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Le Mag

action-education.org

India
3 challenges,
3 projects

 Aide et Action becomes

 ACTION
EDUCATION

SNAPSHOT



15 October 2022, a primary school of the Baksha district in the state of Assam.

Students are preparing for a remedial activity following learning gaps caused by extended school closures. India is one of the countries that went through the longest period of school closure (nearly 18 months) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Online courses excluded many students from the education system. The *Addressing the COVID Learning Gap* project from Action Education

aims to alleviate these learning gaps among children living in rural areas. The project will help 100,000 children and adolescents in 7 districts of Assam to recover from their learning gaps, especially by prioritising basic skills among primary school students. Volunteers from the association review basic subjects (reading, arithmetic) so that children with learning difficulties may continue to follow classes. Teachers' skills in state schools are also strengthened to enable learning continuity. 🌱

EDITORIAL



« SUPPORTING VULNERABLE AND MARGINALISED INDIAN COMMUNITIES »

Charles-Emmanuel Ballanger
CEO of Action Education

Aide et Action (now Action Education) was created in 1981 by Pierre-Bernard Le Bas to support education of children in southern India. During these 41 years, we have not stopped supporting vulnerable and marginalised Indian communities who, being deprived of education and training, had little hope of seeing their future improve. India has experienced significant growth over the past four decades, but also a dramatic increase in inequality according to the 2022 Global Inequality Report. According to World Bank estimates, 56 million Indians have fallen into poverty due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The prolonged and strict lockdown led to an almost total shutdown of economic activity for several months. The challenges we face

in the field are numerous. We wanted to introduce you to the three main ones in the special report of this magazine dedicated to this country. Through the pages of the special report, you will discover how our teams strive for access to education for girls from marginalised communities, the economic emancipation of underprivileged young people, and the application of the right to education for migrant children. Giving these communities the opportunity to learn and build a better future is one of the objectives we pursue. We wanted to enhance the magazine's special report and certain articles with audio-visual content that is accessible from our website.

Happy reading and Happy Holidays to all.

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Vietnam Economic emancipation of women in rural areas

In Sapa, a small mountain town with green hills, Vàng Thị Xá, 25, a farmer dreams of welcoming visitors to her home and running her own business.

“cried a lot when my parents asked me to stop studying,” says Xá, who ended her schooling in ninth grade because of poverty. In her H’Mong community, poverty often leads to the sacrifice of girls’ education in favour of early marriage.

EDUCATION FOR ALL

In rural areas such as the hometown of Xá, access to equitable vocational training and career guidance remains largely out of reach. In early 2022 Action Education organised a mobile training programme in rural and remote communities in collaboration with local vocational training centres. Xá was one of the participants in this month-long intensive training, which provided her with technical skills in embroidery and weaving, as well as general skills in communication and work ethics.

Prior to participating in the training, Xá had been making clothes for her family using the skills her mother taught her and participating

in a cooperative embroidery group that was led by a local artist. “The sewing skills I learned as a child came in handy to produce clothes for my husband and children, but they didn’t work out well in the co-op because I didn’t have any creative ideas to make beautiful products,” she explains. With three young children to raise, Xá worried about her financial situation and how she could afford to send her eldest child to school next year. Since joining the training, her worries have decreased. “I felt free and comfortable to participate in the training course and quickly acquired new knowledge and thought of creative ideas. Now I can produce better products to sell for the cooperative and earn more money for the family,” she says.



GOOD TO KNOW

Only 12.3% of employed women in rural areas have received any kind of training. To remedy this situation and equip young women from ethnic minorities with skills that are relevant to the Vietnamese labour market, Action Education is developing intensive training in very remote locations.

A NEW PATH TO BE FOLLOWED

With her family’s income gradually improving, Xá once again dreams of the career she imagined as a young girl: running her own homestay business. “If my financial situation continues to improve, my dream of running a guest house could come true next year. I hope that this programme will continue so that I can follow other training courses, particularly in traditional cooking and welcoming the general public.” 🍌

Senegal Support the education of 300 vulnerable young girls

The SCOLFILLE project supports the education and success of 300 young girls who are at risk of dropping out of school in the regions of Kolda and Fatick.

