

SAY YES

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF UNICEF TURKEY SUMMER 2003

GIRLS' EDUCATION

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY

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IN THIS ISSUE

A BIG ISSUE ABOUT A BIG ISSUE

The gender gap in girls' education in Turkey is a very big issue for all concerned — the Government, UNICEF, NGOs, the school system itself and of course for Turkish girls themselves. So this bigger issue of Say Yes is almost exclusively devoted to the complex of traditional values, economic deprivation and sheer discrimination which keeps girls from rural districts and the poorer urban areas out of school in Turkey.

The Government and UNICEF's Advocacy Campaign for Girls' Education is an important initiative in this respect. A carefully structured plan has been worked out to ensure that girls who have never attended or who have dropped out of school will in fact complete their schooling. The campaign will be launched on the 17th of June in ten provinces with the lowest rates of enrolment and will be expanded to forty other provinces by 2005.

Below: playing with gender — could they expect better future opportunities if they were boys?

See **Go Girls!** page 13

BİNGÖL DISASTER: APPEAL FOR FUNDS

Following the earthquake in Bingöl, eastern Turkey, which killed 177 and injured more than 520 people on the 1st of May, UNICEF has launched an appeal for funds to facilitate the resumption of school activities.

Eighty-five children and one teacher lost their lives when Çeltiksuyu boarding school, fifteen kilometres outside the city of Bingöl, caved in upon them. Generally, the worst hit buildings in the area have been schools, a disturbing fact which is echoed in the figure of 131 schools which collapsed following the Marmara earthquakes of 1999.

UNICEF has already supplied 100 tents and equipment to set up temporary schools in the area but an initial amount of US\$450,000 is required for a comprehensive response. The requirement is urgent in the extreme since most pupils in these schools are from poor rural families and the disaster may seriously affect UNICEF Turkey's drive to improve enrolment rates for girls.

Many thanks to the UNICEF Italian National Committee who have already contributed 100,000 Euros.

Çeltiksuyu: Waiting for Word, pp 14 & 15



There is no more important single issue on UNICEF's agenda today than education for girls and my visit here is an opportunity to commend Turkey for its role in promoting 'Advocacy for Girls' Education', a campaign begun by the staff of UNICEF Turkey in partnership with the Government, NGOs and the private sector.

The theme of girls' education harmonises perfectly with a new drive launched in Istanbul called Leave No Child Out. It envisions a world in which no child is discriminated against or excluded, like the 120 million children around the world who are not in school — the majority of them girls.

It is a vision that begins with the recognition that education is the right of all children — and the obligation of all governments, its primacy proclaimed by agreements ranging from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Fulfilling the right of every girl to a quality basic education is the key to promoting true equality between boys and girls and men and women.

But education, especially for girls, is also smart economics. Only education can equip girls with the confidence to make the most of their abilities; that can provide a means for changing attitudes about violence while promoting equality; and that can put young women on a path to economic and social empowerment.

Educated girls grow into educated women — women who are more likely to participate in making decisions that affect their lives and the lives of those they love. And they are more likely to be healthy, to have smaller families, and to have healthier and better-educated children.

To reach our goals for girls' education, we need strong national leadership, unshakeable political commitment, generous financial support — and an all-out attack on the factors that help sustain gender discrimination and violence: poverty, ignorance, and inequity.

At the same time, we must address the catastrophic effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on educational systems and other vital institutions, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. And we must ensure that children get the early childhood care and nurturing that is vital if their minds and bodies are to be equal to the demands of learning.

At the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children last May, world leaders reaffirmed the goal of achieving universal girls' education by 2015. But to bring that goal within reach, governments agreed that a number of countries would need an extra "push" out of the starting gate. And so a decision was



made to launch a major drive to close the gender gap in education by 2005.

The objective is for Turkey and 24 other countries to make girls' enrolment equal to boys' by the target year, using a combination of increased resources and active partnerships involving governments, multilateral agencies like UNICEF, voluntary progressive groups — and above all, local communities, schools and families.

Turkey has made considerable progress in promoting education for girls since 1997. But ensuring that girls get the quality basic education that is their right involves more than enrolling them in classes. Just as children must

be prepared for school, so we must ensure that schools are ready for children.

Schools must provide relevant curricula and adequate learning materials. Teachers must be well trained to encourage children to participate actively and think critically. And schools must have adequate hygiene and sanitation facilities, health and nutrition services, and policies that guarantee children's health and safety.

During my visit to Turkey, I learned of the Child-Friendly Learning Environment programme, which aims to make school a more enriching experience for children through a more relevant curriculum, better physical conditions — and more parent-student interaction.

The understanding and cooperation of parents is vital to the success of the Advocacy for Girls' Education campaign. It is especially hard for impoverished families to send their daughters to school when they are needed to help with household and farming chores or to work outside the home for extra income. But it is up to all of us to show parents why it is in their own best interest to see that their daughters finish their compulsory education and perhaps even go on to college and beyond. The dream of universal girls' education is still just that — a dream. But I am convinced that we will make it come true. The proof is in the partnerships that are already at work — among parents and teachers, village councils, local authorities, national governments, and the bilateral and multilateral community, including UNICEF Turkey and our Regional Office, which stand ready to help in any way.

And to all Turkish girls, I say: *Haydi kızlar, okula!*

Carol Bellamy
Executive Director, UNICEF

Carol Bellamy launched **Leave No Child Out** in Istanbul on June 16th and **Advocacy for Girls' Education** in Van on June 17th

THE BIG ISSUE

Associate Professor Hüseyin Çelik was born in the Gürpınar District of Van in 1959. Immediately after graduating from the Faculty of Literature at İstanbul University he became an assistant in Yüzüncü Yıl University. In 1987 he returned to İstanbul University as a faculty member. Between 1988 and 1991 he took his Masters Degree in Turkish Politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and wrote his doctoral thesis on 'Ali Suavi and his Times'. While researching the 'Young Ottomans Association' as the first modern political movement in Turkish history, he travelled widely in Europe, visiting Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France. In 1992 he took the post of Assistant Professor in Yüzüncü Yıl University, becoming an Associate Professor in 1997.

