

Educaid

Norwegian co-operation in basic education

Year 6 Issue no. 1 2002

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:

That the poor will always be with us is a Biblical truth which the development agencies seem determined to prove false. This is witnessed in the shift from poverty alleviation to poverty elimination in both bi-lateral and multi-lateral rhetoric. The Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan (PRSP) is now a recognised and required tool in any programme of social reform. These plans seem to have much the same elements, whether designed for Pakistan or Tanzania. First, they seek to engender economic growth through stabilizing the economy, reforming the tax and revenue platforms, managing debt more effectively and embracing privatisation. Added to these strategies are improvements in the infrastructure, plus a focus on good governance, income generation, human capacity development, upgrading of the environment and government engagement with NGOs and CBOs.

Occasionally such PRSPs quietly mention the external issues of unfair trade relations with the industrialised countries and the burden of debt. The overall impression given by PRSPs is that technical solutions to the poverty issue are available and merely need to be applied. More radical commentators on the poverty issue reject such thinking entirely, largely because they are exogenous strategies which ignore indigenous strengths and opportunities. Majid Rahnema, writing in 'The Development Dictionary' (Zed Books, Johannesburg) suggests that the poverty issue is looked at in entirely the wrong way. Although Rahnema does not suggest a return to a Rousseauian golden age, he does coin the term 'convivial poverty' to describe a lack of worldly goods which reflects principles of simplicity, frugality, sufficiency and respect for all forms of life, a kind of moral or voluntary poverty. Measuring people's well being in terms of per capita annual income relative to GNP is not the whole story. 'A tragic form of poverty, often perceived as an expression of modernity, is that of a world of economically obsessed individuals and nations fighting with each other over more greed, more violence, more exploitation and more destruction of the inner and outer life forces of humankind.' (Rahnema) There is much to be pondered over in Rahnema's analysis of what poverty may actually mean. Are there limits to economic growth? If, as many people believe, there are, what are we left with if the Economic Age proves as illusory as its predecessors? As educators we are committed to schooling as one means to help people out of poverty. But this does not mean helping them into consumerism. We would hope to induct children into the joy of being rather than the joy of having.

Bob Smith, LINS

Tendencies in Norwegian aid - II

The previous issue of Educaid provided statistics indicating that Norwegian development assistance to education had declined during the years 1998-2000 from 11.2% to 8.4% of net aid (and from 7.5% to 5.8% of total assistance). This is despite the fact that the Norwegian Parliament had set an objective of 10 percent, increasing to 15 percent of total development assistance for education. The split for different educational levels saw a reduction of 6.7% of assistance to basic education.

The main concern of the former Labour government seemed to be to increase assistance to health and vaccination campaigns. With the shift to the present coalition government, education is back as "job number one".

Educaid is informed that a new strategy for education sector cooperation will be published before August this year, in order to be ready for the budget of 2003. We anticipate this strategy will emphasise education's important role in fighting poverty. We also guess it will underline the importance of secondary, and not least vocational education. Hopefully, the strategy will recognize the significant potential of the education sector to arrest the spread of HIV. Francoise Caillods of IIEP/UNESCO writes that for a long time, HIV/AIDS was considered to be essentially a medical problem, but that it has now become clear, since no vaccine is available, that **education might potentially be the single most powerful weapon against HIV transmission.**¹ There seems to be so many good reasons to keep education as job number one.

Anders Wirak, LINS

Fight against Poverty

The Norwegian Government has recently presented its Action Plan for Combating Poverty towards 2015. Launched on Monday March 3rd in Oslo, the document lays out the strategy to be adopted by the Norwegian Government. The keynote speaker at the launch, Professor Amartya Sen of Trinity College Cambridge, linked the concept of development with that of freedom, arguing that no real development could take place without full political participation of the masses. Among the aims and commitments included in the Action Plan can be mentioned that of increasing ODA to 1 per cent by 2005 and to cancel all debt to countries engaging themselves in the HIPC process. The important role of trade is underlined by the fact that Norway, as of 1 July 2002 will

¹ In the Foreword of Michael Kellys "Planning for education in the context of HIV/AIDS", UNESCO/IIEP Fundamentals of Educational Planning, No 66, Paris 2000

provide zero tariff market access to all products but arms from the poorest countries. Readers of Educaid can be reassured that education is emphasised as one of the pillars of development assistance. This time there is an increased focus on vocational education and ICT.

