Hello!

Welcome to Gender Wire. It's a newsletter for, and about, the people and ideas pushing Gender Equality in Education in Asia and Pacific forward.

Only one month to go for the regional UNESCO – UNEGI calendar 2012 drawing contest. We have received some creative and inspiring submissions, but are still looking forward to reaching out to as many young people from as many countries as possible. We would also like to draw your attention to a slight change in the theme, that was made to better reflect the reality in the entire region. The modified theme is: How does girls’ and boy's equality in education help us all? We urge you to continue sharing the contest’s information through your networks and social media or use a more targeted approach to distribute the link and updated flyers. We can’t do it without you!

WIDER LENS

LOOKING FOR A GOOD READ?

Brain Pickings: 7 Must-Read Books on Education
Maria Popova picks the most compelling and visionary reading on reinventing education from the past century.

Vishakha Desai’s Top Five Books on Asian Women
Ms. Desai is the President and CEO of Asia Society, a scholar of classical Indian art and former performer of South Indian dance.

Khushi Kabir Top Five Books on Rural Women in the Developing World
Ms. Kabir has been working to improve the lives of the rural poor in Bangladesh for almost 40 years. Since 1980 she has
12th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators, Seoul, 25-28 July 2011
Drafts of the regional End-of-Decade Notes on EFA Progress by EFA goal, including Goal 5 on gender equality, will be presented for comments and validation by countries.

World Teachers’ Day, 5 October 2011, This year’s theme is: Teachers for gender equality. Despite the teaching profession being made up largely of women, inequality remains an issue. Even if measures to ensure equality are enshrined into the policies and constitutions of many states, for millions of female teachers, the goals remain unfulfilled.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence international campaign, 25 November – 10 December 2011. This year’s theme is: From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let’s Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

USAID: Funding Opportunity Announcement for Capacity-Building Programs, Research Projects and Assessments to Enable the Global Community to Better Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) within Refugee and Conflict-Affected Populations, Closing date: 5 July 2011

Commonwealth Foundation’s New Grants Initiative ‘Women as Agents of Change’ Closing date: 15 July 2011

Call for Applications for funding of NOMA Gender Incentive Activities 2012 – 2013/14 from Higher Educational Institutes in selected developing countries
Priority countries: Bangladesh and Nepal but other developing countries may apply. Closing date: 31 August 2011

The Elsevier Foundation New Scholars Program: Supporting Women in Science Closing date: 1 September 2011

The Elsevier Foundation grants opportunity for Innovative Libraries Programs in developing countries Closing date: 15 September 2011

WHAT’S NEW?

Sweden Pilots Gender Neutral Schooling
At the “Egalia” preschool, staff avoid using words like “him” or “her” and address the 33 kids as “friends” rather than girls and boys. From the color and placement of toys to the choice of books, every detail has been carefully planned to make sure the children don’t fall into gender stereotypes.

Does Mukhtaran Mai Verdict Mean Failure for Pakistan’s Women’s Rights Movement?
In 2002, Mukhtaran Bibi was gang raped at the orders of a local Pakistani jirga in retaliation for a minor offense by her 12 year old brother. For nine years she braved death threats to bring her attackers to justice.

acted as head of Nijera Kori (We Do It ourselves), an NGO which promotes self-reliance through mobilisation and rejects the concept of micro-credit.

ONE GOOD PRACTICE A MONTH

PLAN Int: Improving a Girl’s Life in a Garbage Dump Through Education
Learn how Anisha improvised a mobile community learning centre in a Jakarta landfill.

NEW ON THE SHELF

In the last decade, 58 million young women in developing countries - one in three - have been married before the age of 18, many against their will and in violation of international laws and conventions on women’s rights. Even more disturbing, according to new figures, one in nine girls, or 15 million, have been forced into marriage between the ages of 10 and 14. With limited education and economic opportunities, child brides are often condemned to a life of poverty, social isolation, and powerlessness, infringing on their human rights, health, and well-being.
But on April 21 the country’s Supreme Court released five of the six alleged rapists.