The general elections of April 18th, 1999 carried Minister Çelik to the Grand National Assembly as a DYP (True Path Party) deputy from Van. On July 3rd, 2001, however, he resigned to join the founders of the AK Party. He was a founding member of the party when they took their seats in parliament. In the general elections of November 3rd, 2002 he was re-elected as the deputy for Van. His first post was as Minister of Culture in the 58th Government established after the elections. Soon thereafter, he was appointed Minister of National Education in the current, 59th Government.

Minister Çelik has published fifteen books on a variety of issues including ideological and political movements, Turkish culture, the political history of Turkey, Turkish literature and other issues of current interest to the country. He is married and has two sons and a daughter. A fluent English speaker, Minister Çelik is an extremely frank person, whose habitual expression is a mixture of

determination and affection in equal parts.

We had a warm and lively exchange on the theme of

'education' in general and the 'Advocacy for Girls' Education' campaign in particular.

At the outset, Minister Çelik emphasized that education is a basic human need: "Some essentials such as eating, drinking and so forth are common to every living organism. But education is the distinguishing characteristic of a human being. It is a spiritual need, bringing material benefits also. Education is the key to discovering and rationalising the environment in which human beings live."

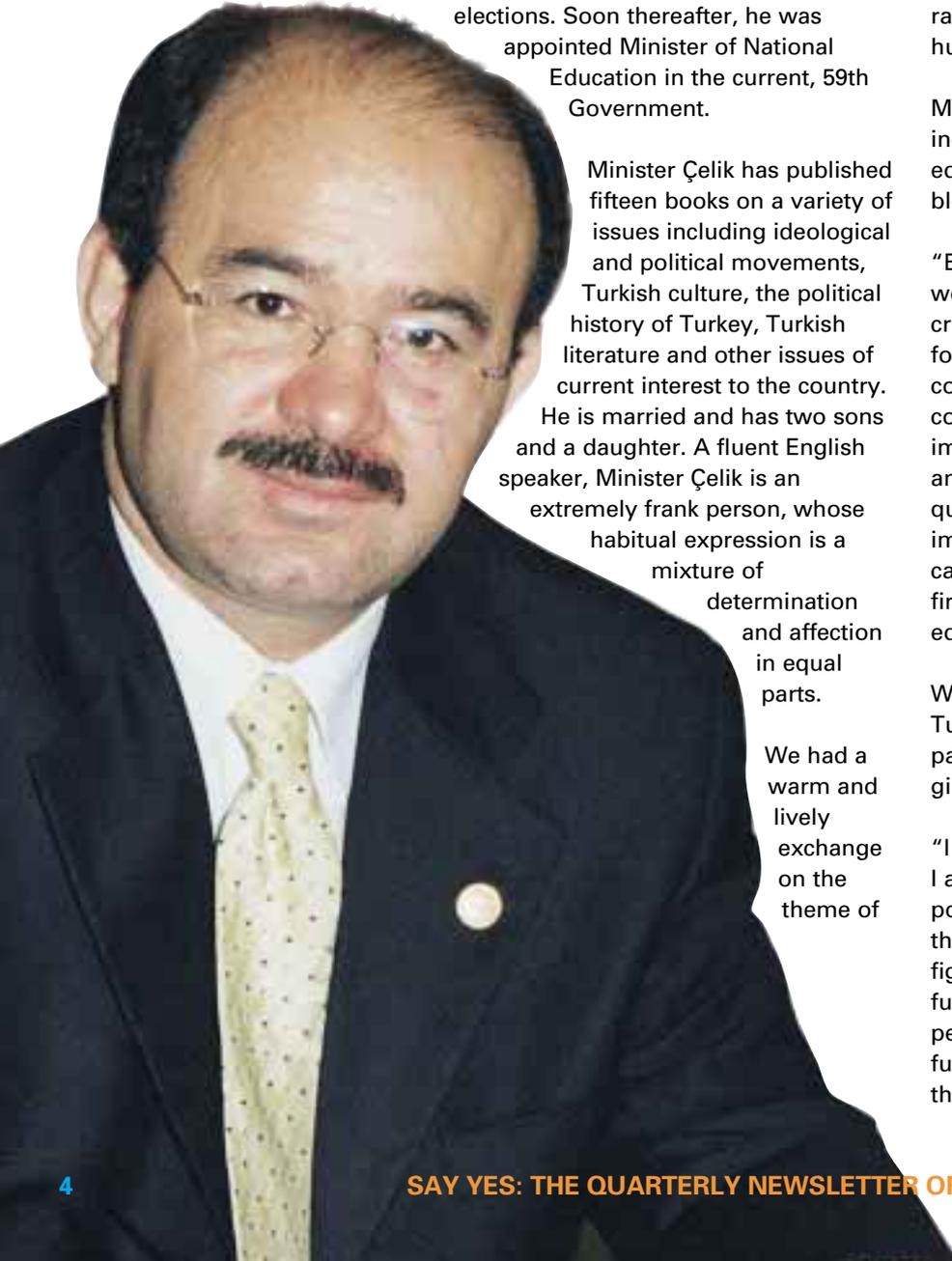
Minister Çelik sees education as an indivisible whole. Yet he underlined 'basic education' for its importance as a building block for our future.

"Basic education is the solid foundation of all we will learn afterwards. It is therefore crucial to ensure access to basic education for all. The issue is not that everyone should continue with higher education after completing their basic education. What is important is to impart relevant information and skills that help individuals enjoy a good quality of life. This is not to deny the importance of further education; yet we cannot get a good higher education without first having in a good system of basic education in place.

