

# Education for All

Mid Decade Assessment Report Sri Lanka



# 2008

Education for All



**Education for All, by 2015**  
*truly...*



Ministry of Education Sri Lanka - 2008



**EDUCATION FOR ALL**  
**by 2015**

*truly...*



# **EDUCATION FOR ALL**

**MID – DECADE ASSESSMENT  
REPORT**

**SRI LANKA**

**2000-2006**

**Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka**

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## Foreword

Expenditure on education is considered by economists as an investment in the future with a quantifiable rate of return. Hence all countries generally take a special interest in the education of their children. Most of the Sri Lankans, who traditionally viewed education as the pathway to wealth and social status, took a keen interest in the education of their children. With the emergence of a widespread network of schools by late 1930s which have been established by the government as well as various religious NGOs, even the poor rural children were able to receive some level of education. Education facilities widened substantially to reach all strata of the society with the introduction of free education in mid 1940s which resulted in a phenomenal increase in participation. The steps taken by successive governments have contributed to improve access to as well as quality of education resulting in a noteworthy upgrading of the quality of life of the people. These milestone developments in education had placed Sri Lanka in an enviable position among the developing countries in respect of universal basic education. It is encouraging to note that parents at present are taking a special interest to find a school for their children even before they reach the school going age. Also, the number of parents who are moving towards the practice of sending their children to pre-schools is increasing rapidly.

With the increase in enrolment in education due to measures taken to achieve universal primary education by the governments over the past two decades, many countries faced the problem of providing additional places in secondary education for the increased student population. It is perhaps a unique feature in the Sri Lankan education system that the gradual increase in enrolment was not felt as a burden. Although the Sri Lankan government was bearing almost the total burden of providing general education to the children, not much attention was directed towards early childhood care and education during the past. However, provincial education authorities are seen getting increasingly involved in ECCE activities.

It seems that Sri Lanka took the responsibility of achieving UPE rather lightly perhaps due to the high rates of enrolment the country had achieved before the Jomtien conference. However, to compensate for that, the Ministry of Education, with the assistance of other ministries and organisations in the social sector, has commenced to make a concerted effort in order to achieve EFA targets. We are grateful to the international institutions such as UNESCO and UNICEF for the support and assistance extended to our ministry in implementing activities connected with the EFA programme.

Mid-decade Assessment Report of EFA produced by Sri Lanka includes a comprehensive account of our achievements and shortfalls in achieving EFA goals. The introduction gives a complete narration of the historical background, the current system of education and its characteristics. Early childhood care and education, universal basic education, life skills and life-long education, and adult literacy are dealt with in detail to show the achievements as well as problems and challenges. The conclusions given in chapter 8 give an insight into the present situation and provide a guide to future action. A lot of effort has gone into the compilation of this report and I believe that it will be a very useful source document for decision making as well as future planning. I am confident that this document will go a long way in

making the achievement of EFA goals possible for Sri Lanka. I wish to thank the chapter writers, the data analysts, the editors, copy writers and all others who assisted in this task. I congratulate the Director of the EFA Unit and her staff for a job well done.



M.M.N.D. Bandara  
Secretary,  
Ministry of Education

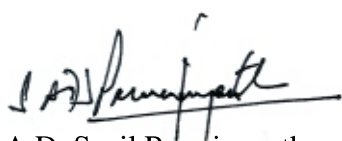
## Honourable Minister's Message

Sri Lanka has a rather long history of impressive achievements in the field of education. Our participation rates and retention rates rank high among the developing nations. However, we still have some way to go in achieving total participation. The quality of the education delivered is perhaps a bigger concern for the country.

The government is committed to provide all children of school-going-age opportunities to receive an education of good quality. Many steps have been taken during the past decades to achieve this end. We believe that human resource development is a primary requisite in improving the economy of the country as well as the quality of life of the people. Hence the present government is determined to carry forward the development process of education and equip the younger generation with skills and competencies needed to face the challenges of the modern world.

In the light of our aims and objectives, I perceive, that the Education for All programme sponsored by UNESCO is of immense importance to our country. I am happy to note that the officers of the Ministry of Education, particularly those who are in charge of the Mid Decade Assessment of the EFA programme, are applying themselves with diligence and commitment to the task they are entrusted with. With the commitment of all those who bare the responsibility of educating our children from the tender years of early childhood to the mid teens, we will be able to achieve the EFA goals, Early Childhood Development & Learning, Universal Basic Education, Life Skills and Lifelong Learning, Adult Literacy, Gender and Quality, even before the target dates.

I congratulate all those who contributed in various ways to produce the Sri Lanka MDA Report and wish to affirm that the commitment of the government to implement the recommendations embodied in this report and achieve EFA goals.



A.D. Susil Premjayantha  
Minister of Education



## SLNCU Secretary General's Message

The Education for All (EFA) goals, as also, the assessments of its performances, greatly assists countries in not only giving increased focus and attention towards achieving the goals being set for EFA, but also, provides impetus to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), to which all countries are committed to.

Above all, it sets the agenda to improve quality education for all at the national levels, since the goals pay attention to a wide array of topics, sector wide, viz; Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Universal Primary/Basic Education, Life Skills and Lifelong Learning, Literacy, Gender and Quality Education.

The success of all governments in achieving these goals on behalf of the future generations will depend on the importance and attention being given by the decision makers and administrators in following up on the monitoring and assessments at all levels, i.e. at the levels of Schools, Zones, Provinces and the Ministry of Education.

It is therefore hoped that the capacities at all levels within the country will be built up, in order to collect, collate, analyse and interpret the data, in order to enhance performance and in achieving the goals.

We wish to congratulate the EFA/MDA Unit in the Ministry of Education, for their untiring efforts in compiling these reports under difficult conditions and with limited staffing support.

Whilst encouraging those involved the EFA assessments in their future endeavours, we would like to urge the Ministry of Education to continue to enhance their efforts to build capacities of the units and personnel at all levels, who carry out the exercise of EFA reporting.

We thank the UNESCO offices in New Delhi and Bangkok for their kind co-operation and assistance.

We also wish to place on record, our appreciation to the Japanese Governments Funds in Trust Programme, for their generous funding support.



**R.P. Perera**

Secretary General

Sri Lanka National Commission for UNESCO

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## Abbreviations

CBT	Competency Based Training
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CGC	Carrier Guidance and Counselling
CGCCs	Carrier Guidance and Counselling Centres
CHDRs	Child Health Development Records
COTs	Colleges of Technology
DDST	Denver Development Screening Tool
DHS	Demographic & Health Survey
DTech	Diploma in Technology
DTET	Department of Technical Education and Training
EBF	Exclusive Breast Feeding
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EMIS	Education Management Information System(s)
ESDEP	Education Sector Development Programme
ESI-R	Early Screening Inventory Revised
ETF	Employees Trust Fund
FHB	Family Health Bureau
GCE O/L	General Certificate Education, Ordinary Level
GCE A/L	General Certificate Education, Advanced Level
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rates
GIR	Gross Intake Rates
GTZ	German Technical Corporation
HDI	Human Development Index
HNDE	Higher National Diploma in Engineering
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDD	Iodine Deficiency Disorder
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organisations
ISAs	In-Service Advisors
ITUM	Institute of Technology University of Moratuwa
LBW	Low Birth Weight
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
LRDC	Learning Resources Development Centre
LRUCs	Learning Resource Utilisation Centres
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
MCDWE	Ministry of Child Development and Women's Empowerment
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MDA	Mid-Decade Assessment
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIS	Management Information System

MMN	Multiple Micronutrients
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health and Nutrition
MVTT	Ministry of Vocational and Technical Training
NAITA	National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority
NBUCRAM	Norm-Based Unit Cost Resource Allocation Mechanism
NCOs	National Colleges of Education
NCPA	National Child Protection Authority
NDES	National Diploma in Engineering Science
NDT	National Diploma of Technology
NE	New Entrants
NEC	National Education Commission
NER	Net Enrolment Rates
NEREC	National Education Research and Evaluation Centre
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisations
NIE	National Institute of Education
NPA	National Plan of Action
NVQs	National Vocational Qualifications
NVQSL	National Vocational Qualifications Framework of Sri Lanka
NYSC	National Youth Services Council
OUSL	Open University of Sri Lanka
PHDT	Plantation Human Development Trust
PHMs	Public Health Midwives
QMS	Quality Management System
RESCs	Regional English Support Centres
SDP	Skills Development Project
SLIATE	Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technical Education
TCs	Teachers Colleges
TEDP	Technical Education Development Project
TEVT	Technical Education and Vocational Training
TTI	Technician Training Institute
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UN	United Nation
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VTA	Vocational Training Authority
WAN	Wide Area Network
WHO	World Health Organisation

## **Overview of the EFA/MDA Report**

The purpose of this report is to assess changes in education in Sri Lanka in the light of the EFA Dakar framework during the period 2000-2006

Chapter 1 of the report presents a description of the country and its education.

In Chapter 2 the status of Early Childhood Care and Development is analysed according to the EFA MDA indicators. It covers ECCD policy and health and nutrition programmes implemented by relevant ministries and authorities. This chapter highlights the necessity of improving the comprehensive care and education of children aged 0-5 years.

Chapter 3 provides an assessment of progress towards Universal Basic Education. This chapter examines many developments occurred within general education system since 2000, compares data on EFA indicators and draws attention to inequities within schools. It provides a set of recommendations to improve the system.

Chapter 4 focuses on Life skills and Lifelong Education which has been particularly neglected in part because of the difficulty of defining and monitoring it. This chapter highlights the development of linkages between general education and technical and vocational education and a great variety of non-formal, literacy, equivalency life skills and livelihood education programmes.

Chapter 5 provides an account of progress on Literacy, based on the available data. Sri Lanka does not consider adult literacy as a serious issue. But this chapter highlights the importance of developing a mechanism for a practical assessment method so that the actual literacy rate of the country can be found.

Chapter 6 focuses on eliminating gender disparities. It reviews the progress of the country in meeting gender parity, with particular attention to policies and strategies.

Quality is also a crosscutting theme and therefore all the chapters describe the progress and importance of quality of education. Chapter 7 discusses particularly problems and challenges that have affected the quality of education.

Chapter 8 carries a summary of previous chapters. The chapter discusses prospects for achieving 6 EFA goals and the way forward for government and other actors to accelerate the movement towards quality education for all.





## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Sri Lanka in Brief

#### 1.1.1. Geography

The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) comprises of one large island and several islets in the Indian Ocean, lying east of the southern tip of the Indian subcontinent between Northern latitudes 5° 55' and 9° 50' and Eastern longitudes 79° 42' and 81° 52'.

The maximum North-South length of the island is 435 km and its greatest width is 225 km. The island (including adjacent small islands) covers the land area of 65,610 sq.km. The Bay of Bengal lies to its north and east and the Arabian Sea to its west. Sri Lanka is separated from India by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. The country has a tropical climate, with seasonal monsoons. The island comprises mainly low or rolling plains and a mountainous zone in the south-central interior. There are no marked climatic seasons, but the temperature of the hill country varies between 17° – 26°C and in low country it varies between 24°-32°C during the year. The annual average rainfall varies between 130 cm - 350 cm throughout the country.

#### 1.1.2. The People

The estimated population in Sri Lanka was 19,886 million in 2006. This population is dispersed through most of the country with the greatest population density in South – Western wet zone where the agricultural and living conditions are most favourable. 76.4% of the population is rural; 1.7 million people live in the Greater Colombo area. The average population density throughout the country in 2006 is 317 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup> while the highest being Western Province with about 466 inhabitants.

The current average population growth rate, 1.1% (2006), shows a significant decline



compared with the rate of 1.8% in 1978. The crude birth rate and the crude death rate in 2006 were 18.7 and 5.8 per 1000 respectively and thereby the rate of natural increase is 12.9 per 1000.

According to the Census Report in 2001, ethnically 82.0% of the population is Sinhalese, 9.4% is Tamils and the rest is mostly Moors and others (7.9%). Most of the Tamils live in Northern and Eastern Provinces. Religion wise, the majority (76.7%) are Buddhists, 7.8% Hindus, 8.5% Islam, 7.0% Christians and 0.0% others. It is important to recognise that these figures are based on the survey returns of only 18 districts - 16,929,689 population. As the districts where the data are missing have a majority Tamil population, both Tamil population ratio, and Hindu religious ratio may be higher than indicated here, approximately 20% and 15% respectively.

### **1.1.3 Historical Overview**

The ancient culture, language, art and architecture, technology and social customs of Sri Lanka were of Indian origin. However, being a separate island helped to develop a culture of its own, with a distinct identity. Buddhism, which originated in India, remains the principal religion in this country. Similarly, the languages, social customs and other cultural aspects, though originating in India, have developed with their own distinguishing characteristics.

### **1.1.4 The Political System**

Historically, Western powers aimed to obtain a strong hold on the island, in order to control the trade of raw materials and consolidate their power in neighbouring India. When India gained independence in 1947, Sri Lanka, too, becomes independent from the British who ruled the country for 133 years, without any bloodshed in 1948. After independence the country was governed by a democratically elected Westminster model type of government. In 1972, Sri Lanka became a republic. The current structure of the political system was formed in 1978, when an executive presidency model was adopted. Since then, there have been the Legislature, the Parliament, and the Executive President elected separately by the people through universal adult franchise.

In present Sri Lanka, the government authority is substantially devolved to the elected provincial councils. The country is divided into 9 provinces, which are subdivided into 24 districts. Each province is entitled to have its provincial council, with exceptions in Northern and Eastern Provinces, where elections have not been held, owing to the on-going internal conflict. Hence the Governors of these two provinces are responsible for conducting the

government affairs, though elections for the Eastern province will be held shortly. The local Government institutions, designated as Divisional Councils in rural areas and Urban and Municipal Councils in the urban areas, are elected by the people and ensure the people's participation in managing their local affairs.

### **1.1.5 Socio-Economic Background**

From ancient times, subsistence farming has traditionally been the main occupation of Sri Lankan people. With the British occupation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, plantation crops were introduced, firstly coffee and later tea and rubber. The export oriented plantation economy was based on the latter two crops and coconuts.

In 1931 a substantial measure of autonomy was granted with the right to elected members to the State Council by universal franchise. Some of the series of enlightened measures were adopted and implemented were the introduction of free education, free health services, restoration of irrigation facilities for colonisation and labour legislation to protect worker's rights. These measures have greatly contributed to the social development of the country.

After independence in 1948, Sri Lanka adapted an open economic policy in 1977. The open economic policies transformed the traditional agro-based economy to one dependant on services and manufacture. The agricultural sector which contributed 44% to the GDP in 1963, had been halved by 1998, to 21%. Furthermore, by 2004, the contribution of the agricultural sector declined to 18%, while the services contributed 56% and the industrial sector 26%. Tourism has been a significant contributor in the services though its growth had been erratic during periods of insecurity due to the conflict. Over the years the structural transformation in the economy has taken place.

Thus, Sri Lanka has recorded a steady growth during the last half of the century, with the approximate GDP growth rate of 5.5%. The per capita income has risen from US\$ 150 in 1960 to US\$ 1355 in 2006. Sri Lanka has graduated from a low income country to a middle income country. Although, compared to the South-East Asian countries which were on par with Sri Lanka in the 1960s, the growth rate has been far lower. This is considered mainly due to the closed economic policies followed by the successive governments, the liberal social subsidies granted without targeting the recipient population and the ethnic conflict. The policy of granting social subsidies has had its beneficial results as well, reflected in the physical quality of life of the population indicate this fact. Sri Lanka's social indicators such as life expectancy, literacy, infant mortality are more favourable than those of the developing countries and are on par with many developed countries. In terms of the

Human Development Index (HDI) Sri Lanka ranked 99<sup>th</sup> with an index of 0.743 among 177 countries (2007). It is placed 55<sup>th</sup> in adult literacy rate category, and 126<sup>th</sup> in the combined Gross Enrolment Ratio category of the below Index.

However, apart from GDP growth, there are other serious problems that the country is faced with. The incidence of poverty is one such issue. According to government estimates 22% of the population live below the poverty line i.e. earning less than one dollar a day. Further it has to be noted that 45% of the population earns less than two dollars a day. This large component of the population forms a vulnerable group who may fall back to poverty due to an unexpected disaster or even vagaries of weather or world economic down turn.

It is necessary to note that the above statistics derived from household surveys do not reflect the situation in the conflict-affected Northern and Eastern provinces, as the census survey has not been conducted in the region since 1981.

**Table 1.1: Quality of Life Indicators**

Indicator	1991	1996	1998	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>Infant Mortality Rate (per 1000 live births)</b>	17.71	17.26	14.35	12.63	11.49	11.17	...
<b>Adult Literacy Rate (10 years and above)</b>	86.6	...	...	91.1	...	...	92.5
<b>Youth Literacy Rate</b>				96.9	97.0	95.6	95.6
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	14.7	11.4	9.2	7.9	8.8	9.0	8.9
<b>Human Development Index</b>	0.721	...	...	0.73	0.74	0.751	0.755
<b>GDP per capita US\$</b>	518	796	879	841	872	954	1010
<b>Life Expectancy at Birth</b>	...	...	...	72.3	72.5	74	74.3
<b>Net Enrolment Rate in Primary education</b>	...	96.6	97.3	92	95	92	91
<b>Net Enrolment Rate in Secondary education</b>	...	94	95.4	89	90	91	89
<b>Survival Rate in Primary Education</b>	...	...	94.5	...	96.6	96.8	98.6

Source: EFA Database of Ministry of Education; Reports of Department of Census and Statistics; Annual Reports of Central Bank of Sri Lanka; Human Development Reports of UNDP

It can safely be assumed that the poverty count in these provinces is very much higher than the average of the seven provinces where data is available.

Another relevant factor to note is the wide disparities in the poverty levels among the different provinces and the districts in the country. The more urbanised Western Province and parts of the Southern Province have lower levels of poverty than the predominantly rural provinces such as Uva, North-western, North-central and Sabaragamuwa. The aggregated national figure does not reflect the pockets of deprivation prevalent in the outlying areas. These inequities are noticeable even among the different income groups of the population. From 1990-91 to 2002, the gross income of the poorest 20% as well as 40% has increased by about 36% and the 33%, respectively, while the income of the richest 20% increased by 49%. The consumption inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient has grown sharply from a level of 34% in 1995 to 41% in 2002. These statistics show that the fruits of development are not equitably distributed to reach the poor. At this rate reaching the targets for the achievement of the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of “*Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger*” is unlikely. Recognising this drawback, Government has developed a ten-year plan to intensify the poverty alleviation programme. As for the other MDGs, Sri Lanka is well on its way to achieving the targets.

### **1.1.6 Current Challenges**

Three decades of armed conflict between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and the Government of Sri Lanka has caused tremendous damages in Sri Lanka. More than 65,000 lives have been lost, and around one

million people have constantly been displaced. Sri Lanka suffered its worst natural disaster in recorded history in December 2004. A Tsunami swept across the North, Eastern, Southern and South-Western shoreline, devastating two thirds of the coastal belt of Sri Lanka. This catastrophe caused more than 31,000 deaths, over 15,000 injured, more than 5,000 reported missing and nearly a million people displaced. At least 100,000 people lost their jobs. The total damage to assets is estimated as approximately US\$ 1,000 million. In the education sector, 178 schools were totally damaged, and 465 schools partly damaged while 100,000 pupils were displaced.

### **1.1.7 Development Framework 2006-2016**

‘Mahinda Chintana’ or ‘Thoughts of Mahinda’ the guiding ten-year (2006-2016) policy document of the current government, sets an economic growth targets of 8% in the first few years and 10% thereafter. However, in 2006, the economy only managed to achieve a growth rate (real GDP) of 7.4%. The growth was mainly propelled by the services sector, which grew at 8.3% compared to a modest 4.7% growth rate in the agriculture sector. The industry sector grew at 7.2% during the same period. With rising fuel prices and domestic interest rates one cannot be very optimistic about the growth rate achievable in 2007. A fast track reconstruction and development programme for the newly liberated areas in the East under the slogan of ‘Nagenahira Navodaya’ or ‘New Dawn for the East’ was launched in July 2007 by the Government. The aim of this programme is to develop infrastructure and attract investment to the region in order to uplift the socio-economic status of its inhabitants.

## 1.2. The History of the National Education System

### (a) Pre-colonial Era

From ancient times, education occupied a prominent place in the cultural tradition of Sri Lanka. Following on the Eastern traditions, learning was considered as a valued treasure. The main purpose of education was to impart religious knowledge and practices. It was carried out in Buddhist temples or monastic colleges known as Pirivenas by Buddhist clergy.

### (b) Colonial Era

With the advent of the Western colonial powers, however, the Portuguese in 1505 and the Dutch subsequently, the traditional educational structures were undermined. Under Portuguese rule Roman Catholic missionaries established schools mainly to propagate the Roman Catholic religion. The curriculum was mainly reading, writing and scriptures. The Dutch who captured the maritime provinces driving away the Portuguese followed a much more vigorous policy on education. They established the Scholarchal Commission to supervise the schools. They also followed a policy of propagating religion through education, converting people to the Dutch Reformed Church.

The British who succeeded the Dutch laid the foundation for a mass education system in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although in the beginning, education was left in the hands of the clergy, soon the Government started its support, influenced by the Humanitarian movement in the home country and also realising the need to educate the natives to man the lower level positions in the public service and the emerging commercial sector. A dual system of schools, those run by the denominational bodies with the government assistance, of which some were

following the English medium and others using the mother tongue as the medium of instruction emerged. In order to manage the government schools and to regulate the assisted schools the Department of Public Instruction was established in 1869. By the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was a national revival among the Buddhists and the Hindus, which resulted in the growth of a nationalist movement. While demanding self-government, Buddhist and Hindu organisations also established their schools. With the inauguration of the Donoughmore Constitution in 1931 the representatives of the people were entrusted with a fair degree of autonomy in running the country affairs. One of the elected representatives became the minister in charge of education.

From 1931 to 1947 a number of significant achievements were made in the sphere of education. Some of these are:

- Enactment of a comprehensive law on education: The Education Ordinance No.31 of 1939,
- Provision of free English medium education in government schools and the establishment of Central schools to implement this proposal,
- Grant of financial assistance to denominational schools which entered the free education scheme,
- Promotion of mother tongue for instruction starting from the primary grades,
- Curriculum changes aimed at “head, heart and hands” concentrating on academic knowledge, aesthetic sensibilities and practical skills,
- A widespread scheme of student welfare measures such as free health services, mid-day meal and scholarships for deserving, and promising students.

**(c) Post independent era**

The impressive results that the country has achieved in literacy and educational provision during the mid-twentieth century are mainly due to the impact of above initiatives. These also formed the basis and guide to action for policy makers in the post- independent era.

After the independence in 1948, the successive governments continuously followed these enlightened policies in education, health and social services. The use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction was extended to the secondary grades as well. Although English was taught as a second language, deterioration in standards shows that the neglect of English had mixed results.

In the 1960s, of the Government took over the assisted schools, thereby creating a more consolidated national education system.

The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) was established in the 1960s mainly to develop curricula in science and mathematics. Later, it also took over the development of curricula in other subjects also. In 1985, the National Institute of Education (NIE) was established by an Act of Parliament with wide powers to develop education in the country.

The reforms of 1972 attempted to carry out this through a major curricular revision. It introduced a common general curriculum of nine years duration including science, mathematics, social studies, languages, aesthetics and pre-vocational studies. These reforms introduced immediately after the first youth revolt were aimed at imparting the skills necessary for the world of work under general education as unemployment was considered to be the main factor responsible for the youth uprising.

However, due to political changes, this attempt was not continued to a successful conclusion.

The Reform of 1981 also tried to improve the quality of education and diversify the curriculum for the development of skills, but suffered the same fate as the previous attempt.

**(d) Post – Jomthien EFA Era**

Recognising the need for stability and continuity of educational reforms, in 1991, the Government established the National Education Commission (NEC) by an act of Parliament vesting the authority to formulate the National Education Policy. After wide public consultations and debate, the NEC formulated the national education policy, which the Government undertook to implement from 1997. The reforms in general education comprised four main areas.

- Promoting access and equity in education
- Improving the quality of education
- Teacher development
- Management development

Implemented from 1998 to 2003, these reforms brought about certain changes in the instructional process in the classroom by making the curriculum more child-centred and activity-based, as opposed to traditional teacher-centred and textbook-oriented teaching methods.

After studying the implementation of the reforms, the NEC made certain recommendations in 2003. These recommendations were incorporated into the Education Sector Development Framework and Program (ESDEP) of the Ministry of Education to be implemented from 2006 to 2010.

**(e) The major policy themes of the ESDFP**

- (a) Increasing equitable access to basic and secondary education;
- (b) Improving the quality of basic and secondary education;
- (c) Enhancing the economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation;
- (d) Strengthening education governance and service delivery

### 1.3 The Legal Framework

The constitution of Sri Lanka states that “*the complete eradication of illiteracy and the assurance to all persons of the right to universal and equal access to education at all levels*”. (Constitution of Sri Lanka, Article 27).

The Education Ordinance No.31 of 1939, provide the principal legal basis for the system of education. This ordinance was ammended in 1947 to address the needs that surfaced subsequently. It advocates compulsory school attendance, regulated under Regulation No. 1 of 1997 which requires schooling for all children between the ages of five to fourteen years.

