

## Policy Goal

The goal of this policy is to enhance access to education among the most marginalized communities and to increase the quality of education that these communities deserve.

## Rationale for Policy

Through its Official Development Assistance Program, the Canadian Government has committed itself to six program priorities. One such priority is to meet the basic human needs of the individuals that are the focus of its programs. These needs include providing basic education, nutrition and health care. Among individuals who are unable to meet even the most essential necessities of life, such as feeding and clothing themselves, education serves little purpose. Education should therefore be conducted in an environment that supports a more holistic approach to meeting basic human needs. Early childhood development programs support the health, nutrition, and emotional and physical well-being of the child and their caregivers. It provides health care, educational support about early childhood needs, hygiene, and sanitation practices for pregnant mothers, as well as nutrition, health care and educational programs for children; such programs have already proven highly beneficial to mothers and young children. Similar programs, while perhaps more limited in scope, could no doubt prove equally valuable to the pre-school and primary school age groups.

## Objectives

The objectives of the policy are:

- To enhance the quality of education of those individuals most marginalized in a society, and especially girls and people with disabilities, among poor, rural, indigenous, and minority communities;
- To increase the chances of individuals completing school by providing them incentives for staying in school;
- To provide a better and more supportive learning environment for school-goers and teachers, and to make education a better choice for individuals living in marginalized communities.

## Policy

To this end, **in coordination with national and local government and NGOs**, Canada should:

- **Encourage governments to develop and adopt a national education policy, if one does not already exist, ideally in coordination and consultation with local NGOs, community and church groups, indigenous organizations and minority groups.**
- **Support existing local and national networks that promote educational programmes in marginalized communities.**
- **Help to promote alternative systems of education that correspond to the language, resources and needs of the community, and that are organized and run by the community.**