With his profound understanding of the Turkish character, Minister Çelik is particularly interested in the education of girls. His approach to the issue is candid:

"I am against all forms of discrimination, but I also believe that there is need for some positive discrimination favoring girls when the issue is education. According to my figures, 7.5 million people in this country are functionally illiterate and six million of these people are women. So the number of functionally illiterate women is four times that of men! Speaking openly, I think that a

"I am against all forms of discrimination, but I also believe that there is need for some positive discrimination favoring girls when the issue is education."



DR HÜSEYİN ÇELİK

problem of this magnitude requires positive discrimination in favor of women.

"It is true that the education of girls is one of the priority issues in Turkey. Yet, this problem is not specific to Turkey. Nations who fail to educate their women have no chance in the dizzying race in which the world is presently engaged. In Turkey, interregional disparities in development are reflected in education as in other areas. There are disparities not only between the western and the eastern regions of the country, but also between the centre and periphery of urban settlements. There are many things, however, that can be done to solve the problem. One way is to enhance public awareness and mobilise all sections of society. I think that with the campaign we are about to launch with UNICEF on the 17th of June we'll be able to address that and achieve a great degree of mobilisation and participation. I also believe that we can strike a spark in the hearts of all by making each citizen a part of the solution, stressing that the real solution requires the participation of all — not just the State — by showing that each of us can play a part.

"I was born in Van and educated in a regional boarding school. So I know that our people would consider me as 'one of them'. And I believe that they will stand by me in this campaign and send their daughters to school. The solution to the problem of girls' education is a key to the solution of many economic, social and cultural problems that presently affect Turkey.

"We don't want to waste half of our human resources for lack of education. In education, we must place due emphasis of ethical aspects and build a system that brings to the fore human nature and face of our children. What would really make a difference would be not simply to accord some rights to women, but to have them ask and struggle for these rights."

Minister Çelik expanded on the launch and future direction of the campaign: "We'll start with ten provinces where girls' enrolment rates are very low and then we'll further expand the program by adding twenty more provinces. By 2005, we will have gone a long way towards eliminating gender differences in school enrolment and attendance rates."

Another question we put to Minister Çelik was about approaches to improving the quality of education. His response was heartening, stressing a holistic approach as the key to eliminating issues of quality:

"Quality in education should be seen as five elements that complement each other and form a whole: Good and qualified teachers, schools, education materials, curriculum and the students themselves.

"To effect some changes in our system of education, we are at present working on a grading system for teachers. Under this system, teachers will first start their careers as candidate teachers and need to satisfy specific criteria to be full teachers. Other qualifications will be sought for those who want to be schoolmasters. It all depends on the performance of teachers and of course their remuneration will be harmonised with their qualifications and performance. The objective is to adopt a dynamic approach and continuously renew and update teaching practices.

"We are very pleased to be working with UNICEF in this campaign for the education of girls. Through our cooperation, we strongly believe that we will succeed in mobilising our children, their families and all other individuals and institutions in the country.

"At the end of the day, we should make the message clear everywhere that education is for all. It cannot be a privilege conferred to specific groups. And quality in education is the most important of all."

We sincerely hope that the Minister's commitment is absorbed by the country as a whole and that girls are no longer deprived of their basic right to an education.



"The solution to the problem of girls' education is a key to the solution of many economic, social and cultural problems that presently affect Turkey."

CLAIMING THE FUTURE

Dr Nur Otaran is a researcher and consultant to UNICEF Turkey on education for girls. A committed advocate of women's rights, Dr Otaran experienced the women's movement in the United States during the seventies when she studied there and of course here in Turkey where the movement is very much a growing force for change. She has always worked in education and training, as a teacher at first, then at various managerial levels in both the public and private sectors. For a time, she also worked as a researcher at the Educational Science Faculty of Ankara University completing her Masters Degree and her Doctorate in Educational Psychology.

Her work has always had a focus on the education of girls and young women — her dissertation was on Sex Role Development — so the issue of women's education has naturally developed as a speciality for her.

As part of our support to the Ministry of National Education's 'Advocacy for Girls' Education' campaign, UNICEF asked Dr Otaran to prepare a booklet highlighting the importance of the issue, outlining those areas where various agencies and NGOs could get involved. In order to consolidate her observations, Dr Otaran conducted a study of girls' education in Kars, a largely rural province on the eastern border.

"Economically poor, the people there endure a harsh winter climate that can last up to eight months. Apart from the city of Kars itself, very few homes in outlying villages have running water, for example, so supplies have to be fetched over considerable distances. Life is hard.

"Interestingly, the women of Kars enjoy equality with the menfolk in all walks of life — more so in fact than their counterparts in neighbouring provinces. However, they have very little time for reading and writing: everyone must work hard in order to keep their heads above water, so to speak. They

have television, of course, so they get an idea about what's happening in the world but they don't read newspapers or books.

"However, this isn't to say that they are complacent in any way. They know what they are missing which is a start.

"The act of learning, of doing something, involving yourself with others, is very important to these women. They understand that education is essential for a positive outlook and that it can influence your behaviour for the better: it puts a sparkle in your eyes. As far as they are concerned, study for its own sake, regardless of the subject, is a pleasure even though their restricted lifestyle allows no immediate outlet for what they have learned.

"That said, the education of mothers is of course vital to the health and development of their children. The consequent effect is that the next generation steps up a level in their education since the foundations were laid with the mothers."

"Attitudes toward education have not changed a great deal in over a decade," she says, referring to a report* from 1991 which suggests that a combination of local customs and traditions and extreme poverty is at the root of the matter. "Many people simply do not see education as being a priority, certainly where girls are concerned. Also, if the schools were in better condition, better equipped and so forth, people would be more inclined to take advantage of their facilities.

