

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.

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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 with interest, capacity, and competence in the field of basic education and development. A special focus and "target" will be Norwegian development assistance.

Educaid is distributed to individual and institutional actors within the field of education, development and North/South relations.

LINS Perspective

The publication of the World Bank's World Development Report 2000/2001, entitled 'Attacking Poverty', brings us once again to the dominant issue in the development environment at the moment. A great deal is being published and presented on the topic of poverty and Norwegians were given opportunities recently to hear Alan Gelb and Birger Fredriksen of the Bank speaking on various dimensions of the poverty challenge. Of course financial or economic poverty is the most obvious manifestation of the problem but we at LINS have also been giving some thought to other dimensions of poverty.

Poverty of security has been brought home to us all with the recent upsurge of violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In September, all was relatively calm. By November about 300 people had been killed. The countries where people live in a daily relationship with violence and insecurity are too numerous even to list here but whatever their material standard of living, such people must be numbered among the world's poor.

Poverty of power is another manifestation of the challenge. For those who appear to have no power to change their reality because of a lack of education, because they hold the 'wrong' religious views or because they are women, also number among the world's poor

Poverty of opportunity or choice is related to poverty of power. Simply being ignorant of what opportunities are available, what resources can be drawn upon, what choices are open represent real poverty for many. Social poverty, which restricts people from access to what others take for granted, like freedom of association, membership of organisations and leisure pursuits, afflicts many throughout the world.

So the analysis could continue, breaking down the various facets of poverty experienced by many every day. The obvious question which arises is whether the economic lens is always the most appropriate through which to view poverty. Having enough money to live on is a basic survival necessity but there are the deeper aspects of life, which make us truly human. Education is one of the most effective answers to all these forms of poverty. Using education as a means to alleviate or even eliminate poverty is on every donor's agenda but are they looking beyond the traditional schooling-to-economic liftoff model of the past?

Robert Smith, LINS

Emergency conditions for education in Palestinian Areas

The situation for education – as for all other areas of life and society – is extremely difficult in the Palestinian Areas, since the outbreak of the Al Aqsa Intifada. The Israeli army has imposed closures and siege on Palestinian cities, towns, villages and refugee camps, and Palestinian people have been living under curfew for more than eight weeks so far.

However, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and teachers, pupils, inspectors and educationists at all levels, as well as volunteers make great efforts to keep classes going, despite all the difficulties. The MoE issued a statement on 21 November stating that the Palestinian Authorities intended to continue with the process of education, despite all attacks by the Israeli occupation forces.

To be able to continue with education, emergency plans have been created and are now being implemented. In Hebron, distance education has been used for 40 days already. Three local TV stations are broadcasting lessons, prepared by supervisors, teachers and pupils. The lessons are recorded in schools that are not under curfew, or in the studios of the TV stations. The Director of Education addressed the parents about the importance of having them assist the children. An unexpected by-product is that some of the illiterate parents, having nothing else to do under curfew, are learning reading and arithmetic while assisting their children.

In West Bank and Gaza an emergency plan is now being implemented. The 16 educational administrative districts are being divided into smaller units, and a coordinator is chosen for each unit from school principals, supervisors or district staff living in the area. The Israeli army closed the major roads in the district on 8th of November. Since this date teachers, who are not able to go to their own school, have reported to the closest school, and have taken up teaching there, replacing other teachers unable to reach the school. Pupils do the same, and volunteers are helping out by replacing missing teachers. This emergency plan has been successful, since MoE reports that 99% of teachers are working in their normal schools or in alternative locations. The number of pupils attending is reported to be about 90% on average.

The pupils, however, are having an extremely difficult time. Children are frightened, not sleeping at night because of shelling and shooting. One principal, when asked about children's interest in schooling, answered: "What do you expect? These are emergency conditions. We are implementing emergency plans to keep the children in school. The pupils, however, have an emergency attention span, emergency concentration

and emergency ability to understand what they are being taught”.