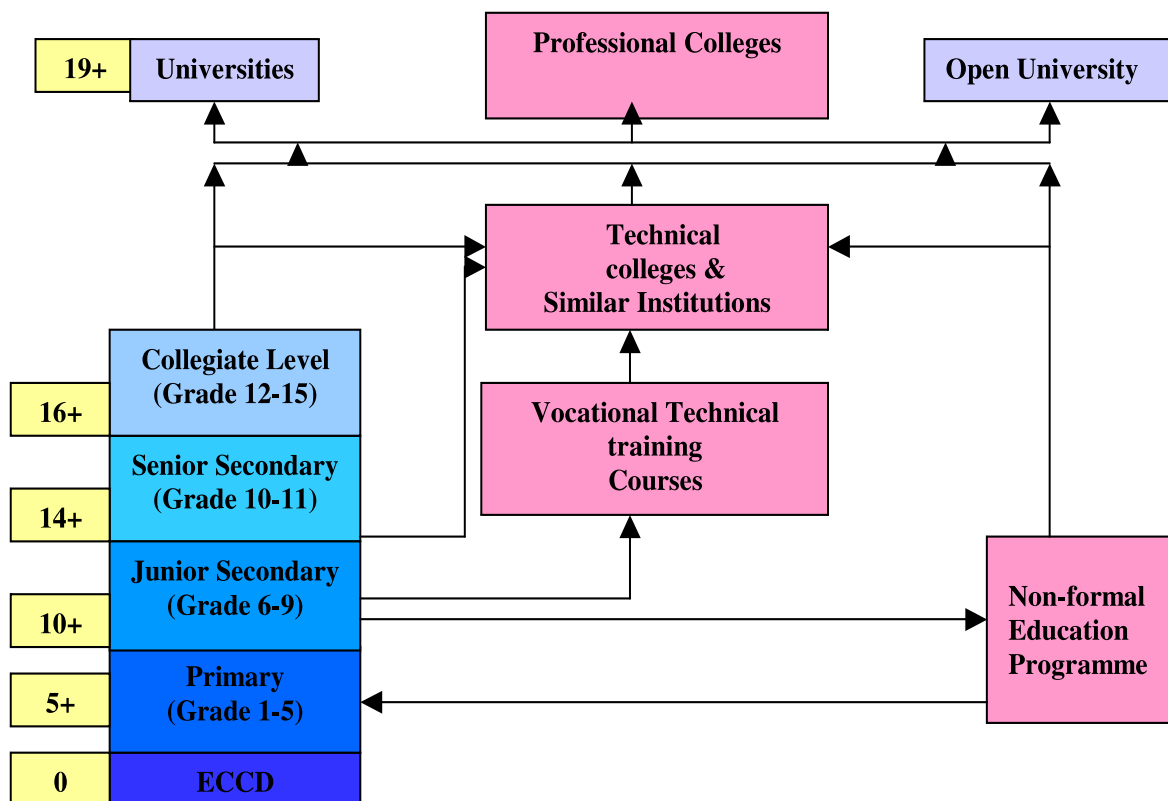
Sri Lanka also is a signatory to the following international conventions:

- UN- Declaration of Human Rights and Convention on the Rights of the Child - education as a fundamental human right
- “World Declaration on Education” and “Education for All” Jomthien in 1990 and Dakar 2000
- Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

Sri Lanka is not only committed to the cause of education but also has demonstrated by its actions that education is a priority item in its agenda for development.

### 1.4 The Structure of the Education System

Figure 1.1: The Education System of Sri Lanka





The government policy, though not enshrined in the constitution, is to provide free education from primary stage to the first-degree level of university education. Preschool education is a subject devolved

to the provincial authorities while local government bodies and the private sector are expected to establish and run these schools. Accordingly, the stages of education can be classified as follows:

<b>a) Pre-school Education</b>	from 3 to 5 years is provided by the local authorities, religious bodies, voluntary organisations and the private sector.
<b>b) General Education</b> <i>Primary Education</i> <i>Junior Secondary Education</i> <i>Senior Secondary Education</i>  <i>Grades 10-11</i>  <i>Grades 12-13</i>	from 5 to 18 years is sub divided into three levels as: 5 to 9 years covering grades 1 to 5; 10 to 13 years covering grades 6 to 9; <i>Covering two years leading to the GCE O/L Examination.</i> The primary stage and secondary stage each has a common curriculum sitting for 9 subjects with 6 being compulsory. Covering two years leading to the GCE A/L Examination. This stage consists of three curricular streams namely Science, Arts and Commerce streams Sitting for 3 compulsory subjects
<b>c) Tertiary and University Education</b>	mainly provided at post - secondary technical and professional institutes and universities;
<b>d) Vocational Training</b>	for school leavers provided in various types of training institutes run by the Government institutions, the private sector and Non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

### 1.5 Medium of instruction

The country has two main languages, namely Sinhala and Tamil. Tamil is the mother tongue of the Tamils and the large majority of the moors. Mainly Sinhala and Tamil are used as media of instruction in government schools. Normally, Sinhala children study in Sinhala medium and Tamil children study in Tamil medium. Muslim children study in either medium according to their choice. However, there are 437 schools

teaching two or more subjects at least in one grade in the English medium. According to 2006 School Census 72.8% of the total student population study in the Sinhala medium while 26.1% and 1.1% study in Tamil and English media respectively. The number of school is distributed evenly among the three media. Tertiary education is mainly imparted in English.

**Table 1.2 : Number and Percentage of Schools and Students by Medium of Instruction**

Medium	Number of Schools	Percentage of Total	Number of Students	Percentage of Total
Sinhala	6,435	66.2	2,794,959	72.8
Tamil	2,804	28.9	999,615	26.1
Sinhala and Tamil	38	0.4		
Sinhala and English	298	3.1		
Tamil and English	110	1.1		
Sinhala, Tamil and English	29	0.3		
English	-		41,976	1.1
Total	9,714	100	3,835,330	100

Source: Annual School Census, 2006 MoE

## 1.6 The School System

At present, there are 9,714 government schools and 93 private schools. There are also 653 Buddhist centres of learning called Pirivenas and 200 international schools teaching in the English medium.

The schools are categorised by type as indicated below depending on the terminal grade of the school:

- **1AB Schools:** those schools which have classes up to GCE A/L in all subject streams, namely, Science, Commerce and Arts
- **1C Schools:** those schools which have classes up to GCE A/L Arts and Commerce streams

- **Type 2 Schools:** those schools which have classes up to GCE O/L
- **Type 3 Schools:** those schools which have classes up to grade 5 only

Most schools have classes from grade 1 upwards, while a few schools commence at grade 6.

The overall teacher pupil ratio is 1:19, which is one of the most favourable teacher pupil ratios among the developing countries.

**Table 1.3: Schools, Teachers and Pupils - 2006**

Province	1AB Schools	1C Schools	Type 2 Schools	Type 3 Schools	Total Schools	No. of Teachers	No. of Pupils
Western	160	256	634	303	1,353	40,965	857,466
Central	93	308	520	546	1,467	29,421	503,535
Southern	91	238	548	216	1,073	28,184	494,906
Northern	62	118	313	399	892	13,481	264,849
Eastern	55	160	362	394	971	17,627	372,452
North Western	74	260	643	244	1,221	26,247	456,502
North Central	31	147	339	265	782	125,841	248,637
Sabaragamuwa	43	169	376	243	831	15,567	276,851
Uva	50	198	490	366	1,104	20,875	361,352
<b>Total</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>1,854</b>	<b>4,225</b>	<b>2,976</b>	<b>9,714</b>	<b>204,908</b>	<b>3,836,550</b>

Source : School Census, 2006, MoE

**Table 1.4: Numbers of Alternate Schools by Category and Number of Students by Gender 2006**

Category	Number of Schools	Number of Students		
		Male	Female	Total
Non-fee levying private schools	40			
Fee levying private schools	29			
Special Schools	24			
Pirivenas	653	54899	-----	54899
Non-Formal Education Centres	461	3987	4752	8739

Source: Annual School Census, 2006 MoE

### 1.7 Non-governmental Schools

There are other categories of government approved institutions providing basic education to children. They are private schools, specified schools and religious institutions. Most of the private schools are managed by Roman Catholic and Christian organisations except for a few Muslim schools. There are two types of private schools, fee levying and non-fee levying. The non-fee levying private schools which are 40 in number receive a grant to pay teacher salaries from the MoE. Specified schools are twofold, government run institutions for delinquent children and special schools for handicapped children managed by non-governmental organisations. These schools receive a grant from the MoE. There are 24 such institutions in the country. Buddhist religious institutions are monastic schools called “Pirivenas” conducted mainly for the Buddhist clergy. Pirivenas are 653 in number and cater to 54,899 students. All Pirivenas receive a grant from the MoE. Another category of institutions is “international schools”. These schools are not affiliated to or approved by the MoE but are institutions registered with the Registrar of Companies as business enterprises. Therefore, the MoE has no connection with, or control over them. The medium of instruction of all international schools is English. The majority of them prepare children for British Examinations.

### 1.8 Curriculum Development

The national curriculum is developed by the National Institute of Education, a corporate body under the MoE. Syllabi and teachers guides are prepared by the NIE with the assistance of experts in the field and distributed to schools. Teachers have the freedom to adopt the curriculum to the local environment to make teaching and learning more meaningful and interesting. NIE carries a continuous dialogue with teacher groups in order to monitor and maintain the validity of the curriculum. NIE also trains In-Service Advisors (ISAs) who guide teacher in classrooms and conduct teacher training programmes in the province. There are also Teachers Centres in the provinces to conduct teacher training for upgrading the teacher skills.

### 1.9 Student Welfare

The Government provides a whole package of welfare services to pupils in schools. These welfare measures have contributed to better school attendance, higher participation and the high literacy rates in the country. (Pl. refer 3.2.VI)

### 1.10 Non-formal Education

Non-formal education programs of the MoE are conducted by the Non-formal Education (NFE) branch of the MoE to cater to the needs of out-of-school children and adult groups in the community. The main programmes are:

- **Functional Literacy Centres:** Located in areas where there are concentrations of non- school going children to impart functional literacy. Children who have not enrolled in school at all or have dropped out prematurely from school are admitted to these centres. Some young children who attend these classes are sent to a formal school.
- **Community Learning Centres:** provide continuing education programs for identified target groups. The programmes are of a diverse nature varying from simple literacy to life enrichment courses and skills training programs.
- **Vocational Training Centres:** Located in schools and classes are conducted in the afternoons about three days of the week, these centres provide vocational training facilities to youth who are desirous of improving their skills.
- **Inclusive Education** - disabled children are accommodated in normal classes, where teachers are given a training to take care of such children

The MoE also supplies special education equipment such as Braille writing materials, equipment required by hearing impaired children and teaching/ learning aids for mentally retarded children.

### 1.12 Management of Education

The responsibility for education in Sri Lanka is shared by the Government as well as the provincial councils, in terms of the constitutional arrangements carried out in 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment 1987 for the devolution of power to the provinces.

The Education Ministry of the central government is responsible for:

- Laying down national policy on education,
- Monitoring of the maintenance of standards in educational institutions,
- Formulating the national curriculum and training the provincial trainers through the National Institute of Education,
- Management of specified schools designated as National Schools,
- Teacher Education
- Public Examinations

The NFE branch also conducts a few special programmes such as centres for street children and literacy centres for adults, organised in places where there is a need.

### 1.11 Special Education

Special Education programmes serve the needs of disabled persons, such as visually handicapped, hearing impaired, physically disabled and mentally retarded. The general programmes are:

- **Special schools** - run by the private sector for those who are severely affected by disability. These schools are given financial assistance by the Government
- **Special Education Units in schools** - trained instructors with necessary facilities pay special attention at the early stage and later direct them to normal classes

The institutions functioning under the Ministry of Education are:

• **Department of Examinations**

The Department of Examinations provides the National Educational Evaluation and Testing Services, the National Agency Testing Services and the General Services.

The institution is responsible for conducting the grade 5 scholarship examination and the General Certificate Examination (Ordinary Level) which are the two important examinations pertaining to the compulsory education span.

• **The National Institute of Education**

The National Institute of Education is entrusted with the curriculum development and training of principals, education research and teacher education.

• **Department of Education Publications**

The Department of Education Publications is responsible for providing textbooks for all school children.

• **Teacher Education Institutions:**

Several institutions are responsible for teacher education:

- National Colleges of Education (NCOEs)
- Teachers' Colleges (TCs)
- National Institute of Education
- Teacher Centres and Regional English Support Centres (RESCs)

After the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the government established a three tier structure for managing the provincial education system. These are:

- I. Provincial Ministry of Education:** In each of nine provinces, this ministry operates under the Provincial Minister of Education, who is assisted by the Provincial Secretary. The Provincial Ministry of Education is responsible for issuing policy within its purview.
- II. Provincial Department of Education:** Headed by the Provincial Director of Education, this department is responsible for planning, implementation, management and direction of all education programmes in the Province. It also manages provincial schools.
- III. Zonal Education Office:** For administration purpose, each province is divided in to several Educational Zones, headed by a Zonal Director of Education. Each zone has approximately 100 to 150 schools.
- IV. Divisional Education Office:** Headed by a Divisional officer, the functions of the Divisional Office are mainly general supervision of schools, collecting information and data from schools, distribution of textbooks and other equipment and materials to schools and assisting in school supervision.

### 1.13 Educational Financing

In the 1960s, the state set apart about 4.5% of the GDP and 14% of the annual budget on education. Over the last two decades, the share of education in the GDP has been about 2.8% and the share of the annual budget about 8 to 9%, owing to financial difficulties arising from high oil prices, greater investment on infrastructure development and the internal conflicts.

In addition to the allocations from the Consolidated Fund, external aid is an important source of funding for the education sector in Sri Lanka. These external resources are both multilateral and bilateral. The major donors in the education sector are the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. UNESCO, UNICEF, JICA, DFID, GTZ and SIDA, Save the Children also have contributed, especially for uplifting of disadvantaged groups.

#### ***EFA Goals***

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b><i>i. Expanding Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)</i></b> <i>Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;</i></p>  | <p><b><i>iv. Improving Adult Literacy</i></b> <i>Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;</i></p>   |
| <p><b><i>ii. Providing Free And compulsory Basic Education (UBE)</i></b> <i>Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;</i></p> | <p><b><i>v. Achieving Gender Parity and Equality</i></b> <i>Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality;</i></p>                        |
| <p><b><i>iii. Promoting Life Skills and Lifelong Learning</i></b> <i>Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes;</i></p>  | <p><b><i>vi. Enhancing Educational Quality</i></b> <i>Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy numeracy and essential life skills.</i></p> |

## 1.14 Coordination and Monitoring of EFA Programs

The mandate for the planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the national EFA programme is entrusted to the MoE. The ministry has set up the EFA unit to be in charge of the task. However, it is recognised that, since the EFA programme covers a wide range of issues, all the components of EFA cannot be handled by one unit in the ministry or even the MoE alone. Active participation and coordination among several ministries of the government, the international community, non-governmental organisations and other community-based organisations are essential to achieve the EFA goals successfully.

The EFA Unit of the MoE is responsible for policy direction, co-ordination and monitoring of EFA programmes of the country. For this purpose it has formed a steering committee under the chairmanship of the Secretary to the MoE. The key organisations engaged in EFA activities are represented in this committee. The committee meet regularly, discuss issues and take policy decisions.

At the MoE several other branches deal with matters relating to the EFA goals. These are:

- **The Primary Education Branch** is responsible for the primary stage of education
- **The Non-formal Education Branch** deals with all non-formal education programs such as literacy, skills training and life enrichment programs for various target groups in the community
- **The Special Education Branch** is responsible for the education of children with special education needs
- **The School Health and Nutrition Branch** is responsible for promoting health and nutrition programs in schools
- **The Data-Management Branch** collects and processes data and maintains records of statistical information

A National Action Plan, submitted to UNESCO in 2001, has been reviewed and modified in the light of experience. Its last revision was carried out in 2004, which incorporates the work to be done during the period 2004 to 2008. The elements of this plan are integrated in to the plans of several agencies referred to earlier. For example, activities relating to primary education are found in the plan of the Primary Branch. In implementing the Action Plan, several ministries, departments and institutions are involved. They are:

- Ministry of Child Development and Women's Empowerment (MCDWE)
- Ministry of Higher Education
- Ministry of Vocational and Technical Training (MVTT)
- Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition (MoH)

Besides, there are a number of other government ministries and agencies conducting programs relating to various aspects of EFA goals. Ministries of Labour, Youth Affairs, Agriculture, Fisheries, Housing and

Construction, Ports, Samurdhi and Poverty Alleviation, Science and Technology, Industries, Tourism and Social Welfare conduct various kinds of skills training programmes. A large number of private sector organisations and NGOs also conduct similar programmes. Funding for implementing programmes is provided mainly from the government budget.

Donor funding is also channelled through the annual budget and is reflected in the estimates of the respective agencies. The contribution of various INGOs and NGOs has been critical, although its magnitude cannot be determined as details are not available. The private sector also contributes substantially for skills training; albeit details also not available.





## CHAPTER 2: Expanding Early Childhood Care and Education

### 2.1 Introduction

Education for All goals set in Jomtien Declaration in 1990 signifies the international commitment to ensure education for every citizen in every section of a society. This commitment was reaffirmed in Dakar, Senegal in 2000 with the Dakar Framework of Action and it provided Sri Lanka the much needed stimulus not only to accelerate strategies that have been already adopted but also to formulate appropriate policies to attain EFA goals.

EFA goals especially goal 2, 4 and 6 are targeted to be achieved by the year 2015. To meet these targets it is imperative to achieve the EFA Goal 1: expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. ECCE provides a strong and a long lasting foundation to achieve the other five goals. Hence, it is timely to examine in this Mid Decade Assessment (MDA) how Sri Lanka has worked towards achieving the EFA goal 1 reiterated in the Dakar Framework of Action.

### 2.2 ECCE in the Sri Lankan Context

Early childhood is defined in the Sri Lankan context as the period of child's life from conception to age five. The upper limit of the age in this definition differs from the international definition, which is eight. At the same time, Sri Lanka has used the term "early childhood care and development" (ECCD) instead of the term "early childhood care and education" (ECCE) when designing and planning programmes that support children's development, learning, health, nutrition and other attributes, described in the UNESCO Report to define ECCE.

Therefore, the concept of education is represented wherever the term "development" is cited in this report.

The terminology used in explaining ECCE programmes vary significantly although they convey the same meaning in different circumstances. Early Childhood Development Centres, Preschools, Montessori schools, Day Care Centres and Crèches are terms commonly used in this context. Services provided by the Day Care Centres and Crèches differ from the other institutions since these take care of children in place of their working parents for longer hours. The services provided by the other institutions mentioned above are almost the same. Similarly, various terms are used with reference to ECCE care providers. Preschool teachers, ECCD officers, ECCD instructors, care givers and crèche workers are the names generally used for ECCE care providers. Care at the family level is strengthened through the Home Based ECCD Programme implemented by the Ministry of Health where the Public Health Midwife is the grass root level worker providing services to children from birth until the age of five years with special focus on the first three years.

#### 2.2.1 Expanding and Improving ECCE: Policies and Provisions

The responsibility of expanding and improving ECCE in Sri Lanka has been shared by Sri Lankan Government, Local Government Authorities, Non-Governmental organisations and International Non-Governmental Organisations. These sectors have worked towards achieving EFA goals collectively and separately since Jomtien declaration in 1990.

Numerous measures have been taken by the Government of Sri Lanka to achieve EFA goals by introducing reforms, Acts and policies through various ministries since 1990. For the first time in the history of Sri Lanka the Ministry of Education has included early childhood education as an important subject under the *General Educational Reforms of 1997*. The reforms have detailed the actions that are being implemented for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and preschool education in two separate sections; an indication that the Sri Lankan Government had taken ECCD seriously. The actions stated for ECD and preschool education could be summarised as follows:

- Strengthening the Children's Secretariat and the Non Formal Education Branch of the MoE appropriately for the task of implementation of the planned early childhood programmes
- Designing awareness programmes targeting mothers to create awareness in the public mind and among those who work in the area of child development
- Developing training programmes on early childhood development for mothers and care givers
- Promoting setting up of more preschools thus providing facilities for greater participation of children between 0-3 years in education
- Making legislative provisions for the regulations of preschools
- Designing basic curriculum guidelines for preschools
- Setting up a Department of Early Childhood Education and a Child Study Centre in one of the Universities.

The last action has been implemented by establishing the *Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education* and the *Child Study Centre* at the Open University of Sri Lanka in the year 1999 and 2001 respectively. The Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education carries out the task of providing opportunities for personnel in the field of ECCD to obtain professional qualifications.

In spite of the actions suggested above, the reforms on general education especially the primary education have been more successfully implemented through the NIE for the obvious reason that general education comes directly under the MoE and Provincial Ministries of Education. However, the Reforms have triggered the Ministry to draft a National Plan of Action to improve ECCD and literacy in Sri Lanka. The objectives of the Plan for ECCD are:

- to improve nutritional status of infants & pre school children
- increase participation at pre school education from 60% to 80%, and
- lay a good foundation for life and formal education through improving the quality of ECCD programmes by the year 2010

Apart from General Education Reforms (1997) another measure that would make an impact on the disadvantaged child is the establishment of the Department of Special Needs Education in the Open University in 2005. At present, the Department is planning to establish a Learning Centre for Children with Special needs in the OUSL, with the support of German Sri Lanka Friendship consortium.

Sri Lankan Government also has implemented strategies to ensure the child's "*Right to Protection*" by establishing the Child Protection

Authority (NCPA) under the “*Child Protection Authority Act No 50 of 1998*”. Although it was initially established under the Presidential Task Force, presently it functions under the Ministry of Child Development and Women’s Empowerment.

According to the Act, the NCPA has been established for the purpose of

- formulating a national policy on the prevention of child abuse and the protection and treatment of children who are victims of such abuse;
- coordinating and monitoring action against all forms of child abuse; and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto

The NCPA has been successful in enforcing related law on child abuse in the country and also raising awareness among people of child abuse and related issues through various strategies in the past few years.

### **2.2.2. Government Strategies and Progress since Dakar Framework for Action**

Assigning a ministry for children in Sri Lanka is a progressive step taken by the government in achieving Millennium Development Goals as well as EFA Goal 1, expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. The MCDWE was for each divisional secretariat in Sri Lanka. Monitoring created in 2005 and has under its purview the Children’s Secretariat, Department of Probation and Childcare Services, National Child Protection Authority and the National Committee for Women.

In keeping with the EFA Goal 1 the former Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Social Welfare formulated the National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development in October 2004. This document could be

described as a milestone in the history of ECCE in the Sri Lankan context.

Currently, the MCDWE is assigned with the task of implementing the Plan. The Children’s Secretariat has already introduced minimum standards for preschools, which have been stated in the National Policy with a view to providing quality programmes in ECCD/ ECCE.

*The National Plan of Action (NPA)* prepared in 2004 by the Ministries of Health, Education, Justice, Water Supply, Labour, Women’s Empowerment and Social Welfare for 2004-2008 is presently being monitored by the MCDWE. The Plan has elaborated the objectives of health, and education. According to the Plan the objectives of ECCE are:

- to increase participation of children between 3-5 years in preschool education from 62% -82%
- improve quality of preschool education and train all preschool teachers
- create awareness of the needs of preschool children among stakeholders

Currently, the ministries are working under the leadership of the MCDWE in the National Steering Committee that monitors the implementation of the NPA.

The Children’s Secretariat, which functions under MCDWE, has carried out home based programmes to raise awareness of parents and elders on Early Childhood Development since Dakar Framework of Action in the year 2000. Training programmes for preschool teachers, and programmes on providing daytime facilities for the care of children of employed parents, prevention of child abuse, and food and nutrition were also some of the measures taken by the Secretariat. Further, the Secretariat has appointed ECCD officers for

each divisional secretariat in Sri Lanka. Monitoring the provisions for ECCE is also within the purview of the duties of these officers. Considering the importance of the early childhood period MoH too expanded its *Maternal and Child Health programme* (MCH), which initially focused only on the provision of health and nutrition services to the target group from conception to five years to incorporate services to optimise psycho-social development of children. This integrated approach was implemented as a Home Based ECCD programme where services to improve the health, nutrition and psycho-social needs of children were implemented through the well developed preventive health infrastructure. Among the many achievements of the MCH programme is the reduction of Maternal Mortality, Infant Mortality and Stunting among under five children. The Family Health Bureau in the MoH implemented the Home Based ECCD programme with the support of UNICEF on a phased out basis since 2002 where the focus was on providing holistic care to children less than five years with a special emphasis on those less than three years of age through services provided at clinic and household levels. The Programme has covered approximately 213 areas at the end of year 2006 providing approximately 1.6 children from birth to five years with the opportunity of optimising their survival, growth and development during their critical years through improved care practices at family level. Good early child care is a process leading to improved readiness to formal school which enables children to make optimal use of the educational opportunities provided improving their life chances to be productive citizens contributing to the overall economic development of the country.

Research specifies the positive effects of the

empowerment of mothers on early childhood care and education (Blumberg, 2006). The developments in the field of ECCE cannot be discussed without the empowerment programmes for women. In Sri Lanka, the Women's Bureau, which functions under the MCDWE, is instrumental in implementing women empowerment programmes such as the *Integrated Family Development Project, Health Care Assistants Training, Women's Home Gardening and Hostel Project for working women*. Raising awareness of women and girls on their rights, educating chief household widows, raising awareness of migrant women, and self-employment programmes for women are some of the important programmes conducted by the Women's Bureau which are directly associated with the ECCD.

To implement the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child and Child Rights Charter of Sri Lanka, the Department of Probationary and Child Care Services has provided assistance for twins who need medical assistance and rehabilitated and institutionalised children under the umbrella of the MCDWE. This department also has launched a foster parent's programme and awareness raising programmes for parents throughout the country. *Prevention of Domestic Violence Act 2005* and *Tobacco and Alcohol Bill No. 166 of 2006* are other landmarks that make an impact on the ECCE. It is a well established fact that growing up being abused, neglected, unsupervised and ill prepared to benefit from learning are some of the major reasons that contribute towards children being at risk in any country (Knitzer, 2000, Schorr et al. 1991). Therefore, these Acts are considered positive steps in improving the home environment for young children.

### **2.2.3. Programmes implemented in the area of Early Childhood Care and Education**

Although development during the first three years is optimised through the Home Based ECCD programmes, Preschool is the most accepted and commonly used provision in early childhood care and education for children between 3 to 5 years. The government, as well as Private, and Non-Governmental Organisations are involved in managing preschools and preschool teacher training programmes. Government institutions that manage preschools are mostly the local government authorities such as Municipal Councils and Urban Councils. Ministries such as Social Welfare also conduct preschools for the government Sector. The Children's Secretariat and Divisional Councils conduct preschool and teacher training programmes while Plantation Trust Fund conducts training programmes for crèche workers. Out of the local NGOs involved in preschool education, Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka manages preschools through out the country to serve urban and rural low income sectors and provides short term training for their preschool teachers in a very successful manner.

## **2.3 Policy and System Indicators**

### **2.3.1. Existence of National Multisectoral Early Childhood Policy**

Sri Lanka is yet to formulate a national multisectoral Early Childhood policy. However, the National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development (2004) is an indication of the effort taken by the state to achieve the EFA Goal 1. Currently it is being introduced in the provinces by the Children's Secretariat, which functions under the MCDWE.

