Refugee Education workshop held

16 September 2017

Education International (EI) is the voice of the education sector worldwide, representing teachers and education employees at all levels. As its core, EI is guided by the principles of human rights, democracy and social justice. Accordingly, EI recognizes that education is a human right and public good, enabling people at all stages in their lives to achieve their maximum potential. EI has a natural role to play in promoting the right to education for refugees and migrants. The growing refugee and displaced persons crisis in the world and specifically in Africa is becoming a serious concern.

Consequently, Continental Refugee Education Workshop was organized by Education International to create awareness on the issue to teachers’/education unions in Africa which was held from 13-14 September 2017 in Addis Ababa.

President of Ethiopian Teachers Association, Yohannes Benti, after his welcome remark, has invited the guest of honor to officially open the workshop. Then State Minister of Education, HE Teshome Lemma who also welcomed the participants to the workshop, informed Ethiopia’s effort to provide education to the huge number of refugees the country is hosting.

The workshop was honored by the presence Fred Van Leeuwen, General Secretary of Education Internal. The General Secretary reaffirmed the need for education unions, in Africa and the world over, to continue efforts towards the achievement of the refugees’ right to access quality education. He said “what brings us together here in Addis Ababa is our deep concern about the fate of forcibly displaced children,” and discuss “how to realize the right to quality education for perhaps the most vulnerable among the most marginalized”.

[Image: refugees in a workshop]
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The workshop has discussed on various topics such as EI policies, program activity initiatives; the role of education unions in this context; UNHCR comprehensive refugee response framework and so on.

Participants were teacher organizations/union representatives from Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Cameroon, Tanzania, South Africa, Zambia, Senegal, Rwanda.

Participants were divided into two by language groups (English and French) and discussed on the following thematic areas:

- Quality public education (funding, teacher training, curriculum)
- Advocacy Avenues
- Research and communication and
- Solidarity and development cooperation.

Finally, the workshop came up with consolidated document on the way forward and adopted declaration.

Ethiopian Teachers Association (ETA) which is a founding member of Education International (EI) is honored to have hosted this important workshop in Addis Ababa and is committed to implementation of the declaration made at the end of the workshop.