In these two regions, many challenges hinder girls in pursuing their studies: school fees, patriarchal traditions, sexist stereotypes, lack of female role models... From the start of the project, 300 schoolgirls who were at risk of dropping out of school, were identified. Opinion leaders, elected officials, village chiefs, religious leaders and parents had been made aware of the importance of girls’ education. Teachers were trained to foster girls’ participation, involvement, and motivation in learning processes. The 5 middle schools of the project were equipped with laptops, video projectors, and tablets to facilitate learning at home for middle school girls. They also received school supply kits as well as reusable sanitary protection.

PERSONALISED SUPPORT

From the start of the project, a system was designed to allow these young girls to be accompanied by 120 older students. Each schoolgirl received the support of a student/tutor, called ‘Magalé’ or ‘Diadia’, which means ‘big sister’ in Wolof and Fulani. These students in education sciences provide moral support, advice, and strengthen both confidence and commitment of young schoolgirls. Each student regularly organises a telephone exchange with the schoolgirls she accompanies around a given theme (career objectives, confidence and self-esteem, work at home, period management, etc.). The middle school girls really appreciate the exchanges with their tutor. A tutor testifies: “I realise that this project is really of great importance. Because it changes the turn of a life, and the perception of things of our goddaughters. I am very proud of the mission given to us because it is already bearing fruit!” 🍌

295
GIRLS
(98%)
completed the
2020-2021 school
year without
dropping out



India 3 challenges, 3 projects

The three major challenges that Action Education faces in India relate to access to education for girls from marginalised communities, economic empowerment of underprivileged young people, and the application of the right to education of migrant children. Discover how three of our flagship programmes integrate these themes and endeavour to meet these challenges.



ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL GIRLS

The Enlight - Girl child education project aims to provide a better future to more than 2,500 young girls living in difficult conditions through education. Operating in nine Indian cities, Enlight interacts with a specific group of girls in each city.

In India :
80
million children of school
age are out of school

13
million children work

27%
of girls are married
before the legal age



Sarasvati is the goddess of knowledge and the arts. Associated with education, she is often represented soberly dressed. She has four arms, two of which play an instrument (the veena), one holds a book and the last one a rosary.

Education is compulsory and free of charge in India from 6 to 14 years old. Yet, in fact, it is estimated that 70 to 80 million children of school age do not attend school. The causes of this lack of schooling are multiple and are not limited to poverty. Various factors come into play, such as discrimination linked to health or identity, socio-cultural practices, disability, etc. These children then run a high risk of being forced to work in conditions of servitude, of being victims of human trafficking or being sexually exploited. Their health and well-being are often seriously compromised. Moreover, educating girls is perceived as a costly and financially non-rewarding effort, and is therefore not a priority for the poorest parents. Girls continue to be an economic burden (payment of dowry) and families prefer, when they can, to send boys to school. The Enlight project aims to encourage and promote the education of girls living in challenging conditions. It enables them to access quality education and build a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities. In each of the 9 project cities, we target girls from the most underprivileged and marginalised communities. For example: girls from families working in waste collection in Mumbai, girls from the Adi Dravida community in Chennai, daughters of female sex workers in Kolkata... We are currently committed to 2,516 girls in

these 9 cities through 45 child support centres (CSC). These centres are intended to improve their learning abilities, basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills. We also seek to develop both analytical skills and life skills of the children we welcome. Parents are made aware of the importance of girls' education. The development of small savings is encouraged, in order

“Empowering and investing in girls is essential to breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and to promoting and protecting the implementation of their human rights”

United Nations Resolution 66/170

to meet educational needs for small accessories (notebooks, school bags, etc.) and to reduce absenteeism at school. Sharon, a young schoolgirl from the village of Vellanur near Chennai, testifies: “The Enlight project really helped me and gave me a taste for learning. I get good grades, awards, and even became a Kutty Teacher, which means I help younger students with their learning.”

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Action Education continues its commitment to underprivileged young people in India, particularly women, with the iLEAD project, which promotes access to employment and entrepreneurship.