### **The aims of the National Policy are:**

- to assure, for every child, the best start in life by ensuring access to adequate health and nutrition services along with the opportunities for responsive psychosocial stimulation
- to promote the importance of the integrated approach that brings together health, nutrition, psychosocial stimulation, safe water, hygiene and sanitation services
- to develop standards and guidelines that regulate the development and implementation of ECCD programmes i.e. home based programmes, child development centres etc.
- to clarify the role and responsibilities of central, Divisional and local government authorities in the provision and support of the ECCD services indicating their commitment to the care and development of the young child
- to clarify the relationship between governmental, non governmental agencies, the private sector, communities and families in the provision of ECCD services
- to synchronise and coordinate the services provided by the different stakeholders in ECCD so as to maximise the availability and use by all sectors of the population
- to mobilise and allocate increasing financial resources for and investment in ECCD programmes
- to promote the importance of the roles of parents, caregivers and the community in the development of children

- to enhance the capacity of parents/ caregivers and communities to be able to adequately support their children’s development

The Policy also has spelt out the following four areas of action:

1. Build knowledge and skills of caregivers to promote optimal child survival, growth and development,
2. Improve and expand training opportunities for service providers,
3. Community based child development centres,
4. Children with special needs

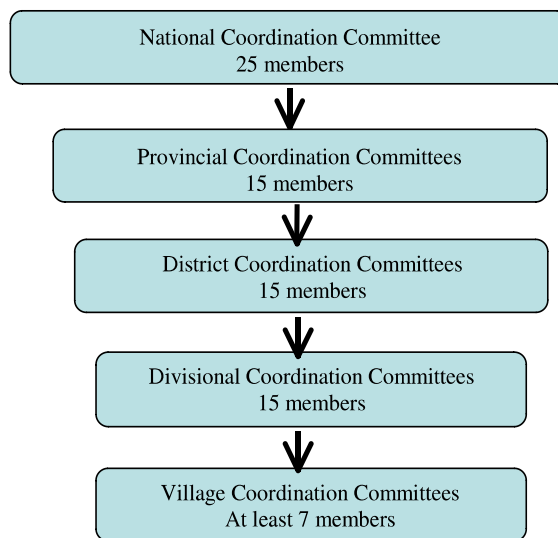
To assure the successful implementation of the National Policy on ECCD throughout the country it proposes a National Coordination Committee which includes all relevant governmental organisations, non governmental organisations, ECCD specialists etc., Provincial coordination committees, District coordination committees, Divisional coordination committees and village committees. Responsibilities of all these committees are explained in the policy. In addition, the policy suggests that local government institutions in Sri Lanka should recognise ECCD work. To assure, for every child, the best start in life, the National Policy has emphasised that special attention should be paid to children with special needs including children with disabilities, children of migrant workers, single parent families and war victims.

**Strategies adopted in implementation of the National Policy**

To assure the implementation of the National Policy on ECCD (2004) throughout the country the National Policy has proposed a management structure that links the Central

Government at ministerial level through provincial councils, officers at grass root level and primary care givers/ parents.

**Figure 2.1: Management Structure of the National Policy**



The proposed National Coordination Committee will be represented by all relevant governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations including INGOs, and ECCD specialists. The main task of this committee is to oversee implementation of National Policy and make adjustments to the Policy when deemed necessary. Rest of the committees are responsible for coordinating and implementing ECCD activities in their respective locations. Developing ECCD programmes appropriate for the province is one of the key responsibilities of the provincial committees. In addition to implementing the National Policy, District and Divisional Coordination Committees are expected to ensure accurate reporting and documentation of service delivery and maintain a data base. Village Coordination Committees comprising officers at grassroots and care givers/parents are expected to assess and analyse ECCD needs in the area in addition to

other responsibilities. Thus the National Policy on ECCD has attempted to incorporate governing authorities at various administrative levels.

### **Policies at Provincial level**

The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka by Article 154G (1) empowers the Provincial Councils to make necessary legislation to supervise the management of preschools. As a result, the Provincial Councils of North Central, Western, and North Western have passed their own statutes on preschool education to ensure the quality of the services provided by preschools. Minimum standards for ECCD centres, qualifications of the ECCD service providers (preschool teachers) and registration of ECCD centres have been stipulated in these statutes and necessary legislations have been passed to implement these statutes. It is noteworthy that other provinces too are working towards developing strategies to regulate ECCD programmes conducted in their respective Provinces. There is no significant difference between the National Policy and the policies formulated by provincial councils in many aspects. They agree on standards laid down for ECCD institutions mainly preschools and Crèches, care giver qualifications etc. However, the provincial policies are silent about coordination committees stated in the National Policy. Hitherto, no proper coordination exists between national and provincial authorities on implementing National Policy on ECCD. Lack of coordination may cause confusion among various sectors involved in ECCD programmes.

### **2.3.2. National Standards for Monitoring Developmental Readiness**

Sri Lanka is yet to set national standards in monitoring developmental readiness in children between 0-5 years. Conversely, there are no established mechanisms to gauge children's

readiness before entering the primary school. However, sample surveys have been conducted by individual academics to assess child development and school readiness (*Perera, 2003*) and the relationship between their abilities and age (*Talagala, 2004*). Attempts also have been made by the state to identify and understand children at entry to grade 1 in the primary school. Their work skills, social skills, pre-literacy competencies, pre-maths competencies and motor coordination are observed and assessed to identify entry competencies. However, identifying entry competencies per se will not serve the purpose of monitoring developmental readiness. Although state-run schools attempt to identify entry competencies through an assessment provided by the MoE, it has not been employed to review or monitor children's total development. Lack of national standards for "developmental readiness" is an issue identified in many research studies.

### **2.3.3 Presence of early screening programmes**

Screening physical growth in children was practised in Sri Lanka for several decades. The Child Health Developmental Record (CHDR), introduced by MoH mainly, looked at the weight of children in relation to their age periodically from birth to five years to monitor and promote the growth of children in order to achieve optimal nutrition for children. With the recent revisions to the CHDR length/height for age was also introduced as an indicator to monitor the growth of children.

The milestones incorporated in the CHDR were used to screen the development of children less than five years. Since the milestones present in the older version of the CHDR looked only at some aspects of development and did not do a complete assessment the Family Health Bureau of the MoH took steps to revise it in 2004 and introduced items that represented the main domains.



Since development is greatly influenced by the child rearing practices in a country it is important to use screening instruments standardised for Sri Lanka. In this context the FHB in the MoH has taken steps to standardise the Denver Development Screening Tool II (DDST II) for Sri Lanka where the assessments are done based on domains. This tool is expected to be incorporated into the CHDR since 2008, as a tool to be used by the caregivers as well as the PHC level worker who is the Public Health Midwife (PHM) for the purposes of from birth until the age of five years. In addition to the initiations of the MoH to validate Denver Developmental Scale II, Early Screening Inventory Revised (ESI-R) has been adapted and validated on a sample of preschoolers between the ages of 3-4½ years to identify children who may need special education services in order to perform successfully in school. Anyhow, it is regretful to note that early screening at national level is not an established practice in Sri Lanka.

#### **2.3.4 Health Links in ECCE established with visits by health professional, diagnostics or referrals**

Children from birth to five years are screened by the Public Health Midwives who are the grass root level workers in the health infrastructure in Sri Lanka. This is done periodically during their home visits. If any problems are identified by the PHM or mothers' complain about any ill health such children will be referred to the Child Welfare Clinic where the Medical Officer of Health will screen and take appropriate action. If the Medical Officer of Health is unable to manage the children would be referred to the hospitals with a paediatrician for specialised care.

Within the preschools too the health sector is responsible for the health and nutritional status of children. There exists a very good relationship between the preschool teacher and the PHM who visits these preschools for regular growth monitoring and promotion with the participation of parents. The Public Health Inspector also does regular visits to ensure the safety of the physical environment.

However it is not a routine practice for Medical Officers to visit preschools to screen children. Currently the MoH is planning to conduct mandatory screening of all preschool children from the beginning of year 2008 by a health team comprising the Medical Officer of Health in which the preschool is situated.

#### **2.3.5. Careers for ECCD Care Providers**

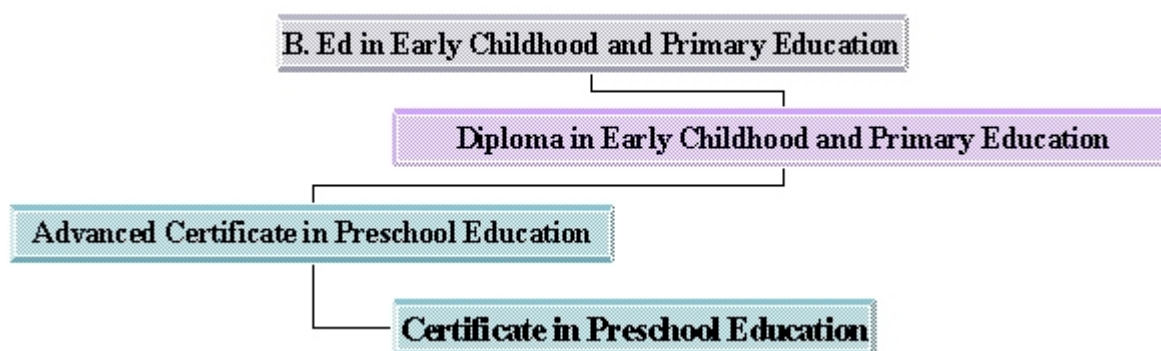
ECCD care providers (in which ever name they are being called i.e. preschool teacher, child development officer/instructor or crèche worker) need to be rewarded with opportunities to upgrade their careers. This will help them to acquire higher education, higher salaries and enjoy higher status. Higher education and higher pay will increase quality of the ECCD Programmes they serve.

Sri Lankan Government's involvement in ECCE, when compared to general education is fairly recent. Although the OUSL has been conducting certificates (Advanced Certificate and Certificate programmes) in teacher training since its inception in 1980, opportunity for teachers to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in early childhood education was not available until the year 2006. It was in 2006 that the OUSL commenced offering the Diploma Programme in Early Childhood and Primary Education for those who are interested in progressing in the field of ECCE. This Diploma will lead to a Bachelor of Education Degree in Early

Childhood and Primary Education and when these Graduates pass out they stand a better chance to progress in their career. It is noteworthy that only one university i.e. Open University of Sri Lanka offers programmes for the professional development of ECCE care providers. However, opportunities are available at the OUSL as well as other universities with Faculties of Education for post graduate research degrees in ECCE. In the recent past ECCE has not been identified by policy makers in Sri Lanka as an area that makes an impact on the country's

development. As a result there is a dearth of specialised academics in the field of Early Childhood Education in Sri Lankan universities. Since investing on ECCE has been proved to be beneficial for a country's development, universities should design programmes for career development of caregivers. Unfortunately, in the present context where students have to face a highly competitive examination to enter universities one cannot expect them to select this field as a career for which the status as well as wages are not attractive.

**Figure 2.2: The Ladder for Professional Qualifications**



### **2.3.6 Provision of ECCE to vulnerable and disadvantaged children**

Although National Policy has targeted “children with special needs” it has not identified street children, beggar children, and displaced children (due to war or other reasons) as a special category although they are a vulnerable and disadvantaged section. The implementation and expansion of the Home Based ECCD Programmes too has been rather slow in the districts of Jaffna, Trincomalee, Batticaloa while it is not implemented in the districts of Killinochchi, Mullaitivu and Mannar due to the conflict situation and limited man power. This will

therefore create a gap in implementing the ECCE and Education polices and achieving EFA goals.

According to National Policy on ECCD children with special needs are:

- children who are at a disadvantage due to physical or mental impairment
- children who have suffered abuse in the home or community
- children who have faced discontinuity in care due to loss of parents/care givers, and
- children who have faced deficiencies in health and psychosocial stimulation

The National ECCD Policy has incorporated special provisions for children with special needs to provide equal opportunities for their survival and optimum growth and development. The policy admits that these children should be addressed separately. However, policies targeting the unreached children mentioned above should be formulated and incorporated into the National policy if EFA goal 1 to be fully realised.

Lack of data on vulnerable and disadvantaged children makes it difficult to review the situation of these children. However, the following table on why children who do not attend preschools

would provide information pertaining to these vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

In the North Eastern provinces data is available only in two Districts due to the on going war. However, the table indicates that a considerable number (28384) of children are placed in disadvantaged situations due to disabilities and poverty. Children not attending preschools since there are no schools in the vicinity also indicate the facilities of the location where those children live. Therefore, these reasons provide cues to policy makers in taking appropriate actions to minimise disparities prevailing among children in the early childhood.

**Table 2.1: Why children do not attend preschools**

Province	Disability	Poverty	Long term illness	No schools in the vicinity	Preschool is not important	Total
Western	137	1036	196	341	847	2557
Southern	176	2064	45	362	906	3553
Sabaragamuwa	110	1049	40	413	1873	3485
Uva	161	1660	27	667	542	3057
North Western	92	3893	51	261	667	4964
Central	572	2729	208	1278	1778	6565
North Central	139	1072	71	181	1419	2882
North Eastern	43	693	3	141	441	1321
Total	1430	14196	641	3644	8473	28384

Source: The national survey to identify children who do not attend preschools, 2006

### Strategies adopted in the National Policy

Strategies adopted in implementing the National Policy are:

- create awareness of the rights of the differently able children
- encourage family/community based approaches
- create awareness and educate parents
- provide adequate information, guidance and support to parents •ensure availability of adequate professionals and well trained support staff to provide effective and efficient childcare
- provide training to caregivers
- provide specialist medical consultation
- provide adequate spaces in institutions for children who cannot be cared for at home or do not have homes
- support families at risk with counselling services information and education

- provide support to parents and family members looking after differently able children and
- undertake regular studies aimed at the development of special programmes and materials

These strategies will be adopted along with other strategies adopted in implementing the National Policy. Since poverty is one of the major factors behind children being vulnerable and disadvantaged the Ministry has established a National Children's Development Fund to provide financial assistance to needy children.

#### **Initiatives of the Ministry of Health**

The MoH has taken measures to provide services to vulnerable and disadvantaged children. The Family Health Bureau of the MoH has incorporated a policy on services for children with special needs into the drafted MCH Policy. The FHB is developing a programme to provide services to children with special needs focussing on the multidisciplinary approach. A record book for the children with special needs is also being developed by the MoH in order to facilitate recording of continuous care provided to such children thus strengthening linkages among various agencies working for disadvantaged children. Another progressive step taken by the MoH is appointing community paediatricians whose primary responsibility would be to provide services to children with special needs.

#### **Other initiatives**

The National Policy on Disability which has been accepted by the cabinet in 2003 could be described as another step taken by the Government to address this issue. This National Policy includes sectoral policies for children, women, school education, and health. However, this policy should be strengthened with appropriate regulations if it is to be implemented effectively.

## **2.4 Core EFA MDA ECCE Indicators**

### **2.4.1. The enrolment rates in ECCE programmes**

There are home based programmes, health programmes, crèches and preschools that serve the needs of children in the early childhood in Sri Lanka. All these programmes except preschools serve children from birth onwards to a relatively young age group. However, non availability of systematically updated comprehensive databases on a national level makes it difficult to provide a valid statistical picture of ECCE Programmes especially regarding 0-3 year old children.

Data related to preschool education is available with the Children's Secretariat and Divisional Councils since it is the most organised programme in ECCE. Nevertheless, it is regretful to note that a data base covering all the districts or divisional secretariats were not available with the Children's Secretariat or with some of the provincial councils at the time of writing this report. However, the following data would give a general idea of enrolment rates in preschool education in Sri Lanka.

There are 315 Divisional Secretariats in the 9 provinces in Sri Lanka. However, data on enrolment in preschools were available only in 185 divisional secretariats. The enrolment ratio of the preschool children in table above denotes the number of children enrolled in preschools as a ratio of total number of children between 3-5 years of age in the divisional secretariats of the nine provinces. Data pertaining to preschool children in the Northern Province as well as some divisional secretariats in the Eastern province are not available due to the prevailing disturbed situation.

**Table 2.2: Gross Enrolment Rate of Sri Lankan Preschool children**

Province	No of Divisions	No. of Preschools	No. who attend preschools	Gross Enrolment Rate
Western	27	2067	63861	94.08
Southern	39	1658	43442	85.02
Sabaragamuwa	21	1062	23017	57.15
Uva	20	874	19185	83.87
North Western	26	938	27019	83.17
Central	30	1796	48824	78.91
North Central	16	632	13827	80.00
North Eastern	06	220	5065	77.55
Total	185	9247	223540	79.95

Source: National Survey on Children who do not attend preschools (Children's Secretariat 2006)

The available data indicates that nearly 80% of children have enrolled in preschools in their respective divisional secretariats. The Western Province reports the highest access to school as well as the highest enrolment rate at 94%. The Sabaragamuwa Province reports the lowest at 57.15%. This rate indicates that, enrolment is limited to more than one third of the child population of preschool attending age in Sabaragamuwa Province. However, the overall picture depicted in the table is to a certain extent is not discouraging in respect of achieving EFA Goal 1. It could be said that the significant roles played by the government and the NGOs as well as INGOs have contributed towards increasing the enrolment levels in preschools in Sri Lanka.

The data in the below table includes preschools run by local government and Government institutions, NGOs and private institutions. Data could be disaggregated only by province.

#### **2.4.2 Percentage of New Entrants (NE) to Grade 1 who have Attended some form of Organised ECCE Programme**

Attending an ECCE programme prior to formal school will prepare children with necessary skills needed to perform well in school.

However, the quality of the ECCE programmes is the most important factor, which makes an impact on the overall performance of a child.

Although ECCE experience itself may not guarantee that a child will perform excellently in primary school it may develop a child's ability to build social relationships and help the child to overcome characteristics such as egocentrism, which are common to children in the early childhood. In that sense children who have ECCE experience will stand a better chance than their counterparts who have not gained any experience in an organised ECCE Programme.

The following Table presents new entrants to grade 1 who have attended some form of organised ECCE programmes from 2001-2005.

**Table 2.3: New Entrants to Grade 1 with ECCE Experience (2001-2005)**

Year	New entrants		Total	New entrants with ECCE		Total	% with ECCE		% Total
	M	F		M	F		M	F	
2000	170,531	163,361	333,892	129,837	128,368	258,205	76	79	77
2001	167,734	160,264	327,998	134,169	132,532	266,701	80	83	81
2002	165,513	160,250	325,763	138,736	136,305	275,041	84	85	84
2003	167,196	162,504	329,700	136,964	133,403	270,367	82	82	82
2004	154,101	149,170	303,271	135,913	132,842	268,755	88	89	89
2005	162,302	156,776	319,078	145,036	141,113	286,149	89	90	90

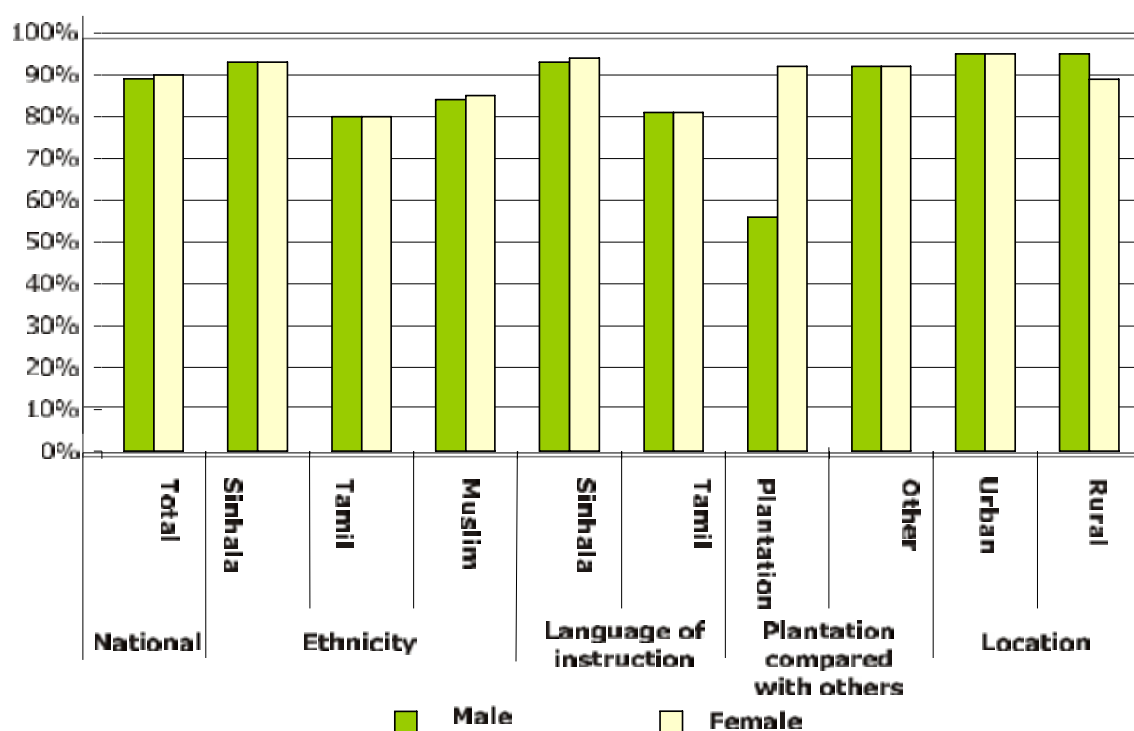
Source: School Census (MOE, 2005)

The ECCE programmes, the new entrants have experienced are likely to vary in many characteristics. However, the situation seems to be satisfactory and hopeful. Data depict the total percentages of new entrants to primary grades have increased every year.

The data also reveal that gender differences are not very significant in primary school enrolment and ECCE experiences. Sri Lanka seems to be on the right track of achieving the target expected in expanding and improving ECCE.

### Percentages of New Entrants to Primary School with ECCE Experiences According to Country Specific Characteristics

Data gathered on new entrants to grade 1 could only be disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, medium of instruction, and geographical location. Plantation sector is also considered in Sri Lanka as a specific subdivision since it differs socially, culturally and economically from the other sections in the society. From the total percentage of children admitted to grade 1 with ECCE experience 89% were Males and 90% were females. Although there is no significant

**Figure 2.3: Grade 1 Entrants with ECCE Experience**

Source: (MoE 2005)

gender difference, 10% children not gaining any experience in ECCE should not be overlooked.

Tamils and Muslims are the main minority ethnic groups living in Sri Lanka. The percentage of Tamil children (80%) with ECCE experiences is less than the Sinhala (93%) and even Muslim children (85%). These two groups as a whole have gained less benefit from ECCE programmes than Sinhalese. Percentages of males and females exposed to ECCE are equal in relation to Tamils (80%) and only 1% difference in relation to Muslims (M 84% & F 85%). This shows that gender disparity is not a discriminatory factor among all sections of Sri Lankan society.

Sinhala and Tamil are national languages in Sri Lanka. When considering the medium of instruction the percentage of children who have ECCE experience in Tamil medium (81%) is lower than that of Sinhala medium (93%). Medium of instruction for a majority of Muslims and Tamils is Tamil language. Data reveal that to some extent Tamil medium children are at a disadvantage in receiving ECCD benefits. When compared with the other children in the Sri Lankan society male children in the plantation sector appear to have received the least benefits from ECCE Programmes; the percentage (56%) being the lowest. This should be considered as a serious issue specific for male children since 92% of female children have received some sort of an ECCE experience. Why male children in the plantation sector do not get this opportunity should be looked into. Further, if children in this sector are neglected, achieving the EFA Goal 1 in the targeted year would perhaps be only a dream.

### **The Plantation Sector of Sri Lanka**

The plantation sector comprising mainly of tea, rubber and coconuts for export is considered as a vital factor in economy of Sri Lanka. A majority of workers in the tea industry are Tamils brought down by the British from South India during the colonial period. Due to this reason and the nature of the industry workers in the tea industry differ significantly from those of other industries in the plantation sector as well as other sectors in the society.

#### **2.4.3. Private Sector enrolment as percentage of Total Enrolment in ECCE Programmes**

Lack of data in relation to ownership and management of ECCE programmes makes it difficult to disaggregate enrolments in ECCE according management. Available data on simple surveys reveal ownership of preschools which are historically, the responsibility of the private and religious organisations. Studies have shown (*Wijetunegge & Wickremaratne, 2004; Talagala, 1997*) that a majority of preschools in Sri Lanka are managed by private institutions. The following table presents the percentages of categories of different management sectors of a sample of 6277 preschools. This data will help to surmise private centre enrolments in ECCE programmes for preschoolers to a certain extent.

There are more privately managed preschools in the Western Province than the other provinces. Only North Western and North Central provinces have more preschools managed by the public sector.

**Table 2.4 : Category of Management by Province**

Province	Private %	Public	Religious body	NGO
Western	60.5	08.3	14.4	16.7
Central	57.8	26.6	05.3	10.2
Southern	33.4	29.8	15.7	21.0
Northern	12.6	16.5	20.5	50.4
Eastern	23.6	21.8	13.8	40.8
North Western	32.0	33.0	09.0	26.0
North Central	14.6	59.9	11.0	14.3
Uva	35.0	25.5	10.2	29.1
Sabaragamuwa	83.8	07.9	03.7	04.6
Total(6277)	39.2	25.4	11.5	23.6

Source: National Study on Childcare provisions in preschools, Sri Lanka 2004

There are number of private schools (e.g. such St. Bridges Convent, Museus College) in the country that have preschools attached to their schools. However, these schools are answerable to the MoE only about the matters related to general education. International schools too have preschools and these schools do not come under the MoE. Therefore specific data related to private centre enrolment are not available to identify their role in ECCE programmes.

The data above does not reveal the quality of ECCE programmes experienced by Sri Lankan children. Conversely, the number of children in the plantation sector who receive ECCE experiences and the number of private preschools in some provinces depict that inequality that prevails in ECCE programmes and the experiences children receive.

#### 2.4.4 Adult Child Ratio

Adult child ratio is an indication of quality provided by the ECCD Centres. However, no national surveys have been conducted to find out structural features such as adult (teacher) child ratios of Sri Lankan preschools or Child Development Centres. The minimum standards for Child Development Centres prepared by the Children's Secretariat (2006) indicate adult child ratio as 1:20. Children's Secretariat hopes to implement these standards to assure the rights of children for growth development and education.

#### 2.4.5 Percentages of Trained Teachers in ECCE Programmes

Structural features of preschool services contribute immensely to the development of children in the early years. Qualifications of the care givers and wages paid to them are included in the structural features in a preschool setting (GAO, 2002). Both educational and professional qualifications are needed for preschool teachers to work successfully with young children. Since general education is the responsibility of the Government of any country acquiring educational qualifications is not an issue for ECCE care providers. However to acquire necessary skills related to ECCE care providers (preschool teachers and crèche workers) have to be provided with necessary training. Training in the Sri Lankan context could be defined as "what has been obtained other than on the job" (*Wijetunge and Wickramaratne, 2006*). The authors state that this definition is very general and inclusive. In view of the duration of various ECCE training programmes in Sri Lanka no other definition explains the term 'training' more appropriately. Improving and expanding training opportunities for care providers has been spelt out in the National Policy on ECCD. Minimum educational and professional qualifications required for care providers are specified in the "Guide lines for Child Development Centres" by the Children's Secretariat in the year



2006. Furthermore, provincial councils also have emphasised the need for training child care providers in their statutes. The North Western Provincial Council has specified that a “child development instructor” should possess at least a one year Diploma in

Preschool Education (Schedule II of the Gazette Notification of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, 2005,).

