

Concluding statement from a Regional Forum on Nomadic Education

Date: 29 May 2008

Location: New Delhi, India

Recommendations for action

Recognising that this Forum was convened to bring together government departments, NGOs, educators and community-based organisations that have a special interest or mandate in increasing and promoting access to education for nomadic and migrant groups, we the participants of the Forum recommend a series of actions at the national, regional and international level.

1 At country level:

1.1 Sri Lanka

As there is already equal access to education there is a need to

- Undertake a survey / research targeting nomadic groups
- Incorporate this group into National Policy
- Formulate proposals to submit to donor agencies
- Prepare curriculum material and undertake teacher training activities
- Implement with the assistance of stakeholders

1.2 Bangladesh

There is a need to ensure strong political commitment to the education of nomadic and migrant people and ensure that government is aware of their needs and pays special attention to their needs. This requires attention to:

- Formulation of a policy framework
- Curriculum development – flexible and life skills – and a focus on its effective implementation (through advocacy, training, monitoring, etc.)
- Bridging with mainstream education
- Ensuring an e-learning network is established to share experiences

1.3 India

As teachers are pivotal to policy implementation, special teacher training and orientation for those working with these groups is sought; appropriate incentives etc. should be provided

In order that affirmative action may be taken, there is a need for more focused policy making and community sensitisation and reorientation about the importance of issues relating to migrant groups' educational inclusion and livelihoods development

Delivery mechanisms should be explored in more detail with particular attention to:

1. ODL mechanisms – placing more emphasis on the uses of e- and m-learning to reach out to these populations to maximise its excellent potential
2. Making formal school systems more flexible, including curriculum development and broadening their scope for meeting the needs of this target group
3. Vocational education and its role in livelihoods development

Development of a proper infrastructure taking into consideration the health, sanitation/nutrition, awareness of HIV/AIDS is required

1.4 Maldives

To tackle problems of migration to Male there is a need to:

- Develop atoll education centres to the level of schools in Male
- Provide hostel facilities
- Provide job opportunities

To tackle inter-island migration, all islands without secondary schools should be connected via a ferry system as soon as possible

2 At the South Asia regional level

We urgently recommend that:

- participatory and other research be undertaken to advance understandings of the educational and livelihood needs of nomadic and migrant groups
- common issues and practical success stories be identified for the benefit of other countries (especially vocational and nfe programmes)
- a network to share good practices among countries be established
- a joint link programme with other countries be formalised
- a professional development centre for capacity building of all stakeholders be established
- an awareness programme for heads of SAARC countries be created
- a SAARC regional centre for the education of nomadic and migrant populations be established; and that among other services it will:
 - Host a portal for nomadic and migrant groups
 - Ensure that materials and documentation are thorough and available in regional languages

3 At the international level

We call upon the International Organization for Migration, the International Labour Organisation and other relevant international agencies to:

- Initiate policy guidelines
- Introduce e-, m- and web-based learning
- Organise a bi-ennial international conference for member countries
- Establish an international network on nomadic and migratory education with nodes
- Implement the concept of 'no child left behind' to achieve the MDGs