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## Education for Rural Development in Asia: Experiences and Policy Lessons

5-7 November 2002  
Bangkok, Thailand  
FAO-UNESCO Seminar

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**Senior government officials from ministries of agriculture and education coming from China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, along with representatives of non-governmental organizations met in Bangkok, Thailand, on 5-7 November 2002,** to discuss with FAO, UNESCO and other UN agencies how to improve Education for rural people in Asia, a crucial issue to achieve poverty alleviation and sustainable rural development.

In Asia, out of a total population of 3 billion people, 900 million live under the poverty line with less than \$1 a day and 525 million people are undernourished which represents 66% of the world undernourished population. Nearly 40% of the children under the age of 5 suffer from malnutrition.

660 million people, fully three-fourths of the world's 880 illiterate people, live in Asia. Women comprise two thirds of this figure. One child out of four does not enrol in primary school. Millions of young people in Asia who finish primary school are barely able to read and write and many may not complete a primary school. The majority of these people live in rural areas and suffer from inequitable access to schools, health care, roads, technology, institutional support and markets.

During the workshop, an international study on education for rural development and food security carried out by FAO and IIEP was presented. The main message conveyed by the workshop was the urgent need of expanding access to quality basic education for rural people through new partnerships. FAO will support countries willing to focus their national action plans of the "Education for All" initiative on Education for Rural People.

The workshop convened by FAO, UNESCO and the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) is part of a global initiative in favour of Education for Rural People.

Available on [http://www.fao.org/sd/2002/KN1201\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/sd/2002/KN1201_en.htm) - December 2013