

Educaid

Norwegian co-operation in basic education

Year 7 Issue no. 2 2003

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>

LINS perspective

NGOs have been a major feature in the educational landscape of the South for a very long time. Their size and competence ranges from the huge, internationally known and respected organisations able to lobby and influence governments to small, local, self-sufficient groups dealing with very localised challenges. Norway is particularly rich in NGO strength and the LINS view is that NGO stands for *Norway's Great Opportunity!* We have recently been able to cooperate with Norwegian NGOs at a number of levels. The regular NGO Forum meetings coordinated by LINS have thrown up many important issues, especially in terms of the debate over Norway's development policies. LINS staff have been asked to speak to various NGO groups about World Bank education policy, literacy, HIV/AIDS and other development challenges. As this issue of Educaid indicates, we have also been busy at the field level with NGOs, assisting them in their processes of self-reflection and learning from experience.

What is so special about the best of NGO work is that supporters can be certain that the organisations get right to the grass roots of problem solving. They have often built up over the years the kinds of deep relationships with their partners that 'hit and run' developers cannot emulate. Where finances are open to scrutiny we can see how little or how much goes to administration and how much goes to the needs of the partners. We can also be sure that NGO staff usually have great commitment to what they are doing and have developed real knowledge and understanding of the peoples of the South with whom they work.

What is of particular interest to LINS is a growing sense among Norwegian NGOs of the need to reflect more on what they are doing and how they go about their partnerships with the South. It is too easy to paint an idealised picture of the noble NGO as opposed to the cynical development bank. Therefore a raised quality of debate, reflection, analysis and self-examination is to be welcomed among the NGO community. *Norway's Great Opportunity* may become more than a slogan if, given the problems of absorptive capacity in bilateral assistance, more ODA is channelled through organisations with authentic partnerships with the South. Such organisations, whose objectives and methods are consistent with the best development practices and who are themselves learning organisations seeking to refine what they do in the light of experience, make excellent channels for Norwegian aid

Bob Smith, LINS

LINS' new frame agreement with NORAD

LINS' current Frame Agreement with NORAD expires in December of 2003. With this in mind, NORAD recently advertised again for services to support the agency in its

basic and teacher education work with the South. A competitive bidding process within Norway was instituted and LINS, along with other interested parties, submitted a tender for this work. Formal documentation was prepared in response to the published Terms of Reference and LINS staff were invited to present their bid to a NORAD team of assessors. We were delighted to be informed in late July that we had won the tender for a further three years from January 2004.

The process of preparation for the competition gave LINS an opportunity to reflect on what had been accomplished since July 1997 and what challenges lay ahead in addressing the consultancy needs of NORAD in basic and teacher education. Since 1997, over 240 assignments have been carried out for NORAD, many in-country but others of a desk-assignment type. Special studies on teachers and their conditions of service, HIV/AIDS and its impact on education, poverty and education, research capacity in selected countries, child labour and education plus many other topics have been published. Networks with other Norwegian and foreign organisations have been developed and paid assignments for agencies other than NORAD have increased. A particular strength of LINS has been the partnership between DECO and Oslo University College, combining the skills and experience of a long-standing consultancy firm with the resources of Norway's largest Faculty of Education. We expect that during the period running up to the new Frame Agreement we will be able to prepare more fully with NORAD an even more effective approach to our consultancy work. LINS has defined consultancy as

The impartial application of specialised technical expertise to the analysis of proposed or actual activities in the field of education leading to the identification of appropriate solutions to developmental problems'.

Seven years' experience with NORAD has provided a rich set of learning experiences which we plan to feed back into the continuing process of consultancy work.

Bob Smith

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.

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UNESCO'S mobile team of experts, EFA and Haiti

On a request from UNESCO HQ, Paris, the four countries Haiti, Cambodia, Indonesia and Sudan were visited by LINS consultants in June to assess the outcome of the Norwegian funded *Mobile Teams of Experts Project (MTE)*. The main objective of the MTE project was "To assist Member States in developing and/or strengthening National Plans for EFA through targeted interventions of technical services". To exemplify the MTE concept and the assessments made by LINS, Haiti is chosen for a very brief presentation.