The current status of the training of ECCE care providers in selected provinces is shown in the following table:

**Table 2.5 Status of the Training of ECCE Care Providers**

Province	Trained		Untrained		Total No.
	No.	%	No.	%	
Western	2109	48.6	2227	51.4	4336
Southern	888	22.9	2988	77.1	3876
North Central	1682	78.8	453	21.2	2135
North Western	651	62.8	1538	37.2	1752

Source: : National Study on Childcare provisions in preschools, Sri Lanka 2004

According to the table above a majority of preschool teachers serving in the Southern and Western provinces are untrained. However the data in the table does not reveal the true picture of training since the Provinces have their own definitions for teacher training. The duration of most of the short term in-service training programmes provided for preschool teachers vary from one year to few days and the author found that in one of the Provinces teachers who received two days training at workshops conducted by an INGO are also considered as trained teachers.

The OUSL conducts two certificate level training programmes i.e. Certificate in Preschool Education and Advanced Certificate in Preschool Education for those who wish to become preschool teachers. The duration of each of these programmes is one year. Training is provided in all three media (Sinhala, Tamil and English) and location is no barrier since the Open University conducts these Programmes at Regional Centres established island wide. Training is available for both urban and rural population. The University of Sabaragamuwa also conducts a teacher training programme in preschool

education from the year 2000. The duration of this programme is one and half years. The University has trained 666 preschool teachers since inception of this programme.

Among the other Government institutions the Children’s Secretariat conducts in service training programmes for ECCD service providers regularly. They get the assistance from the experts in the field of ECCD for this training. Plantation Human Development Trust provides training for plantation crèche workers and monitors their services. They get the assistance of the OUSL to assess their training. Preschool Education became popular in Sri Lanka with the visit of Madam Maria Montessori in 1944. A group of teachers weretrained by Maria Montessori and Montessori Method became very popular since then.

Currently, A.M.I. Montessori preschools are very popular among urban affluent society. Montessori teacher training institutions offer Diplomas in Montessori Method that vary from 6 months to two years. Ladies College vocational institute and North Western Preschool Teacher Institute are among the other leading private institutions that provide one year

pre service training programmes in preschool education for ECCE care providers. Further, various National and International Non Governmental Organisations conduct in-service teacher training programmes successfully in Sri Lanka. Sarvodaya Early Childhood Development Unit, Sithuvama Training Education and Development Organisation, South Asia Partnership, Young Women's Christian Association, Forut, Save the Children Fund, Plan Sri Lanka and Room to Read Sri Lanka are some of the NGOs and INGOs that conduct short term teacher training programmes for ECCE care providers working in disadvantaged communities.

### **Training Opportunities in the Plantation Sector**

Children in the Plantation sector are at a disadvantage in receiving ECCE benefits. However, there is a growing concern about these children in the public sector resulting in many regular training and progress monitoring programmes being implemented in estates. Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) is one of the key institutions that is involved in ECCE in the plantation sector. Providing basic training to Child Development Officers who provide services in the child development centres (crèches and preschools) in the plantation sector is one of the responsibilities of the PHDT. The type of training Child Development Officers receive according to PHDT is fairly comprehensive. They receive:

- One year basic training with field assignments
- 21 days refresher training
- 10 days training in preschools and
- 05 days training on ECCD

Various other NGOs and INGOs also provide short-term training for care providers in the plantation sector. Save the Children Fund, Plan Sri Lanka, Sarvodaya, Room to Read Sri Lanka and Forut are some of these institutions extending support in training Care Providers. Although many institutions are involved in training preschool teachers it is not possible to calculate the percentage since a data base on trained teachers in ECCE are not available. Conversely, the programmes vary considerably in relation to the duration and many other attributes.

### **2.4.6 Support for Early Learning**

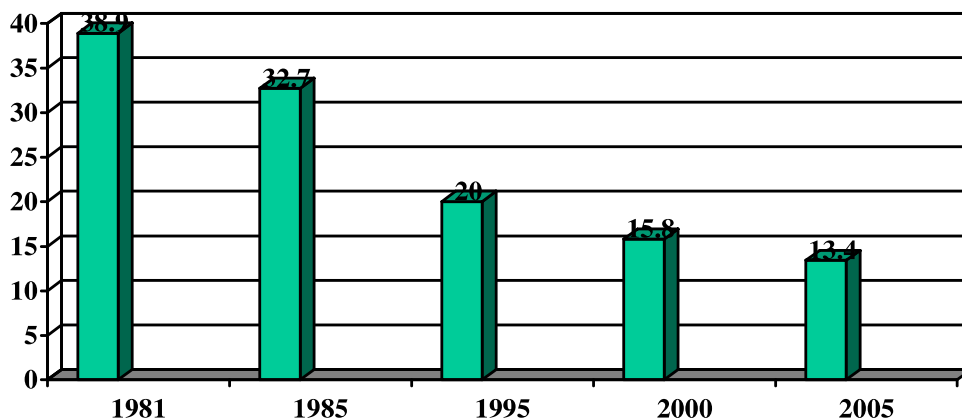
Sri Lanka has a long tradition of introducing first letter in the alphabet to the child at an auspicious hour when he becomes around three years. Even today many families observe this tradition without gender prejudices. This is an indication of parents' expectations on children's early learning. However, systematic studies have not been conducted to establish how parents or adult family members support early learning.

## **2.5. Health Indicators**

### **2.5.1 Under five mortality rate**

The under five-mortality rate is the probability of a child born during a specific year dying before reaching age five if subjected to current mortality rates. It is expressed as a rate per 1000 live births. This reflects the availability and accessibility of MCH care, availability and accessibility to safe water and sanitation and living standards in the country.

Figure 2.4: Trends in Under Five Mortality Rates



Source: Annual Health Bulletin 2005

Figure 2.4 shows declining trends in Under five Mortality Rates from 38.9 per 1000 live births in 1981 to 13.4 per 1000 live births in 2005. This declining trend observed has been attributed to improvements in the access to safe water and sanitation, better living standards, improved access to health services including public health services and maternal care. However the decline has been at a rather slower rate in recent past. Approximately 75% to 80% of deaths during infancy take place in the first 28 days in life i.e. neonatal period. Therefore further reduction in IMR and thereby under five mortality can be achieved only by

focusing on reducing Neonatal Mortality. Improved survival is a major achievement in the overall growth and development of children. Further figure 2.5 shows gross inter district disparities in the distribution of IMR the highest rates being reported from the districts of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Batticaloa (Annual Health Bulletin 2003). Therefore it is important to focus attention on minimising these disparities by improving resource allocation and human resource development in the underserved districts as survival is of prime concern in ECCD.



**Table 2.6 Distribution of IMR in different sectors between 1991 and 2002**

Sector	1991		2002	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Sri Lanka	19.9	15.4	12.9	10.2
Urban	27.1	20.3	16.9	13.1
Rural	7.9	6.6	5.2	4.6
Estate	30.5	30.1	16.4	15.7

Source: Millennium development Goals in Sri Lanka: A Statistical review – 2006

The table above indicates that IMR has been consistently higher in the males compared to females in all sectors during 1991 as well as 2002. The rates are highest in the estate sector for both sexes during 1992 and 2002 compared to other sectors except for males in 2002 where it is highest in the urban sector. The rates appear to be higher in the urban sector compared to the rural sector and this may be due to the fact that all tertiary care hospitals are located in the urban sector. Estate sector is represented by those engaged in the tea plantation industry.

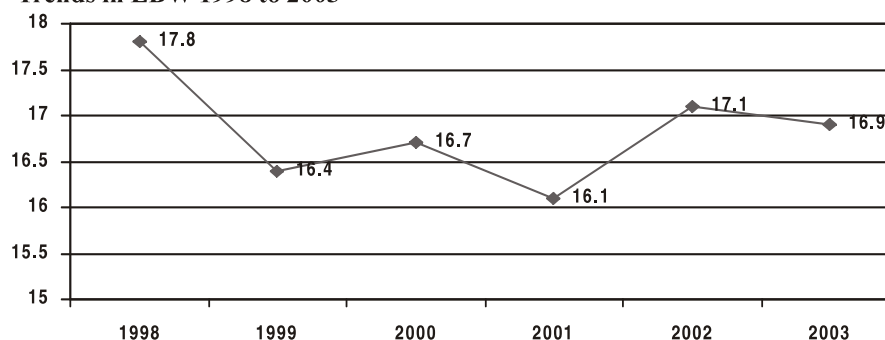
However, a decrease IMR is seen in both sexes in all sectors including the estate sector in 2002 compared to 1991. Although the difference in IMR between males and females is narrow in the Estate sector there appears to be a wide difference between the other two sectors and the estate sector. High IMR in the Estate (Plantation) sector is an issue that should be addressed.

### 2.5.2 Proportion of infants with low birth weight

Low Birth Weight (LBW) was defined as a baby born with a birth weight less than 2500

grams. This is associated with a higher morbidity and mortality during the neonatal period. In developing countries 2/3rds of LBW is considered to be due to Intra Uterine Growth Retardation, which contributes towards a poor mental capacity that would reduce the opportunities in a child reaching his optimal growth and developmental potential thus having a negative impact on school performance. Reporting of LBW has improved considerably over the years with 97% deliveries taking place in institutions and 98% with skilled attendance (Annual Health Bulletin, 2002). Although there has been a significant drop in the LBW percent over the years the past six years from 1998 to 2003 shows that it has remained almost static fluctuating around 17%.

Despite marked improvements in other health indicators such as Maternal Mortality Rate and Infant Mortality Rate, without a parallel increase in the per capita income the reduction in LBW has been rather slow. According to available data it is reported to be 16.9% in 2003 (Annual Health Bulletin 2003) and hence identified as a major public health problem in Sri Lanka.

**Figure 2.6 : Trends in LBW 1998 to 2003**

Source: Annual Health Bulletin 2005

**2.5.3. Percentage of under-fives suffering from stunting**

Stunting is defined as the height for age below 2 standard deviations from the median and the NCHS/WHO data base has been used as the reference. This indicator measures whether a child has achieved his/her potential for optimal growth in height and indicates chronic malnutrition or long-term deprivation of nutrition. The first three years in a child’s life are crucial for healthy growth and development and any deprivations during this period could lead to irreversible negative impacts such as reduced mental capacity which may hinder the child from benefiting optimally during the early childhood years and thereafter school years.

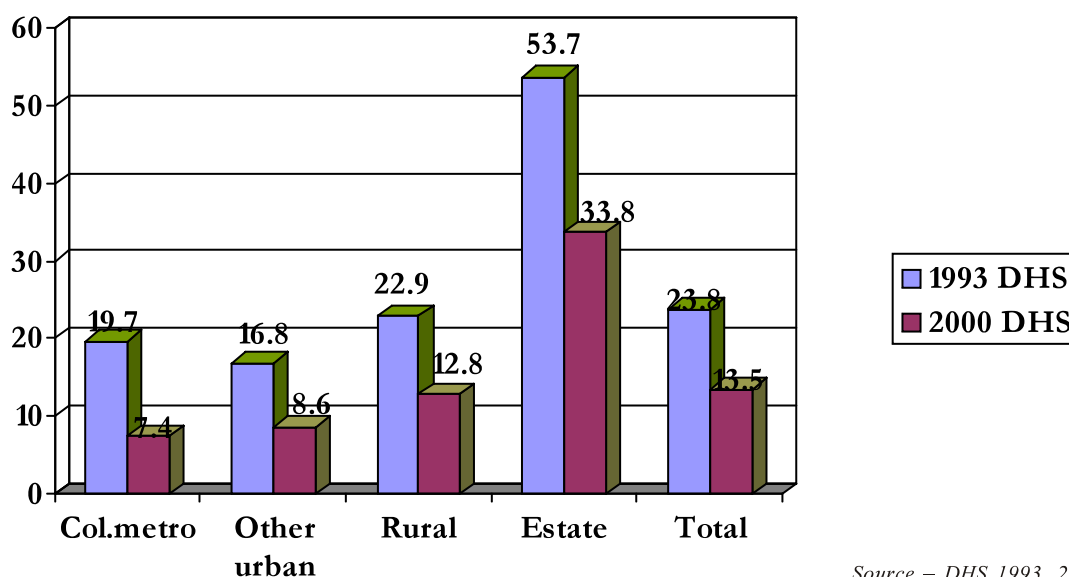
**Distribution of stunting in different sectors (DHS 2000)**

Overall picture of stunting in Sri Lankan children shows great achievements where there has been a significant reduction from 23.8% in 1993 to 13.5% in 2000. However analysis of the prevalence of stunting in different sectors in the country shows that it is a major problem in the Plantation sector despite improvements seen over the years.

Stunting among children less than five years in

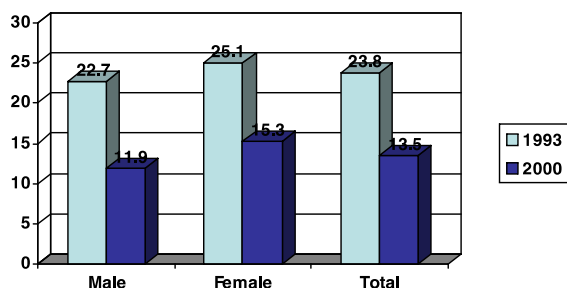
the plantation sector has reduced from 53.7% in 1993 to 33.8% in 2000. Stunting which indicates chronic malnutrition will definitely contribute to poor academic performance limiting the child’s ability to make optimal use of the opportunities provided through schools. More recent data from several districts in the North and East shows that the highest prevalence of stunting (28.8%) is reported from the district of Killinochchi followed by Batticaloa (24.7%) and Mannar (20%). Killinochchi and Mullaitivu are districts affected by the war and not under government control and therefore the routine service provision has been disrupted. (Figure1: Appendix 1) Data from a survey done in 2003 in seven districts identified as vulnerable based on poverty indicators reveals that the prevalence of stunting is highest (31.1%) in the district of Nuwara-eliya which is even higher than that reported by the districts affected by the conflict. Badulla district has reported a prevalence of 25.1%. Both these districts have a large population from the tea plantation industry who are identified as representing the estate population and the severity of the problem in this sector is well reflected. (Figure2: Appendix 1)

**Figure 2.7: Prevalence of stunting among children less than five years**



Source – DHS 1993, 2000

**Figure 2.8: Comparison of stunting by gender between 1993 and 2000**



Source: DHS 1993 and 2000

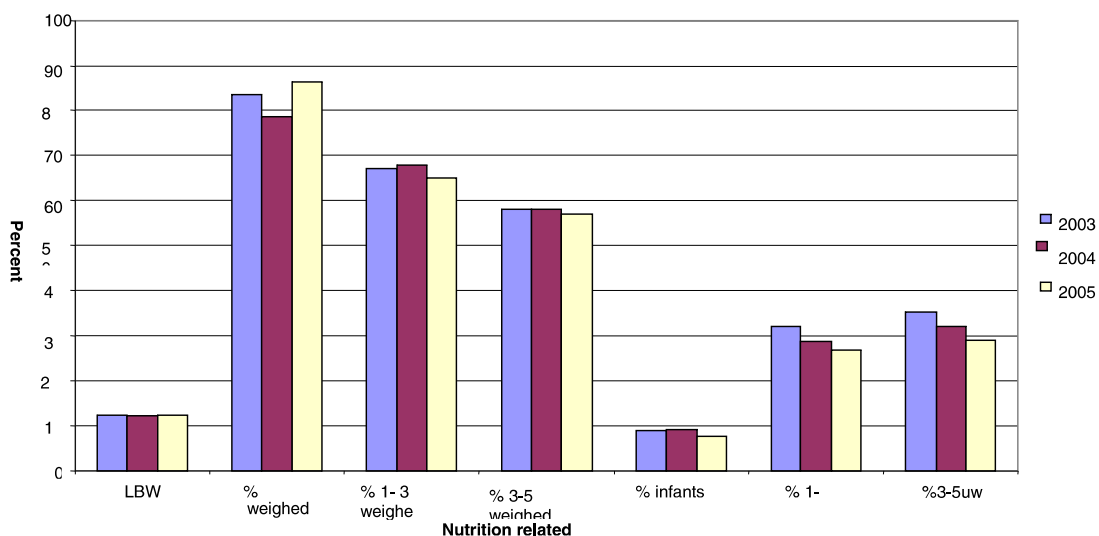
DHS 2000 data reveals that Stunting appears to be slightly higher among females (15.3%) compared to 11.9% among males.

The data presented (Figure 3: Appendix) reveals that the prevalence of stunting in all age groups has come down in 2000 compared to 1993. However, there is a sharp rise in the percent stunted between 12-23 months (16.2%) compared to the percent between 6-11 months (5.7%) in 2000. This could be attributed to poor complementary feeding practices. Stunting due to long term deprivation of nutrition during the early childhood period will have negative implications on the overall growth and development of children thus affecting their

overall performance during the school years. Conversely, it could be noted that national data on stunting is not available after the year 2000. The latest DHS survey which was concluded this year is yet to be published.

Growth Monitoring and Promotion is done routinely for all children from birth until five years of age through the infrastructure of the MoH at clinic and field level. The weighing coverage for infants has been quite high around 77% and 80% during 2004 and 2005 respectively (Annual Report on Family Health Sri Lanka, 2004-2005), however comparatively lower rates have been observed in the older age group of 1-5 year aged children where only 51% had been weighed during 2004 and 2005 (Annual Report on Family Health Sri Lanka, 2004-2005). Weight for age was the indicator used for monitoring for several decades but with the revisions to the CHDR in 2004 length/height for age also has been introduced. Growth Monitoring and Promotion is done by the PHM at clinic and village level in an organised manner to facilitate service provision to parents/ caregivers of infants and children less than five years.

**Figure 2.9: Trends in LBW, growth monitoring and under weight in 34 Medical Officer of Health division implementing the ECD Programme 2003- 2005**



Source: Unpublished, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, FHB

The routine data received from 34 MoH areas implementing the ECCD programme since 2003 was analysed in 2005 and the trends observed. It showed some achievements in relation to important indicators such as LBW and percent underweight in children less than five years. As the programme focused on improving care practices at family level, implementation for three years has shown an improvement in the percent of infants weighed while the percent of infants and young children with underweight shows declining trends. LBW percent has remained more or less static and may be due to better reporting, because steps were taken by the MoH to improve the reliability and reporting of data.

#### 2.5.4. Percentage of Households Consuming Iodized Salt

Iodine deficiency is the single most common cause of preventable mental retardation and brain damage. Children with Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD) grow up stunted, apathetic, mentally retarded and incapable of normal movements, speech and hearing. As such preventing IDD is of major importance to optimise child development. Iodination of salt for human consumption is the most effective method of preventing such disorders.

**Table 2.7: Iodination of Salt at Household Level (tested by rapid kit method) by Provinces:**

Province	% positive
Western	95.9
Central	92
Southern	82
Northern	91.1
Eastern	86.8
North western	83.3
North Central	92.3
Uva	91.7
Sabaragamuwa	87.2
Sri Lanka	89.2

Source - *Iodine Nutrition Status in Sri Lanka 2005, MRI 2006*

The survey done by Medical Research Institute tested Iodine levels of salt at household level using the rapid test kit as well as titration methods. Results of the rapid test kit method found that 89.2% of households had access to iodized salt, and the titration method revealed that 91.2% had iodine levels within the permitted range, i.e. 15 ppm which is a major achievement. However inter provincial variations are seen the lowest coverage (82%) of access to iodized salt at household level reported from the Southern Province (*Iodine Nutrition Status in Sri Lanka 2005, MRI 2006*). Further the Northern Province reported the highest coverage (27%) in respect of iodine levels less than the recommended level of 15 ppm. Same survey also found that the total goitre prevalence among primary school children has reduced from 20.1 in 2000/01 to 3.8 in 2005 which is a major achievement considering the undesirable impact of iodine deficiency on early childhood development. According to Sethi Vani, Kapil Umesh (2004) the most disturbing feature of childhood iodine deficiency is the impaired school performance and lowered I.Q. The Iodination of salt at household level depicted in the above table needs to be improved if Sri Lanka to achieve the EFA Goal 1 by the year 2015.

#### 2.5.5 Vitamin A coverage

Vitamin A is essential for normal vision as well as to protect children from infections by enhancing immunity. Repeated infections in children will contribute to malnutrition limiting opportunities for learning and interaction thus having a negative effect on overall development. Vitamin A deficiency has been identified as a major public health problem (Vitamin A Deficiency Status of children in Sri Lanka, 1995/96, MRI, 1998) in Sri Lanka. Therefore vitamin A mega dose linked to the immunisation schedule was provided to children at nine



months and eighteen months respectively which was implemented since 2002.

Vitamin A coverage reported through the routine Medical Information System (MIS) was used to calculate the coverage. National Vitamin A coverage at 9 months has increased from 44.44% in 2003 to 62.8% and 74.2% in 2004 and 2005 respectively (MIS, Family Health Bureau). Surprisingly the coverage with Vitamin A mega dose supplementation appears relatively low compared to the measles coverage as it is linked to the immunisation schedule. Data from recent surveys are not available.

Prevalence of Vitamin A deficiency (based on serum retinal levels less than 20µg per dl) has reduced from 36% in 1996 to 28% in 2005 (unpublished; Vitamin A survey, MRI 2006.)

### 2.5.6 Proportion of under five children with anaemia

Proportion of children with haemoglobin less than 11 g/dl was calculated. Anaemia is associated with reduced cognitive development and implies poor feeding practices and poor maternal nutrition with inadequate iron stores. Iron deficiency anaemia has significant implications on development since iron is an important nutrient for normal development. Iron deficiency during the most critical periods of

development has irreversible impacts on the growing child. Research has found that even if it is corrected it will affect the cognitive performance of children at school entry and the negative effects continue even during adolescence. Therefore the early childhood period is of utmost importance to help children to make optimal use of the learning opportunities provided through the formal education systems.

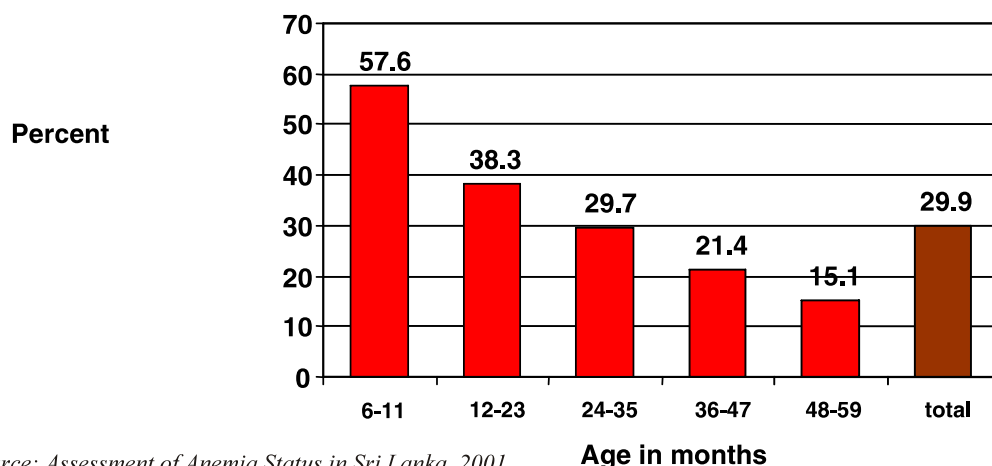
Effects of iron deficiency:

- Altered behaviour
- Lower motor and mental development
- Poor cognitive performance, behaviour and physical growth of infants, preschool and school children
- Reduced immune status and morbidity from infections of all age groups
- Reduced physical capacity and work performance of adolescents and adults of all age groups

Follow up after correction during infancy has shown the following:

- Low scores at school entry
- Low scores even during adolescence
- Arithmetic achievement
- Written expression
- Cognitive functions
- Spatial memory

Figure 2.10: Distribution of Anaemia among children less than five years by different age groups

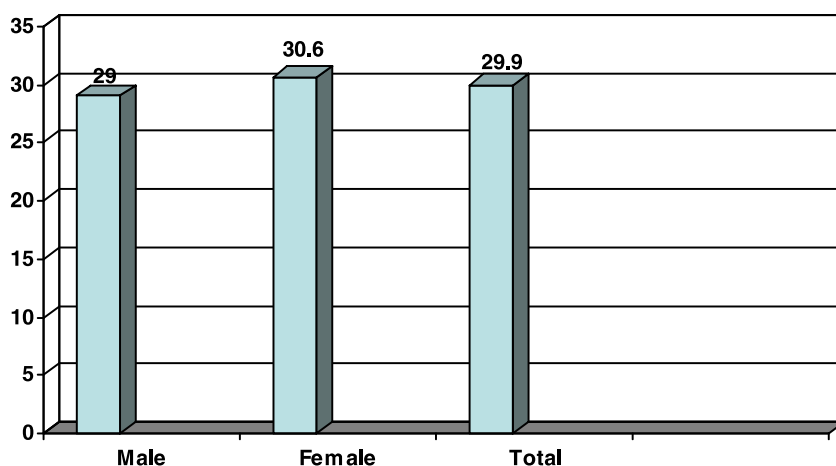


Source: Assessment of Anemia Status in Sri Lanka, 2001

Recognising the negative impacts of iron deficiency anaemia on development of children the MoH has already taken steps to prevent iron deficiency during the early childhood years by providing provide Multiple Micronutrients which contains 12.5mg of iron in addition to other vitamins and minerals to

infants and young children. This has been initiated already in four selected districts as a pilot project. Initially all infants from six months of age until two years of age would be given MMN but would be expanded to other districts on a phased out basis.

