



January 2003

Final Communiqué

Aid Agencies Workshop: "Education for rural people: Targeting the poor"

12-13 December 2002
FAO Headquarters
Rome, Italy

The Aid agencies workshop on "*Education for rural people: Targeting the poor*" was organized on 12-13 December 2002, Rome, Italy, to bridge the education gap between the rich and the poor, between urban and rural areas, and to promote equal access to and completion of quality basic education. More than 60 experts from international aid agencies, NGOs, Foundations and Universities attended the meeting which was organized by the Extension, Education and Communication Service (SDRE) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provided technical cooperation and the Italian Development cooperation funded the initiative.

The workshop assumption was that a better coordination of aid agencies can improve education for rural people, which is crucial to reducing poverty and inequities in a world where the richest 1% of the population receives as much income as the poorest 57%, where 2.8 billion people still live on less than \$2 a day, of whom 70% of this poor live in rural areas. It is mainly among the rural poor indeed that live the 130 million children out of school and the 880 million illiterate adults and the 800 million undernourished people.

The outcomes of the workshop were:

- A consolidated awareness among aid agencies of the importance of Education for rural people (ERP) as an essential component of education for all, poverty alleviation and rural development strategies.
- Increased coordination between agencies for a more effective aid to ERP part of existing donors coordination frameworks.
- Experiences, lessons learned and best practices shared in the field of ERP.
- A clear focus on the need to support member countries willing to develop national plans on ERP as part of their existing Education for all programmes.
- The identification of the actions needed to strengthen FAO/UNESCO led Flagship on ERP.

On **Thursday 12 December**, the opening ceremony chaired by Ms Ester Zulberti, SDRE Service Chief, was highlighted by presentations from:

- Ms Sissel Ekaas, Director, on behalf of the Sustainable Development Department of FAO
- Mr Gudmund Hernes, Director of the IIEP-UNESCO,
- Mr Raffaele de Benedictis, Multilateral Service Chief, Directorate for Development Cooperation (DGCS),
- Ms Lavinia Gasperini, Senior Officer, Education for Rural Development, FAO who presented the flagship initiative and the workshop.

A FAO-UNESCO study on "*Education for rural development: towards new policy responses*" (to be published soon) and the report of the Seminar on "*Education for rural development in Asia: experiences and policies lessons*" were presented.

In the afternoon, agencies briefly presented their activities, experiences and lessons learned in the field of Education for rural people.

Friday 13 December was dedicated to three panel discussions:

The first panel discussion focused on the *Intervention frameworks and mechanisms and on how to better focus on basic Education for rural people*. The panel presented examples and proposals on how Education for rural people could be addressed by the Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes (PRSP), Sector Wide Approaches (SWAP), United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), Education for All (EFA) fast track initiative and EFA action plans, United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security.

The second panel discussion addressed the following question: *What are the monitoring mechanisms for education for rural people and what are related indicators?* The panel discussed donors' experience on how to monitor improvements in removing disparities in rural people's access and retention in basic education and in the quality of education.

The third panel discussion was focused on how to *strengthen the new Education for all Flagship on Education for rural people; how to consolidate new partnerships, to increase access and retention and to improve quality; and how to strengthen capacity to plan and manage education for rural people, as well as on the next steps*.

The following were the main recommendations for follow up made by the participants and synthesized during the closing ceremony (13 December) by Ms. Ester Zulberti:

- Prepare guidelines on how to integrate Education for rural people in Education for All National plans of Actions. FAO in collaboration with UNESCO and UNESCO/IIEP will lead such action.
- Provide technical assistance to countries willing to include ERP in their EFA national plans of action. Such action will require support by FAO, UNESCO and other agencies and flagship members.
- Support analysis of national educational context and needs related to ERP.
- Exchange cross country and regional good practices in planning ERP.
- Promote policy dialogue and research that places ERP at the centre of the policy agenda.
- Ensure participation of civil society.
- Maintain an interdisciplinary approach.

Annex 1 List of participants

Multilateral agencies and institutions

- Asian Development Bank, Manila, Philippines
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Commonwealth Secretariat, London, United Kingdom
- International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO), Paris, France
- Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Coronado, Costa Rica
- International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF), Nairobi, Kenya
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Rome, Italy
- International Labour Organization (ILO), Geneva, Switzerland
- International Training Centre of the ILO, Torino, Italy
- International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), Fiumicino, Italy
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris, France
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Geneva, Switzerland
- World Bank, Washington DC, USA
- World Food Programme (WFP), Rome, Italy

Bilateral Agencies

- Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vienna, Austria
- Direction générale de la Coopération Internationale (DGIS), Brussels, Belgium
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Quebec, Canada
- Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Paris, France
- Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation, de la Pêche et des Affaires rurales
- German Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ, Eschborn, Germany)
- Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, Italy
- Norwegian Agency of Development Co-operation (NORAD), Oslo, Norway
- Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, Oslo, Norway
- Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), Lindau, Switzerland
- Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to FAO, Rome, Italy
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington DC, USA.

Foundations, NGOs and Universities

- Associates in Research & Education for Development (ARED), Dakar, Senegal
- World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), Rome, Italy
- Federazione Organismi Cristiani di Servizio Internazionale Volontario (FOCSIV), Rome, Italy
- Representation of Italian NGOs, Rome, Italy
- Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, USA.

The permanent representatives to FAO of a dozen countries also attended the opening and closing ceremonies.

Available on http://www.fao.org/sd/2003/KN0102a_en.htm December 2013