The starting point of the EFA process in Haiti was to consolidate the present state of affairs in the education sector. During the fall of 2001 appeals were made by *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale de la Jeunesse et des Sports* (MENJS), strongly supported by UNESCO, to all NGOs, consultants, international organisations, the education sector, private schools, social partners, universities, and private enterprises, to undertake commitments regarding the national EFA strategy. The outcome was very positive and, in addition to promises to assist MENJS in its huge tasks regarding the EFA goals, funds were raised for EFA related activities, and certain NGOs as well as the universities engaged positively in conducting studies. The resources allocated for the MTE in Haiti was US\$ 15 480, which was spent on a national consultant and three thematic studies.

There seemed to be consensus about the relevance of MTE and UNESCO's overall contribution to the national EFA process in Haiti. It was often underlined that UNESCO was the only guarantee of continuity in the struggle for EFA considering the political instability in the country.

Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, quality and sustainability were features of the strategy but, as would be expected, varied from context to context and from country to country. Given the lessons from experience incorporated into the report on the four studies, the MTE concept should be revised to take on board those lessons and to assist countries in the operationalisation and implementation of their EFA plans.

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Teacher education links between Norway and the South

As a result of a proposal received by NORAD from the Centre for International University Cooperation (SIU), NORAD requested LINS to carry out a desk study on cooperation between Norwegian university colleges and institutions in the South in teacher education. The response from the survey showed that seven university colleges in Norway have cooperation of one kind or another within the teaching profession and teacher education in particular with institutions in the South. These colleges are Agder University College, Bergen University College, Hedmark University College, Oslo University College, Sogn og Fjordane University College, Stavanger University College and Volda University College

Conclusions from the study suggest that many Norwegian institutions are interested in linkages with sister institutions in the South. However, some existing programmes are not set up in a sufficiently rigorous way and the concept of international partnerships may not be fully developed. Current agreements for staff or student exchange may not add much value to either of the partners. More positively, those institutions with well-planned partnerships are contributing substantially to quality improvement in teacher education and are making efforts to mainstream their cooperation into national provision for teacher development.

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Educational development in Nuba Mountains, Sudan

UNICEF's Nairobi office contracted LINS to carry out an assessment of training needs for the basic education system in Nuba Mountains, a remote and difficult area in Southern Sudan. Nuba Mountains region is at the frontier where the Khartoum Government from the north and the liberation movement from the south contest control of the country. Thanks to the current cease-fire and on-going peace talks, a LINS consultant was able to spend eight days in the area visiting schools and discussing training needs with the local education authorities. Teachers in the primary schools are mainly employed on a volunteer basis except for a few recruited from Uganda and Kenya. These expatriate teachers are at the forefront of efforts to introduce English as the medium of instruction. With support from UNICEF and the Education Secretariat of SPLM based in Nairobi, schooling is still being conducted in the most difficult of circumstances. The demand for schooling is very real and the few classrooms available are crowded with pupils. Basic supplies are lacking but efforts are being made to develop syllabuses locally and to produce text books and other materials. NGOs from Norway and elsewhere are assisting with teacher education and materials production. If the current peace talks are successful then the opportunities for expanding basic education within Nuba Mountains will increase. In the meantime, self-help and voluntary service are key factors in the schooling of the children of Nuba Mountains. Training needs are many, ranging from the administration of the system to school supervision and UNICEF plans to develop an appropriate response to these needs.

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BRAC – a giant in education.

The Bangladesh NGO BRAC is among the world's largest national NGOs. Established 32 years ago as a relief committee, it has developed to become a powerful organisation covering many areas. Perhaps BRAC is most known internationally for its work with poverty alleviation, its focus on marginalised women and its cost-efficient high-quality basic school concept. BRAC staff are at present in Afghanistan to advise on school models, and ideas from BRAC have been channelled via South-South relations to several other countries. At present BRAC is setting up its own University and an Institute of Education is planned for. Dr. Manzoor Ahmed have been assigned as this institute's first Director.

In August 2003 LINS was assigned by NORAD to take part in a Joint Appraisal of BRAC's Education Programme (BEP) for 2004-2009. The Norwegian Embassy has expressed interest to join the BRAC Donor Consortium, together with Aga Khan Foundation, CIDA, DFID, EC, NOVIB, the Royal Netherlands Embassy and UNICEF. The Appraisal Team undertook a thorough study of selected aspects of BRAC's education activities, and concluded to recommend donors to approve the programme, with a budget of US\$130 million over the five years.