NETREED – Norway based network on education and development

NETREED - NETwork for Research and Evaluation on Education and Development was established 1 January 2001. An objective of the network is to enable researchers and evaluators based in Norway to form a strong professional base by sharing knowledge and experience. NETREED aims at facilitating meeting points - physically and virtually - between researchers/evaluators and mediating contact and knowledge transformation between research interests and users of research. The network is also meant to be used by administrators of research on education and development or on development aid in the education sector.

NETREED has established a web site, which contains information about ongoing research projects, as well as personal and contact information on researchers and evaluators based in Norway. Researchers and evaluators are encouraged to register, with personal information as well as information about their ongoing projects.

NETREED is organising a biannual conference, and the first NETREED conference was held in Gausdal from January 7th to 9th 2002. About 55 people attended the conference and the main theme was: *Doing educational research in developing countries - the research agenda and appropriate methods*. Keynotes and papers from the conference are posted at the web page. The first keynote speaker was dr. Adama Ouane from Mali, the Director of the UNESCO Institute of Education in Hamburg, Germany. He set the tone of the conference by suggesting important areas for researchers working with education in developing countries. Several parallel sessions where papers were presented were organised centring on various themes. Some presenters gave just oral presentations of their research projects and got feedback from other participants. The second keynote speaker was Robert Chambers who also gave the participants hands-on experiences with PLA (participatory learning and action) methods.

The focal point of NETREED is based at the Institute for Educational Research (IER) at the University of Oslo. Professor Birgit Brock-Utne is project manager and Research Assistant Ragnhild Tunesvik the project coordinator for NETREED. The network is funded by the Research Council of Norway and the IER.

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LOITASA – a research project with NUFU funding

The LOITASA (Language Of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa) project is a five-year research and capacity building project (1.1. 2002 –31.12.2006) involving Tanzanian, Norwegian and South African researchers. The project is funded by NUFU. (Norwegian

Council for Higher Education's Programme for Development Research and Education). The researchers come from the Faculty of Education and the linguistics department of the University of Dar es Salaam, from the Institute for Educational Research at the University of Oslo and the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Cape in South Africa.

The LOITASA project contains two different research components apart from a staff development component. The first research component has to do with a description and analysis of the current language policies, their background, the forces working for and against change, and the manner in which teachers cope in the class-rooms in the secondary schools in Tanzania and the last part of primary school in South Africa. Work on this part of the project by Norwegian researchers has already started through a four-year research grant (1.1. 2001 –31.12.2004) from the Norwegian Research Council. I have employed an assistant for three years who will concentrate on the South African scene while I together with my Tanzanian master students concentrate on the Tanzanian part of the project.

The second research activity involves an action component where we shall arrange for some Form I and Form II classes in secondary school in Tanzania and fourth, fifth and sixth grade classes in primary school in South Africa to be taught in mother tongue or at least in a language that is familiar to them (isiXhosa in the Western Cape region of South Africa, Kiswahili in Tanzania) in some subjects for two more years. This experiment necessitates the consent of Ministries, of school inspectors, of headmasters, teachers, parents and pupils. It further requires the production of textbooks and teaching material. We shall use this year – the first year of the project – to negotiate with parents, teachers, pupils, school administrators as well as for producing material in isiXhosa and Kiswahili. The action phase will take place from 2003 to 2005 while 2006 will be a year for writing up results.

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LINS homepage updated

LINS is currently updating the website. The new website will contain a searchable database with a registry of all LINS assignments, as well as a comprehensive overview of other educational resources. The new website should be operating in May: www.lu.hio.no/lins

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LINS NGO cooperation

LINS invited NGOs operating in the field of development and education to a joint meeting in mid-February, to discuss areas of common concern. A new forum was initiated, and our next meeting was set for April 9th. Any NGO interested is most welcome to participate!

