

Case Study on the Implementation of the INEE Minimum Standards: The Government of Norway

Introduction

This case study analyses the implementation of the INEE *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction* by the Government of Norway (GoN), including the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad). It also identifies some lessons learnt, good practices and recommendations for consideration and application by other donor agencies.

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All referenced materials are available online: www.ineesite.org
They can also be found in the INEE Minimum Standards Toolkit

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INEE hired a team of researchers from InterWorks, Columbia University and George Washington University from September 2006 to June 2007 to work closely with the INEE Working Group on Minimum Standards, to develop and run a survey to determine the awareness, utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards among INEE members. The final report recommended to conduct further analysis, specifically related to donor agencies, foundations and national governments to obtain a better understanding of their awareness, utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards. This case study, which is based on document analysis and interviews with Norad staff, was undertaken to understand how the INEE Minimum Standards are being applied by the Government of Norway as a donor and what lessons can be learnt for other governments and donor organisations.

Background

The Government of Norway's international education assistance

Norway is amongst five donors, along with Canada, Denmark, Japan and Sweden, who directly refer to education as part of their humanitarian policy and allocate at least 2.5% of their humanitarian aid to education¹. The Government of Norway allows for flexible funding to education programs, which is key to supporting holistic and quality initiatives, including in emergencies and post-crisis recovery settings. In 2003, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), under the government in power at the time, issued a policy statement called "EDUCATION – JOB NUMBER 1. Norwegian Strategy for Delivering Education for All by 2015" which firmly emphasises that education is a fundamental human right as well as poverty reduction strategy². The statement also reiterated Norway's commitment to the six Education for All (EFA) goals and the two UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) relating to education.

¹ ISCA. (2007), *Last in Line, Last in School: How Donors Are Failing Children in Conflict-Affected Fragile States*. London: International Save the Children Alliance. ¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2007), Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises. Report No. 9 (2007-2008) to the Storting, p. 43, Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

¹ Hilde F. Johnson - Minister of International Development, N. (13 September 2002), 'Statement at the meeting with the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies'. [Online]. Available at: <http://odin.dep.no/ud>. Last accessed 4 April 2008.

¹ ISCA. (2007), *Last in Line, Last in School: How Donors Are Failing Children in Conflict-Affected Fragile States*. London: International Save the Children Alliance.

² Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (January 2003), *Education - Job Number 1. Norwegian strategy for delivering education for all by 2015*. Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

More recently, the white paper on the “Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises Report No. 9 (2007–2008) to the Storting”, which is a report to the Parliament, stated that “the Government will seek to ensure that education is included in all humanitarian relief plans and that sufficient funding is rapidly made available for the education of children affected by war and conflict”³. In addition, the white paper described the commitment of the Government at the time to “ensure that Norwegian development policy is based on minimum international standards for education during humanitarian crises and in the early reconstruction phase”⁴. The reference to “minimum international standards” likely relates to the INEE *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction*, which are the first global tool to provide guidance on education access and quality in emergencies and post-crisis recovery.

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ support to INEE

The Norwegian MFA has been very supportive of INEE and the INEE Minimum Standards. In the fiscal year 2006-2007, the MFA contributed 118,750 USD to INEE for strengthening advocacy, expanding membership, building capacity, developing tools and resources, implementing the INEE Minimum Standards and supporting INEE Secretariat staff. In the fiscal year 2007-2008, the MFA contributed approximately 70,000 USD in response to a proposal from INEE on "Promoting and Evaluating Global Standards to Build Capacity to Ensure Quality Education and Accountability in Emergencies." This support to INEE’s wide range of activities, including the network’s core cost, has been essential to assisting thousands of education practitioners and policy-makers in Africa, Asia, the Middle-East and Latin America. Taking stock of the successful INEE activities undertaken with its support, the MFA has made a commitment to continue to provide funding to INEE in 2009.

In addition to direct funding, the MFA covered the salary of an education staff member seconded by the Norwegian Refugee Council to UNESCO in Pakistan, who acted as an INEE focal point for the promotion, utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards in the Pakistan earthquake response in 2005.

Awareness of the INEE Minimum Standards

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) is a directorate under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), whose mandate focuses on poverty reduction. Since February 2004, Norad’s role also includes promoting and enhancing effective management of development assistance funds and ensuring that Norwegian development cooperation is efficient⁵.