"Local schools are not in good condition, generally. Understaffed and often poorly equipped with facilities and materials — one we visited in Çerme had no running water in spite of the fact that it was flanked by two streams — they are not an inviting prospect. Secondary schools can also be very difficult to reach and are often so far away that many are unable to

Dr Nur Otaran: "It's very much within our power to change the situation and improve rates of enrolment."



meet the travel expenses. During heavy snows, families prefer to keep children at home.

“It was good to see that local administrators and teachers, being painfully aware of these shortcomings, were willing to take responsibility for improving the situation. Still, their capacity to do so is limited — they need more support from the Government. That’s another issue in itself: with over ten million children of school age, the current budget for education is inadequate.

“The relatively small sum of 5,000,000 TL (US\$3) required by local schools as a contribution towards running costs can be beyond the resources of many families. Most of these rural households have as many as seven or eight children. One father of nine whom we spoke to said that he could only afford to educate five of his children — an understandable dilemma until you realise that it was summarily resolved by keeping his four girls at home. For these people, education is a critical expense, a luxury almost, and it is the boys who have priority since they will carry the family name. The girls will marry, effectively moving on to another family so where is the future in that they ask themselves?

“This grim reality is a tremendous economic and social handicap for the issue of girls’ education.

“A group of girls we spoke to were quite slow to answer why they were not going to school, possibly because they were with family members and neighbours at the time. One girl pointed out that she was ‘too tall’ for school which confused me (she wasn’t by any means over-developed for her age) until I realised that she meant she was adolescent — of marriageable age, in other words.

“Another big handicap for girls in this part of the country is the lack of role models: there simply aren’t many women in their social circle who have finished secondary school let alone tertiary level or who are working in the professions. So they find it hard to see what an education would mean to their future.

Dr Otaran is nevertheless optimistic on the issue of girls’ education: “These drawbacks aside, it’s very much within our power to

change the situation and improve rates of enrolment in order to ensure that every girl attains a good standard of education. The issue needs more attention and funding, certainly — that’s a matter for Government bodies such as the Ministry of Education to attend to at both national and local levels. We could do with a great deal more inter-sectoral cooperation as well. On the poverty issue, families in need should have financial support. Coordination between NGOs, the Social Solidarity Fund and the private sector would help on that front.

“The Government’s Advocacy Campaign for Girls’ Education is an important initiative in this respect. For UNICEF, however, this is more than a question of expanding educational opportunities for girls — that’s a start — but it also means the systematic elimination of the barriers that keep girls from getting into and succeeding at school. I’m talking about an end to gender discrimination quite simply. We need equal opportunities for girls and boys alike.

“Above all, we need to have the will to change the situation. Even in dire financial need, people have found ways around the problem because they wanted to. Take the case of Hakime: she’s from a remote village and was fortunate enough to finish her compulsory eight years education. She wanted to continue to secondary school and learn a trade but her family was too poor to meet the expenses. Luckily they managed to bring Hakime’s case to the attention of *Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği* an NGO which provided financial support for transport and subsistence. She has become something of a *cause célèbre* locally, everyone follows her progress with great interest.

“It means something for them to see their girl succeed.”

**Factors Influencing School Attendance in Basic Education in Turkey with Special Emphasis on Female Participation, Dr Niyazi Karasar, The World Bank, 1991. Dr Otaran acted as Assistant Coordinator.*

Education for girls is not as accessible in rural areas of eastern Turkey as it is for their peers in the more affluent urban areas.



A GENDER REVIEW ...

Together with our partners in the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), UNICEF has been taking stock of the situation regarding the education of girls in this country and the result is a 'A Gender Review in Education, Turkey 2003' coordinated by Dr Nur Otaran. On the following pages we offer a brief overview of the document which highlights the multi-dimensional nature of the learning environment and investigate how families, communities and institutions can approach the problem and effect a change for the better.

According to the State Institute of Statistics (SIS), Turkey's population was just under sixty-eight million in 2000 with almost 60% living in urban areas. The average per capita income is equivalent to US\$2,584. The average life expectancy is 66 years for men and 71 years for women. The latest census shows that twenty-four million people are under eighteen years of age and six and a half million of those are under five. Out of 193 countries, Turkey ranks 79th for under-five mortality rates and 85th out of 174 countries in the UNDP Human Development Report, 2002.

In recent years, Turkey has seen much in the way of achievement and innovation in education. However, in many parts of the country education remains an issue of exclusion where it should be exclusively an issue of quality. This is so because even though the population is divided equally between the sexes there is, by tradition, a divide of gender inequality.

Girls in rural areas and the poorer shanty towns (gecekonduklar) of urban centres may consider themselves fortunate to have finished primary level education because many of their peers have not. For their sake and the sake of Turkey's future development goals, this needs to be remedied.

Together with MoNE, UNICEF Turkey is committed to changing this: the foremost goal for 2005 is to ensure that rates of enrolment for girls and boys in primary education are on a par — the driving principle of the Advocacy Campaign for Girls' Education.

FAMILIES

Home and family should be the least stressful place for a child to learn, yet it is also where the conditioning of girl children as second class citizens begins. This is not peculiar to Turkey — it is familiar to advocates of women's and children's rights the world over — but that is not to excuse the prevalence of gender discrimination especially in rural areas. High rates of illiteracy and a value system focused on the needs of men and boys tends

to place those of girls and women second.

All too frequently, a girl is considered to be more valuable to the family doing housework rather than homework, looking after younger brothers and sisters and carrying out chores from early on. Care of the household is viewed as the girl's natural responsibility and if she fulfils her duties in this respect, she is deemed to have learned all she needs to know.



It is common for the girl to be seen as the property of her family and the family she subsequently marries into rather than as an individual in her own right. Her value is based on what she can do for the family in the present rather than how she will develop in the future. The question of her education is easily ignored in this context.

