

Forgotten Aspect of Education: Poor Students in Villages

A Report on the Activities of Maryam Educational Charity
Institute

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Executive Summary

Maryam Educational Charity Institute is an Iranian NGO which acts in the field of education for the poor students in all parts of Iran. The institute has begun its activity since 1993. During this period it has supported many students in different levels. At the beginning of the educational year, the institute provides some cloths, shoes and basic educational materials for poor students. Recently the institute has focused on the students in villages. So it has some programmes for more than 10 villages in some of the Iranian provinces. These villages have more than 2000 students, but they don't have standard schools or even good schools.

This report gives some information on the Institute and then it describes the situation in targeted villages. At the end it gives some suggestions to the Iranian government and Inter/national N/governmental organizations.

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1) Maryam Educational Charity Institute: From Establishment to Get Consultative Status With UN ECOSOC

The Institute has been established in Tehran, Iran, in 1993 and its registration number is 11311.

Aims:

The main purposes of the institute are as follow:

1. Identifying the needy and poor people whose continuance of their life requires financial supports,
2. Identifying the rich natural and juridical persons who are willing to assist the institute,
3. Identifying talent students who because of poverty can not continue their educations,
4. Organized and regular transforming of donors and gifts to the needy and poor people ,
5. Organizing other activities that assist the institute to achieve its aims, and
6. Consideration of cultural, social, moral and family problems of those who are under the authority of the institute.

Consultative Status with UN ECOSOC

The institute has got the consultative status with UN ECOSOC in 2005. Now it can give its advisory opinion on the issues within its competence to the UN ECOSOC and by this way it can inform the UNECOSC of the relevant issues in Iran.

What has done?

Since the establishment, the institute has done many activities which can be summarized as follow:

- A) Building a school in the village of Aznojan, located in Khomein city,
- B) Holding some workshops in the field of education
- C) Providing financial support for about 600 students
- D) Providing cloths, shoes and educational materials (such as note books, pen, etc) at the beginning of the educational year and at the beginning day of new year,
- E) Providing financial support for more than 40 families in Tehran and places surrounding it.

2) Education in Iranian Villages:

This report is related to a 3 villages in the western part of province of Kohgeluye & Boyerahmad, Iran (Upper Moshemi, Middle Moshemi and Lower Moshemi), 7viligaes in Khomain City, located in central province (Aznojan-e khomain, Robat Morad, Sarnaqkhomain, Barfian, Shahabieh, Seyfaldin and Darband) and some villages in Golpayegan City.

These villages like many of other Iranian villages are located too far from the main cities. The villagers don't have access to clean drinking water and basic healthy conditions. At now they have access to water in some parts three days in a week. They also don't have good educational buildings and other materials. There is no library or bookstore in the villages. The population of these villages are more than 10000 persons.

The parents are mainly uneducated and are mostly workers who have to leave their families for more than 4 months. They usually go to neighbouring or capital cities for working.

Now there are more than 2000 students of different levels in these villages.

Under the Iranian Constitution the government is obliged to promote free and compulsory education in primary schools. This obligation is being included

building standard schools for villages. But as a matter of fact, in most fields the villages are being forgotten.

In addition to some government`s obligations under national law, under some international rules, which in certain conditions are a part of national law, the government is under obligation to take effective measures in the filed of education in villages.

The government has tried to established some schools and one high school, which is not ready to being used now, in the villages. In some cases, especially for high school, the students have to go to another village, for there is no high school in their villages. The situation is too difficult for them in winter.

The government usually does not send the experienced teachers to the villages. On the other hand the teachers do not like to go to villages because there is no good conditions there. Even in the winter they can not leave the village because the roads are closed.

No NGO acts in this village, but Maryam educational institute. The institute has provided clothes and shoes for students in primary and guidance school. It also has supported some orphans.

Although the students in villages are very interested in education, because of bad financial situation many students have to leave school. The institute intends to support some students financially, as possible.

Another problem is concerned with the girls. The parents do not allow their girls study far from their villages. It is necessary to hold some workshops on this matter. The parents must be educated.

3) Suggestions and Recommendations:

We recommend the government to establish some libraries and bookstores in these villages.

We suggest the government to provide clean drinking water for the villages.

We also suggest the government to make an asphalted road, because a good road is necessary if we want to work for the villagers in different fields.

We also recommended the inter/national and N/governmental organizations:

- A) Participate in building of some standard schools in the villages
- B) Hold some workshops for education of adults and parents in different aspects of social life
- C) Promote peace and healthy conditions

The institute has the necessary potential, in cooperation with other organizations, to put into effect some of these recommendations. It can hold some workshops on the education of the students and parents. To this end, the institute needs the financial support of the relevant organizations and institutions.

4) Concluding Remarks

Truly, the issue of education is a vital and important one in every society. If the number of educated persons is high, the possibility of development in that society will be also high. As the villages do not have access to many resources, they have many problems. These may include different forms of problems, including lack of educational building, of library and of professional personnel.

The government must pay attention to these villages. The national and international institutions can also help to reduce the problems. By this way, the knowledge can be developed among the people of the villages

5) Acknowledgment

We thank the young teachers of the villages, good and kind villagers and some others who helped us to prepare this report.