

Focus: Education and Training of Women

Background: In 1995 in Beijing, the following objectives for action were proposed to aid in this designated **critical issue**. 20 years later we are looking at the results.

Education of women and girls is so foundational for IBVM's, I suggest that we remind each other of the wonderful educational opportunities we are providing. Beside each action is the name of an **IBVM ministry** that is working on the education and training of women and girls. There is wonderful information and photographs on each of our province websites.

Objectives for Action

- Ensure equal access to education: [Vietnam](#)
- Eradicate illiteracy among women: [Mary Ward Centre in Chicago](#)
- Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology and continuing education: [South Sudan, Zambia,](#)
- Develop non-discriminatory education and training: [India](#)
- Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms.
- Promote life-long education and training for girls and women: [IBVM throughout the world.](#)

Here is information from two provinces for our own education.

In **Canada**, although they may seem like other ministries, much of what we do is educational. Our newest educational ministry is through the Mary Ward Centre soon to go online. Through its director Ann McGowan, we are spreading the justice education across the schools in the Toronto area and holding conferences on justice themes for adults in a newly renovated part of Loretto College.

Here is the Mary Ward Centre Mission Statement

- *We commit our energy and resources to promoting the dignity and liberation of all through education for justice, personal and spiritual development, reverent care for the earth, and all of God's creation.*

- *The Mary Ward Centre will provide celebrations and experiences which nourish and deepen the spirituality of each person, recognizing the universal values shared by different faith traditions.*
- *The Centre's aim is to empower agents of change, dynamic leaders with heart, wisdom and the will to influence others to make our world the world that God intends.*
- *The Mary Ward Centre will encourage and enable all whom we encounter to be lovers of truth and doers of justice, creating networks to raise awareness that leads to action.*

When we receive notices about the programs being put on at Mary Ward Centre we can see how they fill this Mission Statement and our IBVM Call to Justice. Thank you Ann McGowan!

India Here is information about the Brickfield schools in **India** that I copied from the Kolkata Mary Ward Social Centre (KMWSC) newsletter on the IBVM.org site. The actual newsletter has wonderful photos. Check it out.

Brickfield: Congratulations to the Brickfield Schools Staff: 150 visits to BFS have been made between 1st November and 16th December 2014. We currently have 50 BFS with 100 teachers and several new partner NGOs. A large majority of the BFS work in Hindi, the remainder in Bangla, according to the language used by most children in a brickfield. Old and new teachers all received 4 days residential teachers training here in Loreto KMWSC. Teachers are now writing their own daily lesson plans, using a weekly and full season plan supplied by the team at KMWSC. This is challenging for many teachers, especially for the 45 who are new. A programme of health camps with free checks and treatment for children and adult workers in the brickfields is taking shape. We intend to run health camps in at least 40 locations. We are constrained by shortage of funds, but hope nevertheless to cover all our 50 brickfields with some kind of health service during the current season. Currently we are doing field visits with short training sessions for groups of BFS teachers.

Let us Pray: A Prayer for all Christians Working in Education

Lord God we thank You for the women and men You have called to work in education. Bless their hearts with Your love, joy and peace. Season their words with Your patience, kindness and goodness.

Fill their minds with Your faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

When they respond to a broken-hearted child show them how to be big-hearted.

When they reach out to a rebellious teen remind them how much You love each one.

When they advise a lonely mature student help them to be Christ Jesus to them.

When they meet with an angry parent let them see a child of God.

When they give advice to a discouraged colleague give them helpful and encouraging words.

When they speak to visitors and strangers grant them the gift of hospitality. Amen.

(Rupert Kaye ACT)

Mary Mallany IBVM, Canada.