Economic barriers further complicate the question of educating girl children. For poorer families, the cost of books, transport, food and clothing for girls are easily viewed as frivolous expenses. Such attitudes exist even though:

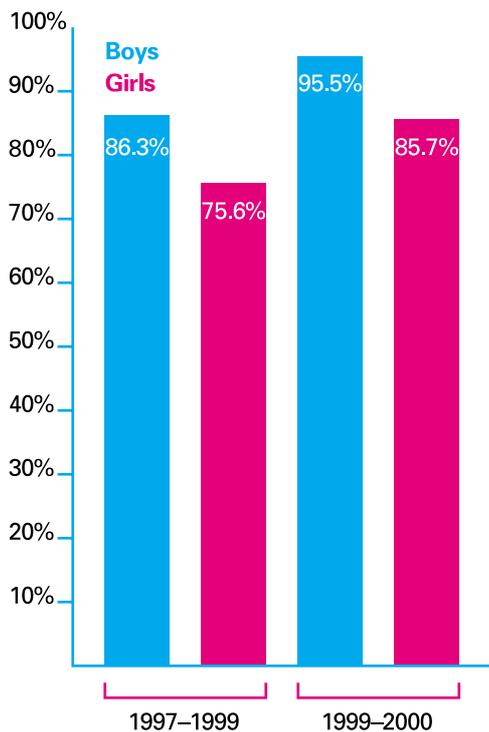
- child labour is forbidden in Turkey;
- the Constitution says that discrimination is to be avoided;
- a primary education of at least eight years is compulsory for every child in Turkey.

In reality many poor families require their children, especially the girls, to work instead of sending them to school: they are unaware of the advantages to be gained by sacrificing her income from work or the hidden value of her labour at home in favour of her education.



Above: Parents were invited to a meeting at Çerme Village Primary School, Kars in Spring, 2003 in order to discuss girls' attendance.

IN EDUCATION



Net enrolment rates in primary education had improved at the close of the millennium, however enrolment for girls was still lower. *Source: State Institute of Statistics*

Families need to understand the relevance of education to their girls' lives both as primary care-givers of the future and as individuals in their own right. There is an argument that girls have few opportunities to make use of an education outside of the home which is spuriously borne out by figures on gender in the professions but it is little more than a self-fulfilling prophesy exploiting discrimination against women today only to perpetuate discrimination against women of the future.

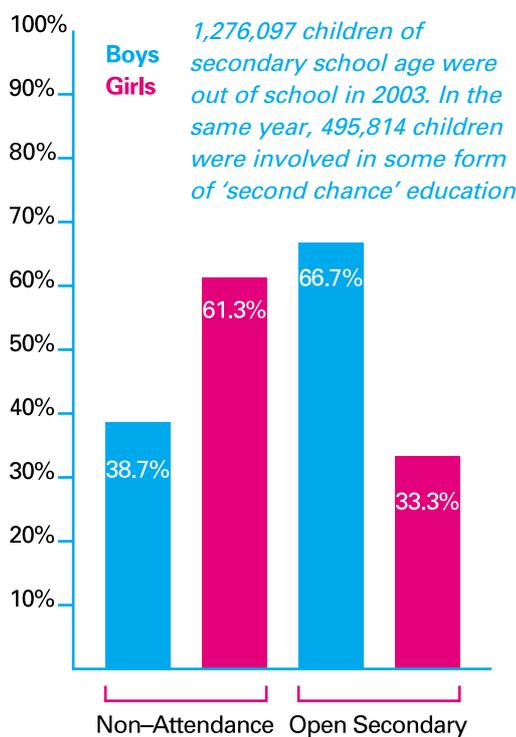
Profession	Percentage of Women
Members of Parliament	4%
Civil Service	33%
Academia	36%
Law	19.7%
Medicine	33.8%
School Principals	4%

Women are not represented equally with men in the professions, most notably in government and in the management of schools. *Source: DGSPW, 2002*

In cases where girls attend school, there is a pattern of late enrolment and early withdrawal from the system, often to make an early

marriage, which needs to be changed. Many families remove their girls from school because they have reached puberty: one girl interviewed in Kars, implied that having reached adolescence, school was no longer relevant to her future.

The children themselves, particularly those from poorer backgrounds, view paid employment as a more attractive option than schooling since it increases their standing within the family. So they innocently collude in the subversion of their education.



While more girls than boys are dropping out of secondary education, the bias is reversed for children attending 'second chance' initiatives such as Open Secondary Education. *Source: MoNE RPC, 2003*

SCHOOLS

Conservative attitudes to gender roles are so much a part of our educational system that it is hard to see the wood for the trees: schools tend to propagate stereotyped gender roles, thereby exacerbating the problem of ensuring education for all.

Since the inception of the Republic, both girls and boys have had access to all levels of education by law. However, there is work to be done if the education system is to be made more relevant to the reality of being a girl or



A GENDER REVIEW ...

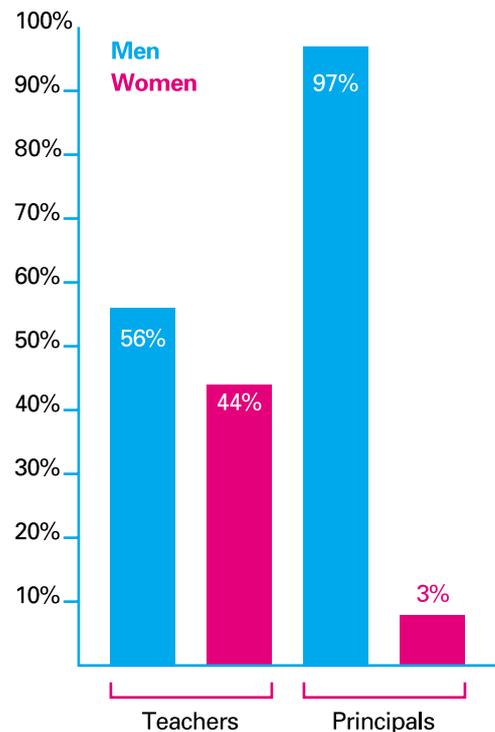
young woman in modern Turkey. Some form of positive discrimination is necessary in order to balance people's conditioning with respect to gender roles, otherwise men and boys will continue to be favoured at all stages of the educational process and so on throughout every area of Turkish life.

