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Announcement of a new publication

Education for rural development

Towards new policy responses

A joint study conducted by FAO and UNESCO

SD-Dimensions is pleased to announce a forthcoming joint study conducted by FAO and UNESCO.

- Presents a new perspective for educational development in rural areas.
- Reviews trends and innovations in basic education for rural children.
- Looks at training issues and higher education strategies to foster knowledge and skills in rural societies.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations UNESCO Publishing/ International Institute For Educational Planning

More than half of the world's population and more than 70 per cent of the world's poor are to be found in rural areas where hunger, illiteracy and low school achievement are common. Educating a large number of people in rural areas is crucial for achieving sustainable development. Poverty reduction strategies are now placing emphasis on rural development that encompasses all those who live in rural areas. Such strategies need to address the provision of education for the many target groups: children, youth and adults, giving priority to gender imbalances. This complex and urgent challenge should be addressed systematically, through an intricate set of policy measures, at all levels of education systems.

Rapidly changing technologies and increasing globalization also suggest that better education and training have become essential for sustainable livelihoods and the competitiveness of the rural economy.

For many years, the approach followed by policy-makers and education specialists has been to focus on practical and occupational agricultural skill training provided mainly at the secondary and tertiary levels. Yet, in a spatial and economic environment increasingly shaped by non-farming activities, and in a policy context dominated by the poverty reduction agenda, education for rural development requires an holistic approach going beyond the narrow boundaries of the traditional agricultural education and training concept.

In this context, this book makes a contribution to countering conventional wisdom and educational policies that have guided the provision of education in rural areas for several decades. It uses recent sources of information to reformulate education issues in the framework of the emerging rural development discourse. Various contributions describe current trends and innovations in improving the provision and quality of basic education in rural areas. This book also discusses skill development challenges, and analyzes emerging strategies developed by innovative higher education institutions to cope with the new educational and rural environment. In so doing, it opens the door for revisiting the links between education and rural development. This publication also provides elements for public policy-makers to rethink the constraints inherited from the sectoral division of labour between ministries of education and agriculture.

Education and training need to be placed at the centre of the rural development agenda in order to contribute to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, to ensure sustainable agriculture, and to build human capacity for rural development. This publication seeks to assist agents of change to progress in this direction.

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For more information on how to obtain this forthcoming publication please contact:

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