

# 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

This edition of Educaid celebrates 50 years of Norwegian development assistance at a time when the divide between rich and poor in the world is receiving more attention than ever before. We have seen a significant rise in movements protesting against the injustices and imbalances this divide is perceived to have created. If writers like Will Hutton (*The World We Live In*, Little, Brown, 2002) are to be believed, there is a deep commitment in European societies to notions of equity as far as wealth is concerned. In Britain, 63% of the people believe that income redistribution is an important role for government. Only 28% of Americans feel the same way. The majority in the US feel that the market should determine what happens about wealth and incomes and government should stay out of the action.

The concept of equity lies at the heart of Norwegian attitudes towards development assistance, reflecting the notion of a social contract between government and governed through which inequality of income and opportunity can be addressed. This is not to say that development assistance is designed to reproduce Norwegian society throughout the world. Rather, the motivation is to target aid in such a way as to create the conditions under which our partner governments can overcome the barriers to more equitable and successful societies. Education is therefore fundamental to these efforts. 'Knowledge is power' has become a cliché, but is no less true for all that. Access to knowledge means more than mere qualifications. Many societies may never see a majority of their populations engaged in modern sector paid employment. But as a recent LINS study on the effects of schooling on poverty indicates, those who have been to school are equipped far better to deal with a range of challenges from health issues to better farming practices to more effective dealings with the bureaucracy.

Fifty years of Norwegian development assistance is a significant landmark. There may have been mistakes of emphasis or practice in the past and we are all learning about what works and what does not work in development. Greater effectiveness is always an important aim but the underlying motivation and ideology which drives Norwegian assistance is also worth attention. The notion of a social contract through which donor and partner reflect the kind of commitment to equity and fair dealing which governments and the governed should share is the model this fifty years represents and which should inform the next fifty years.

Bob Smith, LINS

## 50 years anniversary- The role of education in Norwegian development cooperation<sup>1</sup>

In the year when we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Norwegian development cooperation, it is fitting to recall something of how Norwegian support to the education sector has changed over the years. Two factors have been decisive: One is the inclusion of basic education into Norway's development cooperation portfolio. The other is the change in the mode of cooperation from individual projects to a program based approach.

In the early days of development cooperation education for all was a distant goal. In the 1950's barely half the world's adults could read and write. In Asia the proportion was approximately one adult in three, and in Africa one adult in six.

Norwegian policy for development cooperation was formalised by Parliament for the first time in 1962 and has been amended several times since then. Important principles such as the goal of poverty alleviation, untied aid, recipient responsibility and women-orientation were firmly established as major characteristics of Norwegian support.

During the first decade of formalised development assistance, the 1960s, all education projects were either for higher education or vocational training projects. A few secondary school projects were funded in Tanganyika, the Congo, Kenya and Madagascar. Higher education projects included agricultural, nursing and teachers' training colleges as well as universities in Korea, Kenya, Tanzania, Algeria, Uganda and Ethiopia. The different types of vocational training were, as a rule, conducted in connection with large projects, such as the Kerala fisheries project. During the 1970s and 1980s these trends continued. Again there were no basic education projects, only higher education and vocational training, with some support to advanced education and research. Some support was given to secondary schools through the Norwegian volunteer service and through non-governmental organisations. Basic education was, however, included in some of the few comprehensive district development programmes or so-called integrated programmes during the 1980s.

<sup>1</sup> This article has drawn upon "The Role of Education in Norwegian Development Aid" Forum for Development Studies Nr. 2 1990 p 249-263 by Kate Halvorsen, "Norwegian Support to the Education Sector. Overview of policies and trends 1988-1998" the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Evaluation Report 2/2000 by Janne Lexow, and "Educational Assistance from Norway" Paper presented in January 2001 at the Center of International Cooperation in Japan by Theo Koritzinsky.