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“We the Children”

The Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Children is to be held 8-10 May, 2002. The gathering will present a great opportunity to review progress made for children in the decade since the 1990 World Summit for Children. “We the Children”, the report of the UN Secretary – General, takes stock of the situation as far as universal access to basic education is concerned. Among the gains is that net primary school enrolment has increased in all regions and has reached 82 percent globally. Some countries have also narrowed the gender gap.

But daunting tasks remain ahead. Over 100 million children of primary school age remain out of school, especially working children, children affected by HIV/AIDS, conflict and disability, children of the poor or ethnic minorities, and rural children. Millions of children are receiving an education of poor quality. At least one third of the 190 million working children aged 10-14 have no access to basic education at all. The gender gap has not changed over the decade in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Special Session is expected to produce a global agenda with a set of goals and a plan of action devoted to ensuring three essential outcomes:

- The best possible start in life for all children.
- A good-quality basic education for all children.
- The opportunities for all children, especially adolescents, for meaningful participation in their communities.

Let us hope that world leaders at the Special Session hear the call and take radical steps forward to respond to the rights and needs of children for education all over the world.

Agreement between MOEZ and LINS regarding HIV/AIDS work and Qualitative research.

As an integral part of the educational sector-wide program in Zambia, (BESSIP), LINS is engaged in two pilot programs. A strategic plan on fighting against HIV/AIDS has been developed jointly with David Livingstone Teacher Training College with the support of MOEZ through their District Education Office. The overall aim is to: *Build the capacity of the child for a behavioural change process amongst peers and the community, by building up a systemic and a comprehensive strategy to fight HIV/AIDS by maximising the use of the educational structure and its institutions.*

The other pilot is a Joint BESSIP research partnership between LINS and Institute of Economic and Social Research at University of Zambia. This will support the MOEZ reform initiatives by carrying out demand-driven research on critical issues with a bearing on educational policy, implementation and management related to BESSIP

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University and Technology-for Literacy/Basic Education partnership in Developing Countries, (UTLP)

Rountable, Paris/OECD September 2002

Technology is changing the world and new technological breakthroughs for educational use show considerable promise. Education For All (EFA) Dakar 2000 declared a renewed emphasis on literacy and basic education and underscored the importance of employing ICT. There has been little effort to date to follow up that mandate. Significant barriers such as high infrastructure costs, constrained budgets, and issues of equity and access have impeded the process and have created a substantial digital divide between the haves and the have-nots of the developing world.

The UTLP is designed as a collaborative university partnership program which can benefit LDC universities and other institutions in their efforts to play a more active role in national development for the poorest sectors of their societies. The last UTLP meeting emphasised the need for a common effort to develop a strategy for employing ICT in educational development. The participants reported on the use of ICT in literacy and basic education from a variety of contexts. The participants considered issues such as how ICT can be most effective in reaching the un-reached, and how to lower the cost of quality improvements in teacher training, by using both old forms of ICT, radios, cassette-players etc, as well as new computerised ICTs.

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Educational Development Support to Ethnic Minorities in Lai Chau Province, Vietnam.

Carl Bro a/s in association with LINS has signed an agreement with Vietnamese MOE counterparts regarding the development and implementation of a project supporting basic education for Ethnic Minorities in the highland province of Lai Chau. LINS will mainly be responsible for TA regarding capacity building, teacher training and school management, whereas Carl Bro will cover TA on school buildings and infrastructure. The project is fully funded by NORAD, and is stipulated to cost approximately 14mill NOK.

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Theme: Emergency education

I. “Voices of Courage” award to NRC

In 2001 the Women’s Commission for Refugees award went to the Norwegian Refugee Council for its work in providing education during emergencies. NRC has been leading a campaign to have education recognised as the “fourth pillar of humanitarian assistance,” making it as important a component in emergencies as food, shelter and health. Eldrid Midtun, education advisor, accepted the award on behalf of NRC.

II. "Review of primary education in Gulu, Northern Uganda".

NORAD has supported the Government of Uganda's emergency education programme in Gulu since 1999. The Gulu District Authority in partnership with NRC is implementing the programme.

The large majority of people in Gulu District have been displaced in camps for the last six years, because of the attacks by the rebel group Lord's Resistance Army. Most of the schools in the districts have been destroyed and the programme aims to build 50 new permanent primary schools and also to help people living in the camps with the construction of temporary schools. Despite security problems, the programme has progressed well.