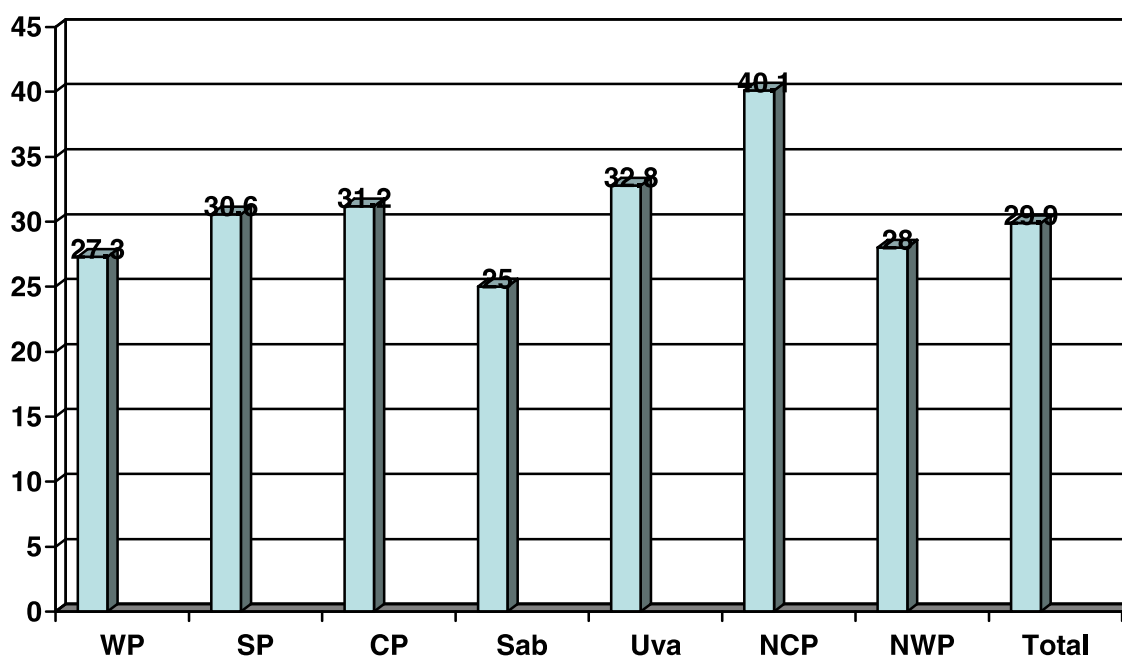
**Figure 2.11: Prevalence of anaemia by gender**



Source: *Assessment of Anemia Status in Sri Lanka, 2001*

Figure 2.11 shows that there is no marked difference in the anaemic status between the two sexes.

**Figure 2.12: Distribution of Iron Deficiency anaemia among children less than five years by Province**



Source: *Assessment of Anemia Status in Sri Lanka, 2001*

Inter-provincial variations in the prevalence of iron deficiency anaemia among children less than five years have been noted. Highest prevalence of iron deficiency anaemia (40.1%) has been reported from the North Central Province and may be due to the fact that Malaria is endemic in this province.

Uva and Central Provinces have reported the next highest levels of 32.8% and 31.2% respectively and these are the districts which have been constantly identified as having high rates of stunting and LBW rates where the largest proportion of tea plantation workers commonly defined as “estate population” reside.

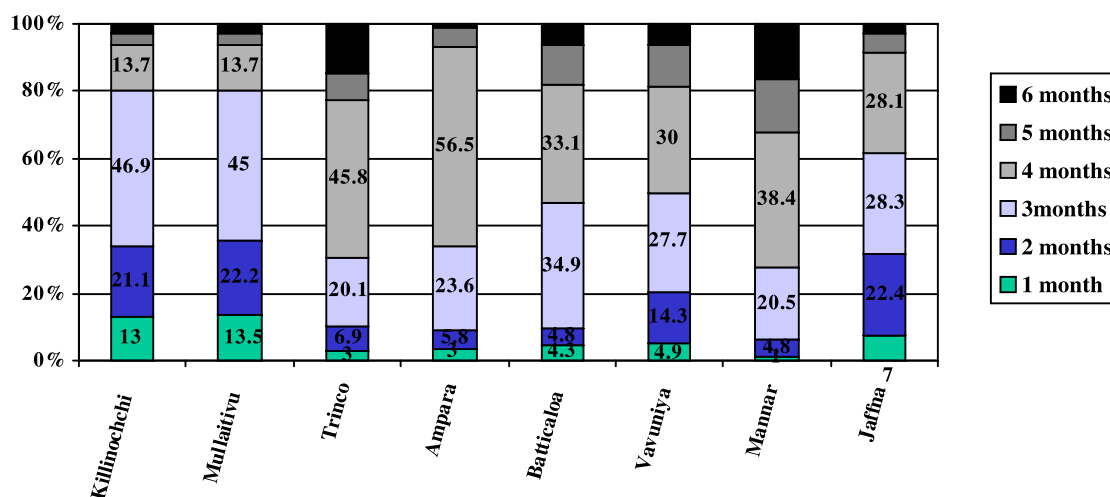
### 2.5.7 Exclusive Breast Feeding rates

Breast milk provides all the nutrition needed for optimal growth and development of children during the first six months and continues to

provide a proportion of good quality nutrients needed until two years of age. It also contains antibodies and live cells which protects children from infections. Further the bonding between mother and baby established and strengthened during breast feeding is essential for normal development. Exclusive

Breast Feeding (EBF) has been associated with improved morbidity and mortality and improved cognitive performance among children. Until 2002 the Sri Lankan policy was to provide EBF for a period of four months, however this was later extended to a period of 4-6 months and thereafter for six months since late 2005 to fall in line with current WHO recommendations. Nationally EBF for a period of four months has improved from 19% in 1993 to 52% in 2000 (DHS data 1993 and 2000) however gross inter-district variations have been observed following subsequent surveys.

Figure 2.13: EBF rates in the districts in North and East

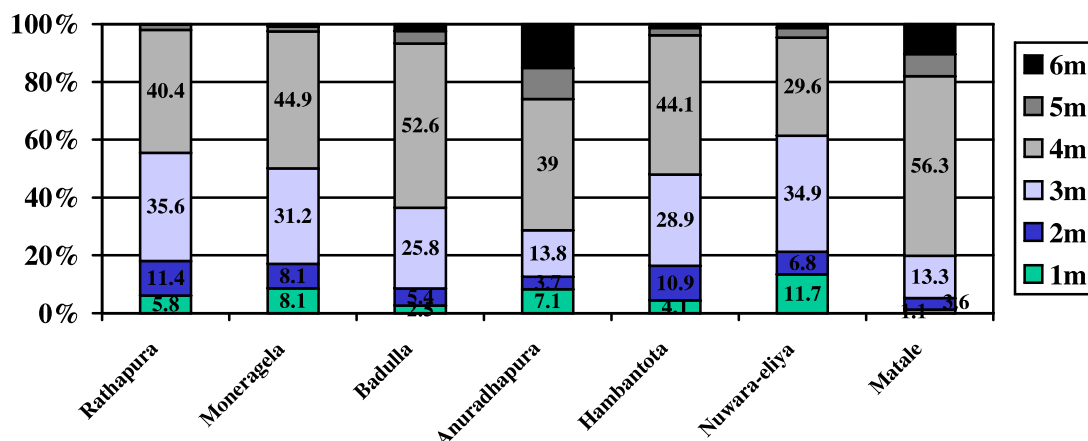


Source - Survey of Child Health and Welfare in selected Northern and Eastern Districts in Sri Lanka 2004 and Killinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts in Sri Lanka 2005/06.

According to the survey on Child Health and Welfare in Northern and Eastern districts done in 2004, 2005/06 EBF rates for 4 months is rather unsatisfactory in most districts. The highest rate of 56.5% has been reported from Ampara district. This has a negative influence

on the overall nutritional status of infants and young children. Efforts to strengthen breast feeding practices still needs priority in view of the current recommendations to provide exclusive breast feeding for a period of six months.

Figure 2.14: EBF rates in seven vulnerable districts



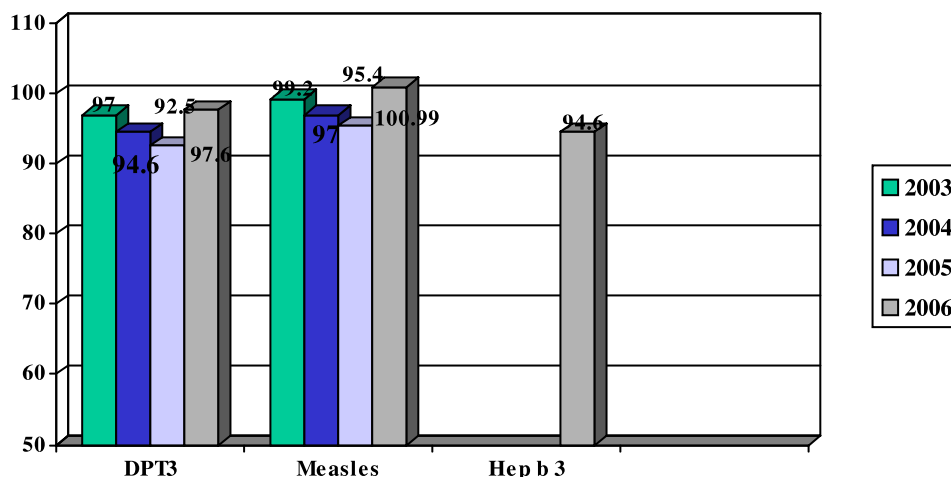
Source - Survey of Child Health and Welfare in Seven Districts in Sri Lanka 2003.

Similar picture seen in the districts in the North and East are also seen in several vulnerable districts in the southern parts of the country. Despite efforts taken by the MoH to improve breast feeding survey findings show that the EBF rate for a period of four months in these districts are rather unsatisfactory, the highest percentage of 56.3% reported from the district of Matale. Poor EBF rates will definitely contribute to under nutrition among infants and young children with a higher risk of infections. Therefore improving breast feeding practices are of prime importance in reducing under nutrition among children thus laying a good foundation for overall growth and development.

### 2.5.8. Proportion of one-year-old children immunised against DPT3, Polio, Measles and Hepatitis

Immunisation protects children from vaccine preventable diseases and is considered a priority preventive health service. Sri Lanka has been able to maintain high coverage against vaccine preventable diseases. Immunization coverage of infants has been maintained above 90% from 2003 to 2006. OPV3 and DPT3 coverage for 2006 has been reported as 93.7% while it is 90.8% and 101% for Hepatitis B and Measles respectively (unpublished data, Epidemic Unit, 2006).

Figure 2.15: National immunisation coverage for OPV/DPT3, Measles and Hepatitis B3 from 2003 to 2006



Source: Unpublished data, Epidemiological unit, MoH

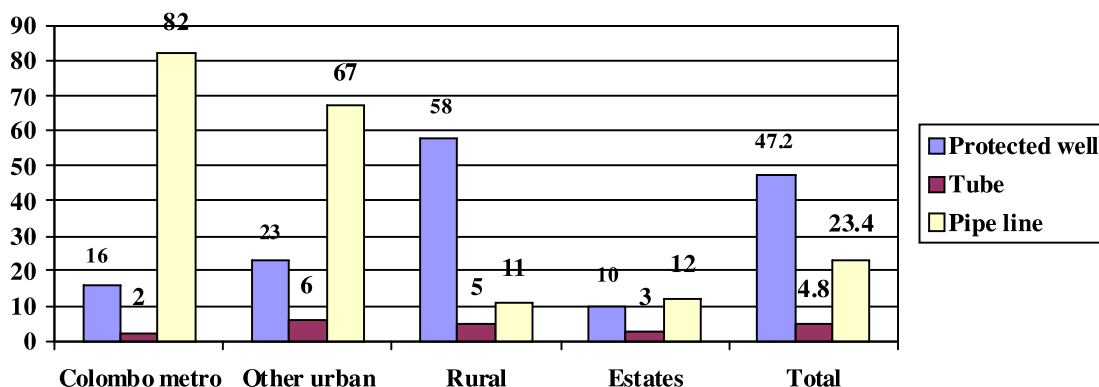
### 2.5.9. Proportion of population with sustainable access to safe drinking water

This is defined as the percentage of population using improved drinking water sources (including household water connection, public standpipe, borehole, protected dug well, protected spring, rain water collection and bottled water).

Access to safe water is a major strategy to prevent water borne diseases especially diarrhoea. Recurrent attacks of diarrhoea may have a negative impact on the growth and development of children.

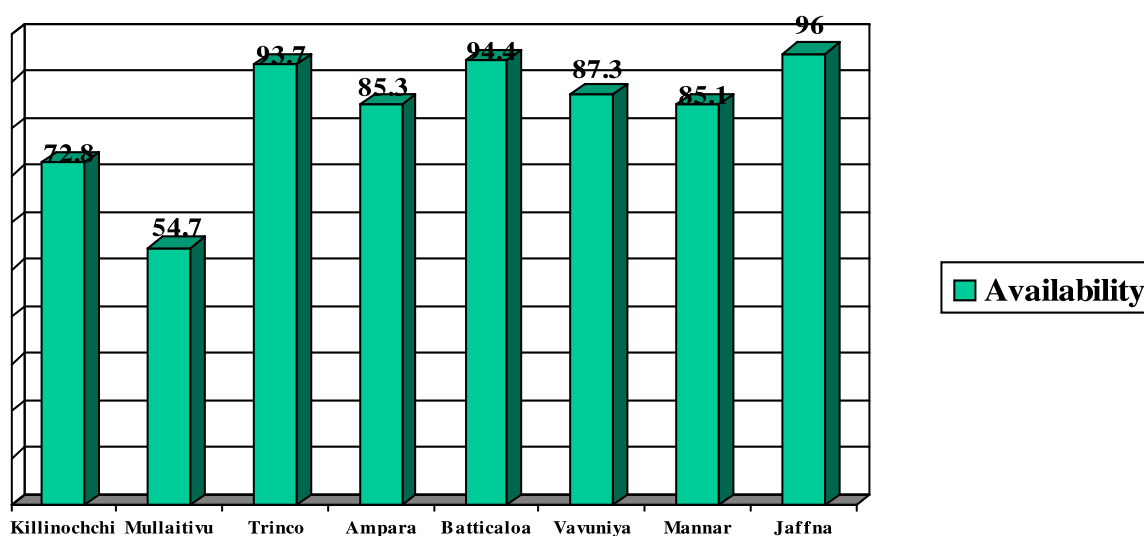
Figure 2.16 shows that 47.2% of households get water from protected wells while 4.8% and 23.4% from tube wells and main pipe lines respectively, thus a majority (75.4%) having access to a safe source of drinking water (DHS 2000). However there are gross sectoral disparities observed where only 24.8% of households in the estate sector had access to safe drinking water while it was 99.2% for those in the Colombo metro.

Figure 2.16: Distribution of households by source of safe drinking water and sector:



Source – DHS 2000

Figure 2.17: Accessibility to a source of safe water in districts in Northern and Eastern Provinces



Source - Survey of Child Health and Welfare in Selected districts in North and East (2004) and Killinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts in Sri Lanka 2005/06. Department of Census and Statistics and UNICEF, Sri Lanka

As indicated by figure 2.17 Mullaitivu district has reported the lowest percentage (54.7%) of households which had access to a safe drinking water source while it is more than 70% in all other districts. Mullaitivu and Killinochchi areas are considered un-cleared because of the ongoing war and routine government systems do not function efficiently as in other districts.

### 2.5.10. Proportion of population with sustainable access to basic sanitation

Proportion of the population with access to improved sanitation refers to the percentage of families those hygienically separate human excreta from human, animal and insect contact. Facilities such as sewers or septic tanks, poor flush latrines and simple pit

or ventilated improved pit latrines were considered as adequate. Lack of adequate sanitation facilities at home is a key reason for higher incidence of diarrhoea and related diseases contributing to growth failure and thereby reduced mental capacity. Such recurrent episodes of illness have a direct impact on school performance, through poor school attendance which may eventually result in repetition or dropout. There are also concerns in the early years that poor sanitation results in slow growth and poor nutrition which in turn has impacts on cognitive and social development. In addition there is concern that efforts to introduce sanitation and hygiene education activities in schools for behaviour change are seriously undermined when there are no sanitation facilities in the community or at home.

**Table 2.8 : Distribution of Households by types of latrine and sector**

Sector	Total%	Water seal %	Pour flush %	Pit %	Other %	Bucket %	None %
<b>All</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>72.6</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>6.1</b>
Colombo metro	100	87.3	10.2	1.8	0.3	0.1	0.2
Other urban	100	86.5	4.8	3.3	0.2	0.2	4.8
Rural	100	72.6	6.2	16	0.1	0.1	5.0
Estates	100	35.5	30	6.3	0.5	0.5	27.7

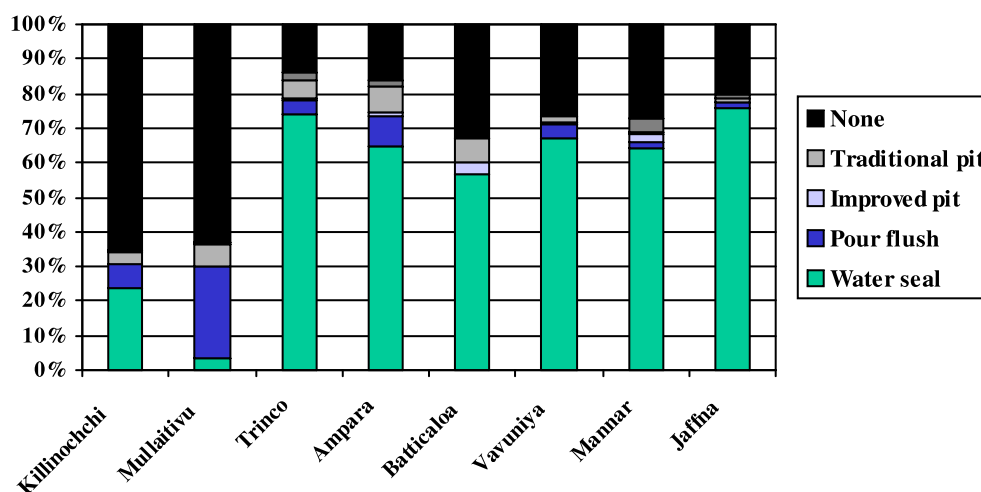
Source – DHS 2000

Data shows that 94% of houses have access to some kind of toilet. However when the different sectors are considered 28% of households living in the estates have no access to any type of toilet. This is a major concern in preventing diarrhoeal diseases and the associated consequences on the children.

Majority of households in both Killinochchi and Mullaitivu districts do not have access to

sanitary facilities while the access in other districts is more than 60%. These are the two districts which are un-cleared and not under Government control. However the situation in other districts is definitely better than the estate sector. Taking all data into consideration it is observed that minimising inter-sectoral disparities with priority to estate sector is an urgent need.

**Figure 2.18: Distribution of households by types of latrines by types of latrines by districts in the Northern and Eastern provinces**



Source - Survey of Child Health and Welfare in Selected districts in North and East (2004) and Killinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts 2005/06. Department of Census and Statistics and UNICEF, Sri Lanka

## 2.6 Additional EFA Indicators

### 2.6.1 Birth registration rate

According to the website of Plan International Sri Lanka has the highest number of birth registrations compared to the other countries in the region. It is estimated that approximately 94% of births are registered. Accordingly 183807 male births and 176413 female births have been registered during 2004 the total being 360220 births. The Registrar General's Department together with Plan Sri Lanka a NGO has launched a Universal Birth Registration programme targeting the vulnerable populations such as the estate population and street families registration is expected to be achieved by end of 2010.

### 2.6.2 Proportion of young children whose parents participate in ECCE programmes

The government institutions such as the Children's Secretariat and NGO's such as Sarvodaya, conduct parental awareness programmes on ECCE regularly. The OUSL has conducted a survey to identify parent's needs in relation to development and education

of preschool children in order to conduct awareness raising programmes on ECCE. However to present a proportion of children whose parents participate in ECCE programmes a survey should be conducted at national level.

### 2.6.3 Public Expenditure on ECCE Program

The government funds are allocated for ECCD through the Ministries of Health, Child Development and Women Empowerment and Social Welfare. These Ministries are also funded by various agencies.

There are several financiers such as UNICEF, Save the Children's Fund, and Plan Sri Lanka who provides support without which Sri Lanka would not be able to address many issues.

### 2.6.4 Public Current Expenditure on ECCE per child as a percentage

Government Expenditure for education is 2.7% from the total expenditure. There is no budgetary allocation exclusively for Early Childhood Care Education. However, the Government allocates funds for ECCE through various Ministries such as Health, Child

Development and Women empowerment and Social Welfare. Therefore, computing public current expenditure per child as a percentage is a very complex task in the Sri Lankan context.

## 2.7 Summary and Recommendations

The state involvement in ECCE is more prominent today than any other period in the history of Sri Lanka. Inclusion of ECCE in the 1997 Educational Reforms as well as other measures taken by Ministries such as of Child Development and Women Empowerment, Health and Nutrition, has proved that Sri Lanka is working towards achieving EFA goals by the year 2010. Collective efforts of the Government, NGOs and private sector to assure young children the benefits of ECCE programmes were evident in many spheres. The National ECCD Policy (2004) is a timely measure taken by the Government to ensure that Sri Lankan children in the early childhood get care and nurture they deserve to develop to their full potential. The vision, mission, aims, areas of action and objectives of each area have been clearly stated in the policy statement. It has identified the framework and mechanisms to ensure quality assurance in ECCD and stipulated the responsibilities and functions of the Government, private sector, NGOs and the community at various levels. The Policy also has formulated aims and strategies for children with special needs which cover the category of most vulnerable and disadvantaged mentioned in the EFA Goal 1. Professionalising people for inclusive education has been undertaken by the state through universities and training colleges. However the National Policy should be reviewed to suit the international definition of Early Childhood since it has left out children between five to eight years. These three years

are considered as the transition period from home or preschool to formal education. The early primary years are included in the international definition of early childhood since the experiences of a child during these two years are critical in sustaining what he/she learnt prior to formal school, (*Evans and Myers, 2000*).

- **Therefore, it is recommended that Sri Lankan children between 5-8 years should be included in the definition of early childhood, regardless whether they attend primary school or not. In this context it is suggested to have strong linkages between the different Ministries responsible for the provision of services to children during the Early Childhood period mainly the MoH, MCDWE and MoE.**

The aims of the National Policy do not reflect the multicultural facet of Sri Lankan society. Development of harmony among various ethnic groups living in Sri Lanka should be a major aim of ECCD/ECCE. Since preschools are important agents in reaching parents, objectives with regard to social cohesion and social integration should be included in the National Policy on ECCD.

- **It is recommended that bilingual (Sinhala and Tamil) or multilingual (Sinhala, Tamil and English) staff that view diversity as an asset should be trained to work with children that attend ECCD centres from different linguistic backgrounds.**

Conversely, specific policies should be incorporated in the National policy to combat educational disadvantage although the Policy has specifically stipulated objectives and strategies of ECCD programmes for children with special needs.



- **Reduction of educational disadvantage can be successful only if it is addressed through policy framework with setting objectives, determining priorities and monitoring and evaluation of policy. Compensatory policy within the national policy framework is necessary to reduce educational disadvantage.**

The Policy has stated that training all ECCD personnel in identifying children at risk and children with special needs as a strategy to improve and expand training opportunities for service providers. It is important to identify children at risk and provide referral services through screening programmes that could support families and children at risk.

Formalising screening programmes and developing national standards for monitoring developmental readiness are pressing needs that should be addressed through the national policy.

In spite of many progressive steps taken by the state for care and development of young children as stated in this report, it is noteworthy that no standards are laid down at national level to monitor young children's total development. Even in the health sector inadequate attention has been paid to early developmental screening. As a result some children are unable to benefit from the opportunities provided through free education. Appropriateness of instruments used, completeness and quality of developmental assessments are issues to be looked at critically and steps should be taken to improve early screening. Further, services for children identified as having developmental delays need to be strengthened since, a well-established referral system linked to ECCE programmes and well-trained personnel to assess children are lacking in Sri Lanka. This has resulted in

preschool teachers assessing children on preconceived notions. Effects of such assessments will remain as a stigma through out their primary school and may contribute to children being dropped out of school.

- **Therefore, instruments should be developed to assess Sri Lankan children's readiness for school and identify developmental delays during the early childhood. Since Sri Lanka is developing country the Government's support is essential in this regard.**

Data reveal that a majority of children have experienced ECCE prior to admission to primary school although the quality of the programmes has not been evaluated. Practices that affect how children experience child care including the responsiveness of the care giver, individualisation of care and use of language in the classroom should be assessed through the state organisations responsible for ECCE. Such studies are conducted from time to time in developed countries since children who receive high quality care are more likely to develop better cognitive skills in the areas of language in particular and are more likely to develop positive social skills than children who receive low quality care (*Facts in Action, 2000*).

This review was able to identify many gaps in the provision of ECCE especially for disadvantaged communities in the society. A considerable number of children do not attend preschools for the reason that preschools are not situated within their locality (Children's Secretariat, 2006). Conversely, the plantation sector which contributes immensely to our economy is still behind the rest of the society in reaping benefits of ECCE Provisions. There are beggar children and street children who have not been reached by these programmes. It has been estimated that there are 5000 child beggars in Sri Lanka (Dharmadasa and

Wickremeratne 2004). There may be children in the early childhood among them. These issues cannot be addressed only through ECCE. It should be linked within a broader framework such as poverty alleviation. Issues of street children and displaced children should be addressed separately.

- **Therefore, compensatory programmes for such children who have not been reached so far and those in disadvantaged communities are recommended in this report.**

Although different Ministries have made efforts to implement policies targeting the expansion of ECCE to all the children from 0-5 years and assimilation of children from vulnerable and disadvantaged groups into the mainstream, lack of information is a challenge faced by the policy makers today.

- **Therefore, this report recommends creating a comprehensive data base which would be maintained and up dated systematically to enable policy makers to implement ECCE policies successfully.**

The experience children gain through ECCE could be considered as sustainable only if the care providers are qualified, motivated and their future aspirations met. Except for the programmes recently offered by the Open University of Sri Lanka, opportunities available for ECCE care providers to progress in their career are limited. For the majority, the maximum qualification is limited to one year Diploma. The highest position they can obtain with this qualification is the principal post of a care providing institution or a supervising officer attached to a local government authority. Most of the ECCD officers in Government institutions are

graduates in Sociology and other disciplines.

Lack of resource persons in the field of ECCE is one of the major issues faced by universities in offering degree programmes for care providers.

Since ECCE is very much focused on the preschool, most of the training programmes for ECCE care providers evolve around preschool education. However, there is a pressing need to re-examine these training programmes to ensure the quality. The duration of training programmes, curriculum, and also physical and human resources reflect the quality of any training programme. The study conducted by Wijetunge and Wickremeratne (2003) on childcare provisions in preschools with a sample drawn from nine provinces reveals that 45.1% respondents have followed programmes of less than a month duration and only 15.1% have followed programmes of one year duration. This clearly shows the inadequacy of training received by care providers. Experiences and qualifications of some of the trainers are also questionable. Tailor made programmes are often used disregarding the appropriateness and diversity of cultures.

- **National standards should be place regarding these training programmes, quality assurance and accreditation of ECCE programmes.**

Finally, it should be mentioned that a budgetary allocation for early childhood care and education is a necessity. Financing the ECCE programmes is the major concern the state agencies face.