A new phase of Norwegian higher education cooperation commenced in the 1970s and 1980s with a number of fellowship courses offered in Norway in fields such as fisheries, pulp and paper, shipping etc. These were disciplines that were regarded as offering comparatively strong Norwegian expertise. At the time, most courses were of 10 months duration. A large proportion of the students recruited to these programmes were government officials and administrators, rather than academic graduates. The courses were typically tailor-made and taught in English separately from the normal functions of the Norwegian institutions of higher learning where the courses were formally located. Cooperation with other parts of the universities was not always actively pursued. The experiences of the foreign students who participated were variable. The most frequent complaint was the relevance of bringing home an unrecognised diploma when everybody at home was looking for academic degrees. Several surveys initiated by NORAD also found that students often felt they were left outside Norwegian society and that, generally speaking, they had difficulties in making contacts with Norwegians. Various tracer studies over the years did, however, show that most students could actually later apply what they had learned in Norway, and that their stay in Norway had moved them somewhat higher up on the career ladder when they returned home. During the last decade the fellowship program has changed significantly. From being specially tailor – made NORAD courses, they are now part of the regular mainstream university programs. Recruitment is done by the universities themselves and ties to NORAD’s bilateral development cooperation in the student’s home country have been loosened. Most of the 16 courses offered are in various academic fields and they are all designed to offer internationally recognised Masters’ degree and they are now also offered to Norwegian students.

As late as 1990, education was not even mentioned as an area of concern in NORAD’s Annual Report. Neither did NORAD’s strategies for bilateral development cooperation –*NORAD in the Nineties* or – *Part II Basic Principles* refer to education when identifying priority areas for Norwegian bilateral cooperation. Furthermore, of the 33 projects appearing on NORAD’s 1990 database for support to the education sector, only three were basic education projects.

Much has changed since the mid -1990s. From having constituted less than 5% of the total volume of Norwegian development cooperation for more than 40 years, the volume allocated to education increased to nearly 10% by the end of the decade. In 1997 the Government declared education as the number one development priority. The new focus on basic education was not realized in budget allocations until 1996/97.

It is always difficult to identify reasons why shifts in major trends occur. Some explanations are found in Norway’s commitments to major global trends such as “*The World Declaration on Education for All* (Jomtien 1990), with the subsequent reiteration of this commitment in White Papers on Norwegian Development cooperation (White Papers no 51, 1991-92 and no 19, 1995-96) A lot of learning from past experiences has also occurred. The EFA goals are highly relevant for three other principles

and strategies in Norwegian international cooperation; poverty orientation, gender equity priorities and the support to the 20/20 initiatives.

A major shift has occurred in the mode of operation for Norwegian support to the education sector. The OECD/DAC review of Norway from 1999 highlights the “Norwegian move from working at the project level to supporting programmes and sector-wide approaches on long-term development relationships”. Through these sector wide approaches Norway is actively seeking to support ongoing educational reforms in some of its partner countries in the south. In 1998/1999 NORAD joined sector-wide approaches in Nepal and Zambia, focusing on basic education in both countries.

Sector-wide approaches correspond to several key elements within Norwegian international cooperation. Increasingly NORAD sees its role as facilitating and supporting reform driven by the countries themselves, thus moving away from isolated projects that usually had little impact on the education system at large. Enhanced mechanisms for donor coordination underline the roles of the governments in question. But there are also challenges. There is an increased recognition of the need to better understand and take into account conditions and processes at school level. The links between reform processes and what teachers and pupils actually do and learn are complex. In the current trend toward decentralised management of education LINS studies have shown that the main outcome so far has been increased responsibility at community level for raising funds for schools, instead of better learning outcomes for the children. Reflections are also made that enrolment in schools is no longer accepted as a sufficient indicator of improvements in education. In the NORAD principles for support to the education sector of 1995 this aspect is underlined, also that NORAD intends to pay much attention to quality of schooling, how and what students learn and rate of completion.

Another challenge is to be sensitive to the unique character of each reform process and the cultural, institutional and development environment in the country in which reforms are being implemented. While many goals of education may be similar between countries all over the world, donors must avoid stressing blueprints of their own educational models into contexts, which are totally different. The roles of NGOs as partners in educational support have long been recognised as critical if the renewed EFA goals of Dakar 2000 are to be reached. NGO roles in sector-wide programmes are nevertheless not clear. We know that many of these organisations make a tremendous effort to reach those children and young people who hitherto have been excluded from educational access; the child labourers, ethnic minorities, children affected by HIV/AIDs, disabled, refugees, the internally displaced and girls/women. There is, however, little systematic experience of how such programs relate to mainstream sector-wide approaches.

In conclusion, with only a short ten-year history, Norwegian support to basic education is quite young and despite considerable policy commitments, Norwegian development cooperation in support of basic education is rather limited yet. There is still much to be learned and many experiences to be drawn upon.