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New NORAD partner country: Madagascar

Education most likely to play an important role

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has decided that the status of Madagascar in Norwegian development cooperation will be moved one step up: to be a partner country. One LINS staff member headed the delegation to review Norwegian cooperation with Madagascar. In addition to proposing a new category for the Norwegian-Madagascar collaboration, the delegation held that the present focus and stakeholders should be maintained, and that one should open for assistance to a limited number of new areas.

Education will hence most likely continue as one of the main areas of Norwegian collaboration. For the time being NORAD's assistance in this sector is channeled via UNICEF, ILO and FLM (Lutheran Church). The assessment of the review team indicated a need to continue to focus on quality of education, as both the Lutheran and Government schools are facing substantial challenges.

The Malagasy education system is passing through a period marked by optimism and an improved financial situation. To make the most of this situation, careful strategy and budget planning and collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the donors will be essential. It is believed that Norway, as an experienced partner in the educational domain, could play an important part in assuring both the planning and donor co-ordination aspects.

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Education in Sudan

LINS has made a study for the three Norwegian NGOs (Norwegian Church Aid, Norwegian People's Aid and the Strømme Foundation) on education in Sudan with the objective of joining forces in the education sector. The study sees great potential for the three NGOs to come up with a common education program in Sudan. Particularly in the South the need and potential for co-ordinated efforts are great, but must be done in close collaboration with the Education Secretariat of the SPLM (Sudan People's Liberation Movement). In the government controlled areas in the North only NCA and Strømme work, and the ideological differences between the Government of Sudan and the NGOs are a matter of some concern. The study recommends the NGOs to continue to identify Northern partners and suggests that the NPA reconsiders its position towards working in the North.

For the three NGOs to work together more effectively in Sudan the study suggests that the three NGOs take both structural/strategic and pedagogical steps. The structural steps include for example the development of a common educational plan, the appointment of focal persons to be in charge of various aspects of the joint effort and a more pro-active role in co-ordinating education activities among the international NGOs operating in Sudan.

The study suggests that the pedagogical input focuses on awareness-raising/conscientisation which is one of the most important, but also one of the most neglected areas in

development work. Awareness-raising should be an integrated part of every project activity, but it presupposes the use of context related methodological tools.

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HIV/AIDS Education, Zambia

Within the framework of the UFD/MOEZ collaboration, HIV/AIDS Education has been one out of 6 priority areas of work. LINS initiated this work and is running these activities on behalf of UFD. The target districts are Livingstone and Kazungula, and from 2003 and onwards Gwembe district will be included. The David Livingstone Teacher Training College (DLTC) is the main collaborating partner through its HIV/AIDS Committee, as well as the co-ordinator of the collaboration at district level and the District Focal Point Persons on HIV/AIDS education (HAE) in both districts. The overall aim has been combating HIV/AIDS through preventive education, by developing strategies for implementing HIV/AIDS education in pre- and in-service training of teachers.

The national syllabuses are now mainstreaming HIV/AIDS education at all levels in the formal school system, but due to culture, traditions and the fact that teachers tend to lack training, the actual implementation has proven to be difficult nationally.

After a two year pilot period HIV/AIDS is now a topic being integrated in all the subject areas at DLTC. All subject areas have a specific responsibility for different aspects of HIV/AIDS education, as ethics, teacher as a role model, how to protect oneself, impacts of HIV/AIDS, living with HIV/AIDS, using role-play, art, drama, and problem based methodologies. During school based practice, the programme is carefully monitored and supervised by college lecturers.

Sensitisation and participation of relevant stakeholders has been a main concern in the process. Involvement and participation create awareness, ownership and make people responsible, also at school and community level. A close collaboration including chiefs, parents, school representatives, pupils and relevant NGOs has played an important role in creating an environment openly discussing and fighting HIV/AIDS together. The pilot project is now in a process of being evaluated, through a participatory strategy involving district, college as well as school level.

The UFD/MOEZ collaboration has been prolonged for the next three years. Main activities for the 3 next years will be to strengthen in-service training activities, focus on the development and training of counselling competencies at different levels, as well as to include Gwembe district. Lastly, due to a serious increase of the number of orphans, approximately 40-50% in each school in Livingstone and Kazungula district, a main emphasis will be to develop strategies supporting the schooling of orphans.