- **Therefore, an equitable system of financing childcare and early education with a strong partnership among Government, Non Governmental Organisations and the private sector is strongly recommended by this report.**



## CHAPTER 3: Providing Free and Compulsory Basic Education for All

### 3.1 Introduction

**EFA Goal 2: *Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to a complete free and compulsory education of good quality.***

According to the coordinators meeting report on the EFA Mid Decade Assessment in October 2005, Inclusive Education has been recommended as the approach to achieve Education for All. The aim of having this approach is given as “*to focus attention on a much broader range of children who may be excluded from or marginalised within education systems because of their apparent difficulties*”.

#### **Inclusive Education as a developmental approach in education**

*“Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups.”*

*(Salamanca World conference on Special Education 1994, The Salamanca statement and framework for action on Special Needs Education, Para 3)*

The inclusive education approach identified three broad categories of children, They are:

- those who are enrolled in schools, but are excluded from learning
- those who are not enrolled in schools, but who could participate if schools were more flexible in their responses and welcoming in their approach
- relatively small group of children with more severe impairments who may have a need for some form of additional support

The Dakar World Education Forum recognised the urgency to address the needs of these learners as:

*“...Education systems must be inclusive, actively seeking out children who are not enrolled, and responding flexibly to the circumstances and needs of all learners...”*

### 3.2 UBE in Sri Lankan Context

When EFA is viewed through this perspective the necessity arises in formulating an assessment report to look into steps taken to make the education relevant to local contexts, and able to treat all pupils with respect and flexibility so that all can participate.

The **Universal Basic Education** is defined in Sri Lanka as education in grades 1–9, 6-14 years of age. Education is compulsory for **all children** in this age span.

Majority of the 8% non-participating children and those students who are dropouts and low achievers, come from vulnerable groups.

The National Education Commission of Sri Lanka identifies the following as vulnerable groups of children:

- Plantation children
- Children with disability
- Working children including in those domestic service
- Children of migrant women workers
- Street children
- Orphaned, abandoned and destitute children within and outside Children’s Homes
- Children in Remand Homes, Detention Centres and Certified Schools

(NEC, 2003: 87)

Other vulnerable groups such as gypsies, aboriginals (Vedda community), internally displaced children and children in war threatened areas also need mention. The policies, programmes and issues related to above mentioned groups are outlined in the chapter.

### **3.2.1 Sri Lanka's history of Policy and Legal framework for free and compulsory education**

#### **Compulsory Basic Education:**

The Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939 provided for enabling legislation to enforce the compulsory attendance of the 5-14 age group, but the then government did not take necessary steps to introduce regulations to enforce this policy. The first report of the National Education Commission (1992) drew attention to the need for legislation on compulsory education. Thus, after six decades, regulations to enforce compulsory education for the 5-14 age group was introduced with Gazette notification 1003/5 of 25 November 1997. These regulations require parents to ensure admission of their children to school and their continued attendance.

The Education Ordinance No. 26 of 1947 (amending the 1939 Ordinance) provided for the extension of compulsory education to 16 years of age. However, the enforcement of this requirement did not take place in the attendance regulations of 1997. This was again proposed by the NEC with the 2003 proposals. Yet no positive outcome has been achieved.

#### **Free Education:**

In 1945 Free Education Act paved the way for children from poor families to gain free access to education. The Kannangara Report (SPXXIV) introduced legislation to provide free primary, secondary, university and other

forms of tertiary education to all.

Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (1978) guarantees fundamental rights to all persons to universal and equal access to education at all levels. The constitution of Sri Lanka states that "*the complete eradication of illiteracy and the assurance to all persons of the right to universal and equal access to education at all levels*". (Constitution of Sri Lanka, Article 27).

#### **Language Policies:**

The language policy in education has also facilitated the success stories in reaching the high standards of compulsory education. The law states that the medium of instruction of students should be their mother tongue. Thus Sinhala children study in the Sinhala medium while Tamil children study in the Tamil medium. Although the mother tongue of Muslim students is usually Tamil, they are free to choose either medium. However, some schools have started English medium classes in recent times for those students who opt to study in that medium.

#### **Decentralisation:**

Under the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution budget, planning and administrative responsibilities were decentralised to provincial authorities. (for details pl. refer section 1.12)

### **3.2.2 National Plans -after 2000-towards achieving UBE - (National Action Plan for the Children of Sri Lanka 2004-2008)**

The National Plan of Action for Children (NPA) has converted the policy into action in the child development sector. The main focus of the plan is to improve the quality of education. The targets and objectives of the NPA which are focused towards achieving UBE are:

## **I. Provision of Universal Primary Education (UPE) of good quality**

Objectives:

1. Ensure full participation of children in the age group 5-9 in primary education
2. Ensure that 90% of the children completing primary education attain mastery level in essential learning competencies.

## **II. Improve quality, access and equity in Secondary Education**

Objectives:

1. Increase enrolment in secondary education
2. Improve the quality of education at junior secondary level
3. Enhance equity in provision of secondary education
4. Reduce dropouts to less than 1%

## **III. Development of Education in conflict affected areas**

Objectives:

1. Ensure provision of infrastructure facilities to meet the needs of total student population
2. Ensure the availability of human resources to provide quality instruction
3. Ensure total population of children between 5-14 age group in education
4. Strengthen programmes to meet the educational needs of out of school children
5. Ensure access and improve the quality of pre-school education

(National Plan of Action for the children of Sri Lanka, 2004-2008)

The Plan originated along with the primary education reforms. A number of stakeholders, especially the MoE, participated in the formulation of this plan coordinated by National Planning Department. It was planned to be implemented and monitored under the all relevant ministries and authorities. However, this plan is not being implemented to fulfil the original objectives. Now this task is taken over by newly formed Ministry of Child Development and Women's Empowerment. Therefore implementation and monitoring is done by administrators without experience or implementing and monitoring responsibilities in the field of education.

### **3.2.3 Programmes and Strategies to achieve UBE**

#### **3.2.3.1 General Policies and Programmes**

##### **I. Enhance equity in the provision of primary and secondary education**

###### **a. Networking**

The development of the network of schools providing primary and secondary education in disadvantaged locations (primary education within 2km and secondary education within 4km) was attempted to improve student access. However, disparities in the provision of quality education have been a concern for many years.

###### **b. Admission Policy**

Recent developments regarding the policy of admission of children to the first grade of the primary cycle had alarming undertones for access to education. There is a widely held belief that the quality of education delivered by some, so called “popular” schools is better than that of other schools. These schools are invariably urban, mostly 1AB, most congenial type. The belief of

better education, although not entirely correct, is not without some foundation as these prestigious schools have much more facilities than the rest. Due to this belief there is a heavy demand for admission to grade 1 of the urban, especially the popular, schools. Hence there were strict regulations governing admissions to grade one issued by the MoE to ensure fair play, giving quotas to different categories, such as children of close proximity, children of past pupils, etc. But there were frequent disputes regarding the adhering to the circular instructions some of which end up in courts of law. In 2007, the Supreme Court intervened in the matter and issued guidelines for the formulation of fresh regulations for admission to grade 1 in 2008. According to these guidelines the children were tested for competency and were given marks, in addition to other considerations. Due to this practice, some children who are residing very close to a given school were denied admission while children living several kilometres away were admitted. The subjectivity/reliability of these competency marks were also questioned. This policy negates two main accepted policies for equitable access to education:

1. providing a primary school within two kilometres of a child's residence. This tends to affect the initial intake rates
2. Accepted policy for inclusive education

Fortunately, the government has decided to amend this circular to ensure equity of access. (Pls also see **VIa**)

Students can also gain admission to popular schools through results of the

grade 5 scholarship examination (pls. refer section **VIa**)

## II. General Education Reforms

**The most recent education reforms at all levels up to senior secondary began in 1997. They are:**

- Enforcement of Compulsory Education Regulations through School Attendance Committees (Pl. refer. Appendix 2) at primary and secondary levels
- Improving the quality of learning that covers grades 1 to 5 through an appropriate mix of play, activity and desk work with an emphasis on the development of competencies related to communication, natural- and the artificial- environment, ethics and religion, use of leisure and learning to learn.
- A strengthening of English by introducing Oral English in key stage 1 and improving the teaching of formal English from grade 3 to grade 5.
- Three kinds of books – text books for the use of pupils to direct their own learning, work books designed to help pupils to master the material, and supplementary readers to help pupils to receive further information through reference were to be provided to the school.
- School-based assessment (SBA) was to be used to assess the abilities and capabilities of each pupil. It was to be undertaken in a manner that promotes group work and co-operation among pupils.
- Emphasis was placed on practical work and projects.
- English language, which was introduced at primary level, was to be strengthened at junior secondary school stage also

with a modification of syllabuses, and new textbooks, workbooks and supplementary readers being provided.

- The change from science to science and technology was another. Junior Science Laboratories and ICT facilities were provided with the change
- The subject of social studies was to be enriched with an inclusion of components with contemporary significance such as Peace Education, National Integration, Democratic Principles, Human Rights, Gender Equality and Environmental Conservation.
- “Life Competencies” was introduced through several subjects (for details pl refer section 4.3.2)
- In order to direct pupils to self-learning by using simple equipment and techniques, an activity room was to be provided to every school.
- To develop and strengthen linkages between vocational training and school education, guidance and vocational counseling was to be provided to both pupils and their parents.

By the end of 2003, the introduction of the reforms across primary grade span was completed. There were shortcomings in the implementation process such as awareness building at school and other levels.

The MoE in collaboration with the NIE and the provincial education authorities was expected to develop a system for continuous monitoring and supervision of the implementation of the reforms. But a proper monitoring mechanism did not materialise for the smooth functioning of new system at school level.

The continuous teacher training need for the sustaining of the reforms did not take place properly.

With a view to promoting a sense of belonging and patriotism and a Sri Lankan identity rooted in the country’s rich tapestry of culture and respecting and sharing these diverse cultures and to meeting the immediate need for social cohesion through learning to live with others in harmony respecting the diversity of cultures in a multi ethnic, multi religious and multi cultural society with sensitivity to differences, preventing and resolving conflict through discussion and rejecting violence, the following changes are being implemented, starting at grades 6, 9 and 12 in 2007:

- Introduction of History, Civics and Geography as separate subjects, at grades 6 to 9, to replace environmental studies in grade 6 and social studies in grades 7 to 11
- Integration of generic skills such as critical thinking, initiative, problem solving, team work and human values in the content, activities and teaching learning experiences
- Introduction of a new subject called Technology with 6 options and practical components in grades 12 and 13 (GCE A/L) present curriculum

The competencies that each pupil should attain at the end of each key stage have been identified and grouped into two categories the essential learning competencies and desirable learning competencies. At key stage one the mode of learning is primarily play and activities. In key stage two there is a mix of play, activities and deskwork. In key stage three there is greater emphasis on deskwork.

There are several key features in the junior secondary school curriculum. The curriculum comprises twelve subjects. In this curriculum some of the subjects which were in operation



before 1999 have been modified and subject titles changed. The curriculum places emphasis on strengthening and consolidation of the five sets of basic competencies focused at primary school level.

As per MoE Circular 2006/09, students at senior secondary stage 1, leading to GCE O/L examination (grades 10 and 11), are offering nine subjects including three “optional” subjects. These subjects are to be picked from three baskets. The student needs to pass six subjects including Mathematics and Mother Tongue, and have at least three credit passes among them, to be considered as having passed the GCE O/L with qualification to enter GCE A/L.

Students at senior secondary stage 2, leading to GCE A/L examination (grades 12 and 13), are offering three subjects. In addition they are allowed to sit for General English, and must take and pass the General Knowledge subject in order to enter a national university. Though they may take any combination of three subjects, there are three main streams, Science, Commerce, and Arts, they need to follow, in order to enter most streams at university level. The Z-score method is used to compare the results of different examination subjects in selecting prospective undergraduates.

### **III Effective recruitment and deployment of teachers**

A circular with a ‘ready reckoner’ is used by the MoE to calculate the teacher requirement of each school. Deficits and excesses of any given school are calculated on the criteria included in this circular. The required number of teachers for a given school is calculated on the basis of enrolments in grades 1 to 5, 3 to 5, 6 to 11 and 12 to 13. Teachers are allocated on the basis of one teacher for about every 30 students. (However, a minimum of 3 teachers are allocated to small schools

irrespective of the size of enrolment.) The allocation includes teachers for general subjects, Science and Mathematics, English, Aesthetics and Technical subjects. A teacher is also given for Guidance and counselling. In addition, grade coordinators and sectional heads are allocated to medium and large schools based upon enrolment in the primary and secondary cycles. Every school is entitled to a principal in addition to the above. The average overall student teacher ratio comes down to about 22:1 excluding the principal with all allocations. Teacher transfers are expected to be sanctioned and new teacher recruits are distributed among the provinces on the basis of this circular. However, factors outside the regulations such as intervention by politicians and interested officials have made this issue a messy problem. Unplanned recruitment has created an oversupply causing unfruitful drain on scarce resources. The mass recruitment of nearly 50,000 new, mostly unqualified teachers in early 90’s created a lot of problems for the school system. 30000 graduates have been recruited recently as teachers with only three month intensive training. Majority of these are working at basic education level.

### **IV Teacher Education**

The National Colleges of Educations are providing the pre-service teacher training. National Institute of Education, Universities, and Provincial Authorities of Education are other main institutions for in-service training. Professional development of graduate teachers is provided through Departments of Education in the Universities and National Institute of Education. Approximately 100 Teacher Centres and 30 Regional English Support Centres were established to support continuing teacher education of all teachers in the system.

### Weakness of the teacher training programmes:

- Most of the teachers are teaching at primary level non-primary teachers. Although some have had training at the colleges of education, others are not trained professionally of their subjects.
- Most of postgraduate diploma programmes are too theoretical. These do not provide skills for teaching young children, especially methods based progress
- Most of teacher training programmes do not provide competencies in methods for assessing pupil's progress.
- The teacher centres do not meet the original objectives as established due to the administration and staff problems. It is necessary to develop a mechanism to strengthen the capacity to conducting continuing teacher education at zonal and school level.

### V Provision of teaching learning aids (Quality Inputs)

The Norm-Based Unit Cost Resource Allocation Mechanism is adopted to allocate resources to schools. The first stage of implementation of this formula treated all schools similarly with adjustments only for school size to accommodate economies of scale, poverty levels of most disadvantaged schools and variations of subjects taught and grade cycles covered.

However, this mechanism has been gradually improved to give schools more flexibility to satisfy the specific needs of every school. This is a positive step taken to improve the equality of education.

Continuing monitoring mechanism needs to be introduced at zonal and school levels for proper implementation and functioning of the system.

### VI Special Programmes

#### a) Provision of a range of subsidies to students

The MoE each year allocates 10% of its budget for subsidies to provide free textbooks to all students from grade 1 to grade 11, children including private schools and high-income households.

The current subsidy budget is LKR 3.435 billion. The subsidies and its coverage is summarised as follows:

#### Free Textbooks

Textbooks, workbooks and supplementary reading books are provide for the primary students in their mother tongue. Textbooks and Workbooks are provided for each student up to grade 11.

#### School Uniform

As the largest subsidy school uniform material is provided to all students.

The problem is supplying these uniform materials and textbooks to all students without identifying the needs. This is a main causes for wastage of resource.

**Table 3.1: Student Subsidies from Sri Lankan Government**

Subsidy programme	Coverage	Estimated Budget (year) LKR MI
Free Textbooks	For all	1,165
Bursaries/Scholarships	Targeted	2.4
School Nutrition	Targeted	700
Supply of Spectacles	Targeted	0.33
School season transport	For all	
School Uniforms	For all	1,260

Source: Ministry of Education.

### **Grade 5 Scholarships**

The Grade 5 Scholarship is provided to students of low-income families. Annually 10,000 bursaries are given to children of families with an income below LKR 24,000.00 (about US\$ 218) per annum to enhance access to secondary education.

However, the question remains whether the children selected are the most deserving as the selection is made through a competitive examination. It has been found that the students from higher income families fare much better than those from families below the poverty line. Hence the most deserving may not qualify for the bursaries and be automatically left out.

### **Other Scholarships**

*Sisusaviya* scholarships for disadvantaged students funded by the Asian Development Bank was implemented from 2002 to 2005 for students in grades 10 and 11 who, having successfully completed GCE O/L at the first attempt and wish to continue their studies further. 65% of the total number of scholarships was allocated to “difficult” districts only. The threshold income level remained at LKR 24,000. A monthly grant of LKR 500 for 10 months amounting to LKR 5000 is payable to awardees. Unlike in the Grade 5 scholarship, purposes for which the award money should be spent are specified. The specifications include study material such as books and school equipment, hostel facilities and traveling expenditure. (MoE, Secondary Modernisation project, 2005)

The Employees Trust Fund (ETF) offers financial grants to the successful children of those parents who are subscribers to the fund. ETF is a government maintained fund.

### **School nutrition programmes**

School nutrition programmes are implemented in approximately 8023 focus schools in difficult areas, mainly for students of grades 1 and 2. Approximately 6500 schools are supported by the government subsidy. Another 1378 are

supported by the World Food Programme and the rest are supported by the Provincial Councils of the country. The allocation per student is LKR 15.00 per day. Annually LKR 500 million is allocated by the MoE. Other two sources incur about LKR 200 million per year (ESDFP, 2006).

### **Other subsidies**

Spectacles are provided to the needy students of selected schools on request. LKR 330,000 is allocated annually for this.

Transport subsidy is paid to the public transport providers to issue season tickets at 25% of the actual fare to students to travel to and from school.

### **b) Developing school libraries**

Financial provision was made in 2001 by the General Education Project -2 to construct over 250 new libraries, convert over 700 excess buildings as libraries, purchase books for over 200 libraries, conduct programmes for development of reading habits in 200 schools and to train 4000 Library Development Officers attached to libraries.

### **c) Development of small schools at disadvantaged locations**

Small rural schools scattered island wide provide access to basic education for a substantial proportion of the population. SIDA, UNICEF, and GTZ supported the development of small schools from the ‘90s. But there is no continuation or sustainability.

Successive governments began secondary schools development projects, such as Navodya, DSD, and Isuru (active at present), and other programmes. They do not take the disadvantaged schools in the vicinity into account. Without a proper plan or strategy, the small schools are threatened with closure due to the lack of intake, thereby disadvantaging those vulnerable groups who find it most difficult to go to schools further away. The original plan,

envisaging a network of primary feeder schools around a secondary school with better facilities, although gaining Cabinet approval, did not materialise.

### **3.2.3.2 Education for specific vulnerable groups**

#### **I. Education of the Children of the Plantation Community**

'Children of resident plantation labour families' have been integrated in the national system of education starting from early seventies. The plantation population is about 6.3% of the population and is mainly in Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Ratnapura and Kandy districts. These schools have benefited from special donor assisted programmes. Special programmes were initiated since 1983 with funding from the Swedish International Development Agency. The most recent phase of funding was from the German Technical Corporation (GTZ). A National College of Education was established to train plantation youth with GCE A/L qualifications as teachers for the plantation sector schools. The teacher shortages in these schools will be rectified in the near future.

#### **II. Special provisions to improve schools and education in conflict affected areas**

Construction of buildings, toilets, water supply in North and East Provinces and adjacent districts, reactivating School Attendance Committees, devising and implementing Catch-Up Education programmes are attempted. Teacher training on psycho-social counselling focused to teachers in the North, East and other threatened areas was provided. Master teachers in other parts of the country were also given the training.

Although programmes are implemented on an ad-hoc basis there is no way to obtain data on the issues of education in the conflict-affected areas.

### **III. Children with Disabilities**

Sri Lanka has taken steps to adopt the concept of inclusive education for special education. However, implementation of the concept of inclusive education has encountered problems. The current statistics on children with disabilities from MoE (2007) indicates that 22,500 of the 5-14 age group are disabled. However, accuracy of this statistics is questionable as there had been discrepancies in the figures in the past few years. Currently special education services are provided through 850 special education units in government schools and 25 assisted special schools.

The curriculum reform with child friendly school, activity based learning, competence based approach and extended continuous assessment has been supportive to the education of the children with disabilities.

A programme for teacher training on inclusive education has been introduced in one of the NCOEs and the NIE has prepared materials for teacher training. A decision was taken to establish a Special Education Needs Department in one of the Universities. However, the staff and resources have not been provided for this department.

The provision of education along with other students in the standard classroom has been introduced. However, the process of identification of disabilities and assessment of their special needs is not well established.

Although Sri Lanka has adopted the inclusive education concepts,

implementation has not taken place properly at all relevant levels, due to the lack of awareness of the concepts among education authorities, school principals, teachers, parents and community. The required resources need to be provided to the schools to create an inclusive environment.

#### **IV. Reduce incidence of child labour**

The minimum employable age is 16 years. Provision of compulsory education as a means of prevention, strengthening legal framework and policies related to child labour, sensitizing the public on the need to eradicate child labour, providing career guidance and counselling in schools are some of the measures implemented. However, lack of a strong mechanism to collect data on child labour has hindered addressing the issue comprehensively. The Department of Labour has identified several types of child labour prevalent in Sri Lanka mainly hidden in the informal sector. The forms of child labour are:

- Domestic labour where children work for others as servants
- Employment in boutiques as workers carrying out a range of tasks from lifting weights, packaging and running errands
- Street vending
- Begging
- Rural crafts makers or helping adults in their work
- Petty trade
- Family business
- Small and medium factories and automobile repair shops
- Working in restaurants and way side eating places
- Child soldiers

Employment of children in domestic work and in various forms of industrial, mining, agricultural, fisheries and service sector enterprises, as well as for military purposes and in criminal activities, are considered as worst forms of child labour. The use of children for pornographic activities, prostitution, armed combat and drug trafficking, are also condemned and identified for elimination.

Recently a UNICEF survey (2004) was conducted among 800 households from each district. When a child is used in labour activities for more than 4 hours a day on any household or outside household work it is considered as child labour. In the north and east districts an average of 4% of children in the school-going-age, without gender difference, work for more than 4 hours a day. However, a similar survey (UNICEF, 2004) conducted in seven other districts revealed that the average is much higher (12.2%). It is reported that 95% of working children are employed to work within the premises of the houses. However, this figure is not based on population figures. Nevertheless, it is an indication of the degree of prevalence.

Jayathilake (2004) reviews several studies which points out that poverty is the main reason for child labour. (Jayaweera et al. 2002; Amarasinghe 2002; SAPI 2002)

A National Plan of Action for the elimination of worst forms of child labour is being prepared. The state has made a firm commitment to the elimination of child labour by being signatories to the relevant UN and ILO conventions.

## V. Education for Street children

The 'street children' are those who live alone or with their families on the streets. They face this situation due to lack of housing, conflict, dysfunction of families and escape from detention centres. Most of these children come from slum areas. They are malnourished and burdened with acute poverty. Sometimes these children engage in petty work and odd jobs. Some of them are exploited by beggar-masters, narcotic dealers or robbers. The facilities to assist them to enter into mainstream education are minimal. Community Learning Centre programme is an intervention to direct street children into education. These are run with the assistance of the government as well as non-governmental organisations. The number of Community Learning Centres in operation in 2006 was 138. The total number participated in these programmes was 7495. Number of instructors involved in this programme was 430. (MoE, NFE, 2006). At these centres children are provided with opportunities to improve literacy and vocational skills. After this programme the children are admitted to the nearby government schools. Lack of reliable data prevents any further action to address this issue. Lack of organised day care/drop-in centres, lack of training for the caregivers in drop-in and learning centres and stigma attached to the street children are aspects that need further attention.

## VI. Education for Displaced children

Displaced children could be identified in relation to the causes of displacement.

The following are some of the categories of children who are displaced:

- Due to the conflict in the North and East
- Security reasons have caused evacuations resulting in displacement
- Due to natural disasters such as Tsunami, floods, land slides  
The displacement occurred due to Tsunami was addressed comparatively quickly and most children are back in schools. One of the most obvious areas the state has to deal with is that of education of the displaced as a result of the internal conflict.

The categories of children who are displaced can be categorised as:

- Children in grades for which they are much overage
- Children in grades for which their levels of achievement are too low for the particular grades
- Children without schools closer to their residence
- Children who cannot be enrolled in any grade of a formal school without adequate preparation

A situational analysis of catch-up education programmes was done in November 2003 with the sponsorship of UNICEF. Catch Up Education generally means providing extra support to children as a temporary measure.

In the absence of proper data collection it is very difficult to assess the incidence of displacement. It is only the existence of this phenomenon that can be reported. Extracts from reports, news items, give an idea on the groups of displaced children.

## **VII. Education for Children in detention**

A considerable number of reforms have been carried out for the better protection of the child within the judicial system since 1995.

- Penal Code (Amendment) Act No.22 of 1995
- Penal Code (Amendment) Act No.29 of 1998
- Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act No. 20 of 1995
- Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act No. 19 of 1997
- Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1998
- Judicature Act (Amendment) No. 27 of 1998
- Evidence (Special Provisions) Act No.32 of 1999

However further revisions have been proposed to the existing provision by considering the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A juvenile justice code is prepared.

## **VIII. Education for children of ‘Vedda’ community**

‘Veddas’ are a near extinct aboriginal community, confined at the moment to a narrow strip of forest. The few hundred people belonging to this community live at present as four groups. They speak a different dialect which is basically Sinhala and have no difficulty in being educated in the Sinhala medium. Access to education is not an issue since state schools are located in these villages. A study conducted by the NEREC in 2004 reveals the access issues related to this community. A sample survey conducted in one of the villages indicates that school going ‘Vedda’

children from grades 1-5 constitute 60% of the total population in the relevant age group. However, a 50% decrease is shown in attendance in the secondary education. Educational achievement in basic education is low due to poverty, mismatch between the curriculum and their daily life, non-use of reading and writing in their daily life. Only 9% remain in the grades 10 and 11.

Although females are enrolled, gradually the number decreases and participation is very low in the upper grades. Both school and community related factors contribute to the low participation in education. Among the school related factors the mismatch and the low quality of education provided by the school are the main contributory factors for the low motivation and performance in education. Another main factor for the decrease in student population from grades 6-9 is the fact that they join the family and community in their diverse economic activities. Some of them serve as tour guides to tourists who visit the ‘Vedda’ community. Disruption of schooling is a serious problem. However, one special feature is that unlike other state schools the ‘Vedda’ students are allowed to re-enter the school even after an absence of one year.

## **IX. Others**

In addition to the groups mentioned in the NEC report there are a few groups of children who need special attention, such as:

- **Children of migrant parents**  
The education of children of parents who have migrated to foreign countries as unskilled labourers falls into this

category. Depending on the quality of substitute care received from the caregiver children will continue their education.

- **Children who are recruited by the LTTE (Child soldiers)**

Many reports are available through the media and the armed forces about children in the compulsory school-going-age being forcefully recruited as soldiers by the LTTE in the North and the East.

Reliable data is not available regarding both these groups.