Strong awareness within the Education and Research Department (ERD)

Norad’s Education and Research Department (ERD) is raising awareness among its employees about the INEE Minimum Standards, with a view to institutionalising them. According to the Coordinator of the ERD Emergency Education Team, approximately 17 employees out of 210 at Norad are aware of the INEE Minimum Standards. The majority of them work in the Education and Research Department as well as on humanitarian issues within other departments. In December 2007, a new section within the ERD was created to specifically work on education in emergencies. The primary goal of the ERD Emergency Education Team is to provide advisory support to the Government of Norway on humanitarian assistance and education in emergencies, in particular to the Embassies of Norway and two sections of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA): the Section for Humanitarian Affairs and the Section for Peace and Reconciliation. The Emergency Education Team is committed to ensuring increased awareness, practical application and systematic utilisation of the INEE Minimum Standards in order to provide strengthened advisory support within Norad and to the MFA and in September 2008, the Emergency Education Team Coordinator participated in a training workshop on gender and emergency education in Geneva, which was co-hosted by INEE and other agencies.

³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2007), Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises. Report No. 9 (2007-2008) to the Storting, p. 43, Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁴ ISCA. (2007), *Last in Line, Last in School: How Donors Are Failing Children in Conflict-Affected Fragile States*, p. 43, London: International Save the Children Alliance.

⁵ Norad. (2008), *Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.norad.no/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=1161. Last accessed 28 May.

Awareness is supported by information-sharing and advocacy

Another ERD adviser is a long-time INEE member who has been following the development process of the INEE Minimum Standards in 2003-2004 and who now regularly informs the rest of the department about important issues raised by INEE. When relevant, updates on the INEE Minimum Standards received from the INEE listserv or shared by Norwegian NGOs who are active within the INEE Network, are further disseminated among humanitarian affairs advisers in other Norad departments. On December 2nd, 2008, the ERD team also invited the INEE Secretariat to present the INEE Minimum Standards at an internal lunch-seminar for the MFA and Norad focusing on the importance of including protective and quality education within humanitarian response.

The utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards

External promotion of the INEE Minimum Standards by Norad

Norad promotes the implementation of the INEE Minimum Standards by other stakeholders working on education in emergencies, child rights and protection programmes. In fact, the team is planning on reaching out to NGOs in Norway who are either not aware of, or have not yet institutionalised the INEE Minimum Standards, and advise them to adopt and refer to the standards in their programme development. Norad is therefore planning to host a seminar on the INEE Minimum Standards its staff and that of the MFA as well as Norwegian NGOs and research institutions by mid-2009.

Utilisation of the INEE Minimum Standards as a criterion for funding quality education programmes

The ERD Emergency Education Team does not itself extend financial grants but it provides technical advice to Norad's Civil Society Department which allocates grants for projects and programmes on education in emergencies. At the moment, the Civil Society Department's application scheme and guidelines for writing and submitting proposals do not refer to the INEE Minimum Standards. However, when asked for advice by the MFA and Norwegian Embassies, Norad's ERD Emergency Education Team does recommend that organisations applying for financial support should describe their use of the INEE Minimum Standards. This is key for ensuring the quality and accountability of education interventions in humanitarian and post-crisis recovery settings.

Lessons Learnt, Good Practice and Recommendation

Advocacy by international NGOs is key to raising awareness of donor agencies

According to Norad, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Save the Children Norway (SCN) and the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) have played a central role in raising their awareness of the INEE Minimum Standards, by sharing information on a regular basis and inviting Emergency Education Team members and other Norad staff to participate in relevant INEE meetings. As a result, the Norwegian MFA spontaneously approached NRC about submitting a proposal on supporting INEE activities.

Institutionalisation within Norad leads to utilization by partner organizations

The Coordinator of the ERD Emergency Education Team suggested that the INEE Minimum Standards be included in the Terms of Reference of the joint mission carried out by representatives of the Government of Norway, the UK Department for International Development, the MFA of Netherlands, the MFA of Denmark, the EU Commission, UNICEF and the World Bank to Southern Sudan. This is an annual mission proposed by the Ministry of Education of Southern Sudan. Therefore, by placing the INEE Minimum Standards on the mission's agenda this year, Norad is concretely promoting the utilisation and institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards by partner donor organisations and most importantly, by the Ministry of Education of South Sudan which is responsible for the reconstruction of the entire education sector in the south. This is a key example of institutionalisation that other donor agencies can learn from and apply.

Conclusion

The experience of the Government of Norway is a prime example of utilisation and institutionalisation efforts by a donor government committed to quality and accountability within education responses in emergencies and post-crisis recovery. The INEE Minimum Standards are used as a tool to support and enhance Norad's and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' systems and procedures on international education assistance. The Government of Norway's support to INEE and application of the INEE Minimum Standards has in turn contributed to bringing the GoN at the forefront of global discussions and debates on education, in particular on teachers, gender and emergencies. In addition, Norway's institutionalisation of the INEE Minimum Standards is having a positive multiplier effect on its partner organisations, including NGOs, other donor agencies and Ministries of Education.