



Education for Rural Development: An Agenda for Action

presented by

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Challenges in Rural Areas in Asia

Higher rates of :

- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Mortality

Lower levels of:

- Educational attainment
- Modern labour skills and vocational training

More barriers to gender equity

More limited access to:

- Economic opportunities, credit, health care, public water systems, electricity, a telecommunication system, and information sources...



Factors Contributing to Low Levels of Educational Access

- **Gender discrimination, usually against girls**
- **Poverty**
- **Inadequate necessary inputs (lack of classrooms and teachers, prevalence of incomplete primary schools in remote areas)**
- **Lack of facilitating conditions (managerial, institutional, economic, social, and political)**
- **Concentration of post secondary programmes and of tertiary institutions in urban areas**
- **Inequitable/uneven opportunities for ECCE and NFE**
- **Distance between school and home**



Factors Contributing to Poor Quality

- **Inappropriate language of instruction, lack of materials in indigenous languages, and few trained personnel fluent in the languages of ethnic groups – the majority of whom live in rural areas**
- **Predominance of unqualified/untrained teachers**
- **Health and nutritional problems of students**
- **Unhealthy environments for teaching and learning**
- **Urban bias and irrelevance of curriculum**
- **Inadequate focus on skills for rural life and for sustainable development in rural areas**
- **Lack of community and government support to teachers and schools**
- **Greater impact of HIV/AIDS in rural areas**

Factors Contributing to the Lack of Participation in Education of Girls

- Permeating effects of poverty
- Cultural practices
- Biased curriculum
- Lack of female teachers to provide a safe school environment and serve as appropriate role models
- Lack of safe means of getting to school
- Absence of separate toilet facilities for boys and girls



Dakar EFA Framework Goals – and their link to Education for Rural Development

- **Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged**
 - requires a special focus on expansion in underserved rural areas where the needs for child care and pre-school are often greatest



- **Ensuring that by 2015 all children, with a special emphasis on girls and children in difficult circumstances, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality**

-- compels governments to educate ALL children, including those most difficult to reach – need to seek them out and find ways to keep them in school or in alternative but equivalent programmes

- **Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes**

-- requires that such programmes are appropriate also to the learning and working needs of youth and adults in rural areas



- **Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults**
 - implies the need for special efforts in rural areas where most illiterates (especially women) live**



- **Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality**

-- requires urgent attention now to the 2005 goal and longer-term focus on the special problems of achieving gender equality in rural areas



- Improving all aspects of the quality of education so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills
 - insists that we address the disparities in quality between rural and urban areas – in all respects



Dakar Strategies for ERD

- Promote EFA policies within a sustainable and well-integrated sector framework clearly linked to poverty elimination and development strategies
- Ensure the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of strategies for educational development



Dakar Strategies (cont'd)

- Implement integrated strategies for gender equality which recognise the need for changes in attitudes, values, and practices
- Urgently implement education programmes and actions to combat HIV/AIDS
- Create safe, healthy, inclusive, and equitably resourced educational environments
- Harness new information and communication technologies to help achieve EFA goals



Action Required -- Analysis

- Promote the recognition of “rurality” and an explicit focus on (and better analyses of) the specific context and needs of rural people
- Promote more holistic analyses of, and approaches to, rural development that go beyond the narrow boundaries of traditional agricultural education/training
- For rural populations, focus on the rates of NON-enrollment and NON-literacy
- Explicitly identify which rural populations are excluded from schooling and learning, analyse why, and design programmes to include them in education
- Support countries in identifying and overcoming constraints to participation of girls and women

Action Required -- Process

- Use a rights-based approach to promote ERD – relate ERD to the fundamental right of ALL people to education of good quality
- Use an EFA approach to promote ERD – relate ERD to the need to achieve the 2015 goals of ALL children completing primary education and of halving the illiteracy rate
- Insist on the insertion of ERD into policy reform discussions, PRSP and UNDAF strategy development, and education legislation
- Encourage countries to establish strong partnerships for assisting ERD
- Enlist Ministries to Agriculture to help achieve EFA goals – and see how Ministries of Education can help achieve MOA goals

Action Required -- Process

- Encourage the participation of rural populations in the process of policy formulation and planning of ERD
- Insist on the development of decentralised, community-based and –owned ERD processes
- Encourage countries to focus more critically on education for rural development in the design and implementation of national EFA plans – e.g., through guidelines/checklists
- Build awareness and capacity of MoE staff around the concern for education for rural development in planning and implementing EFA – Why do it? What is it? How to do it?



Actions Required -- Practice

- **Develop mechanisms at the community level to look for – and do something about – community members who not are being educated**
- **Make compulsory education in rural areas compulsory on the State – and not only on parents**
- **Monitor carefully which ERD programmes and facilities and programmes really work/still exist**
- **Assist countries to reform curriculum development processes, with local involvement and local content**
- **Place increased emphasis on the role of preventive education against HIV/AIDS and take inclusive measures to support rural children affected by HIV/AIDS**



Actions Required -- Practice

- **Promote the harnessing of appropriate new technologies**
- **Focus on the role of education to prevent cumulative environmental degradation and its impact on rural livelihoods**
- **Support the development of effective multi-grade schools, mobile teachers, and bilingual/mother-tongue education programmes**
- **Facilitate teacher deployment to rural areas**
- **Support more, and more appropriate, ECCE programmes**
- **Tackle the root causes of gender discrimination**

