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Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
Internacional de la Educación
Bildungsinternationale

Headquarters

5, Bd du Roi Albert II
1210 Brussels, Belgium
Tel +32 2 224 06 11
Fax +32 2 224 06 06
headoffice@ei-ie.org
<http://www.ei-ie.org>

Press Release

Quality public education for all: No rural and Indigenous girl left behind!

Universal access to public services is a fundamental right reaffirm trade unions attending the upcoming 56th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW). Public services ensure equitable and sustainable development in all societies for all people, including rural, Indigenous women and girls.

Education International (EI), the trade union federation representing 30 million educators and education worker worldwide, joins the 80-strong delegation from four global union organisations attending the UNCSW in New York City from 27 February-9 March 2012.

The four global organisations - Education International (EI), Public Services International (PSI), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) have called on governments to sign up to a global tax on financial transactions (FTT).

Their [joint statement](#) says the FTT should be used to fund quality public services to support equitable social policies and job creation, fight poverty, and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. It also reaffirms the trade union perspectives and worker's rights to the international discussions on women's equality.

"Governments must ensure that national education plans include adequate strategies and sufficient resources to meet the education needs of rural girls," says Teopista Birungi Mayanja, the Uganda National Teachers Union's General Secretary and EI Executive Board member.

"The provision of early childhood education, free quality public education, transitional and special education and vocational training will reduce child labour and increase enrolment and retention of girls in schools. Sustainable funding for education is essential, all the more so in times of crisis. We, as education unions, must ensure that no rural or Indigenous girl is left behind!"

The trade union delegation will lobby governments present at the 56th UNCSW to ensure the economic empowerment for women workers, and that people are put first to build a stronger economy and future, primarily through quality public services.

On 26 February, the trade union orientation session organised by EI, PSI, ITUC and IUF will shape the advocacy plans at the UN CSW 56. Women unionists will also finalise the planning of parallel events organised by the global unions:

- Thursday, 1 March: *Follow that Money - Specific targeted budgets for gender equality and the empowerment of women*, by the Swedish Women's Lobby and EI/Global Unions
- Friday, 2 March, *Empowerment of rural women: Through rights at work, education and public investment*, by EI, ITUC, PSI, and IUF

The trade union delegation will also participate in side events, such as UNESCO's *Rural Women: Education for Employment*, on 29 February; and ILO's *The Importance of Decent Work for Indigenous Women*, on 2 March.

Daily updates on Women workers' rights at the UNCSW: <http://unioncsw.world-psi.org>

For more information, please contact EI Coordinator, Rebeca Sevilla, rebeca.sevilla@ei-ie.org