18 training centres in India

250 000 young people supported since the start of the project

75 % found stable employment



In India, 20% of young people under the age of 25 are out of school or without any kind of employment or training. This is particularly true among young women, who are twice as likely as men to be affected. Often from underprivileged backgrounds and carrying out small activities in the informal economy, they find themselves victims of a vicious circle leading to deterioration of skills, underemployment, and discouragement. The iLEAD (Initiative for Livelihood and Development) project was launched following the 2004 tsunami that devastated the east coast of India. The project allows young people, aged 18 to 32, to benefit from professional training and support in finding a job in more than 40 professions. The areas covered are varied: sewing, beauty care, mechanics, hotel services, tourism, accounting, and IT. Emphasis is placed on the use of digital tools and learning English. Personal skills development sessions also take place during the training. Since 2005, more than 250,000 young adults have benefited from vocational training and a socio-professional integration service thanks to iLEAD (preparation for job interviews, partner networks, etc.). The strength of the project is to offer fairly short training courses – 3 to 4 months – that are extremely professional and free of charge. Ilakiya, 24, a mother of 2 testifies: “Thanks to the iLEAD programme, I found a stable job with a good salary in an IT company. Education is essential to me; I will do anything possible to ensure that my children receive a good education.” Over the years, the

project has become more holistic, inclusive, and empowering. The project has evolved to allow young people to become vectors of change in their communities. The project has also succeeded in breaking down the gender barrier and making young women models of success. It has also enabled young people with disabilities to be cared for and lead their lives in dignity. Entrepreneurship is also put in the spotlight with management training, advice for developing business plans, and links with financial institutions. The success of the project has prompted Indian authorities to revise their vocational training offer. 🌱



ENFORCING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN

Since 2009 Action Education has been working to support migrant children from brickyards and construction sites, and to implement their right to education.



Internal migration in India concerns nearly **140 millions** people, including **10 to 15 million** children

65 % of migrant children suffer from serious forms of stuntedness (growth, emotional, cognitive development, etc.)

India is experiencing significant internal migratory movements. The country's economic growth is mainly based on the development of two sectors - construction and services - which employ a labour force that is often made up of migrant workers. According to the last census (2011), this phenomenon affects nearly 140 million people. Originally from the poorest states (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, etc.), they leave each year to offer their labour force in the big cities for a few months, before returning home for the harvest. This largely invisible population has minimal access to social services (education, health, etc.) and suffers from extremely precarious living conditions.

Among them, 10 to 15 million children that are often out of school, find themselves in a situation of extreme vulnerability. Uprooted and confronted with a language they do not know (India has 22 official languages), young migrants do not have access to local schools in their new areas of residence. Through the establishment of dedicated centres, we strive to provide childcare services as well as continued education for children aged 0 to 6 years. We promote cognitive learning through the development of appropriate learning materials and programmes. At the same time, Action Education encourages schools near construction sites to accept migrant children of school age (6 to 14

years old). Volunteer teachers in the centres come from the same region as the children and share the same culture and language. The main objective is to ensure the continuity of the school career of migrant children. Until then, the children missed too many classes and no longer had the level when they returned. This risk of dropping out of school has now considerably been reduced. At the policy level, we have been successful in drafting and sharing recommendations with the government, policy makers, and brickyard owners to develop a framework for migrant families and children to access decent living conditions, basic services, and assert their rights in the workplace. 🌱



NIVETHA, VELLANUR (CHENNAI)

“My father died when I was young and my mother, who is ill, is no longer able to work. My older brother had to give up his studies and works as a day labourer in a slaughterhouse. Being weak in English and maths, I considered dropping out of school and getting a job. That’s when I was encouraged to join Enlight. Without this project, I would probably be married and be a waste collector, like many people in my community. I want to study well, manage on my own and not depend on someone in life.”

BALASUK, SHILLONG

“I had to stop school at the age of 14 because, with 5 brothers and sisters, my parents could no longer afford my education. I then worked as a housekeeper. My aunt told me about the iLEAD centre and the possibility of training as a beautician, which I had always dreamed of becoming! After the training, I became self-employed. My beauty salon is now very successful, and I plan to open a second one soon. I can also help my family financially. Without the iLEAD programme, I would not have had the chance to become who I am today!”



