

## **Empowerment**

I am going to talk about the importance of education for enhancing empowerment.

As you know, Greenland is the biggest island in the world. We have a very high level of potential living and non-living resources, like fisheries and minerals. On the other hand, we have a very small population and therefore it is very important that we have an efficient human capital. So, to enhance the empowerment we need to invest in our people.

### **Education, The key to our future**

Greenland faces a challenging and exciting future. In recent years much discussion has been devoted to the subject of what resources that will pave the way for a self-sufficient Greenland. My clear position on this issue is that our most important resource is the people of our country. In order to create a better future with better welfare and prosperity, we as individual people and as a country as a whole must do our bit to raise the level of education to be able to compete on the global market.

Children and youth have many different dreams for their future. This is true both in Greenland and in countries all over the world. Unlike many other countries though, we have a unique education system that gives all our children and young people the possibility to educate themselves and realise their dreams. Together we must inspire our children to get an education, to get the skills, courage and desire to shape the future.

### **Empowerment through education**

Education is an investment. An investment for a future self-sufficient Greenland with high influence in political areas of our concern and a higher export through a diverse economy. A self-sufficient Greenland can only become a reality if we raise our education level.

A high educational level will make us less depended from other countries. A high educational level brings a qualified workforce, an efficient administration and an innovative public and private sector. All of which expertise, gained through education, shall pave way for the future. A qualified workforce will both raise the quality of their own life and the country's GDP. Effective governance and efficient administration are central to meet a country's development goals in both domestic and foreign relations. Innovation and creativity are important for a diverse economy in a constant competitive global market. All these areas will be met through an increase of the educational level.

## **GEP, A key for nation building**

To increase the educational level we need tools through the entire education system. Two main tools for us are The Education Strategy and The Education Plan II.

The Education Strategy is the Government's visions and goals for the education sector. The overall goal is that of the year groups that left elementary school in 2015, 70 % must obtain a qualifying education before they reach the age of 35. Today those numbers are at 54 %.

In order to meet the goals of the strategy, we yearly update our Education Plan. The Education Plan follows the structure of the Education Strategy and describes our educational initiatives. The fact that we update it each year will give us the room for manoeuvre for constant change of needs and demands.

## **Cooperation for enhancing empowerment**

Strategies and plans are very important tools for nation building and empowerment. Towards the outside world they offer transparency, signals of determination and inspirations. Our Education Strategy shows our partners the intentions of our policy. This leads to stronger partnerships between our countries, subject to understand and to find synergies between our different countries' strategies.

Therefore it is very important that we constantly develop our cooperation within education and research.

With these words I want to say thank you and I wish you a continuous fruitful seminar.

Minister for Education, Culture, Research and the Church

Nivi Olsen