A Tribute to Jackie

Trainer, Researcher and Scholar

Lyndsay Bird

International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) – UNESCO, Paris

Jackie Kirk's death is an unspeakable loss to all of us, to the field of education and to the communities who will continue to benefit from her tremendous intellectual and personal contributions. We at UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) continue to honour her memory through our commitment to education for children and communities affected by conflict.

Jackie's unflagging passion and advocacy for quality education in emergencies and reconstruction moved and inspired all those who shared the privilege of working with her. In addition to her two publications with IIEP (*Building back better: post-earthquake responses and educational challenges in Pakistan* and *Certification counts: recognizing the learning attainments of displaced and refugee students*), Jackie was actively involved with IIEP's team working on capacity development in fragile contexts. She was especially committed to promoting the right to quality education for women and girls in conflict and disaster settings and to increasing the understanding of the gender dynamics of education. For example, in March 2005, Jackie conducted a workshop in Kabul on gender policy in education which was attended by officials from the Ministries of Education, Higher Education and Women's Affairs. This workshop focused on gender analysis and planning to reach EFA goals, and those participating unanimously attested to the considerable wealth of knowledge they had gained, particularly concerning frameworks for gender analysis in education. Participants demonstrated a commitment to taking forward the outcomes of the workshop within their own departments as well as sharing the new knowledge among friends and family.

Through this type of work Jackie demonstrated her gifts as a trainer, a researcher and a scholar with a deep grounding in field operational realities in the most difficult of environments. She worked closely with UNESCO staff both at Headquarters and in the field and tirelessly

promoted the efforts of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). Jackie was a treasured friend and colleague of IIEP as well as of many other organisations and individuals. Her warm personality, sense of humor, her willingness to speak the truth to those in power and her belief that the world can become a better place will be sorely missed.