Economically the situation is devastating for the Palestinian Areas, for the education sectors as well as all other sectors. The Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* reported on 23 November that the Norwegian funded building of new schools has stopped, and that the extra costs that the Palestinian Authorities have faced so far due to the conflict, amount to US\$774 million.

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African Girls' Education Initiative – phase II

In November 2000 the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs approved the proposal for a phase II in the UNICEF African Girls' Education Initiative. The new agreement includes NOK 200 million over a three-year period. The first phase, from 1997 to 1999 involved NOK 150 million, with an additional grant of NOK 19 million for the year 2000, to continue the activities.

All the 18 countries that were involved in the first phase can be included in the next one if they meet certain criteria. The proposals need to be more focused, and sustainability and coordination issues need to be addressed. The programs should serve as many girls as possible. Objectives and strategies relate to increasing access, improving quality and relevance, as well as addressing and eliminating gender discrimination throughout education systems.

Five or six new countries will be selected, and priority will be given to countries and areas affected by armed conflicts. This selection has not yet been made.

Norway has requested UNICEF to indicate how this initiative is coordinated with other initiatives promoting girls' education within UNICEF, and with UN in general, in particular the Secretary General's Global Initiative for Girls' Education, launched at the Dakar Conference.

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Norway and Sectoral Development in Malawi

In October of this year, Norwegian consultants from the Ministry of Education and Church Affairs (KUF) and LINS participated in Malawi's educational Policy Investment Framework (PIF) Review. Government and donor representatives met to subject the PIF to the reality check which such a Review is intended to achieve. Working groups looked at Basic, Secondary and Post-secondary education and cross-cutting issues like HIV/AIDS, decentralisation, gender and civil service reform were also examined. The PIF Review was the first exercise of its kind to be undertaken by the Government of Malawi and is the fore-runner to a fully sectoral approach to educational reform. Evidence from the Review indicated that Malawi's educational provision is lagging behind that of its neighbours and that the economic situation does not hold out much promise for greater investment in the future.

Since the conclusion of the Review, Norway has decided not to support educational reform in the country. The quality of the PIF preparation and the Review process itself were not given as reasons for this decision.

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The Bangladeshi Primary Education Development Project for Quality Improvement.

A LINS team visited Bangladesh from 22 Oct to 1 Nov. This was the fourth consultancy within an agreed work programme between the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Dhaka and LINS. The purpose of the work programme is to assist the Embassy in their follow up of the Primary Education Development Project for Quality Improvement (PEDPQI). PEDPQI is the NORAD funded part of a huge five years Government of Bangladesh (GoB) program for the development of primary education. 50% of the program is donor funded. NORAD support is given to components like: revision of the Certificate in Education Curriculum, training of untrained primary school teachers, upgrading of the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) in Mymensingh, equipping and improving the staffing of 240 out of 481 Upazila Resource Centres (URCs), training of staff for these centres and sub-cluster training for primary school teachers.

A discussion is going on within the GoB and among the donors about the educational concept of the URCs. The objectives are that the centres should provide academic support for the primary education system in order to improve the classroom teaching-learning process, as well as serve as a demonstration centre for educational technology. However, there is still uncertainty attached to the relationship between URCs and sub-cluster training. Another concern is whether high academic degrees are appropriate qualifications for the staff. Should experience from the primary education sector be required? If not, how might training courses be designed to make up for a lack of such experience among the URC staff?

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Female Secondary Education Stipend Project in Bangladesh (FESP)

FESP was initially funded by USAID from the early 1980s. From 1992 onwards NORAD has funded the project. In 1994 this pilot project became part of a national female stipend programme covering all the 460 rural thanas. NORAD funded 7 thanas, The Asian Development Bank funded 53 more, the World Bank funded 118 thanas, while the Government of Bangladesh funded the largest project – 282 thanas.

Female students from class VI to X/SSC get stipend support under this national programme. The main conditions for obtaining the stipend are:

- * The student must attend at least 75% of the classes.
- * The student must obtain at least 45% marks in each annual examination.

* The student must remain unmarried until passing SSC examinations.

The project period of NORAD funded FESP-1 was from July 1992 to December 1996 and further extended to July 1997. The project is now in the final period of its second phase (FESP 2).