Although girls have fewer disciplinary problems in school, on closer inspection, this reveals a tendency to refrain from attracting attention, minimising the risk of infringing strict codes of dress and conduct which can be restrictive to girls especially. Avoiding negative attention, they often fail to ask questions or get involved in discussions and generally miss out on vital interactive aspects of the learning process. In rural areas, the problem is compounded when girls conform to gender expectations by volunteering for menial tasks such as cleaning duties.

A gender breakdown of the system shows that while just under half the primary teachers and just over a third of secondary level teachers are female, less than 3% of school principals at primary level are female (a gender breakdown of the 3,099 secondary school principals is unavailable). Since training in school management and administration has become a prerequisite of the school principal's post, this raises the question of training and advancement opportunities for women teachers. At tertiary level, the gender gap is even more remarkable, enforcing the message that knowledge is the domain of men while women are fit to teach little more than reading, writing and arithmetic. It is unsurprising that issues of male-oriented approaches to the content of the curriculum and the management of educational establishments still need to be resolved.

Although a curriculum reform was begun in 1997, a great deal of content that is likely to reinforce gender stereotypes remains to be removed from the curriculum: men continue to be ascribed active, public roles while women are portrayed as being essentially domestic or passive. The message is clear that gender sensitive improvements to the school curriculum and teaching and learning processes are essential in order to engage and stimulate the attention of girls in the schoolroom. This is especially true in low-income areas where gender gaps are an almost universal norm.

More life-skills areas such as rights, gender equality, health and nutrition and respect for diversity should be promoted and the quality of learning materials should be improved. The curriculum should feature appropriate vocational and professional training for girls showing them how they will secure marketable future employment.



The gender gap in teachers at Primary school level is 12%. The gender gap in school principals shows a remarkable imbalance. Source: MoNE Undersecretariat, 2003

Teachers, particularly women teachers, should be able to question traditional stereotypes and sexist approaches themselves so it is important that they are trained in these areas and promoted as role models for girls.

SOLUTIONS

At the Governmental level, enforced registration of births and marriages will provide a sound basis for monitoring the progress and development of all children from the earliest stages, not just in education but also in the planning of immunisation and other vitally important health programmes.

Early childhood education should be vigorously promoted for all children — boys and girls alike — since provision for children of either sex is currently not sufficient.

IN EDUCATION

Within the educational system, families, administrators, teachers, the Government, NGOs and girl children themselves should be involved in a national strategy to place Turkish women and men on an equal footing in the future of the country. Stereotyping and rearing of children and the traditional beliefs from which these patterns stem should be resolved at familial and institutional levels or they will continue to hamper progress.

The lack of hope exhibited by low-income families in secondary education and the future employment of their girls should be rectified. The creation of incentives for girls to remain in school would help to overcome the reluctance of many families in both urban and rural areas to lose income or the contribution of their girls' labour. Costs such as books and supplies, clothing, shoes, food and transportation could be subsidised by improved budgetary allocations and partnerships with agencies such as the Social Solidarity Fund and NGOs in order to correct the preferential treatment of boys over girls.

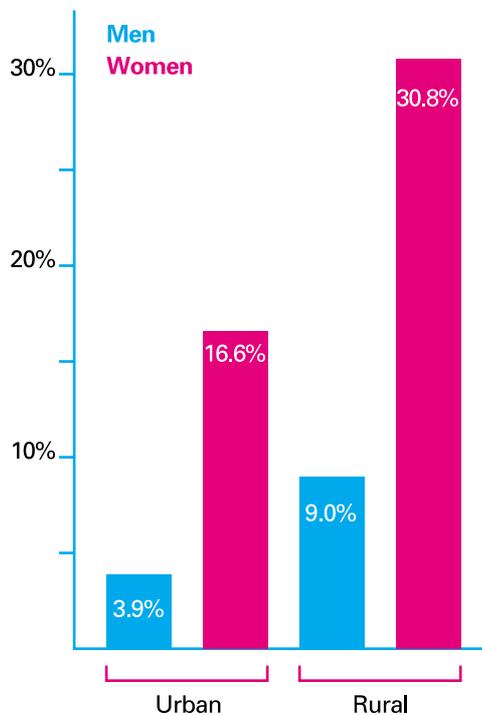
Expenditure on education and the numbers of teachers and schools should be increased. Schools should be made more accessible — laudably, free bus services to primary schools over distances exceeding 2.5km are currently in place. The physical environment of school buildings needs to be improved in order to encourage attendance.

The education system would take a great leap forward if issues of discipline and curriculum content were addressed to make the school more relevant to girls and women. Quite simply, school needs to be presented as a

Countries	1985–1987	1995–1997
Turkey	1.2	2.2
Bulgaria	5.4	3.2
Syria	4.8	4.2
Iran	3.7	4.0
Greece	2.2	3.1
Spain	3.7	5.0
UK	4.8	5.3
USA	5.0	5.4
Norway	6.5	7.7

Expenditure on education as a percentage of gross national product (GNP) has increased although it remains low in comparison with expenditure in other countries. *Source: The UNDP Human Development Report, 2002*

more attractive, engaging proposition for them. Many girls interviewed said they would like to see a similar free travel service to secondary schools such as that for primary schools, for instance.



Illiteracy amongst people of low-income remains a problem, with a disparity between the sexes in both areas. *Source: The State Institute of Statistics, 2003*

At a glance it is clear that Turkish women and girls need more from the educational system: they lose out because ultimately they are unable to take part in the shaping of society to the extent that their male counterparts do. Improving the educational system for girls would undoubtedly mean a better future for them and for Turkey.

