

# Educaid

Norwegian co-operation in basic education

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LINS is a resource centre for international education and development established in June 1997.

You can also read Educaid at <http://www.lu.hio.no/lins/educaid>

## The purpose of Educaid

The objective of Educaid is to function as an information channel between persons and institutions in the field of basic education and development. A special focus will be Norwegian development assistance.

## LINS Perspective *Gaps and Inconsistencies*

In much educational research, gaps and inconsistencies form an essential rationale for the study to be undertaken. What is the coherence and consistency of the curriculum as designed, as taught, as learned? What is the connection, if any, between a policy of Education For All and the budget allocations to different sub-sectors in education? Differing schools of psychological thought have led us to believe that as humans we seek to impose order on the world, to make sense of it all, to seek coherence. Alternatively, that the mark of human intelligence is to be able to hold conflicting and contradictory views simultaneously, to be inconsistent.

In our work in supporting NORAD's development assistance for basic education, LINS staff have frequently come up against Inconsistency Theory. This is half-brother to the better known Ambiguity Theory of March and Olsen. Inconsistency Theory teaches us that there will always be a gap between what the documents say and what is happening on the ground. This is perhaps to be expected, as dealing with human development is not the same as building a bridge or an aeroplane. The lack of correlation between the blueprint and the product provides for numerous interesting variables.

Where the danger arises is in the blind acceptance of reports, oral or documentary, which fit our hopes for the programme or project under review. Is it enough, for example to accept a report which informs us that an average of 40 teachers per week attended the Resource Centre in the first six months of the project period. But what did they do? Collect their attendance money and go home? Research information for a set of lessons in Social Studies? Duplicate 50 copies of a mathematics test for Standard 5? The search for quality in education demands that the reality must resemble the rhetoric. This is not a matter of distrusting our development partners and demanding the verification of everything, much as a financial auditor has to do. Yet why should our standards be any less rigorous than those of Coopers and Lybrand? Much criticism of development assistance to education suggests that too many of our programmes and projects require the imposition of foreign ideas onto systems which cannot absorb them; hence the under-utilised teachers' centres, computer laboratories, textbook bureaux and the like. Greater focus on verifying the impact of our programmes, as NORAD did in Pakistan a few years ago and is now doing in Bangladesh, helps mitigate the worst effects of Inconsistency Theory. Gaps will always be there but they will be narrow and bridgeable.

*Robert Smith, LINS*

## Ethiopia Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP)

Ethiopia is one of the largest and most populous countries in Africa. Its primary school Net Enrolment Rate (NER) of 35% is also one of the lowest on the continent. This was one of the impulses behind the establishment of the country's first Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) which was initiated in 1998 and will run for five years to 2002. It is an ambitious program with a budget of over 12 billion Birr (about USD 1.4 billion) Over 70% of the funding is planned to come from the Government of Ethiopia and the remainder is to come from a wide range of donors including World Bank, the UN agencies, the European Commission, the African Development Bank, Austria, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. Over half the ESDP funding is allocated to primary education (grades 1 to 8). The program also includes secondary, technical and vocational education and tertiary education. With almost 12,000 primary schools spread across a mountainous country twice the size of France, the logistical problems confronting the ESDP are daunting. However all public administration, including education has been effectively decentralised to nine major regional authorities and Councils whose job are to implement the program in the field.

The program is managed by means of a small secretariat and Annual Review Meetings which plot progress and plan amendments. A Mid-Term Review of the ESDP has just been completed and its main findings and recommendations are expected to emerge shortly. A team of 20 officials and consultants from Ethiopia, the World Bank, the United Nations, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands and Norway participated in the review which was co-ordinated and led by the World Bank. The team examined educational planning and management, curriculum development, civil works, non-formal education, gender aspects and capacity aspects. Bjørn Berg and Michael Fergus from Norway participated in the Review. They were impressed by the effective way in which the review was organised and managed by a triumvirate from the World Bank, the Government of Ethiopia and UNICEF (representing the donor community) in an intensive three-week period where no one was spared.

