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# **PRESENTATION OF THE 2014 ACTIVITIES REPORT**

### INTRODUCTION

2014 enabled the Education and Solidarity Network to firmly establish its legitimacy around three keywords: Health – Education – Solidarity. To obtain this result, the Network worked around 3 major lines:

- Advancing its pilot projects as a matter of priority, with a view to obtaining tangible results for the 2015 General Meeting and to better anchor our positioning;
- Increasing the participation of members in the operation and governance of the Network, particularly through more closely linking its actions with the strategies of its founders;
- Contributing to the methodological toolbox which will be presented to the 2015 General Meeting

#### **1. Pilot projects that have progressed very well around 3 lines of action**

- The Network's pilot projects are based around 3 main areas of activity:
- Placing health at the heart of schooling;
- Developing solidarity-based health systems;
- Nurturing the principle of solidarity amongst the young.

##### *1.1. Placing health at the heart of schooling*

This first line of work was contributed to, in particular, by the survey "occupational health of education professionals" which was distributed worldwide from October 2014, after being collectively prepared by MGEN (France), NEA (United States), CSQ (Canada – Quebec), THF (Australia) and CIESS (Mexico).

At the end of 2014, more than 2,000 professionals from around the world had already responded, and the rate has maintained since then. Based on these responses, statistical work shall be carried out during the 1st half of 2015, for the results to be published during the GM and at the EI Congress; they should enable new lines of work to be defined for the years to come.

Amongst other actions, the latest phase of trade union training, including a module on occupational health, should be noted in Moldavia, led by UNSA-E within the framework and with the support of the Network.

##### *1.2. Developing solidarity-based health systems*

The pilot project in this area is that led by the SNEAB with all of the primary education trade unions in Burkina Faso. This project made significant steps in 2014: delivery of the feasibility study at the beginning of the year, then preparation for implementation with the signing, at the end of the year, of a framework agreement including trade unions, the Government, a local NGO, ASMADE, providing technical support for the project, and the partners in the North (OGBL-SEW for Luxembourg, MGEN France, SOLIDARIS Belgium, CSQ Canada), represented by the Network.

It should be emphasized that this project is making progress despite an extremely difficult political situation, particularly following the events of the end of October/beginning of November. This shows how important the issue is for all of the actors concerned.

This project, which is considered a pilot project in Burkina Faso and a lever for the universal health insurance which should be set up, very convincingly illustrates the role that the education community plays in advancing the cause for healthcare cover in a country.

We therefore have a great illustration for our General Meeting of the potential mobilisation of education professionals around a solidarity-based healthcare project having national impact... Even if creating the mutual society will still take a while!

It should be noted that we have maintained contact with trade unions involved in projects and mutual societies in other countries: DRC, Gabon, Niger, Senegal, Costa Rica, etc.

Developing solidarity-based health systems also means promoting this through education and lobbying work.

The first phase of the PROCEDH programme by SOLIDARITE LAIQUE was completed in 2014 in Haiti. The Network, and particularly its member CIESS, was involved in raising awareness of and education on social protection, with a widely distributed lobbying paper and a pilot module on solidarity tested in two secondary schools in Port au Prince. A second phase of the PROCEDH programme will be launched in 2015 and the Network shall remain involved, with Education International as project leader.

In the same area of intervention, it should be noted that a new education project on social protection emerged at the end of the year which should proceed during 2015 in Colombia, at the initiative of AIM and its local members (GESTARSALUD and AMA).

Lastly, supporting solidarity-based health systems also requires international partnerships with the potential to generalise experience and good practice. A bilateral partnership between mutual societies was signed under the aegis of the Network during 2014: MGEN and MUGEF-CI (Ivory Coast) effectively signed a co-operation agreement on the exchange of materials and training, initially; the support of the MUGEF-CI is very significant given that the Ivory Coast is setting up universal health insurance cover.

### *1.3. Nurturing the principle of solidarity amongst the young*

This line of work, requested by the members of the Network, was initiated in 2013. In 2014, it led to concrete applications around two themes.

On the one hand, a Google+ community was set up to launch and promote concrete solidarity-based projects supported by young education professionals. These projects include: a mobile library, exchanges around music, etc. At the end of 2014, about forty young people were participating in this community for work and exchange.

On the other hand, two Facebook groups were created, bringing together about forty young professionals to exchange experiences and good practice between young professionals:

exchanging experiences on entering the career;

exchanging experiences and good practice on unionisation and mobilisation of young professionals in a spirit of community and solidarity.

The most interesting and promising projects and practices shall be presented at the GM, and two prizes shall be created to award the best projects (MGEN and Network).

## **2. Increasing and expanding the participation of Network members**

A Network like ours can only survive if its members are fully engaged. It is with this in mind that a common reflection was conducted resulting in the approval, during an Extraordinary General Meeting in September 2014, of an operating method for the Network centred around the participation and initiatives of members. The latter:

- Must contribute to the reflection on the strategic and political framework within which the Network operates;
- Must be actively involved in projects;
- Must be involved in the governance of the Network;
- Must be Network ambassadors within their organisations;
- Must contribute to Network communication and lobbying.

This operation has already led to a full engagement by all, at the end of 2014, particularly in distributing the occupational health survey and finding participants within the youth community.

More specifically, we have been able to more solidly strengthen the link between the operation of the Network in project mode and the actions of AIM and EI, particularly in terms of international lobbying around the role of mutual societies and quality education, respectively.

This dynamic has also led to renewed interest for the Network, and in 2014 we have registered new memberships, motivated by participating in concrete projects. Our preparations are therefore off to a good start for mobilisation for the 2015 AGM and the EI Congress. Similarly, the number of visitors to the new website, bringing together a shop window and an extranet, "rocketed" (more than 6,000 visitors a month at the end of 2014).

Finally, preparations for the AGM are being made in a very involved way, with member organisations and their members, particularly the young, being associated very early on with an event whose format will be very interactive, thereby reflecting the new participatory impetus of the Network!

### **3. Elaboration of a methodological toolbox in view of the 2015 GM**

Latest significant development: the Network must ensure the transition, in 2015, between its “project” phase and a period of consolidation around better structured actions that are replicated across all continents. This takes the form of a “methodological toolbox” on which we worked in 2014.

As a first component of this arrangement, the Network was to draw lessons from the actions conducted since its creation and make a “kit” available, enabling others to pick up topics. Work, which should be completed for the General Meeting, was therefore started on putting together a “mobilisation kit” enabling actors to build on past experiences and lessons drawn serving their own initiative. The latest version of this kit will be presented at the GM, but it will then be enhanced and made available on the Network’s extranet.

As the second element of the methodological toolbox, in 2014, the Network initiated an action-research approach which should enable pilot projects to be supported, documented, and made replicable thanks to the contribution of universities and researchers. This approach, currently being tested, will also be presented at the GM and then systematised.

Finally, the Network completed the development of its “TOGETHER” support/community project coaching programme, with SOCIAL ENTERPRISE EUROPE.

Kit + -Action-Research + Support/training/coaching = all the key elements to systematise the actions of Network members from 2015!

## **CONCLUSION**

2014 was indeed the year of mobilisation that we had called for to enable us to show all actors in education who will be in Ottawa in July 2015 the relevance and impact of the Network. It is on this basis that we intend to expand and magnify the movement in 2015!