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Gratis

Humanitarian assistance or development aid?

OBSERVERS of international co-operation were hoping that, with the fall of the communist block and the end of the cold war, the world would rapidly move towards disarmament and that more funds would be made available for development. Those aware of the enormous needs of the *Less Developed Countries*, particularly in Africa, knew that in order to break the vicious circle of under-development, well-organized mobilization on a massive level would be necessary

Unfortunately, however, over the past four years these hopes have not materialized and, in reality, the peace dividend (935 billion dollars between 1987 and 1994 according to the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report) has been used on a limited scale mainly for emergency and relief operations in order to counter

the effects of natural disasters and civil wars, or has gone towards financing peacekeeping operations. Figures available on humanitarian assistance are not always coherent and are often incomplete. Exactly what the cost is of maintaining the peace, (mobilization of the U.N. Peace Force and on a bilateral level the mobilization of soldiers of leader countries involved in peacekeeping operations) is not known. Not only are the targets different, but also the sources are very varied. Money spent on peacekeeping operations often comes from different ministerial budgets – Foreign Affairs and Defence amongst others. Over and above the financing of peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance operations need more and more financial resources. According to different sources, since 1990, humanitarian funds are running up to several billion dollars, namely the equivalent of all the development aid devoted to education. It is also worth noting that the U.N., in its 48 years of existence, has spent 4 billion dollars on peacekeeping operations and that, in 1993 alone, apparently the same amount was spent.

Short-term remedies don't solve main development problems

It is unfortunate, although probably unavoidable, that emergency and survival operations, within the framework of humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping actions only solve problems on a *short-term* basis. The main development problems (more of a structural nature) remain and require massive means to be solved in the *long term*. The international community is now faced with reconciling emergencies and long-term development needs, so that relief operations will no longer be necessary in the future. Crises

In today's world, how do donor agencies tackle the problems which are often at the root of political chaos and turmoil.

In this issue ...

*Our leading article this time discusses the dilemma donors face as they find themselves having to privilege relief operations rather than tackling the basic problems which are often the cause of the turmoil. Next, (p.3) we celebrate the first time that an educational policy report prepared by planners under IIEP guidance is used as an agenda for action by the Zimbabwe Government. Part 3 of the Co-operation Dossier looks at IIEP's U.N. connections (p.8) The 'Audience Africa' conference is announced (p. 4). Reports of training activities include courses on: 'Educational Management' in Mauritius (p.5), 'Programme and Project Planning' in Latin America (p.12) and 'Science Issues in Education' for NORAD staff (p.11). An article (p.6) discusses the outcomes of a Policy Forum organized in Central Asia to identify the region's priority needs in training. Another (p.14) reflects on monitoring educational quality in Africa. Finally, two new IIEP publications are reviewed (p.16) ... and **News in Brief** (p.2) brings us all some happy news.*



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Giving priority to humanitarian assistance rather than development aid is mixed up with an aid fatigue phenomenon.

and emergencies are the result of underdevelopment, and they are caused by inequality, exclusion, marginality, non respect of democratic values and corruption. The current trend of giving priority to humanitarian assistance rather than development aid is mixed up with an *aid fatigue* phenomenon; as a result, funds for social aid and, more generally, development assistance are not as easy to mobilize.

Call for imaginative decisions

For educational policy, planning and administration, these trends are a real challenge. They call for decision-makers to be imaginative when tackling the development of human resources. Bearing this in mind, four main streams of thought emerge.

First, new sources of financing have to be found, such as, for example, swapping debt for education development. Over the past seven years, operations of this kind have allowed debts of 750 million dollars to be used to fund new development projects. Mainly concentrated in Latin America, these debt swaps could be implemented on a much larger scale, particularly in Africa, with the help of the DAE¹.

Second, in order to modify attitudes and behaviours in an attempt to make needs for humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping less urgent, the content and methods of education should be modified, promoting the culture of peace and the respect of human rights and democratic values. Such efforts are being given more attention than ever by UNESCO.²

Third, in order to improve the impact of educational policies and steps undertaken in the planning and administration of education, new information and communication technologies should be mobilized on

a large scale. *Education for all* can only become *lifelong education for all*, if extensive use is made of new information and communication techniques and the possibilities they offer.

Finally, as regards how to assist developing countries, co-operation and exchanges on an international level should be sought, encouraging the development of networks, consortiums, regional and sub-regional partnerships supported and financed by Member States (governments, the private sector, NGO's) and international aid agencies. One modest but most promising example is the Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), created recently by a group of planners from the Ministries of Education in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania and Swaziland, with IIEP assistance. SACMEQ aims at addressing policy questions associated with monitoring progress towards the quality of education goals established by the Jomtien World Conference on *Education for All* (see article p.3-4). Here countries are expected to finance local costs, and international costs (meetings, training courses) are covered by the donor agencies.

Towards a global compact for human development

All these approaches converge towards the U.N. proposal to formulate a *20:20 compact for human development*. It suggests that donors and recipients of aid could mutually agree to share responsibilities in a way that "developing countries would allocate 20 per cent of their budgets and donors 20 per cent of their aid, to human development priorities".³ To date, only 7 per cent of the aid given to developing countries is allocated to basic human needs such as elementary education programmes, medical care, water supply and sanitation, family planning, and nutrition.