Another major component has been to improve the quality of education through teacher training. A special course has been developed to help teachers deal with the many problems children are facing due to the war. Many children suffer from traumas of different kinds, some because they have been abducted by the rebel group, but have then managed to escape from LRA. Others suffer emotionally from having been displaced over years. The review team found that the training had been enthusiastically received, and both teachers and district authorities felt that the course responded to a felt need among the teachers for this type of training.

The critical part of the programme was the supply of instructors and facilitators. This had so far been the role of the Gulu Primary Teacher Training College. The use of staff from this college is regulated by the Ministry of Education and Sports, and in following up the national Education Sector Investment Programme (ESIP) the college staff time was actually needed for other teacher training programmes. One of the team's recommendations was, therefore, to better integrate the programme into the MOES, and synchronise its content with the strategic directions of the ESIP.

II. "Review of NORAD's support to UNICEF's children's programme in Angola".

One component of UNICEF's programme in Angola is the Teacher Emergency Package (TEP), which is implemented in a tri-partite agreement with the Ministry of Education and the Norwegian Refugee Council. Angola bears the marks of more than thirty years of conflict, and over 3 million people have been internally displaced just since the project started in 1999. The ongoing conflict makes "normal" development work difficult and some of the original components could not be implemented fully because of the continuous emergency situation.

The TEP-programme covers delivery of educational material, intensive training of selected government primary school teachers in the special TEP methodologies and the conduct of TEP classes for over-aged children who have lost out on education opportunities. The intention is to transfer these children to the appropriate class to which their age-group belongs after having participated in a TEP class for one year.

TEP has provided an opportunity to learn for thousands of Angolan children. Not all children succeed in reaching the academic level required, however, and about one-third of them have to start in the first class after

having participated in a TEP class. In Angola, the Ministry of Education is currently developing the country's plan for Education for All by 2015. It is still an open question as to how and whether TEP experiences will feed into the development of the national EFA plan.

IV. "Thematic study on Emergency Education".

On behalf of NORAD, LINS is currently carrying out a study on emergency education. Education in emergency situations need to address problems of various kinds: children traumatised by war, women and youth in distress, destroyed school infrastructure, absence of standardised curriculum, lack of trained teachers, and government structures that are weak or have collapsed. The study deals with the emergence of education in policies for humanitarian assistance and how the issue has been dealt with in several UN agencies over the years. Despite the fact that policy commitments by far have been followed up by adequate financial commitments, education has nevertheless clearly become established as an important element of humanitarian responses.

Norwegian contributions to education programmes in emergencies can be divided in several groups. One mechanism is humanitarian assistance which are funds allocated from MFA to acute emergencies through Consolidated Appeals, which in practice will mean to one of the UN agencies (UNICEF, UNHCR etc) or Norwegian NGOs. Such funds are of short term nature and usually not earmarked to education or any other sector. Many UN agencies still utilise Norwegian funds for education. MFA also supports countries in emergencies in a longer-term perspective such as the UNICEF Girls' Education Initiative. NORAD also supports emergency education through bilateral agreements with UN agencies at country level or with non-governmental organisations.

During the past decade international agencies have reflected much upon problems related to the transition from relief to development. Education is one of the areas where long-term perspectives are particularly relevant but very challenging. Building long-term capacity the education systems, to ensure dialogue and cooperation between relevant actors and the government and to coordinate activities on the ground are critical aspects that need to be tackled.

The establishment of INEE- the Inter-agency Network for Emergency Education under the secretariat of UNESCO is a recent step to ensure more collaborate efforts among different donors. INEE is an open network of UN-agencies, non-governmental organisations, government partners, practitioners and researchers- all working together to ensure children's rights to education in situations of emergency and crisis. INEE's goal is to improve strategies for cooperation in the field, at local, national and regional levels. INEE will not be an operational body, but a network where different agencies can get access to manuals, guidelines, experiences and new research. INEE hopes to publish some standardised global guidelines for emergency education within the next 18 months.

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Input and feedback to Educaid are appreciated

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