Dr Otaran, the coordinator of the Review is optimistic: "The shortfall in literacy amongst women is dramatic, but it isn't drastic — let's not forget that in comparative terms, we're really talking about something like 10% of the population. The situation can be remedied if the willingness is there on the part of the Government to invest in budget and resources so that we can move forward."

The Gender Review in Education, Turkey 2003, has been reviewed and approved by both the Ministry of National Education and the State Institute of Statistics.

LEAVE NO CHILD OUT



“Leave No Child Out is a unique opportunity to mobilise across the region to end the discrimination and intolerance that rob millions of children of their dignity and potential. It’s a way of standing up for *all* children’s rights. It’s not just a campaign for better policies; it also challenges us as individuals to change our own attitudes and mindsets,” says Philip O’Brien, UNICEF Regional Director.

LEAVE NO CHILD OUT

Being left out means being an object of discrimination which begets a vicious cycle of disadvantage as the effects pass from one generation to the next so that children often suffer multiple disadvantages as a result. Exclusion or discrimination — whatever you care to call it — is hugely detrimental to society when the costs of public services and lost potential are taken into account.

“Where would I be without an education? I’m not sure I’d be able to speak up for myself — I wouldn’t know what to say.”

Exclusion is not a fact of life but a given and it is entirely preventable. Which is why the Regional Network for Children (RNC), a part of the Global Movement for Children, is going to tackle the issue of exclusion in the Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltics (CEE/CIS) region. The RNC has adopted ‘Leave No Child Out’ as the focus for its region-wide public awareness campaign for 2003–2004.

During the past decade, as the region grappled with the myriad social and economic problems of transition, around 18 million children were living in poverty; 2.2 million people were internally displaced and one million were refugees; the number of children in institutions for the disabled has risen in many countries; almost one million live in residential institutions and the region has the fastest growing rates of HIV/AIDS infection in the world with roughly one million people living with the disease.

Stressing that ‘A World Fit for Children’ will only be possible through

strong, visionary partnerships, the Leave No Child Out campaign will:

- expose social exclusion and its impact on children;
- promote public debate;
- promote anti-discriminatory attitudes, behaviour, practices, policies and norms;

The RNC’s vision of the CEE/CIS is of a society where no child is excluded; where diversity is respected; where the rights of every child will be upheld and, above all, where no child will be left out. In short, a ‘Region Fit for Children’.

The ‘parent’ of ‘Leave No Child Out’ was the phenomenally successful ‘Say Yes for Children’ campaign which won the hearts and minds of Turkey: two thirds of parliament and one in every four people said ‘Yes’ for children prior to the United Nations Special Session on Children last May. ‘Leave No Child Out’ is built on the first action of the ‘Say Yes’ pledge, which topped the poll in the CEE/CIS region.

It is Turkey’s honour to host representatives from twenty-seven countries at the regional launch of the campaign in İstanbul with the ‘Festival of Joy’ on the 16th of June. Demographically, the CEE/CIS is a young region and the RNC aims to shape its future with the joys and aspirations of the children because they are viewed as the most important stakeholders of the campaign, the foundation of it’s success.



GO GIRLS!

ADVOCACY FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION

In Turkey, the 'Leave No Child Out' campaign will focus on the participation of the private and public sectors, the media, NGOs, the Government and, of course, the children themselves in the 'Advocacy for Girls' Education' campaign.

Turkey is one of twenty-five countries which UNICEF has earmarked for accelerated action in the world-wide drive to close the gender gap in education. Gender disparities in the Turkish education system are significant especially in the rural parts of the southeastern Anatolia and low-income families settled in the urban centres.

"If I couldn't go to school, I couldn't expect to have a good job when I grow up. What would I do? I'd probably have to be a cleaning woman or a scrap collector. There's nothing wrong with women who do that work. But I don't think they have a choice and people don't respect them for it."

The 'Advocacy for Girls' Education' campaign supports the provision of quality education for all children by focusing on girls as the largest single group of children who are discriminated against in the denial of their right to an education and equality with boys.

"I'd feel lonely if they sent me to work instead of school. I need to play and who would I play with? — Could I play?"

With the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of National Education plans to increase access for girls and improve the quality of education on offer.

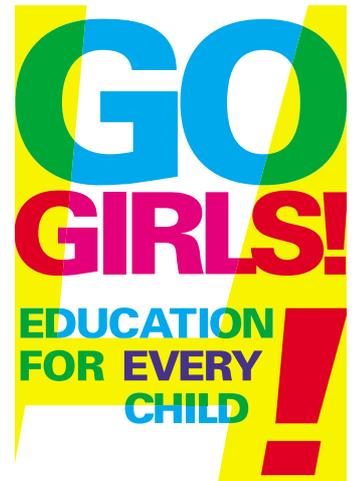
By the end of 2005, the Girls' Education campaign aims to achieve parity in enrolment rates between girls and boys in fifty provinces where the schooling rates for girls are currently lowest.

The launch of the campaign will take place in Van, one of the most beautiful and characteristic provinces of the Turkish homelands where the issue of girls' education is a significant problem. UNICEF Executive Director, Carol Bellamy will have informal discussions with local girls and their families about their views on the way forward for girls' education.

Along with the Minister of National Education, Dr Hüseyin Çelik, himself a native of Gürpınar in the province, and the Governor of Van, Mr Hikmet Tan, Ms Bellamy will introduce the campaign and 'light the flame' which will grow into a blaze of education reform over the next two years.

The Ministry of National Education and UNICEF see the issue of getting every girl into school as a core development issue, a step towards eliminating poverty and advancing sustainable human development which has been held back for too long in many countries worldwide by the failure to educate girl children especially. The promotion of gender equality is the basic element of the campaign which will have the knock-on effect of giving Turkish women a higher profile and a stronger say in the evolution of our society.