### 3.3 Educational financing towards compulsory education

National Expenditure on education declined from 3.5% in the 1990s to about 3% of the national income by 2005. The government education expenditure in Sri Lanka currently amounts to about US\$ 415 million annually which is about 7-9% of government spending (Aturupana, 2005). The escalation of defence expenditure in the context of civil war has contributed to the decline of expenditure allocated to education. Defence expenditure in 2005 absorbed over 5% of the GDP. The other reasons for relatively moderate public education investment include: the broad range of public services such as free health care, wide ranging access to poverty alleviation programmes such as the 'Sammurdhi', low public revenue which has contributed to the large budget deficits and constrained government expenditures.

Sri Lanka has a dual system of financing in the education sector as the subject of education is devolved to the provinces. The national government assumes the responsibility for the administration of National Schools through the MoE. The Ministry of Finance provides funds under the two headings namely, recurrent and capital expenditure. Capital expenditure is given to the central Ministry as a block grant while recurrent expenditure for the schools run by provincial councils is channelled through the Finance Commission to the Provincial Education Authorities.

The major proportion of recurrent expenditure (nearly 75%) is spent on teacher salaries. Teacher salaries, school text books and uniforms account for nearly 95% of all recurrent expenditure.

The short fall from the national budget is partly offset by donor funding. Until the 1980s flow of foreign aid to education had been a trickle.

The UN- agencies such as UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF and bi-lateral assistance from Commonwealth countries and Colombo Plan were the sources of grants. In 1982 SIDA started to provide funds to develop education in the estate sector in mid 1980s GTZ, the German arm of state assistance to developing countries, also stepped in for assistance.

Funding by both organisations were in the form of grants. Since 1990, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank stepped in with large loans. In addition, the Swedish SIDA, JICA and JBIC from Japan, DFID of the United Kingdom, and various INGOs also appeared on the scene. Donor funding has been utilised mainly for quality improvement programs and infrastructure development.



### 3.4 Policy and System Indicators

Here we analyse indicators of primary and secondary education in detail regarding coverage, efficiency, quality, equity, and their impact upon the system.

#### 3.4.1 Coverage

In order to ensure equitable access to basic education the government has established a

widely scattered network of schools throughout the country. At present there are 9,714 government schools. Out of them, 2,486 are primary schools with classes from grade 1 to grade 5, 490 are primary schools with classes from grade 1 to grade 8 and 6,412 are schools with grade 1 to grade 11 or 13. The rest have classes from grade 6 and above.

**Table 3.2: Number of Government Schools by Functional Grade Span 2006**

Grade 1-5	Grade 1-8	Grade 1-11	Grade 1-13	Grade 6-11	Grade 6-13	Total
2486	490	4199	2213	27	299	9714

Source: Annual School Census, Ministry of Education

The policy of the government is to provide a primary school within two kilometres of every child of the age range of 5 to 9 years and a secondary school within four kilometres of

every child of 10 to 16 age range. Because of this policy a number of schools with small classes are seen especially in remote areas.

**Table 3.3: Number of Government Schools by size of Student Population 2006**

Number/Percentage of Schools with							
<50 Students	51-100 Students	101-200 Students	201-500 Students	501-1000 Students	1001-2500 Students	>2500 Students	Total
1,549	1,392	1,966	2,514	1,340	817	136	9,714
16.0%	14.3%	20.2%	25.9%	13.8%	8.4%	1.4%	100.0%

Source: Annual School Census, Ministry of Education

According to the student population some schools are found to be in diametrically opposed extremes. At the lower end there are:

- one school with one student,
- four schools with two students,
- seven schools with three students,
- five schools with four students,
- 11 schools with five students,
- 11 schools with six students,
- 22 schools with seven students,
- 16 schools with eight students,
- 15 schools with nine students and
- 20 schools with 10 students.

At the other end there are:

- one school with over 8000 students,
- six schools with over 5000 students and
- seven schools with over 4000 students

The seriousness of this situation is highlighted by the fact that:

- Ten most populace schools have 54,294 students (1.38% of the total student population)
- Bottom 100 schools altogether have only 664 students (0.02% of the total student population)
- Bottom 500 schools altogether have 7234 students less than the enrolment in the largest school (8175 students)

### 3.4.2 Access

Although enrolment rates in Sri Lanka have been impressive, she has still not been able to achieve the target of total participation in basic education. The progress achieved over the last five years is also not very satisfactory. In 2001,

the national GER in primary education was 95% for males and 94% for females. In 2005, the rates were 99% for males and 94% for females. (See Table 1 in appendix 2)

#### Gross Enrolment Rates

**Table 3.4: Gross Enrolment Rates in Primary Education-Progress between 2001 to 2005 (National Level)**

Year	Male	Female	Total	Gender Parity Index(GPI)
2001	109	108	108	1.00
2002	106	104	105	0.98
2003	101	99	100	0.97
2004	107	102	101	0.98
2005	99	94	97	0.98

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated midyear population data from DCS

Although more girls than boys participated in primary education in the urban sector according to the GER, the participation of girls is slightly lower than that of boys in the rural sector. In the plantation sector, the GER is lower for females

than for males. However, the rates for both genders are better than the national rates. Among the ethnic groups, the male participation in primary education is better for the minority ethnic groups except for Tamil females.

**Table 3.5: Gross Enrolment Rates in Primary Cycle by Social Groups, 2005**

Category	GER in Primary Education	
	Male	Female
National Rates	99*	94*
Urban Sector	103	106
Rural Sector	103	102
Sinhala Ethnic Group	103	102
Tamil Ethnic Group	107	100
Muslim Ethnic Group	109	106
Plantation Workers' Children	106	97

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated mid year population data from DCS.

\*The National rates were computed using national level estimated data since actual data for all districts were not available. The other rates were calculated using available actual data. Hence there is a discrepancy between national figures and others.

The gross enrolment rates for the secondary cycle are also close to those in the primary cycle. In 2001 the GER for both males and

females were 96%. See table 2 in appendix 2 for details.

**Table 3.6: Gross Enrolment Rates in Secondary Education between 2001 to 2005 (National Level)**

Year	Male	Female	Total	GPI
2001	96	96	96	100
2002	95	97	96	102
2003	95	96	95	101
2004	94	96	95	102
2005	92	95	94	103

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated mid year population data from DCS

Net enrolment rates show a downward trend from 2001 to 2005. In 2001, the NER for males was 91% while the rate for females was 93%. These rates have dropped to 90% for males and 88% for females by 2005. It has to be noted that an unspecified number of children in the 5 to 14 age range attend international schools. Enrolment data of these schools are not available with the MoE. However, it is estimated that about 2% of the children in the relevant age range are enrolled in these schools. Absence of this data tends to pull down the NER as well as the GER. Unavailability of

population data for seven administrative districts tends to distort the GER and NER rates. Data for these seven districts are not available as the population census could not be held in them due to the prevailing conflict situation. Population estimates for these districts have been calculated based upon the census data of 1981. However, a district wise breakdown of this data is not available. National level GER and NER have been computed using the population estimates for the whole country including the seven districts in question and therefore do not reflect the district level values.

### Net Enrolment Rates

**Table 3.7: Net Enrolment Rates in Primary Education Progress between 2001 to 2005 (National Level)**

Year	Male	Female	Total	GPI
2001	91	93	92	103
2002	95	95	95	100
2003	92	92	92	100
2004	92	90	91	99
2005	90	88	89	100

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated midyear population data from DCS

Net enrolment rates in the secondary cycle remain more or less constant during the period in review. The rates for the districts vary between 82 and 99 for males and between 83 and 99 for females in 2001. Colombo registers an NER of 101 for males in 2005.

This is a result of students migrating from other districts to enrol in grade 6 in Colombo schools. Other values for males vary between 82 and 92 among the districts. The NER for females in 2005 is slightly better than that of males.

**Table 3.8: Net Enrolment Rates in Secondary Education Progress between 2001 to 2005 (National Level)**

Year	Male	Female	Total	GPI
2001	88	91	89	103
2002	88	92	90	104
2003	89	93	91	104
2004	87	90	89	104
2005	88	91	90	104

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated midyear population data from DCS

The Gross Intake Rate to grade 1 of the primary cycle was 102% for both males and females in 2001. The GER in respect of individual districts ranged from 90% to 104 for males and from 86% to 105% for females. By

2005, the national rate has dropped down to 91% for males and 90% for females. The variation among the districts ranged from 77% to 104% for males and from 73% to 93% for females.

### Gross Intake Rates

**Table 3.9: Gross Intake Rates in Primary Education Progress between 2001 to 2005 (National Level)**

Year	Male	Female	Total	GPI
2001	102	102	102	1.00
2003	97	95	96	0.98
2005	95	93	94	0.99

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated midyear population data from DCS

Table 3.9 shows that the GIR for both genders continued to drop from 2001 to 2005. The same trend can be observed in the GER and NIR for the primary cycle but not in the NER. The Net Intake Rate steadily increased from 2001 to 2003 and dropped sharply in 2005. The national NIR in 2001 was 95% and 96% respectively for males and females. The rate varies between 87% and 100% among the districts for both males and females. These rates were 91% and 90% respectively for males and females in 2005. The District wise rates ranged from 75% to 100% for males and 71% to 96% for females.\*

\* population data are computed as on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July of the year. Hence the five year olds of a given year consist of those who were born between 1<sup>st</sup> of July of the previous year and the 30<sup>th</sup> of June of the present year. But for school admissions a child is considered to be a five year old only if he/she has completed five years of age on or before 31<sup>st</sup> of January of the given year. This difference in calculations creates an error in the NIR and does not show the actual value of the rate.

**Table 3.10: Net Intake Rates in Primary Education progress between 2001 to 2005 (National Level)**

Year	Male	Female	Total	GPI
2001	95	96	96	1.01
2003	97	95	96	0.98
2005	91	90	91	1.00

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated midyear population data from DCS

**Table 3.11: Net Intake Rates in Primary Cycle by District and Gender 2001 and 2005**

District	NIR in 2001		NIR in 2005	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
National	95	96	91	90
Colombo	93	95	92	92
Gampaha	87	89	87	92
Kalutara	94	94	97	96
Kandy	92	91	84	82
Matale	100	91	90	88
Nuwara Eliya	90	90	89	82
Galle	95	97	95	94
Matara	94	92	92	89
Hambantota	96	99	97	92
Ampara	82	84	86	83
Kurunegala	99	98	91	90
Puttalam	87	87	100	82
Anuradhapura	96	95	83	81
Polonnaruwa	90	94	75	74
Badulla	93	93	91	86
Monaragala	101	98	75	71
Ratnapura	93	94	80	87
Kegalle	97	100	92	88

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated mid year population data from DCS.

### Non-participation and Dropping out

Research studies have revealed that about 8% of the children of the 5 to 14 age group do not participate in education. Non-participation is twofold, i.e. non-enrolment and dropping out. A third dimension is the high rate of absenteeism among the children. A research study conducted by Gunawardana et. al. among 971 households

selected from 22 districts involving 1014 children and 944 parents bring to light useful facts about non-participation. According to the findings of the research the highest incidence of non-attendance is found among the children living in rural villages and slum areas.

**Table 3.12: Classification of Children by Attendance at School and Community**

Community	High Absentees		Non Schoolers *		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Urban Lower middle class	51	71.8	20	28.2	71	7.0
Village	198	47.0	223	53.0	421	41.6
Slum	73	26.7	200	73.3	273	26.9
Plantation	54	34.2	104	65.8	158	15.6
Fishing	15	31.3	33	68.7	48	04.7
Other	6	15.0	34	85.0	40	03.9
Total	397	39.2	614	60.8	1011*	100.0

- No response for 3 children

Source: Non-participation and Dropping out by C. Gunawardana

The main reasons for non-enrolment as stated by parents are, (i) not having the birth certificate of the child, (ii) inability to support the children through school, (iii) ill health of children and (iv) distance to school. Strangely, the reason given by the highest percentage of respondents is the

non-availability of the child's birth certificate. But the authorities have given specific instruction to the school heads that no child should be kept away from school due to the absence of the birth certificate

**Table 3.13: No. of Parents and Reasons Given for Children Never Attending School**

Reasons*	Total	
	No.	%
No birth certificate	30	18.4
Distance	22	13.5
Lack of transport facilities	3	4.9
Cannot afford educational costs	26	16.0
Ill health	27	16.6
Disability	11	6.7
Learning difficulties	23	14.1
Dislike to go to school	3	3.1
Other	8	4.9
Total	163	100.0

\*Multiple reasons have been given

Source: Source: *Non-participation and Dropping out* by C. Gunawardana

A small percentage of children in the compulsory school-going age are still not in schools. They are concentrated in certain disadvantaged locations such as the conflict affected areas, plantations, remote rural villages, fishing communities, deprived urban settlements and migrant population groups. A recent phenomenon has been the neglect of children of mothers who go out to work in the middle-eastern countries by the guardians to whom they are entrusted.

An island wide survey was conducted jointly by the NFE Branch of the MoE and Provincial Departments of Education, through attendance committee to identify children who are within the age of compulsory education but not

attending schools. Approximately 67000 children and the reasons for not attending school were identified. By 2005 approximately 97% of these children were enrolled in grade 1. Education is provided to them through formal schools and Non Formal Education centres (ESDFP, 2006). However, the ESDFP admits there may be shortcomings in the collected data, leading to limitation of reliability. Over the years no effective action has been taken so far It is important to identify students with difficulties for a proper plan to address these issues It should be participatory and intergraded work with relevant government agencies, NGOs and INGOs.

### 3.4.3 Quality of Basic Education

The quality of education depends on many factors, the quality of teachers, the curriculum, material inputs and teaching learning aids, facilities such as science laboratories, ICT facilities, libraries, the health of children and their home environment. Most schools are

lacking in these facilities. Even though there are enough teachers in the system the deployment is faulty and the popular schools are overstaffed while the remote schools do not have enough teachers.

**Table 3.14: Survival Rates to Grade 5 by medium, ethnicity and sector - 2004**

		Male	Female	Total	GPI
<b>National</b>		98.20	98.90	98.60	1.01
<b>Medium</b>	Sinhala	98.40	98.50	98.50	1.00
	Tamil	98.20	99.20	98.90	1.01
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Sinhala	98.6	98.9	98.8	1.00
	Tamil	97.8	100.3	99.1	1.03
	Muslim	97.2	96.7	97.0	0.99
<b>Location</b>	Urban	100.5	101.1	100.8	1.01
	Rural	97.8	98.4	98.0	1.01
<b>Plantation</b>	Plantation schools	90.2	93.1	91.6	1.03
	Non plantation schools	98.9	99.2	99.0	1.00

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE

#### a) Survival Rates

As can be seen from Table, the gender-aggregated total survival rate to Grade 5 is 98.6%.the remaining 1.4% of the total dropped out of the schooling system before Grade 5. However, the girls' survival rate to Grade 5 is better than that of the boys.

#### b) Transition Rates

A child who enters grade 1 of the primary cycle is expected to proceed through the primary and secondary levels up to grade 11 without any pause or break in order to achieve 100% internal efficiency in the general education system. One indicator that reflects on internal efficiency is the transition rate from one level to the next across the grade span. Low transition rates from primary to the lower secondary cycle and dropping out of students affect the achievement of UBE. The transition rates from

primary cycle to lower secondary cycle were 96% for males and 98% for females in 2001. These rates have improved to 98% and 99% respectively for males and females by 2005 which show that dropping out has decreased. An examination of the rates across the different groups/sectors revealed that the transition rate for both male and female children in plantation schools (95% and 96%) are lower than the rates for students in other schools (97% and 99%). Also, the rates in Tamil and Muslim schools are lower than those in Sinhala schools. The transition rates for males and females in urban schools are 106% and 111% respectively whereas the same rates for males and females in rural schools are 95% and 96% respectively. The increase of the transition rates over 100 in urban schools is due to the migration of students from rural schools to urban schools at grade 6 especially on the results of the grade 5 scholarships and placement examination.

**Table 3.15: Transition Rates from Primary Cycle to Lower Secondary Cycle by Urban/Rural Area, Social Sector/Group and Gender 2005**

Category	Male	Female
National rates	98	99
Urban schools	108	111
Rural schools	95	96
Sinhala schools	99	99
Tamil schools	92	94
Muslim schools	97	99
Plantation sector schools	95	96

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated midyear population data from DCS.

**Table 3.16: Transition Rates by District and Gender 2001 and 2005**

District	Transition Rates from Primary Cycle to Lower Secondary Cycle				Transition Rates from Lower Secondary Cycle to Senior Secondary Cycle			
	2001		2005		2001		2005	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
National	96	98	92	95	94	96	98	99
Colombo	103	102	95	97	96	96	103	102
Gampaha	97	98	93	95	94	97	94	98
Kalutara	96	99	93	95	94	95	97	98
Kandy	99	101	94	96	95	97	101	102
Matale	97	98	93	95	96	96	98	98
Nuwara Eliya	92	93	88	92	87	93	97	97
Galle	97	102	93	97	94	97	98	99
Matara	96	98	93	96	94	97	97	98
Hambantota	95	99	93	96	95	97	98	101
Jaffna	94	112	94	96	91	96	96	98
Kilinochchi	93	94	83	92	95	104	98	101
Mannar	87	88	88	96	93	102	98	102
Vavuniya	88	94	91	91	91	95	87	90
Mullativu	92	94	89	92	95	98	96	98
Batticaloa	87	89	86	89	90	92	90	94
Ampara	90	92	87	89	92	93	95	98
Trincomalee	91	93	89	88	92	90	98	97
Kurunegala	98	98	92	96	95	97	100	101
Puttalama	94	109	86	89	90	92	97	99
Anuradhapura	98	98	90	94	93	94	98	100
Polonnaruwa	94	97	93	95	92	95	96	99
Badulla	95	95	91	94	91	94	98	99
Monaragala	94	96	91	93	93	97	97	99
Rathnapura	95	97	92	96	94	97	96	99
Kegalle	96	098	95	96	96	97	96	97

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE



Transition rates from lower secondary level to upper secondary level are slightly lower than those from primary level to lower secondary level. However, a slight improvement in the rates can be observed from 2001 to 2005. It is significant that rates for all districts are below 100 for both sexes in 2001. This shows that there had been no significant inter district student migration within the secondary cycle. However, female transition rates in 2005 show an increase over 100 in respect of Kilinochchi and Mannar districts. This may be the result of student migration to areas perceived as safer places in the context of the present conflict situation. Male transition rates in Nuwara Eliya district are much lower when compared with other districts. This may be due to the male children joining the labour force after grade 9 in the plantation sector. Male transition rates for Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullativu, Batticaloa,

Ampara, Trincomalee and Puttalam are low probably due to the ongoing conflict in the country.

### c) Completion Rates

The completion rates given in the following table are calculated as a percentage of the relevant school-going-age population and therefore are naturally a little lower than the completion rates calculated by using a cohort analysis. However, they are not so low to be a cause for very high concern. This phenomenon is due to the fact that dropping out is rather low in the primary cycle.

**Table 3.17: Percentage of Students Completing the Primary Cycle – 2001-2005**

Year	Primary Completion Rate			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	
2001	88	91	89	103
2002	88	92	90	104
2003	89	93	91	104
2004	87	90	89	104
2005	88	91	90	104

Source: Annual School Census, MoE

### d) Repetition Rates

**Table 3.18: Repetition Rates by Grade, Gender and Medium 2003-2005 (Primary Cycle)**

Medium	Year	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Sinhala	2003	0.26	0.20	0.49	0.27	0.42	0.27	0.53	0.29	0.74	0.41
	2004	0.17	0.13	0.46	0.29	0.36	0.20	0.53	0.28	0.64	0.34
	2005	0.17	0.12	0.39	0.25	0.39	0.25	0.57	0.27	0.77	0.37
Tamil	2003	1.16	0.89	1.79	1.53	2.14	1.76	2.46	2.03	2.57	1.82
	2004	0.98	0.76	1.87	1.35	2.20	1.69	2.53	2.02	3.14	2.14
	2005	0.87	0.68	1.74	1.33	2.14	1.65	2.62	1.98	3.08	2.12

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE

Repetition rates are rather low in all grades especially in the primary cycle and show a generally declining trend over the years. Repetition among males seems to be higher than that of females. The rates in the Tamil medium are higher for males as well as females than in the Sinhala medium.

Tables 3.18 and 3.19 below gives the total figures for the whole country by grade, medium and gender for 2003, 2004 and 2005.

Disaggregated figures by district and province are given in Appendix 2 Tables 7, 8, 9, 10.

**Table 3.19: Repetition Rates by Grade, Gender and Medium 2003-2005 (Secondary Cycle)**

Province	Year	Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Sinhala	2003	1.07	0.43	0.88	0.42	0.61	0.32	0.47	0.27	0.28	0.14
	2004	1.12	0.50	0.79	0.37	0.60	0.28	0.33	0.17	0.19	0.08
	2005	1.03	0.40	0.93	0.38	0.67	0.28	0.40	0.21	0.22	0.11
Tamil	2003	2.71	1.90	2.65	1.87	2.25	1.59	1.71	1.30	1.52	1.23
	2004	3.04	2.05	2.38	1.59	1.85	1.29	1.60	1.14	1.62	1.15
	2005	3.35	2.34	3.18	2.06	2.79	1.75	2.06	1.48	2.08	1.41

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE

### Input Indicators

Although school places have been provided throughout the island to satisfy the circular requirements the provision of physical facilities and human resources to implement the school curriculum effectively show a wide disparity among the districts and even among schools in the same district. By circular No.1 of 2005, the Ministry of Education classified the government schools in the country into five categories as:

- more congenial schools
- congenial schools
- not difficult schools
- difficult schools and
- very difficult schools

This classification was based upon seven groups of criteria regarding available facilities in schools. The criteria included:

- i. Availability of basic facilities (drinking water, electricity, telephone, library)
- ii. Availability of usable equipment (duplicator, radio, TV, type writer, photocopier, OHP, computers)

- iii. Availability of basic usable sanitary facilities (latrines and urinals)
- iv. Availability of building spaces (classrooms, labs etc.)
- v. Availability of minimum spaces (principal's office, teachers' room, Store room)
- vi. Availability of teachers (adequacy, professional qualifications)
- vii. Location (distance to bus route and railway station)

Different weightings were given to each of these criteria to compute a difficulty index for each school. The Classification of Schools According to Level of Difficulty is used to differentiate and group schools for the following analysis in this chapter.

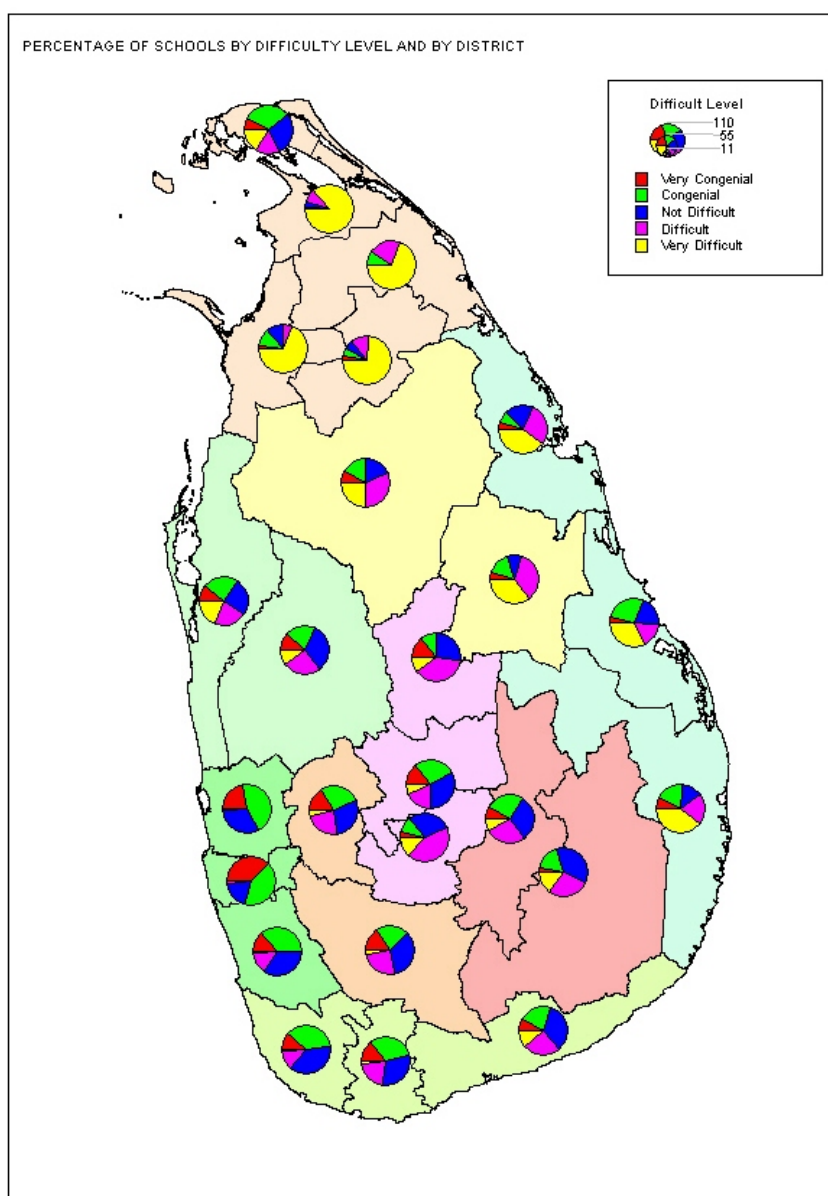
Table 3.20 shows the results of the classification. It shows that Western Province has received the lion's share of the facilities whereas the North and East Provinces are worst affected. The MoE also has ranked the districts according to the facilities index

**Table 3.20: Classification of Schools According to Level of Difficulty by Province**

Province	Percentage of Schools According to Classification				
	Very Difficult	Difficult	Not Difficult	Congenial	More Congenial
Western	0.5	04	12	28	55.5
Central	07	17	30	20	26
Southern	05	14	17	26	38
North and East	38	14	13	19	16
North Western	13	23	21	22	21
North Central	24	27	13	19	17
Uva	08	15	37	22	18
Sabaragamuwa	04	25	22	25	24

Source: DMR Branch, MoE

**Figure 3.1: Percentage of Schools by difficulty level by district, 2005**



**Table 3.21: District Ranking According to Facilities Index**

District Number	District	District Rank
14	Mullativu	1
12	Mannar	2
16	Ampara	3
13	Vavuniya	4
22	Badulla	5
15	Batticaloa	6
6	N'eliya	7
11	Kilinochchi	8
23	Monaragala	9
20	Anuradhapura	10
21	Polonnaruwa	11
5	Matale	12
18	Kurunegala	13
9	Hambantota	14
25	Kegalle	15
4	Kandy	16
17	Trincomalee	16
19	Puttalama	18
24	Ratnapura	19
8	Matara	20
3	Kalutara	21
7	Galle	22
10	Jaffna	23
2	Gampaha	24
1	Colombo	25

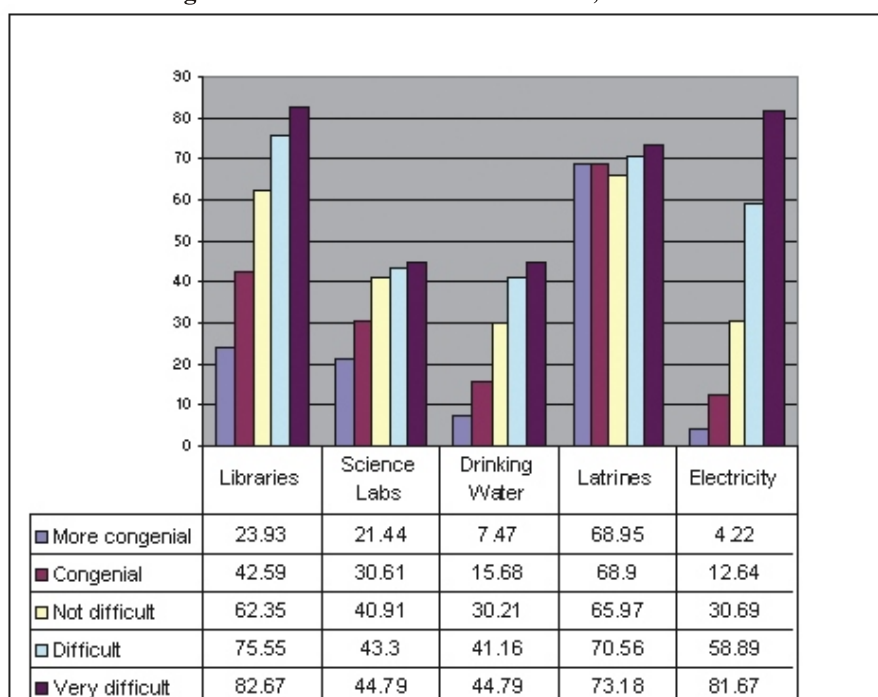
Source: Data Management & Research Branch, MoE

### a) Provision of Resources to Implement the Curriculum

Establishment of schools alone does not satisfy the requirements to maintain an efficient system of education for the benefit of the student population. The government has the responsibility of providing infrastructure including buildings, furniture and equipment, teachers and other human resources, quality inputs such as learning/teaching materials and other support services.

