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Report of the Education for rural people: Aid agencies workshop

The Aid Agencies Workshop: "Education for rural people: Targeting the poor" (12-13 December 2002, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy) was one of the first activities of the newest of the Education for All (EFA) flagship initiatives. This flagship, focusing on "Education For Rural People" (ERP), was launched by the Directors General of FAO and UNESCO in September 2002, during the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Johannesburg, South Africa, to help achieve the goals of EFA and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

It was a meeting of a group of bilateral and multilateral agencies, which were anxious to see some action on ending, or at least drastically reducing, the disadvantages, which rural people, and especially the rural poor, chronically suffer. The participants recognised that, despite several decades of experience in educational programmes for rural people, there was still a need for a special and concerted effort to draw together into accessible forms the many insights that those experiences had generated. Even more important, of course, was the need to make sure that the people, who should use the insights --policy makers, people who influence the allocation of financial and human resources, programme designers-- actually knew about them and could access them.

This workshop brought together some of those allies and potential partners to appraise the tasks that have to be undertaken. We are delighted and encouraged that about 30 governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations sent representatives to assist the workshop here in Rome. As the record shows, they have helped clarify how best to move forward the mission of the ERP flagship.

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