The Ministry of Education in Bangladesh has commissioned a study to assess the long term impacts of the stipend project in the 7 pilot thanas. In general, the study will assess the impact of the NORAD funded FESP-1 on economic and social benefits of female secondary education, including the impact on female enrolment, attendance and retention. One of the main objectives of the study is to assess to what extent the project has been able to produce changes in household behaviour and has contributed to raising the general awareness in the society for the need of female education that will sustain demand for girls education even without the stipend programme. The findings will be presented at a workshop in Dhaka at the end of November.

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District Based Support to Primary Education (DBSPE) in Tanzania

District Based Support to Primary Education (DBSPE) in Tanzania is a national programme developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The purpose is to facilitate the implementation of major components of the Basic Education Master Plan (BEMP). The following components form the main focus of implementation:

- * Development of school clusters and establishment of Teacher Resource Centres (TRCs);
- * Improvement of teacher performance through In-service training (INSET) at the TRCs;
- * Improvement of education planning, management and monitoring at district, TRC and school levels;
- * Improvement of teaching and learning environments in primary schools through school rehabilitation and maintenance programmes;
- * National level capacity building to support primary education.

The Governments of Denmark, The Netherlands and Finland are the current DBSPE donors. Denmark will withdraw from the education sector at the end of the current grant to the DBSPE, which expires by the end of the first quarter of 2001. In this situation three new donors are considering to join DBSPE. They are the European Commission, Canada and Norway. An appraisal for NORAD was based on participation in the Joint Annual Review and Evaluation Mission for DBSPE, 04-23.09. 2000.

In three years the programme has reached many significant milestones in terms of establishing and fine-tuning its operational structure. However, there are still issues of efficiency that need to be improved. More attention should also be given to the qualitative improvements of teaching and learning in primary education. It is believed that Norwegian resources could contribute valuably to the further strengthening of DBSPE through taking over the financial responsibilities in districts where DANIDA is pulling out, extending the

coverage to all schools in those districts, and earmarking support specifically to the strengthening of pedagogical improvements. NORAD is still considering their support.

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Joint Donor Review BPEPII, Nepal

LINS staff attended the recent Joint Donor Review Mission in Nepal, called to assess the implementation status of Phase II of the Basic Primary Education Program (BPEP), and to make recommendations for the continuation and qualitative improvements of the programme based upon progress during the first fiscal year of implementation. The mission based its work and recommendations mainly upon documentation prepared by the Ministry in advance. There were also discussions with central stakeholders at Ministry and district levels plus short field visits.

The mission addressed the need for further strategies to be developed and steps to be taken in a number of issues:

- *The utilisation of technical assistance supporting the program from various sources has to be co-ordinated, especially in relation to capacity building.
- *A comprehensive strategy for community mobilisation should be in place in order not to duplicate activities.
- *There is still a severe lack of female staff at all levels in the education system.
- *The impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector is still not discussed as an issue within BPEPII components, but a plan for addressing this was recommended.
- *The Ministry was asked to ensure that experiences from piloting would be the basis for development and delivery.
- *Lastly there is a need to re-examine the roles of the various stakeholders involved in pre-and recurrent teacher training activities in order to improve efficiency and the quality of the training provided.

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Interagency Consultation on Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis

The consultation was held at the recommendation of the ministers present in the Strategy Session on Education in Emergencies held as part of the World Education Forum in Dakar, April 2000. It was convened jointly by UNESCO, UNHCR and UNICEF, and hosted by UNHCR in Geneva from 8 to 10 November 2000. The purpose of the meeting was to agree on practical strategies and mechanisms to achieve more effective inter-agency collaboration at global, regional and country level in the field of education in emergency and crisis.

Delegations from the three convening agencies attended the meeting, as well as representatives of WFP, UNDP, World Bank, bilateral donors and over 20 non-governmental organisations currently engaged in education programmes in countries in crisis or unstable situations.