*Michael Fergus, NCG, Oslo, Norway*

## Palestine: Sector Working Group on Education

On 27 March 2001 the Sector Working Group on Education met in Ramallah. The Group consists of 25 bilateral and multilateral organizations' in addition to representatives from Palestinian National Authority. The

focus for the meeting was the situation of the education system in the present very difficult circumstances. The Deputy Minister of Education highlighted the number of children that regretfully have been killed since the beginning of the intifada. 96 were under the age of 18 years and 67 were students from basic and secondary schools. 2003 students were seriously injured and 43 lost or injured one or both eyes. He informed that 240 schools are located at friction points, and only in Hebron 32 school were closed that day.

The deputy minister also explained the new measures adopted by the ministry's emergency committee to ensure continuity to the ministry operations, like the **decentralization** of a number of activities to the district level, the possibility of accommodating overnight staff at the school's and at the ministry's premises during the working week, to avoid time consuming and expensive commuting.

The deputy minister at the same time expressed his concern about the future, particularly about the real possibility for the ministry to cover running costs on a monthly basis. This is the reason why the ministry has proposed to set up an "Emergency Fund", which could pay for the recurrent expenditures of schools. The deputy minister informed that the fund could be managed by a committee and will be fully accountable to the donors through clear working mechanisms and regular financial reports.

The school construction projects are running relatively smoothly at some 90% of the implementation pace, with the exception of Gaza. Some contractors still face problems in reaching the sites, in recruiting workers or in obtaining sufficient construction materials, but the overall picture is improving. In fact, new agreements have been signed with donors with some new 15 tenders for construction.

The deputy minister concluded by thanking the donor countries, which expressed support to the ministry during the difficult time, stressing that this has meant a lot to the one million Palestinian children, who wish to have peace in their future.

## **The Bangladeshi Primary Education Development project for Quality Improvement.**

A LINS team visited Bangladesh from 13/3-22/3-2001. This consultancy was the fifth within the agreed work programme between the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Dhaka, and LINS. The purpose of this work programme is to assist the Embassy in their follow up of the Primary Education Development for Quality Improvement (PEDPQI). PEDPQI is the NORAD funded part of the Government of Bangladesh Program for the Development of Primary Education (PEDP). In Educaid no.4/2000 the main components of the programme were presented. The main purpose of this visit was to pursue issues of relevance to PEDPQI with special focus on institutional networking and development of training courses at the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) in Mymensingh. This visit meant a big step forward in institutional networking between Oslo University College

and NAPE and the college and the Institute of Educational Research (IER), Dhaka University. Based on the present initiatives concerning both a training programme at NAPE and joint impact studies relevant to PEDPQI, we expect in the future to see increased institutional linkages directly between NAPE and IER. This type of networking will mean a lot to the sustainability of improvements in the primary educational sector in Bangladesh. A step forward for the competence building at NAPE is also the fact that the institution now is linked up to internet.

There are two other educational programs in Bangladesh partly funded by NORAD: the Female Scholarship Program (FESP) and the Non-Formal Education Program (NFEP). The Embassy may in the future wish to get some assistance also in the follow up of these programs. Such expansion will enable LINS not only to follow up the implementation of PEDPQI, but to build up a broader background for assessing the coming new educational policy for Bangladesh. From LINS' point of view an assessment of this policy should be based not only on general educational ideology, but on experiences of a varied set of educational programs implemented by GoB and donors over the last decades.

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## **Why do many poor children in Dhaka, Bangladesh, not go to school?**

During a five-month fieldwork in Dhaka I interviewed 240 households with children at the ages from 6 to 12, living in different slums and squatter areas. Out of 320 children in that age in my randomly selected households, 43% attended primary school, 42% had never attended primary school, and 15% had dropped out before completion. The attendance rate was slightly higher for girls than boys. The cause of non-enrolment and dropout answered most frequently by their parents was that the direct costs were too high. Other causes were: indirect costs, the household had moved, dangerous traffic, teachers had refused children to start school, children lacked interest for schooling. Nearly all parents expressed positive attitudes to education. The correlation between children's school participation and the educational level of their parents was very weak.

My M.Phil. thesis in Human Geography shows that the following factors are significant to be able to improve school attendance among poor children in Dhaka:

- Eliminate the direct costs
- Lower the indirect costs
- Provide permanent shelter for poor people
- Locate schools inside or near slums and squatter areas, or provide free transportation to school
- Provide more and better information to poor people
- Create schools which are more attractive for children

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## “Getting children out of work and into school” - India.

