 40 countries, prior to, during and after Global Action Week, a wide variety of actions took place. This report has illustrated how activities carried out in the context of Global Action Week remind governments about their responsibilities and influence them to undertake actions for achieving Education for All by 2015. The impact of Global Action Week was heightened by unified national coalitions bringing together teachers’ unions, civil society organisations and governments. Educational International also works together with the Global Campaign for Education and looks forward to consolidating this partnership in future actions.

When teachers, students and all other stakeholders together joined up for education they left a strong message which continued to have impacts even after the closure of Global Action Week. We at EI would therefore like to encourage everybody to continue working for education rights throughout the year. Although we are moving towards Education for All, we are not there yet.
Global Action Week 2008
The World’s Biggest Lesson

In 2008, the Global Campaign for Education in partnership with EI will celebrate Global Action Week from 21st-27th April. The theme is: “Quality Education to End Exclusion”. Millions of children, teachers and campaigners from all over the world will have the opportunity to invite politicians BACK TO SCHOOL, to participate in the World’s Biggest Lesson on the 23rd.

EI invites all its affiliates to follow the progress of Global Action Week 2008 and to keep up to date with other events taking place year round in the framework of Education for All. Further information and resources are available on the websites below:

Education International:

Global Campaign for Education:
http://www.campaignforeducation.org
The Global Campaign for Education promotes education as a basic human right, and mobilizes public pressure on governments and the international community to fulfill their promises to provide free, compulsory public basic education for all people; in particular for children, women and all disadvantaged, deprived sections of society.

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Education International is the Global Union Federation representing 30 million teachers and education personnel from pre-school to university in 169 countries and territories.

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