Education reform is a long term and in many ways a continuous process. Norway undoubtedly needs to continue to take many more active initiatives in the years to come.

## **Education- job number 1 for Norway's development cooperation!**

The Minister for International Development Ms. Hilde F. Johnson visited LINS at Oslo University College on May 29, 2002. The Minister's main message was that support to education remains a fundamental pillar of Norway's development cooperation policy. The Minister underlined that development and growth are inconceivable without a well-educated population. It is thus not sufficient to contribute to the survival of children. Children must also be given an education to allow them to contribute to economic and social development. In this connection it is particularly important to ensure that girls and women receive an education. The Minister underlined that education is a right and that that Norway is ready to take its share of the burden for reaching the Millennium goals of achieving universal primary education and promoting gender equality and empowerment of women.

This means that in the next few years Norway's goal is to expand and accelerate its support to the education sector, with a particular focus on basic education. The goal is to allocate 15 per cent of the total Norwegian development assistance to the education sector by the year 2005. In monetary terms it will take an increase in the range of 700-800 million NOK to accomplish this given the present level of support, which only amounts to 9 per cent of the total development cooperation budget.

The Minister underlined the need to look at education from a holistic perspective. This means taking a comprehensive and integrated view where all educational levels are intertwined and where macro- financial and economic structures and framework conditions are also taken into account. Isolated projects and individual initiatives from one donor alone would not give the desired results. Norway's role would be, in partnership with other donors and institutions, to support the national governments' own plans and strategies and contribute to a better education system that is relevant for the culture and country in question.

The challenges are immense and solutions are not always readily available. Norway will continue to take a critical look at all its methods of support and keep alternative channels and new options open for possible future support. Non-government organisations will continue to be an important channel for Norwegian development cooperation in the education sector. The same will apply to multilateral organisations such as UNICEF, UNESCO and the World Bank. Norway will continue to be actively involved in policy dialogues with governments' in partner countries in the South. Norway has welcomed the EFA and World Bank initiative to move from measuring success by enrolments to rates of completion. Norway also finds the moment opportune to look at possibilities to expand Norway's cooperation in the education sector both country-wise, for example to West Africa, where Norway's engagement so far has been limited. Thematically, Norway would also like to include

non-formal adult education and vocational training in its concerns.

## **Educational developments in Pakistan**

Since the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> last year and the response of the Pakistan Government to international demands for action against perceived threats, a renewed interest has been shown by multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors in supporting social and educational reform in Pakistan. In January, a Human Development Forum was held in Islamabad to which a number of development partners were invited. As a consequence of that meeting, LINS staff were asked to assist the Islamabad Embassy in preparing proposals for possible support to education in Pakistan as part of the human development initiative of the GoP. Key areas for attention included the needs of more remote and marginalised groups. The preferred modality was to be co-operation or even co-financing with like-minded donors. Programmatic rather than project-based interventions were also specified by the Embassy and by NORAD itself. As a result it is likely that Norway will support community-based educational initiatives in two Provinces and may contribute further to an Education Development Fund in one of the two selected provinces. These interventions should be seen against a backdrop of renewed commitment by Pakistan to development of the social sector, as evidenced by the negotiation of a 'debt swap' with the World Bank through which debts will be exchanged for increased investment in health and education.

## **Primary Education Development in Bangladesh (PEDP)**

As one of a group of external donors Norway has supported a number of educational initiatives in that country. First is the Primary Education Development Program for Quality Improvement (PEDPQI), a sub-component of the PEDP. Others have been the Female Education Stipend Program to encourage girls' enrolment and the third has been support for Non-formal education in Bangladesh.

PEDP is coming to the end of its current cycle. It is likely that it will be succeeded by a Phase II and that Norway will continue to support the program. PEDPQI, the component directly supported by Norway, has itself a number of sub-components which include aspects of teacher education, supply of teaching and learning materials, development of local resource centres, training and capacity building.