**China’s Demographic Gender Time Bomb**
Between 1982 and 2010 nearly 20 million more males than females have been born in China. Experts say that the growth in gender imbalance is one of the most worrying demographic trends taking place in the country. It will have a big impact on China’s future demographic and social development. The imbalance of males and females in the marriage market will be intense with many unwelcome social and psychological consequences.

**Korean Women Earn Lower Pay in Spite of Increase in Social Status**
Korean women continue to be paid less than men despite improvements in their social standing. A recent report shows that the average salary of a Korean women stands at 67 percent that of men.

**Singapore: Divorce and the Attractive Woman**
Prospects of remarriage may be considered when courts decide alimony payouts.

**Indian School for Muslim Women Triples Enrolment**
Enrolment is booming at a women's college that serves Muslims in a hard-pressed textile neighbourhood of Mumbai. One proud parent says the students are defying the low expectations that surround the community and women who wear abayas.

**India Journal: No Country for Women**
India’s 2011 Census revealed that the child sex ratio (number of girls to boys 0-6 years of age) in the country fell, like it has in every decade since 1961. From 976 girls for every 1,000 boys in 1961, the ratio fell to 927 by 2001 and to 914 in the latest survey of 2011. The story of sex selection is a national one, cutting across urban and rural India, and income and education levels.

**To protect girls, women must have rights**
To counter sex-selective abortion, increase opportunities and education – don’t limit women's control over their bodies.

**South Asia’s growing modernity masks women’s plight**
South Asia may boast a number of women leaders and be home to cultures that revere motherhood and worship female deities, but many women live with the threat of appalling violence and without many basic rights.

**Can Affirmative Action Increase Women’s Ability to Get Elected in Indonesia?**
While much restructuring to improve the parliament occurred prior to the 1999 elections, women’s groups noted that the first free and fair election after Reformasi resulted in lower numbers of women representatives than before the end of authoritarianism.

**Nepal census recognizes ‘third gender’**
In what is believed to be a world first, Nepal's Central Bureau of Statistics is giving official recognition to gay and transgender people -- a move seen as major victory for equality in a country that only decriminalized homosexual relationships three years ago.

**Nepal to offer shelter to South Asia's battered gays**
Nepal's pioneering gay rights organisation, is set to become the only NGO in South Asia to offer a shelter to lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders who face violence in their own countries due to their different sexual orientations.

**Timor-Leste: Education and sport empower a young woman to pursue her dreams**
Inácia dreams of being a professional basketball player. She often plays, at a youth centre on the western edge of Dili, Timor-Leste’s capital. Through sport, Inacia and other teens find an outlet from the pressures of growing up in a neighbourhood notorious for gang fights and youth violence.

**NEW TUBE**
JUST A QUICK QUESTION

Last month, we asked you if gender equality is a concern for men. The answer is yes! The achievement of gender equality implies changes for both men and women. More equitable relationships will need to be based on a redefinition of the rights and responsibilities of women and men in all spheres of life, including the family, the workplace and the society at large. It is therefore crucial not to overlook gender as an aspect of men’s social identity. But the lives of men are just as strongly influenced by gender as those of women. Societal norms and practices about “masculinity” create demands on men and shape their behaviour. Men are too often expected to concentrate on the material needs of their families, rather than on the nurturing and caring roles.

Socialization in the family and later in schools promotes risk-taking behaviour among young men. So the lifestyles that men’s roles demand often result in their being more exposed to greater risks of morbidity and mortality than women.

Men also have the right to assume a more nurturing role, and opportunities for them to do so should be promoted along with their domestic responsibilities. The adoption of a gender perspective is an important first step: it reveals that there are disadvantages and costs to men accruing from patterns of gender difference. It also underscores that gender equality is concerned not only with the roles, responsibilities and needs of women and men, but also with the interrelationships between them. (UNFPA)

This month’s question: Why are girls more likely than boys to miss out on secondary education in the developing world? What do you think?

Send us your answers!