The three-day meeting included both plenary and group sessions. Different thematic working groups looked into subjects of particular relevance for emergency education programmes. It was agreed that collaboration at all levels should be promoted, with priority on country level co-ordination. In order to avoid duplication, key tasks should, wherever possible, be assigned to an already existing co-ordination body. Global meetings and structures should be limited, and virtual communication used to share information and promote transparency between the stakeholders.

The existing network would be renamed simply the "Network on Education in Emergencies", and would provide, through its activities, membership and reporting, a linkage between the humanitarian assistance co-ordinating structures and the EFA Follow-Up. A small Steering Group will guide the Network, and a Project Officer will most likely be seconded by an NGO and based in UNESCO, Paris to support the Steering Group.

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A Norwegian based network for research and evaluation on education and development

Through funding from the Norwegian Research Council a Network for Research and Evaluation in Education for Development (NETREED) is under construction at the University of Oslo. NETREED will be built up from the 1st of January 2001. The grant from the Research Council for the network to get started covers a three-year period. The academic leader of the network is Birgit Brock-Utne, Professor of Education and Development at the Institute for Educational Research. Cand.polit. Ragnhild Tungesvik will be the administrative leader of the network. The network will be established in tandem with LINS. A steering committee for the network will be established, with representatives from different institutions.

The principal objective of the network is to enable Norwegian researchers, evaluators and research-administrators within the field of education and development to learn from each other, to avoid duplication but instead to form a strong Norwegian research base within the area of education and development. A web site will be created for this purpose, constantly up-dating users when it comes to new evaluation and/or research reports. The web site will also give information on where to apply for research money, field studies for students as well as conferences of interest. It will further give links to relevant international web sites. A biannual conference is planned as part of the project, in which researchers, evaluators and other actors will meet. A publication with short papers will be published after each conference.

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Conferences and seminars:

BETTER SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: THE ROLE OF THE HEAD TEACHERS.

Shanghai, September, 19th - 21st 2000.

This seminar was organised by IIEP, UNESCO, and Shanghai Institute of Human Resources Development, as a part of the ANTRIEP programme. Participant countries were, Indonesia, Korea, India (Mizoram and Uttar Pradesh) Bangladesh (BRAC), Malaysia, Philippines, Australia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Nepal. During recent years, the importance of the role of the head teacher has increased due to the greater emphasis being laid on decentralisation of educational management, and the move towards school based management and school autonomy.

The overall aim was to stimulate exchange of experiences between countries and create synergy between the institutions involved based upon the programs launched in their respective countries to improve the management capacities of their school heads.

Important issues discussed were:

- The role of the head teacher
- Community involvement
- Capacity building.

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WORLD BANK TRUST FUND SEMINAR, LINS, Oslo University College, Oct. 19-20 2000

For the fourth time LINS was the convenor of a two-day open seminar, while representatives from the World Bank were in Oslo for the annual meeting of the Reference Group for the Norwegian World Bank Trust Fund in Education.

HIV/AIDS and its impact on education was the first topic, and presentations were made by Keith Hansen from the Bank and Helen Craig from IIEP/UNESCO. In the second session Alan Gelb gave a presentation based on a recent book: *Can Africa claim the 21. Century?* All presenters were followed by well-prepared responses, as well as questions and comments from the audience.

The second day started with parallel sessions, one focussing on *The African Virtual University*, the other one on *Developing programs for Orphans and Children at Risk in Africa*. The last presentation, by Birger Fredriksen from the World Bank, focused on the HIPC Initiative, and the possibilities for increased resources for education. Papers from the conference, as well as some critical responses and articles, will be available on LINS' website in due course.

www.lu.hio.no/lins

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FORUM 2000

1500 delegates converged in the second meeting of The African Development Forum (ADF) in Addis Abeba on Dec 3 – 7. The main theme of the conference was: AIDS: The Greatest Leadership Challenge. The overall objective of the conference was to serve as a major launching pad for a new level of commitment and action against HIV/AIDS as a major threat to the development of the continent.

*Extensive and updated information can be found at:
www.uneca.org/adf2000*

Input and feedback to Educaid are appreciated

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

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