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¹ *Donors to African Education.*

² *For example, the new UNESCO Programme for the Culture of Peace.*

³ *UNDP Human Development Report, UNDP, New York, 1994.*

Educational policy report used to prepare an agenda for action

Since 1991, the IIEP and a number of Ministries of Education and Culture in the Southern Africa sub-region have been working together on systematic long-term strategies for building the capacity of educational planners to monitor the quality of basic education systems. These activities have concentrated on training and research programmes that give *hands on* experience in the use of computer-based survey research methodologies for the collection, analysis and reporting of data that are to be used to make informed policy decisions. In all, more than 50 of the sub-region's educational planners (from Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) have benefitted from this successful partnership between the IIEP and the ministries.

These important training and research programmes have included the presentation of sub-regional seminars¹ and the preparation of several significant educational policy reports. The most recent of these reports, entitled *The Analysis of Educational Research Data for Policy Development: An Example from Zimbabwe*², illustrates how the analysis of educational planning information can be used to generate research-based policy options for a whole primary education system.

The Zimbabwe policy report has been widely acknowledged as a landmark for educational policy research in Southern Africa because of its technical excellence and because of its impact upon action. Even more importantly, the report provides an excellent model of how a highly motivated team of 15 educational planners from eight different countries in the sub-region can pool their talents and experience in a genuinely co-operative effort to improve the educational policy agenda for a single country.

An agenda for action

The Zimbabwe policy report was presented to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Culture in April 1994 and within several days he had convened a meeting with senior staff of the Ministry in order to review the report's 30 major policy suggestions and to discuss strategies for using them to develop an agenda for action. The senior staff of the Ministry were then given approval to take immediate action concerning many of the most important policy suggestions.

Some of the changes already implemented concern:

☞ *Conditions of school buildings:* the report provided evidence that a number of school buildings in some educational regions required maintenance. The Permanent Secretary therefore suggested a substantial increase in the money allocated for "minor repairs" to school buildings.

☞ *Classroom conditions:* one major finding of the research study was that pupils in classrooms with few supplies had low achievement, even after their home background had been taken into account. The Ministry of Education and Culture therefore allocated special funds for classroom supplies to schools identified as having the poorest conditions.

☞ *Furniture:* one policy suggestion stated that: "The Ministry should establish a plan to improve classroom furniture supplies – perhaps through a partnership scheme with school communities". While the Ministry already had a pilot scheme for communities to provide low-cost furniture for schools, a decision was taken to immediately expand the coverage of this scheme.

☞ *Access to books:* another policy suggestion was that: "The Ministry should explore the possibility of using alternative strategies for increasing pupils' access to books". The senior staff of the Ministry decided on several activities that should be implemented in this area. The most significant of these was to organize a joint training programme, in association with

IIEP's research and training programme in Zimbabwe leads to the development of a significant Educational Policy Report, and then to an Agenda for Action.

¹ 'Data Building and Data Management' in 1992; 'Data Processing for Policy Report Preparation' in 1993; and 'Project Plan Preparation' in 1994.

² S. Murimba et al., IIEP/Ministry of Education and Culture, Zimbabwe, 1994.

“Planning is an essential service and all of us should call upon the Planning Section when we need their assistance with gathering and using information for decision-making within the Ministry”.

³ “A Southern Africa Proposal for Monitoring Progress towards attaining the Goals of the EFA Jomtien Conference”, G. Moyo et al., IIEP, Paris, 1993.

the National Library and Documentation Centres (NLDCs), which consisted of two-day workshops for school-heads to develop their knowledge and skills in setting up and running school libraries. A sum of money was also allocated by the Ministry to the NLDCs to help them extend their work to poor rural areas.

☞ *Norms for equipment and supplies:* the report provided clear evidence that many Ministry personnel were unaware of the government’s benchmark standards for equipment and supplies. It was therefore decided that the Planning Section assemble and publish the approved 1994 standards, and distribute this document to all schools.

☞ *Classroom space and toilet facilities:* two of the policy suggestions involved monitoring the adequacy of classroom space and toilet facilities. The Ministry has commissioned the Planning Section to conduct a census of all primary schools in order to identify those requiring immediate attention.

Changed perception of planning

The Zimbabwe policy report resulted in a major change in the perception of the role of planning and research within the Ministry of Education and Culture. As a result, the staffing of the Planning Section was expanded from four posts to ten, and this gave a substantial boost to the status of planning as a key function within the Ministry. Confidence has increased in the capacity of planners to deliver information that can be used as a vital element in the decision-making process.

These changes in the general perception of the importance of the work of educational

planners have been accompanied by new initiatives by Division Heads to strengthen the links between the Planning Section and other Sections in the Ministry. Action has been taken to arrange contacts and formal meetings that have expanded the role of the Planning Section in these respects. These improvements were recently summarized by one of the Heads of Division when he referred to educational planning as being *the torch-bearer in educational development*. He also said: “Planning is an essential service and all of us should call upon the Planning Section when we need its assistance with gathering and using information for decision-making within the Ministry.”

Maintaining the momentum

In late 1993, a group of educational planners from six countries in Southern Africa prepared a proposal³ to extend the co-operative sub-regional model that had been used to produce the Zimbabwe policy report. This proposal suggested that Ministries of Education and Culture in Southern Africa should join forces to launch a *Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality* (SACMEQ). It is intended that SACMEQ’s main mission will be to co-ordinate educational policy research projects aimed at monitoring progress towards the quality of education goals established by the Jomtien World Conference on *Education for All*. A detailed plan for SACMEQ’s initial project has been completed and is now being circulated to Ministries of Education and Culture in Southern Africa. It is proposed that this project should be launched in February 1995.

GEORGE MOYO AND SAUL MURIMBA

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