NORAD has undertaken a review of Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF)'s program to eliminate child labour in Ranga Reddy District in Andhra Pradesh.

MVF has taken an uncompromising stand that all children not attending school is a child labourer. This is contrary to the current Indian laws and regulations that define a child as child labourer only when s/he works in one of the sectors that are banned by the law as a hazardous industry. MVF argues that it is not possible to differentiate between various types of child labour in terms of hazardous or non-hazardous, wage or non-wage work. All types of labour that keeps children out of school are detrimental to the development of the child. MVF advocates against the prevalent view that poverty is the root cause for child labour. The organisation has further taken a position against programs for non-formal education. Non-formal education, MVF claims, remains a means for legitimising child labour and is in effect a “poor quality education for poor children”. MVF is convinced that only by attending regular formal education can child labour issues be tackled.

After five years of operation, the review team found that MVF has succeeded in enrolling nearly all children in the project area. The strategy adopted is essentially based on age and gender. Older children in the age group 9-14 years are run through a bridge course, which builds on what the children already know to enable them to catch up with regular school children of their own age. For younger children direct admission to schools is done. In all cases there is a detailed follow up program to retain them in school. Summer school camps have proven effective as a strategy to upgrade children to higher classes. For the girl child the approaches are similar, but more intensive. MVF organises special motivation sessions for girls to convince them and their parents of the need to attend formal government schools.

There have been other spin-offs. The attitude of the entire village community towards school has changed. Teachers are more proud of the work and MVF is attracting a large number of volunteers from the communities as partners in the process of enrolling and keeping children at school. MVF experiences have also resulted in a number of significant policy changes all over the state of Andhra Pradesh. Other education programmes have by now adopted bridge courses as a central element in getting children into school. Conventional non-formal education programmes have changed into day schools. MVF has become a training ground for staff in other programmes. Many of the trainees belong to large-scale government supported programs. The new government White Paper on education is also strongly influenced by MVF.

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## LINS-member lecturing and learning in Japan

At the end of January this year, Theo Koritzinsky visited Japan to participate in seminars at the University of Hiroshima and meet educational experts from Japan

International Co-operation Agency (JICA). Koritzinsky, a former member of the Norwegian Parliament and the Council of Europe, mainly working with culture, education and development, has for many years been associate professor at the Oslo University College and connected to LINS. He was invited by Professor Norihiro Kuroda to present a paper on *Educational assistance from Norway* at the Center for the study of International Cooperation in Education (CICE), Hagashi-Hiroshima. In his paper, Koritzinsky analysed and discussed the following questions:

Which basic values, interests and principles have motivated Norwegian assistance policies, and how have educational purposes been integrated in the more general arguments? What explicit arguments have been used for educational assistance?

What has been the role of education in Norwegian development assistance? How important has it been in theoretical statements, budget allocations and in practical operation? What channels, countries/regions, levels, areas, sorts of programs and projects have been chosen – and why?

How has educational assistance been organized, administered and operated – in Norway and in receiving countries? What has been the role of governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations?

What has been done to evaluate different programs and projects in educational assistance? Who has made the evaluation reports? What do they tell us? What can be learned from them? What are some of the challenges to Norwegian educational assistance in the years ahead?

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## Evaluation of Danida's Framework Agreement with UNESCO

In November 2000 a group of consultants from NCG, DECO and LINS won an international bid competition for the evaluation of the Danida/UNESCO multi-bilateral cooperation in education. The evaluation included fieldwork in Mongolia, Mozambique and Zambia. The findings of the evaluation, which were reported to UNESCO and Danida in Paris ultimo March 2001, will give inputs to future cooperation between the parties as well as stimulate discussion among other donors regarding new and possibly more harmonised designs of the pattern of cooperation with UNESCO's multi-bilateral work.

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## Sund Folkehøgskole (People's College) - A college with international orientation

The main aim with one year at a People's College is personal development through studying a subject chosen by the individual student. A People's College is a boarding school, and various activities are organised to promote *friendship, respect, independence, knowledge, social skills and international commitment*. In a People's College there is no set curriculum and the students decide together with their teachers what topics they would like to focus on. This year Sund Folkehøgskole has 105 students from 14 different countries.

. The students study Norwegian culture and language, jazz, art, soccer, social work or third world studies. All courses have an international orientation.