YELLAMMA, HYDERABAD

“My husband and I came to Hyderabad to work on construction sites 10 years ago. I had to stop working when I had my children. The opening of the centre managed by Action Education has been very beneficial for us. There I learned sewing, and the fact of being able to leave my three children there during the day allows me to carry out a paid activity which supplements my husband’s income. My children are very well taken care of by the centre which looks after their education and their health.”



To find out more, scan this QR code or connect to action-education.org

Action Education launches its end-of-year campaign for girls’ education around the world

In India as in the rest of the world, the reality faced by millions of girls is unbearable. Because they were born girls, they are unjustly deprived of education and subjected to all kinds of discrimination and violence.



LET’S TAKE ACTION FOR THE EDUCATION OF ALL GIRLS!

Worldwide, more than 129 million girls are deprived of education. A number that exploded with the COVID-19 pandemic and the persistence of many cultural and social traditions, such as exclusion of girls during their periods, the overload of household chores or forced marriages. It is urgent to take action today to prevent them from living a life of submission, silence, and poverty. Guaranteeing young girls their fundamental rights, and in particular their right to quality education, is nowadays the best weapon to reduce ignorance. Your exceptional support will enable them to acquire skills, gain self-confidence, assert their rights, and become fully involved in their lives and in tomorrow’s society. **What’s more at the end of the year, please feel free to take action alongside us for the education of girls all over the world!**

WITH A DONATION OF

90 €

FOR EXAMPLE

You can support a poor family to ensure their daughter both continuous and quality education in Laos.

WITH A DONATION OF

140 €

FOR EXAMPLE

You can raise awareness of 200 young girls about the dangers of sexual harassment as part of the Enlight project in India.

WITH A DONATION OF

220 €

FOR EXAMPLE

you can support the vocational training of a young single mother in Madagascar.

ONCE AGAIN, A HUGE THANK YOU!



To make a donation, scan this QR code or connect to pourchaquefile.action-education.org



GUINEA



BENIN



NEPAL



LAOS

EMPOWER AND PROMOTE CITIZENSHIP



GUINEA

Employability and civic engagement of young people

The Skills for Tomorrow Programme (CPD) supports nearly 1,000 young people in an underprivileged neighbourhood of the capital Conakry. Its objective is to contribute to the empowerment of young people in suburban areas of large cities. Training is provided, for example in audio-visual skills or plastic waste recycling. Awareness-raising actions on civic-mindedness and citizenship are also carried out.

GOOD TO KNOW

This programme, which is implemented in consortium with Solidarité Laïque through funding from the French Development Agency (AFD), is present in six West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Mali, and Senegal).



BENIN

Computer kits for primary schools

Computer equipment was donated by Action Education to 13 state primary schools and youth associations in the municipalities of Allada and Ouidah, in the south of the country. Each kit includes a computer, a printer, an inverter, and a router with an internet subscription. The official handover took place on 15 September 2022. The aim of the project is to facilitate children's access to digital technology.

GOOD TO KNOW

The ACTE Africa project ('Action for Citizenship by and for All Children through Education in Africa') spans several countries and connects young Beninese with their peers in Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Togo for a time of exchanges and sharing of experiences.



NEPAL

Vocational computer training in Nepal

Action Education Nepal is implementing the third phase of its iLEAD vocational training project in the Kathmandu Valley. Young people from underprivileged communities may opt for training in various fields, including IT and networks. They are also supported in their job search or entrepreneurial project.

GOOD TO KNOW

The project also provides participants with soft skills training. The trainers provide full guidance and support to the trainees during and after the training period. WhatsApp groups allow alumni to help each other, share their experience and support one another.



LAOS

Emergency fund following devastating floods

At the end of August 2022, thousands of people in the province of Oudomxay, in the northwest of the country, suffered flash floods that were caused by heavy rains and the aftermath of a tropical storm. Confronted with these floods that affected districts where Action Education conducts projects, we launched an emergency fund to contribute to material safety and food security of the populations.

GOOD TO KNOW

Laos is a country which is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The country is experiencing an increasing risk of flash floods in mountainous regions, causing landslides that claim many victims.



