

United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)

NEWSLETTER FROM SOUTH ASIA

Message from the Regional Secretariat

UNGEI VISION

"A world where all girls and boys are empowered through quality education to realize their full potential and contribute to transforming societies where gender equality becomes a reality" (adopted by the UNGEI Global Advisory Committee in June 2008 in Kathmandu, Nepal)

*A*s I was preparing the text for this newsletter, I noted the trend towards maturity and indigenisation among most country UNGEI partnerships in South Asia. For example, the young champions' initiative has been integrated in the Bangladesh government plan as a strategy to promote secondary education, recommendation from studies conducted under UNGEI in India are in the process of being incorporated in the workplans of states where partnerships exist, a plan for partnership management is under implementation in Nepal, while an external evaluation of the young champions' initiative is planned in Pakistan. The Afghanistan partnership struggles to remain relevant in an environment of active conflict rising insecurity and rapid turnover among partners.

The regional secretariat has supported country partnerships in the last few months through capacity building in Afghanistan and the Maldives, technical support in knowledge management to Bangladesh, technical and financial support for an upcoming evaluation of the young champions' model in Pakistan and promoting South-South linkages for Bhutanese youth through a study visit to Nepal to learn about youth managed initiatives such as the well-known radio programme, "Chatting with my best friend."

We are also trying to revive the regional UNGEI partnership by re-establishing linkages with some of the partners including Plan International, and developing joint programmes with regional bodies such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperations (SAARC) and the South Asian Initiative for Ending Violence against Children (SAIEVAC)



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NEWS FROM COUNTRIES WITH ACTIVE UNGEI PARTNERSHIPS

AFGHANISTAN

What is happening now?

- ❖ A two day training programme on gender responsive budgeting in education enabled the sharing of knowledge and helped build capacity of government counterparts from the ministries of education and finance including related departments such as the girls' education unit, teacher education department and the global partnership for education (GPE), as part of AGEI's continued advocacy and efforts to address gender disparities in

education.

Coming up.....

- ❖ Expanding the AGEI partnership by co-opting representatives from on-going programmes in girls' education and strengthening linkages with GPE.
- ❖ Review and discuss at the next AGEI meeting, the UNGEI-GPE statement of intent and workplan signed at the global level and come up with strategies to strengthen country level collaboration between AGEI and GPE

BANGLADESH

What is happening now?

- ❖ The Young Champions' Initiative (YCI) has been integrated/mainstreamed into the government workplan for secondary education
- ❖ Ten YCs were trained to field-test the Young Champions' Training Manual (TM), which is an adapted and contextualised version of a manual developed by the regional secretariat. The final manual is ready for use by the directorate of secondary and higher education (DSHE).

Coming up.....

- ❖ Train 240 YCs (adolescents, radio personnel, journalists) as master trainers (MTs) for the training manual
- ❖ Develop scripts on adolescent issues based on the YCs' TM to implement YCI through interactive radio programmes aired from 10 Community radio programmes jointly with the communication section. These actions are expected to

help mainstream YCI into the secondary education system and orient more than 2 million young people on adolescent issues through electronic, community radio programmes and print media, and also by involving young journalists from 10 renowned newspapers

- ❖ Conduct a study on the causes of high dropout of girls at various levels in secondary and tertiary education, especially those from disadvantaged groups and remote areas, map the bottlenecks into a data base for informed programming and strategic partnerships

INDIA

What is happening now?

- ❖ National Girls Education Vision document is finalized
- ❖ Data has been analyzed to advocate differential programming
- ❖ Report on Partnership for Girls Education and Empowerment in India has been completed in partnership with ROSA
- ❖ Girls collectives and MEENA cabinets to support mainstreaming out of school children are underway
- ❖ Capacity building of Adolescent girls on Life Skills
- ❖ Physical Education and Sports for girls to address development issues/life skills

Coming up.....

- ❖ Sharing of equity analysis of educational indicators with government and partners
- ❖ Incorporation of recommendations of completed studies into workplans of state partnerships
- ❖ Documentation of best Practices

- ❖ Life Skills Education for Adolescent girls
- ❖ Support to Girls Education Programmes including physical Education and sports
- ❖ Support to civil society forums and coalitions for gender equity
- ❖ New partnerships
- ❖ Involvement of adolescent girls to improve girls' attendance and retention in school
- ❖ Gender audits
- ❖ National level advocacy event by girls' education partnerships

NEPAL

What is happening now?

- ❖ A national level conference, the first of its kind, of Gender Focal Points (GFPS) focused on equity in education, and involved policy makers, political leaders, and officials from various ministries, GFPs from 32 districts, center level line agencies and GE Network members. The combined effort of several partners of the network helped make this event successful. The conference ended with a declaration and adopted the terms of reference for district level GE Networks and gender focal points.
- ❖ Over one hundred young women and men from various backgrounds, including celebrities from the media, performing arts, sports, literature and entertainment, gathered for a national conference on gender equity. Inclusion and quality, raised awareness about the positive

role of young people in promoting equity and began the process of scaling up the young champions' model at central and district levels..

Coming up.....

- ❖ Implementation of partnership plans at central and district levels
- ❖ Expansion of the GE network and linkages with existing networks in equity and girls' education
- ❖ Implementation of recommendations from the conferences of GFP and young people.

PAKISTAN

What is happening now? .

- ❖ Mohammad Qasim, from rural Pakistan represented UNGEI and his country at the UN Malala day events in NY in July. Also, the country UNGEI focal point participated in a panel discussion with the CEO of GPE. More on <http://www.urduvoa.com/media/all/latest.html?z=281>
- ❖ Review of sector plans for integration of gender equity as a cross cutting theme in Education Sector Plans for Sindh, Balochistan , KPK and Punjab
- ❖ Ongoing policy dialogues and consultations at provincial & national level [one pre budget dialogue held to advocate increased budgetary allocation for girls education budget)
- ❖ Formulation of policy briefs on a range of policy issues. Technical & financial proposal for 04 briefs finalized.
- ❖ Follow up Capacity Building sessions held with Pakistan Girls Guide Association & Pakistan Boy Scouts Associations on Recommendation of an assessment study of 2012
- ❖ Supporting Pakistan Boy Scouts and Girls Guide Associations to develop plans for capacity building of textbook writers, curriculum developers and teachers' trainers on Social Cohesion, DRR, CFS and Gender.
- ❖ Integration of sports and play activities in girls primary schools in Sindh(7 districts) through provision of sports materials, technical guide manuals
- ❖ Girl Junior Leaders (grades 4/5th) identified who play an proactive role in class room activities, support teachers in classroom and demonstrate leadership skills in (7 districts of Sindh)
- ❖ Planned setting up of 100 ALP centres (70% for girls) and drop outs in 7 districts of Balochistan ; ALP strategy and curriculum being developed.
- ❖ Universal Primary and Secondary Education (USE) Campaign launched engaging EDOs and DMOs of all 36 districts of Punjab

Coming up.....

- ❖ Continuity of the above mentioned activities including strengthening parliamentary engagement, providing capacity support to Government and relevant departments and supporting young school girls for developing skills in leadership, sports and communication.

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