The main concept in a People's College is learning by doing, and the course focusing on third world studies implements this by making specific third world countries their "classrooms". For eight weeks the students are travelling to either Central America or India. During their stay the students live in host families, visit organisations and study various development projects, culture, religion etc.

After returning to Norway the students are travelling to different schools and institutions in Norway to share their experiences. NORAD and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs sponsor this tour to promote international awareness among Norwegian youth.

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## Inter-agency evaluation of development assistance to basic education

A number of bilateral and multilateral donor agencies have agreed to carry out an inter-agency evaluation of development assistance to basic education. During a meeting on 23 February in The Hague, representatives of Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UNESCO, UNICEF, United Kingdom and the World Bank decided on the content and procedures for the proposed evaluation. The meeting decided that the evaluation should be a guiding post for the Dakar follow-up process by analysing the processes and results of development assistance to basic education in partner countries.

The results of the evaluation are expected to be used in several ways: as inputs into the design of agency strategies, in the context of discussing specific management and partnership issues, to improve practice in the field, to identify best practices and to improve aid efficiency and effectiveness.

Participants also stressed that basic education should be seen in the wider context of poverty, gender, HIV/AIDS, and sectoral and intersectoral issues. Five countries will be invited to participate in the evaluation.

As soon as the terms of reference for the evaluation are finalized, an evaluation team will be selected through an international competitive bidding process. The evaluation will be co-ordinated by an inter-agency steering committee and a management group, lead by the Netherlands.

## Conferences and seminars: BASIC EDUCATION EDUCATORS

UNESCO is carrying out the pilot phase of a 4-year Norwegian Funds-in-Trust project, Basic Education Educators: Integrated Policy and Training, in nine countries: The Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Jordan, Mali, Mexico, Senegal, Vietnam, and Zambia. The focus of the project is how to go beyond the existing, bifurcated, system of training of teachers and basic education educators in formal and non-formal settings and meet the

diverse learning needs of the many who have been denied access to basic education.

As part of the pilot phase activities, the countries prepared their action plans and the experts meeting was organised from 26-28 February, 2001, in UNESCO-HQs in Paris to review these plans with a group of experts (i.e., Mr. Robert Smith, Oslo college, Mr. Thomas Bediako, All Africa Teachers Organisations, Ms. Francoise Caillods, UNESCO-IIEP, and Mr. Richard Halperin, UNESCO-HQs).

The nine action plans all emphasise the need for an integrated approach to training of basic education educators. Some countries attempt to achieve this by increasing the capacity of formal teachers in the teaching of non-formal subjects, such as adult literacy, while others opt for refurbishing the administrative system and policy to favour an integrated management of training for formal and non-formal basic education educators. Still others intend to develop an integrated curriculum for polyvalent teachers.

Reviewing the action plans, the experts presented their recommendations.

The nine action plans were approved with some modifications and revisions to make. With the approval of the plans, the pilot phase was concluded and the project now awaits a decision from Norway on the main phase of the project. If approved, the main phase will last for three years, during which the countries will implement their action plans.

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## HIV/AIDS, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

LINS organised a seminar 25 April at Oslo University College with the title "Deprivation, Disadvantage and Disease". Professor Michael Kelly from Zambia made a presentation which stimulated discussion and inputs from a relatively large audience. Kelly's latest book "Planning for education in the context of HIV/AIDS" is available on Internet on the homepage of IIEP:

*<http://www.unesco.org/iiep/english/pubs/recent/rechiv.htm>*

## AFRICA: UNESCO/UNFPA TECHNICAL CONSULTATION IN DAKAR (15-18 MAY)

UNESCO Dakar is organizing, in co-operation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a technical consultation on population and family life education from 15-18 May at UNESCO Dakar.

The consultation intends to mobilize and highlight experiences in sub-Saharan Africa, specifically to: (1) take stock of the what has been done in population and family life education programmes; (2) map out strategies to promote the effective integration of population and family life education in national EFA plans of action in both formal and non-formal education; and (3) define modalities for the inclusion of new approaches such as those used in life skills training and education programmes.

The co-operation between UNESCO and UNFPA has already led to the development of population education in education systems in over ninety countries.

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## Input and feedback to Educaid are appreciated

In order to be updated with news about ongoing education projects and international conferences, we depend on information from our readers. Please contact:

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