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FAO/UNESCO seminar

## Education for rural development in Asia: Experiences and policy lessons

5-7 November 2002  
Bangkok, Thailand

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**The "FAO/UNESCO seminar: Education for rural development in Asia: Experiences and policy lessons" was held 5-7 November 2002 in Bangkok, Thailand.**

More than 70 percent of the world's poor are to be found in rural areas where hunger, illiteracy and low school achievement are common. It is now recognized that education is an essential part of any strategy aimed at achieving sustainable rural development that encompasses all those who live in rural areas. Such strategies need to address the provision of education for all target groups: children, youth and adults, giving priorities to gender imbalances. This complex and urgent challenge needs to be addressed systematically, through a comprehensive set of policy measures, at all levels of education systems.

Asia is home to the world's two most populated countries as it is to many of the small island states. All countries in the region have rural populations, most have large numbers of rural communities and some are almost entirely rural. A growing number of governmental and non-governmental policies and practices are being implemented to alleviate both poverty at large and poverty in rural areas in the Asian region. Yet, little of this poverty alleviation has been undertaken on an inter-or multisectoral basis, and the notion of education for rural development is still only slowly making ground.

This report is based on a multisectorial policy seminar organized by FAO and UNESCO in Bangkok to discuss issues relating to education for rural development in Asia. It reviews current educational policies in rural Asia and offer policy suggestions for future action.