Education

Three years of mobilization for children's rights!

For the 30th anniversary of the Convention on Children's Rights in 2019, Action Education integrated the Action Group «From Convention to Acts!». Three years later, it's time to take stock. And in view of its successes, the group is ready to continue its mobilization to ensure better effectiveness of children's rights.

« In France, 1 child is raped every hour. 1 child is killed every 5 days in the family circle. At least 50,000 minors are victims of abuse every year. We ask the National Assembly to create a parliamentary delegation for the rights of the child". Hereafter is the request sent on 26 June by the deputies who are members of the Socialist Group to the new President of the National Assembly Yaël Braun-Pivet. A great victory for the member organisations of the Action Group «From Convention to Acts!», including Action Education, who have been making this request to parliamentarians for several months.

« MAKING CHILDHOOD A PRIORITY »

For three years now, the Action Group «From Convention to Acts!», which brings together some thirty organisations and associations, has taken action to strengthen the effectiveness of children's rights in France and around the world. As early as 2019, for the 30th anniversary of the Convention on Children's Rights (CIDE), member organisations had called



1989
UNANIMOUS
ADOPTION
by the United Nations
Member States of the
Convention on Children's
Rights

on French public authorities to warn of France's failures to meet its responsibilities. It has since published several observations on the status quo of children's rights in the world and has gone into greater detail on issues of governance and children's participation in the development of public policies that concern them, calling in particular for a reform of the Parliament of children.



MOBILIZED FOR AN ELECTION YEAR

In 2022, on the occasion of the presidential and legislative elections, the Action Group "From Convention to Acts!" took action to ensure that issues related to childhood are not forgotten. This was with the aim of carrying out its proposals and in particular the establishment of a ministry dedicated to Children and Youth. This alone, in fact, would have made it possible to get out of the logic of silo thinking and to implement a real strategy for children and young people.

WHAT IS NEXT?

The story of the Action Group should have ended in September 2022, three years to the day after its creation. But while the group is now identified by the public authorities and has an interesting and unifying dynamic, the members of the Action Group "From Convention to Acts!" wonder about the possibilities of continuing the adventure. Action Education is currently contributing to this reflection to better carry out its advocacy. 🤝

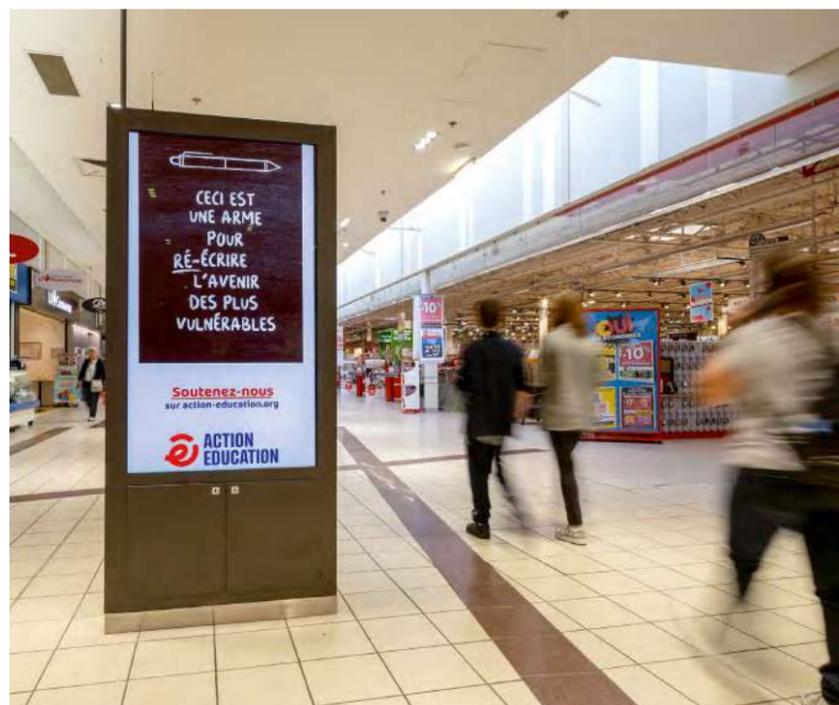


Find out more

Discover all the actions of the Action Group «From Convention to Acts!» at: www.delaconventionauxactes.org