LINS has been supporting PEDPQI and the Embassy in Dhaka in a number of ways. Most prominently, Oslo University College staff have been conducting training at the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) which is responsible for staff development at the primary teacher training institutes. In addition, LINS staff have developed an impact study in partnership with NAPE and Dhaka University to assess the outcomes from revision of the teacher training curriculum. Significantly, these 'operational' activities have been funded directly from PEDP sources, rather than the NORAD budget. Working

directly for the Embassy, LINS staff have assisted in preparing for the Annual Review of PEDP (May 2002) by developing an analytic report on overall progress with the Program and presenting this at the Review. It is likely that the growing commitment to work in Bangladesh will require the establishment of a more extensive LINS team beside the six teacher educators currently involved.

## Teachers and teacher development in Swaziland

As part of a larger set of studies to be financed by the World Bank, LINS staff have begun consultancy work regarding the recruitment, training, deployment and continuing professional development of teachers in this Southern African Kingdom. A number of challenges present themselves, including the growing phenomenon of graduate unemployment in Swaziland (many primary school teachers are in fact university graduates), the huge over-subscription of places in teacher training, high attrition rates of maths, science and technical teachers who leave for the private sector and the employment of many untrained and under qualified teachers in remote areas. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is also affecting the teaching force quite severely. How to train and educate enough of the right sort of teachers, to retain them in the profession and to create a worthwhile career structure for them are the challenges the consultancy is to address.

## Visitors from Zambia

During May, Norway's Ministry of Education welcomed a group of 14 educators from Zambia, visiting Norway as part of the agreement between Zambia's Ministry and our own. There are five components to the agreement and the first group of visitors from Southern Province came to initiate the Capacity Building element of the joint programme. Other components of this cooperation agreement include a focus on Multi-Grade Teaching, development of an Education Management Information System and initiating School Twinning arrangements. The fifth component, joint work on HIV/AIDS education, has been taken on by LINS whose staff have a cooperation agreement with David Livingstone Teachers' College in the Southern Province of Zambia.

The visitors spent time in schools and in observation of the decentralised procedures of the Norwegian educational administration. For much of the visit the group were looked after by education officials in the Trondheim area. The group was enthusiastic about what they had seen. For some this was not their first visit and it is to be expected that the mutual benefits of Ministry-to-Ministry cooperation will be felt by all the parties involved. Reciprocal visits are planned for Norwegian educators.

## Co-operation between MOE in Zambia and Ministry of Education and Research in Norway (UFD)

The background for the co-operation can be found in the general trend in development assistance from project to program assistance and sector development. Strong focus on the role of education in development and the right to basic education for all also explains the active role

for UFD in assistance to education. Under the Basic Education Sub-Sector Program (BESSIP) MOEZ expressed the wish to get more insight into the Norwegian education system. A pilot program was agreed upon for the year 2002, with the intention of a more long-term agreement.

Sector development basically means a process of change in structure and organisation of the sector. Administrators and stakeholders at all levels shall be included in planning, decision-making and implementation. This demands extensive training and competence building.

The ownership of the process shall be with the stakeholders and the donor's roles are to be supporters and dialogue partners. This demands new competencies from the advisors where we believe UFD can contribute. In spite of varying cultural and political contexts, bureaucracies like a ministry is characterised by many of the same organisational features, lines of authority and administrative routines. To some extent this also holds for the relation between the ministry as central authority and district and local authorities. Of main importance is the dialogue between colleagues that can communicate experiences "on the same footing" and the professional partnerships that can be established through this co-operation.

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## Sund Folk College (Folkehøgskole) recruits for a 10 months exchange programme

The Norwegian Peace Core (Fredskorpset) was re-established in June 2000 and is focusing on the reciprocal exchange of young people from Norway and partner countries to increase awareness and understanding about other cultures and other ways of living. Sund Folk College has recently entered into Partner Agreements with Centre for Social Action (CSA), Christ College, Bangalore, India, Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA), Nairobi, Kenya and Kab'awil, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. Provided that the Fredskorps approve the agreements, Sund Folk College will exchange personnel with the three institutions and organisations for the next three years, each exchange lasting 10 months.

CSA is a centre within Christ College which aims at involving the students in activities to improve the situation for the urban poor. MYSA is an organisation initiated by Mathare and engaging over 14,000 children and youths. Kab'awil is a peasant association working to strengthen the indigenous people of Guatemala.

During the month of June Sund will recruit Norwegians to work for these institutions. As it is a Fredskorps exchange programme, the participants must be between 22 and 35 years of age. Interested people should get in touch.

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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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