"Every day spent outside of a school is a tremendous loss not only for the girl but for the future of her country," said Carol Bellamy in May. *"These girls simply cannot afford to wait any longer."*



"We all need school — not just some of us whose parents are lucky enough to afford it or who don't need their children to work."



ÇELTIKSUYU SCHOOL

On the morning of Thursday, 1st of May, an earthquake measuring 6.4 on the Richter Scale struck the province of Bingöl in eastern Turkey. By the following Monday, 177 people were reported dead and 520 injured. The worst hit building was the boarding school in Çeltiksuyu, fifteen kilometres east of the city of Bingöl, where 85 students and one teacher died. As rescue teams searched the rubble, people from the neighbouring village of Güzeler kept a vigil in a corner of the schoolyard. No one ate and no one slept. They were praying that another of the 50 children from their village who attended the school would be found alive.

Below centre, in the company of her daughter, Emine, Hacer awaits news of her son Doğan.

“The building fell upon my son, but *my* heart is torn to pieces,” Hacer was there, awaiting news of her boy, fourteen-year-old Doğan, who was still buried under the ruins, “speak to me Doğan, give me a word, any sound.” Watching the scene for a sign of hope, she spoke about the youngest of her seven children with pride and joy: “Doğan would come home to us every weekend and even at fourteen, he’d sit on my knee and insist on being called ‘Mummy’s boy’. Everyone from the village is here, we’re all waiting and hoping, praying. We don’t have a school in our village, so we all sent our children here as boarders — to school, mind you, not to a graveyard.”

An estimated 130,000 primary school children from the age of six upwards come

from sparsely populated rural areas of Turkey to board, Monday to Friday, at schools like Çeltiksuyu because it isn’t viable to have a school locally. It’s not an ideal solution but it’s all there is for the time being and the children and parents miss one another terribly. Even fourteen year old Doğan hated making the trip back to the dormitory on Monday morning: “There would be tears,” said Hacer.

As the rescue operation continued amid an atmosphere heavy with sorrow and the incongruous brilliance of early Spring, Ayşe and Bahar, day pupils from the eighth grade, clutched photographs of dead friends and wept silently. With something of the resolve that hallmarks her youth, Ayşe asks “What will happen now? Does this mean we won’t get our diplomas in June?”

This is by no means



WAITING FOR WORD

selfish of her: in Bingöl, one of Turkey's poorest provinces, where many girls do not go to school, Ayşe knows only too well that her education is the key if she is to have a better life than her parents.

In the wake of the disaster, local authorities are determined to restore a sense of stability to the lives of the children and their families by resuming school activities. However, most schools were so badly damaged by the tremor and the aftershocks which followed that they are unusable. After consultation, UNICEF immediately sent 100 school tents from contingency stocks so that schools could reopen within a fortnight. School supplies were also released in order to avoid risky forays into unstable school buildings to retrieve items such as blackboards and books. Çeltiksuyu was prioritised for obvious reasons.

"It takes a long time to get over the trauma of an earthquake of these proportions. People are fearful in their homes or any kind of permanent structure so tents become an important psychological prop," said UNICEF Representative, Edmond McLoughney at Çeltiksuyu, "Nobody feels at risk in a tent so they're ideal for school activities in the short term. School is also the ideal situation for psychosocial programmes to help the children, teachers and families get over the trauma of what has happened" he added.

"We have a great deal of experience from the Marmara earthquakes in 1999 where we developed the

Psychosocial Programme to help families pick up the reins on their lives."

Within fifteen hours of the disaster, UNICEF Turkey's team was at the scene. After an initial assessment, teams of psychologists were drafted into the area to work with the Ministry of National Education and other agencies on a psychosocial programme.

The Psychosocial Programme provides a platform for children affected by traumatic experiences to confront issues such as bereavement, disorientation and trauma. By expressing their feelings and reactions to what has happened to them, they are able to resolve obstructive issues which would otherwise prevent a return to normalcy.

Regrettably, for Doğan and the other children who died in the earthquake, it is too late, but to the boys and girls of Bingöl who survived, we promise that it is UNICEF's mission to help you realise your right to an education and a better future.

Following the earthquake, thirteen rescue teams spent four days searching the wreckage for survivors.



OUR GOALS FOR 2005

- To ensure that rates of enrolment for girls in primary education are on a par with rates of enrolment for boys;
- To reduce the Infant Mortality Rate from 42.7‰ to 20‰;
- To reduce the Maternal Mortality Rate by 50%;
- To increase rates of exclusive breastfeeding;
- To eliminate Iodine Deficiency Disorders in children;
- To expand the Family and Child Training Programme (FACT) to reach 3 million families;
- To improve the health and development of adolescents;
- To significantly minimise the ratio of children in need of special protection;
- To build local capacity in social monitoring and planning for children and women;
- To ensure that Turkey's legislation is fully compliant with CRC/CEDAW;
- To have a sustainable, interactive Child, Women and Youth Information Network;
- To respond to the needs of children and women during and after emergencies.

GO GIRLS!

EDUCATION FOR EVERY CHILD

- Educated women and girls have better opportunities and life choices;
- Educated women and girls have a greater voice in family and community affairs and are more likely to participate decision making;
- Educated girls are more likely to marry and have children at a later age — because they choose to;
- Educated girls have better job opportunities and are more able to contribute to the family's economy;
- Educated mothers are more likely to send *all* their children, both boys and girls, to school;
- Educated girls tend to have fewer and healthier children — child mortality rates drop with higher levels of female education;
- Educated girls are more aware of health issues — rates of HIV/AIDS infection are significantly reduced by higher levels of female education;
- Educated girls have healthier pregnancies, resulting in lower maternal mortality rates;
- Attention to girls also benefits boys — In UNICEF's experience, programmes focusing on girls have proven to be equally beneficial to boys;

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