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The student exchange program of NAMAS, Norway's Namibia Association

LINS has recently conducted a review of the NAMAS Student Exchange Program. Through questionnaires, in-depth interviews, workshops and field visits to Namibia, a number of stakeholders' views contributed extensively to the assessment. The number of Namibian students spending some time abroad is expanding rapidly, as are the numbers of students visiting non-Western countries. These trends are in accordance with overall national objectives.

Four University Colleges in Norway have Frame Agreements with NAMAS which mainly facilitates contacts with relevant institutions in Namibia. The international coordinators at the Colleges are responsible for the development of professional, cultural and personal aspects of the exchange arrangements, as stated in the Frame Agreements.

A number of interesting issues arose from the evaluation which is still in draft form. NAMAS functions as a bridging organisation, bringing institutions in the South into closer contact with colleagues in Norway.

The evaluation reveals high levels of satisfaction in Namibia from such contacts although there are certain problems to be overcome in terms of an even distribution of visitors and financial recompense for partner institutions in Namibia for the time spent by their staff in preparing for, receiving and supporting visitors from Norway.

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Progress with SEIA thematic studies

As noted in the last issue of Educaid, a Norwegian consortium of researchers has been involved in a large study on Secondary Education in Africa for the World Bank together with researchers from the University of Western Cape. The studies are now in their finalisation process. Draft reports have been submitted to the World Bank, and will be subject to a World Bank internal review. Next year seven such thematic studies will be synthesised into one major report on Secondary Education in Africa.

NIFU has had the main responsibility for finalising the thematic study focusing on transition mechanisms to and from Secondary Education, while LINS has coordinated the study focusing on promising practices related to health, life skills and civic education at the secondary level. Findings from the thematic studies were presented at the 1st Regional Conference on Secondary Education in Africa in Kampala, Uganda in June. The 2nd Regional Conference on Secondary Education is scheduled for June 2004. For more information on progress with the studies and other work related to Secondary Education in Africa, please visit www.worldbank.org/afr/SEIA

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ESDP Ethiopia and LINS

Over the last couple of years, four LINS-consultants have taken part in the annual Joint Review Missions (JRM) under the Ethiopia Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP). In the mission to take place in October/November 2003 two experts from LINS will join, one hired by Swedish SIDA and one by the Irish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is very important for LINS to increase

the number of clients, as the assignments from NORAD tend to be erratic and rare.

The JRMs represent significant milestones of the ESDP, and collection of information from the field is considered basic. By visiting local education offices and schools without former notice, the JRM members will be able to assess "real school life" in the rural and urban areas of the country. The JRM consists of donor representatives, consultants as well as staff from MOE, and the reports produced are fed into the planning and monitoring system of the ESDP.

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NETREED conference

The second NETREED conference will be held at Gausdal Høifjellshotell from 8th -10th December 2003. The theme of the conference is Disseminating and Using Educational Research Results from the South and the key note speaker is Dr. Iffat Farah from the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan. The theme of the conference is chosen in order to get a wide discussion and different perspectives on research results of researchers in the North doing research in countries in the South. Paper presentations by graduate students, researchers, evaluators and representatives from NGO's will be organized in parallel sessions. These will deal with different issues connected to educational research in the South and the session headings will depend on incoming papers.

Important dates:

Deadline to deliver abstracts of papers - October 20, 2003

Deadline to register - November 1, 2003

Deadline to deliver papers full text - December 1, 2003

There is no registration fee for NETREED members.

Further information and registration:

www.netreed.uio.no/conferences/programme2003.html

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NETF seminar October 2003

The Annual NETF seminar will take place at Oslo University College 21st and 22nd of October. The seminar presents the strategic plans for the Fund for the coming year, as well as focus on the outcomes of the NETF including a case from Eritrea discussing experiences from collaborating on Education Sector Development Plans. Furthermore, Paud Murphy will discuss aid modalities with international donors, and Alain Mingat will give a presentation focusing on equity and efficiency issues.

The second day of the conference presents the World Development Report 2004, "Making Services work for Poor People". In addition to World Bank senior staff, representatives from various NGOs in Norway as well as from the international donor community will contribute to the programme. The two-day programme encourages seminar participants to engage in debating important current issues in international educational development.

The detailed programme will soon be published on LINS' webpages: www.lu.hio.no/lins. The seminar is open and free of costs. If you would like to register please contact liv.haraldsen@lu.hio.no.

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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 dependent on information from our readers. Please contact:

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