ACTION EDUCATION AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Following our change of name and visual identity on 4 July, we launched a communication campaign aimed at the general public at the start of the school year, so that Action Education gains visibility and renown.



 ur messages have been broadcast free of charge by a large number of media. Several television channels (including France Télévisions) broadcast our spot. Dozens of publications in major French magazines and newspapers as well as hundreds of outdoor billboards in the largest cities have made it possible to present our new identity. In total, the media spin-offs are valued at more than 1 million euros (which would have been necessary for the purchase of equivalent advertising space). Our awareness campaign was also deployed on our website and social networks. On these, the campaign visuals have generated 1.5 million impressions (number of times the content is displayed) since 5 September, and the video has been seen by 819,000 people. 



To find out more, scan this QR code or connect to action-education.org

ACTION EDUCATION IN THE MEDIA

Action Education has been asked on several occasions by French and international media to present its programmes and actions.

 Vanessa Martin, Public Speaking & Advocacy Manager for Action Education, explains why "Aide et Action" has become "Action Education" and answers questions from journalist Vicky Bogaert.

 Mathieu Cros, Evaluation & Capitalisation Research Manager of Action Education, published an article in the United Nations review on the challenges of NGO interventions.

 Vanessa Martin, Public Speaking & Advocacy Manager for Action Education, answers questions from Patrick Figeac, whose weekly programme "L'école de la vie" is dedicated to education and training. 

Rukmini RAO

« We seek to establish norms where violence is no longer accepted »

Dr Rukmini RAO has devoted over 40 years of her life to fighting for social justice and women's rights in India. She is the founder of the Gramya Resource Centre for Women, which is supported by Action Education. She has also been a member of the international board of directors of our association since 2011.

HOW DID YOUR COMMITMENT START?

When I was young, I saw a lot of articles in Delhi newspapers that talked about dowry-related murders of young girls. We decided with a group of friends to create the Saheli structure (which means 'Woman friend') in order to help women who are victims of domestic violence. We helped change the law in the 80s and 90s, then in 2005 domestic violence was recognised as a crime.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN LIVING IN RURAL AREAS?

We realised that most of the complaints came from middle-class women, who read newspapers or watched television, while rural women were often not informed of their rights. I came back to Telangana State and started working with Dalit women farmers who are often victims of violence in their communities. With a friend of mine, we created the Gramya centre for women. Our organisation has over 3,000 women in 10 districts. Our work is essentially rights-based, guaranteed by the constitution, but not adequately enforced. We collectively seek to establish norms where violence is no longer accepted. It is an arduous struggle because our class and caste divisions represent a brake on the unity of women. We try to



carry out preventive work to avoid situations of domestic violence, by working with women but also with men in the communities. Gender discrimination begins at birth, at home. We run regular campaigns to try to identify children who have dropped out of school and make sure they come back. We ensure that the children have a balanced diet and that the vaccination protocols are well respected. We work on the long term and on sustainable solutions, such as organic farming.

ARE YOU POSITIVE ABOUT THE FUTURE?

I'm personally very positive because we've seen a lot of change

«Our organization counts more than 3,000 women in 10 districts.»

happen. I think it's very important for girls to have role models. I regularly give courses on leadership and bring in women from the community who have become engineers, community radio leaders, taxi drivers... When I ask young girls in the community today, some answer me «policewoman», which was unimaginable only ten years ago! There is still a long way to go, but I think we are on the right track. 



THIS IS A WEAPON
THAT CAN RULE OUT
~~POVERTY~~
~~AND EXCLUSION~~

IT ALL STARTS WITH EDUCATION.
FOR 40 YEARS, WE HAVE USED EDUCATION AS A WEAPON
TO FIGHT AGAINST INEQUALITIES AROUND THE WORLD AND IMPROVE
THE LIVES OF MILLIONS OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS.



AIDE ET ACTION HAS BECOME
ACTION EDUCATION
[Support us
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