

## Education - Funding Priorities for Africa and the Middle East

### Background

From a Christian point of view, the right to education is a direct expression of human dignity, innate in all human beings as they were created in God's likeness so that they may share and participate in Creation. Article 26 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) demands and spells out in precise terms that "education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages" and that "elementary education shall be compulsory". 60 years later, most African countries are still far from being able to fulfil these demands. In view of less than satisfactory progress made, a total of 164 nations agreed on the Education for All (EFA) Framework for Action on the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, including six specific goals expected to be achieved by 2015. These include free and compulsory primary education of good quality, the acquisition of life skills by adolescents and youth, a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy, equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults, girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality, and finally improving all aspects of the quality of education.<sup>1</sup>

One of the commitments undertaken by governments adopting the UN Millennium Development Goals was to "ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling".<sup>2</sup> Even though since then some progress has been made, implementation in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa and some countries of Western Asia is still far from satisfactory. In fact, the total number of illiterate persons in Africa has increased.<sup>3</sup>

There can be no doubt that education, in and out of school, is of key importance to development and the eradication of poverty. Ever since its inception, MISEREOR has regarded education as an important area of promotion<sup>4</sup>, with non-formal education and training for the poor and disadvantaged clearly enjoying priority. **However, in accordance with Catholic Social Teaching, the provision of formal education in schools is regarded a core duty of the State.**

The aim of these promotion priorities is to determine MISEREOR's contribution to education in Africa in the context of its limited resources and to provide the staff of MISEREOR's Africa Department with relevant policy information to help them in their daily project processing and dialogue with our overseas partners.<sup>5</sup>

### 1. Goal

To give the poor and disadvantaged access to education and training opportunities which will enable them to acquire knowledge and values, patterns of behaviour and lifestyles which are of key importance to ensuring a more sustainable future, decent livelihoods and positive societal changes.<sup>6</sup>

### 2. Direct Target Groups

The poor and disadvantaged whose access to public educational institutions is constrained, incl. in particular:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| a) women and girls             | f) working children, street children            |
| b) primary education drop-outs | g) people with disabilities                     |
| c) war-affected persons        | h) AIDS orphans                                 |
| d) displaced persons           | i) marginalised ethnic and religious minorities |
| e) refugees                    |   |

### 3. Indirect Target Groups

- (a) parents
- (b) teachers and trainers
- (c) institutions of education and their networks working predominantly with the a.-m. target groups
- (d) national commissions and lobbying facilities for Church-based educational activities

### 4. Funding Priority

**Preference is given to support based on the principle of subsidiarity and aiming to promote measures of basic education imparting holistically personal, social and sector-specific competencies (i.e. values, behaviour, knowledge and skills). The measures and activities to be supported should be practice-oriented and geared to real needs.**

## **5. Fields of Promotion**

- (a) measures improving target groups' access to formal basic education
- (b) rehabilitation of schools after wars and natural disasters
- (c) non-formal basic education courses
- (d) political lobbying for the right to education
- (e) self-organisation and political representation of interests of Church-based providers of education and training vis-à-vis governmental authorities
- (f) activities to counteract violence and sexual abuse at educational institutions
- (g) designing locally adapted curricula and teaching aids, introducing holistic teaching methods
- (h) relevant practice-oriented further training of teachers and staff working with the direct target groups
- (i) supporting innovative concepts and pilot schemes for teacher training for a limited period of time
- (j) deployment of expatriate development workers only for the training of staff in fields (g), (h) and (i)

## **6. General Criteria for Funding**

- (a) the goal and objectives of the proposal should be set out clearly and in such a way as to allow an efficient impact monitoring and achievement of objectives analysis
- (b) all local options to finance the proposal must have been exhausted (*ultima ratio* principle)

## **7. Non-Priorities**

- (a) establishment and upkeep of Church-related parallel structures when the educational services provided by other institutions are sufficient
- (b) universities and colleges including general scholarship programmes which serve to find indirect funding for recurrent expenditure
- (c) secondary school education
- (d) student hostels
- (e) recurrent expenditure of schools, teacher training colleges and diocesan school secretariats
- (f) per-diems for participants in training courses

## **8. Impact Monitoring, Achievement of Objectives**

In addition to the usual quantitative data<sup>7</sup>, the reports to be provided to MISEREOR/KZE will have to include detailed information on the following<sup>8</sup>:

- to what extent has access to educational opportunities been improved for the poor and disadvantaged?
- to what extent were participants able to acquire knowledge, skills and values?
- have participants adopted modes of behaviour and lifestyles which are conducive to ensuring a more sustainable future, decent livelihoods and positive societal changes?
- what other impacts (results, effects) have been observed?

*Gds/Hw/Le/Por/Schb/Eb*  
11/06+3/07

<sup>1</sup> cf. UNESCO, The Dakar Framework for Action. Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments. World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000.

<sup>2</sup> cf. UN General Assembly, MDG Declaration, 8 September 2000, Goal 2; Declaration A/56/326, 6 September 2001; The Millennium Development Goals Report 2006.

<sup>3</sup> in addition to that, there is the great number of those who, even though they did attend school, have not really become literate.

<sup>4</sup> among many other documents and working papers, cf. the MISEREOR sectoral policy paper "Policy on Basic Education" (1992).

<sup>5</sup> political education will be the subject of a separate sectoral paper. As to vocational training, please refer to the MISEREOR policy guideline "Vocational Training and Microbusiness - Funding Priorities for Africa".

<sup>6</sup> cf. the overall goal of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD): "This educational effort will encourage changes in behaviour that will create a more sustainable future in terms of environmental integrity, economic viability, and a just society for present and future generations."

<sup>7</sup> including total number of participants, examination results, number of lessons given etc.

<sup>8</sup> specific indicators to be proposed by the implementing project partner for the project or programme concerned.