### b) Provision of Physical Facilities

The Ministry of Education has prepared a set of norms for the provision of all physical facilities to schools. The requirements of schools are identified on the basis of these norms. The MoE, in the process of conducting the Annual School Census, collects data on facilities available in schools in order to compute the additional requirements. However, deficits in physical resources persist as all requirements are normally not satisfied due to financial constrains. A physical facilities survey conducted recently by the MoE reveals the variations that exist in the provision of facilities to schools.

**Figure 3.2: Percentages of schools without basic facilities, 2005**

Source: School Facilities Survey, MoE

**Table 3.22: Number and Percentage of One Teacher and Two Teacher Schools 2006**

Number of Teachers	Number of Schools	Percentage of the Total
One teacher schools	124	1.3
Two teacher schools	316	3.3

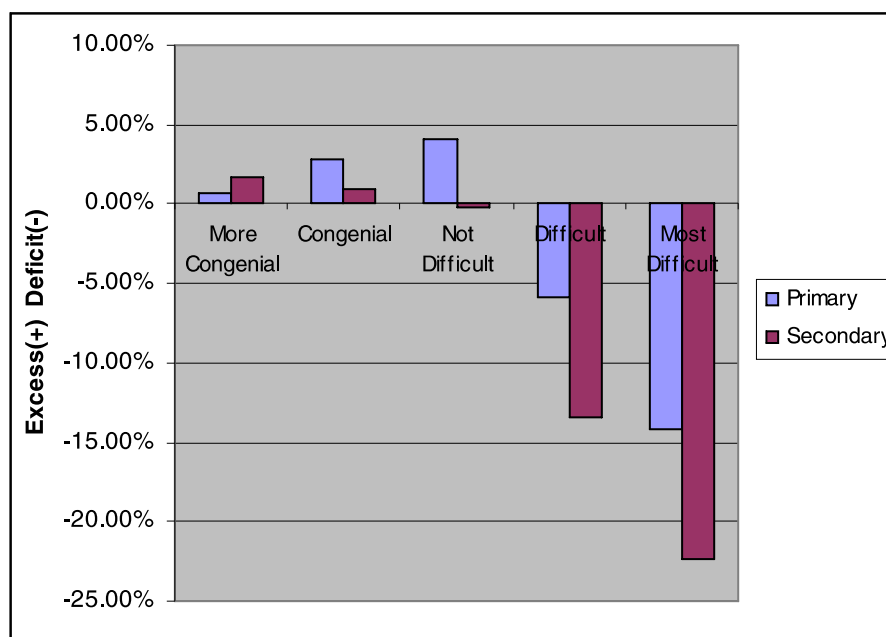
Source: Annual School Census, Ministry of Education

**c) Provision of Teachers**

According to circular instructions schools with 45 or less students are entitled to three teachers. If circular instructions are strictly enforced there cannot be any school, however small the enrolment is, with less than three teachers. However, there were 440 schools with less than three teachers in 2006. These are mostly remote difficult stations where it is extremely difficult to persuade the teachers to go. The teachers who serve in schools identified as difficult and very difficult stations are paid an

incentive of 10% and 15% of their salary. Yet teacher shortages in these schools persist. The education system managed by the MoE has a more than adequate stock of teachers. Yet severe teacher shortages exist especially in remote rural schools. The shortages are particularly severe in Science, Mathematics and English subjects. At the same time there are large surpluses of teachers in some urban schools. This situation is the result of inefficient teacher deployment. Figures 3.3 below shows the extent of this problem.

**Figure 3.3: Excess or Deficit of Teachers by School Category, 2005**

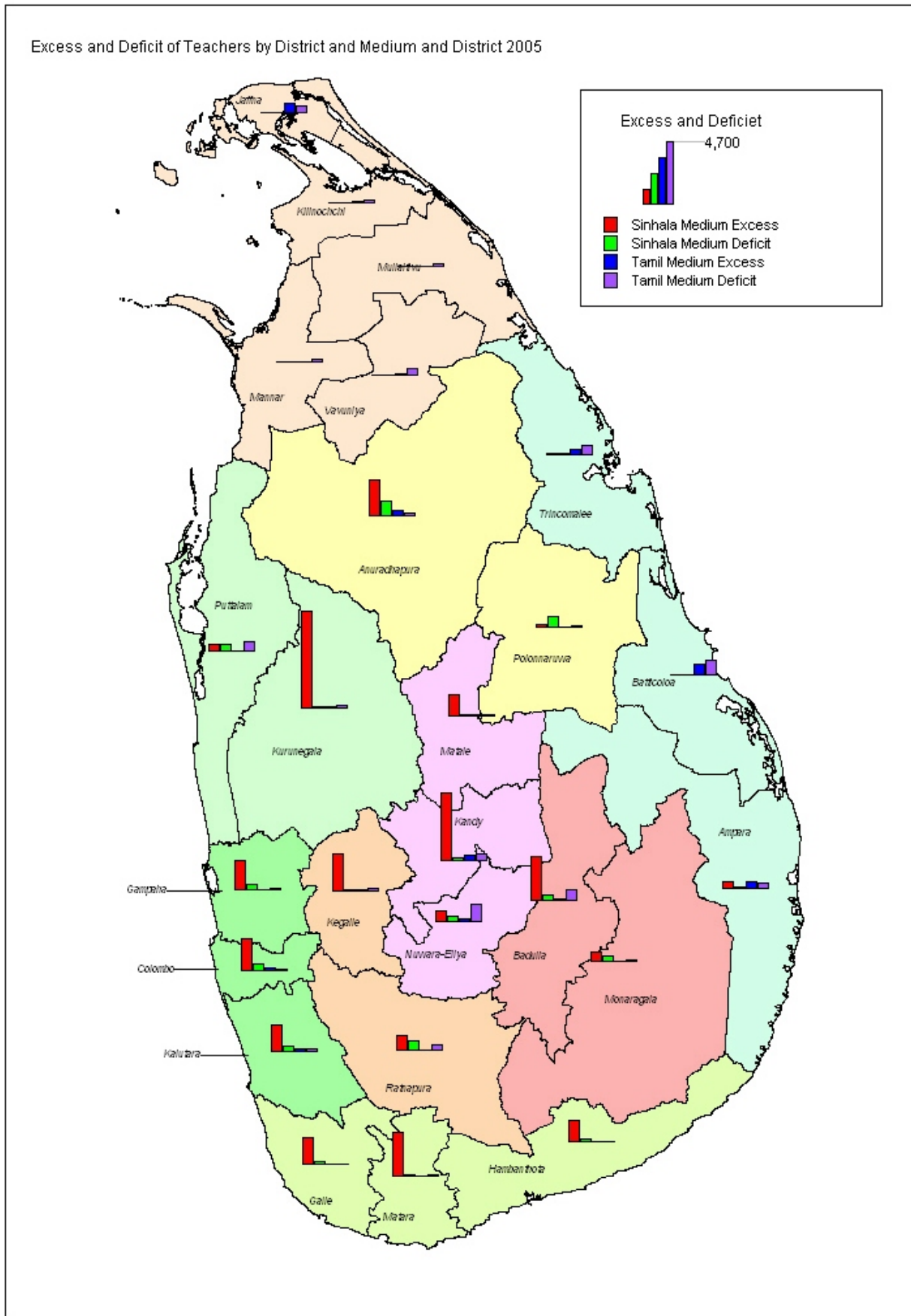


Source: Annual School Census, Ministry of Education

Tamil medium schools are the worst affected in this respect. In early '90s a policy decision was taken by the government to effect all recruitments to the government service according to the ethnic proportion of the country. This decision was taken to prevent any discrimination against the minority communities. However, this practice aggravated the problem as more vacancies were in the Tamil schools.

Although the government has stopped this practice after realising its adverse effects recruitment of teachers on political reasons has caused the problem to persist. It also can be seen that some district are badly handicapped because of teacher shortages while some others continue to enjoy a surplus of teachers. Further, it is evidenced that excesses and deficits exist within the same district.

Figure 3.4: Excess and Deficit of Teachers by district and medium 2005



**Table 3.23: Student Teacher Ratios by Teacher Category and Difficulty Level of Schools**

Type of School	Student Graduate Teacher Ratio	Student Trained Teacher Ratio	Student Untrained Teacher Ratio	Overall Student Teacher Ratio
More Congenial Schools	65	37	2122	23
Congenial Schools	73	29	1108	20
Not Difficult Schools	78	24	614	18
Difficult Schools	109	25	445	19
Very Difficult Schools	132	27	238	20

*Source: DMR Branch, MoE*

Another concern is the quality of the teachers particularly in schools categorized as difficult and very difficult. For example more congenial schools have one graduate teacher for every 65 students while very difficult schools have one graduate teacher for every 109 students. At the other end, more congenial schools have one

untrained teacher for 2122 students while very difficult schools have one untrained teacher for every 238 students. Table 3.23 gives details about student teacher ratios by teacher category and difficulty level of schools .

### 3.4.5. Efficiency of the System

#### a) Student Performance

Achievement level of students is an efficient indicator of the quality of education provided. Sri Lanka does not have much to show as her performance in this field. It seems that the country has sacrificed quality for quantity in maintaining education facilities. As budgetary allocations did not increase to match the increase in enrolments over the past few decades, quality has been marginalized to cater to the expansion of education facilities. The government was concerned about this phenomenon during the recent past and therefore quality improvement in education has been a top priority of the authorities. These efforts have not yielded justifiable results. A research study report published by the National

Education Research and Evaluation Centre (NEREC) reveals serious discrepancies in achieving mastery of grade 4 pupils in key subjects. According to this report Gampaha, Colombo, Matara, Kalutara, Kurunegala and Kegalle districts show better achievement levels while Mannar, Trincomalee, Nuwara Eliya, Batticaloa, Mullativu and Kilinochchi districts have achieved very poor levels. All three districts of the Western Province are in the group of six districts with better achievement levels. Out of the six districts with lowest achievement levels five districts belong to the North and East Provinces. It has to be noted that five of the six districts with least achievement levels are those with least facilities.

**Table 3.24: Composite Index for Districts – Based on Percentage Achieving Mastery**

Group	District	First Language			Mathematics			English Language			Total Score	All Island Rank
		Achieving Mastery	Rank	Score	Achieving Mastery	Rank	Score	Achieving Mastery	Rank	Score		
Upper Group	1. Gampaha	59.4	01	25	54.1	1	25	20.3	2	24	74	1
	2. Colombo	51.4	02	24	53.7	2	24	23.7	1	25	73	2
	3. Matara	47.6	04	22	47.5	3	23	16.1	3	23	68	3
	4. Kalutara	47.6	04	22	46.7	4	22	14.0	4	22	66	4
	5. Kurunegala	47.6	03	23	46.3	5	21	9.8	8	18	62	5
	6. Kegalle	45.1	06	20	45.2	7	19	12.7	5	21	60	6
Middle Group	7. Galle	43.0	08	18	46.0	6	20	12.2	6	20	58	7
	8. Kandy	43.6	07	19	41.0	9	17	11.3	7	19	55	8
	9. Anuradhapura	36.4	10	16	40.3	11	15	9.0	11	15	46	9
	10. Ratnapura	37.0	09	17	41.0	9	17	8.5	14	12	46	9
	11. Hambantota	36.0	11	15	37.5	12	14	9.3	10	16	45	11
	12. Polonnaruwa	33.8	13	13	41.5	8	18	6.1	17	09	40	12
	13. Badulla	35.8	12	14	36.0	15	11	8.8	12	14	39	13
	14. Puttalam	32.8	14	12	37.5	12	14	6.4	16	10	36	14
	15. Vavuniya	26.9	17	09	36.9	14	12	8.7	13	13	34	15
	16. Matale	24.5	21	05	29.4	18	08	9.4	9	17	30	16
	17. Monaragala	30.4	15	11	33.9	16	10	5.5	18	08	29	17
	18. Ampara	26.0	19	07	30.1	17	09	6.5	15	11	27	18
	19. Jaffna	26.1	18	08	28.1	19	07	5.4	19	07	22	19
Lower Group	20. Mannar	27.0	16	10	25.3	20	06	2.9	24	02	18	20
	21. Trincomalee	25.5	20	06	21.7	22	04	4.9	21	05	15	21
	22. N'Eliya	23.4	22	04	22.3	21	05	3.3	23	03	12	22
	23. Batticaloa	19.1	23	03	21.5	23	03	5.0	20	06	12	22
	24. Mullativu	17.5	24	02	18.8	24	02	4.8	22	04	8	24
	25. Kilinochchi	11.2	25	01	09.7	25	01	0.7	25	01	3	25

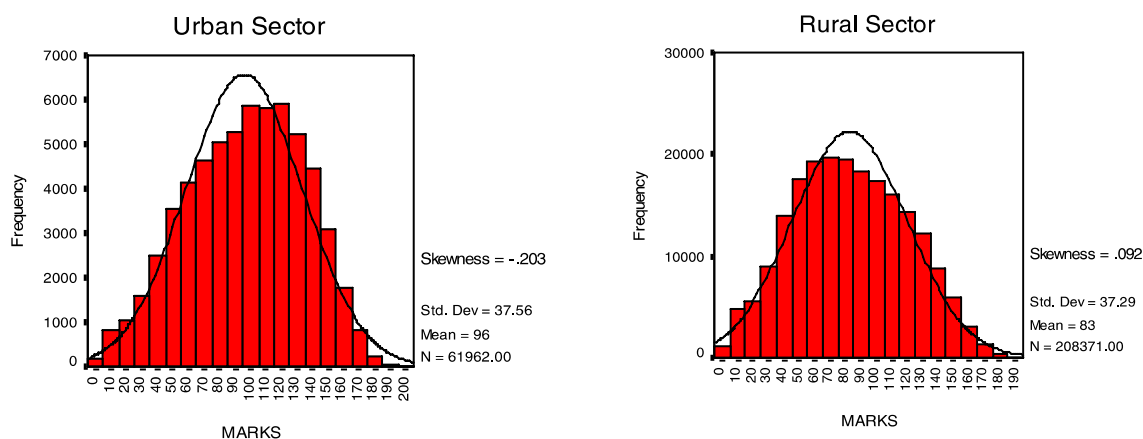
Source: National Assessment of Achievement of Grade 4 Pupils in Sri Lanka

Performance of students at national level examinations also gives an insight into the quality of education delivered to the children. They are the outputs of the composite factor of inputs to education such as physical facilities, human resources and quality inputs. The general education system in Sri Lanka has national level examinations at two levels (Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination and

the GCE O/L Examination). A review of the grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination reveals that wide disparities exist in the performance of students among different schools of different levels of difficulty and between urban and rural sector schools and also between schools in the plantation sector and other schools.



**Figure 3.5: Performance of Students at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2005**



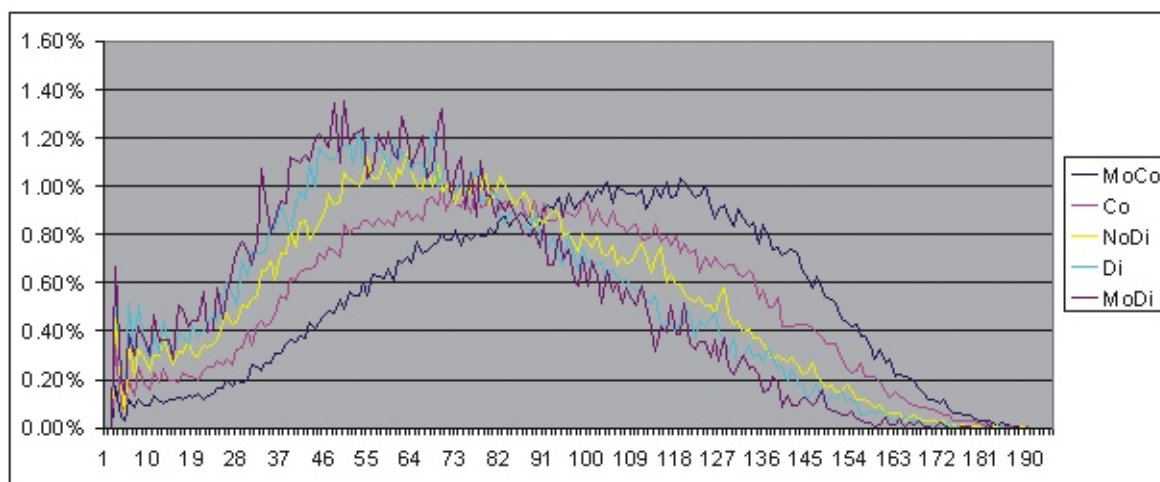
The distributions above show that children in urban schools fare better than children in rural schools. Performance of children of low income families is lower than that of higher income families. (Figures 5 & 6: Appendix 2)

The Figure 3.6 clearly highlights the wide disparity in performance of students of schools with different difficulty levels. Figure 3.7 shows the difference in performance between students of estate sector schools and students of other schools. Figure 3.8 depicts the performance of

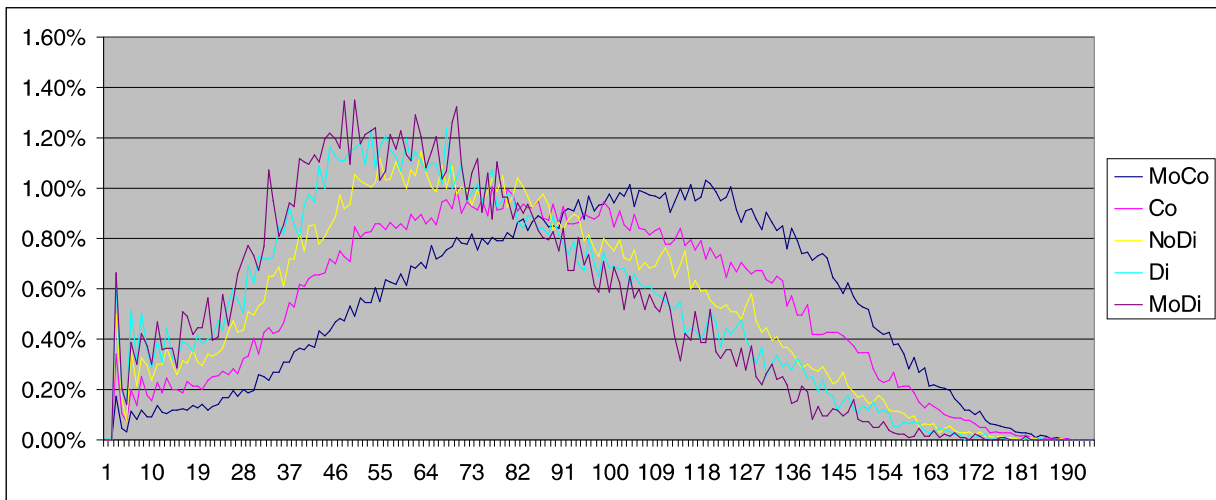
males and females. This graph reveals clearly that girls perform better than boys at the examination.

The total of these illustrations conclusively prove that there is a marked disparity in providing resources for curriculum implementation which has resulted in the denial of the right to equitable access to education of acceptable quality for some categories of children. It will not be able to achieve UBE until these shortcomings are addressed.

**Figure 3.6: Performance of Students at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2005 by category of Schools**



**Figure 3.7: Performance of Students of Estate Sector Schools and Other Schools at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2001**



**Figure 3.8: Performance of Students of Estate Sector Schools and Other Schools at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2005**

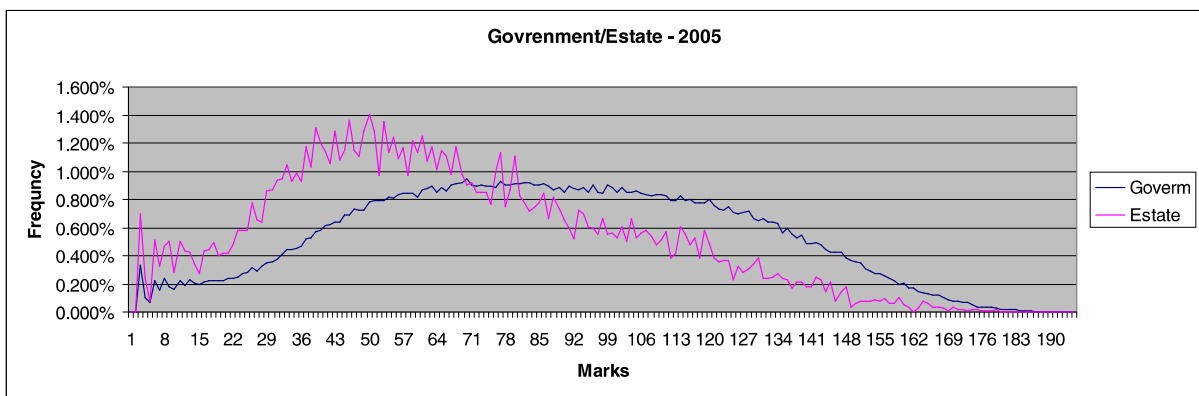


Table 3.25 shows disaggregated data in respect of the performance of students at the General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level) Examinations in 2001 and 2005. In both occasions, sharp differences in achievement are exhibited by students in different categories of schools. Students in urban schools, more congenial schools and 1 AB schools have achieved better results. Students in plantation sector schools have fared poorly when compared to students of other schools. Among

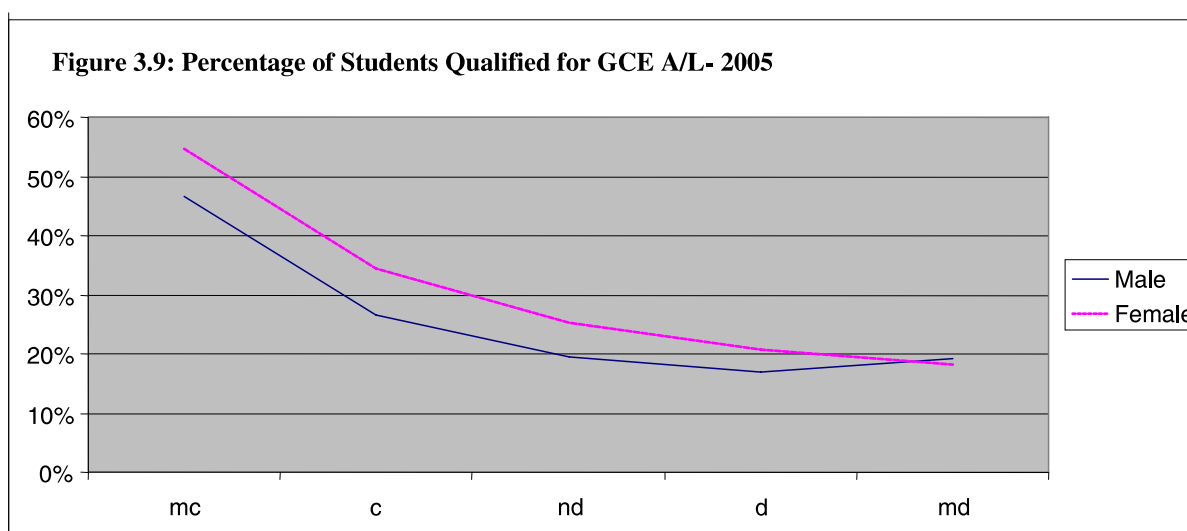
the ethnic groups Sinhala students have attained better achievement levels than Tamil and Muslim students. These results show a close similarity to the results of the grade 5 scholarship and placement examinations. They also have a correlation to the disparities in the provision of resources as shown by the achievement levels of students in schools with different difficulty levels from more congenial to very difficult.

**Table 3.25: GCE (O/L) Examination Pass Rates by Category of School and Gender, 2001 & 2005**

Category	School Type	2001		2005	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Location</b>	Urban schools	52.99	60.48	53.31	60.76
	Rural schools	24.91	31.82	27.20	33.67
<b>Difficulty Level</b>	More congenial	46.89	55.79	46.67	54.70
	Congenial	27.01	36.74	26.70	34.41
	Not difficult	19.42	26.53	19.40	25.37
	Difficult	17.84	23.07	12.84	20.69
	Most difficult	19.14	21.06	19.27	18.17
<b>Type of School</b>	1 AB schools	55.23	63.63	54.07	61.78
	1 C schools	23.64	33.52	22.78	30.49
	Type 2 schools	17.64	25.34	16.62	22.44
<b>Sector</b>	Plantation schools	11.51	8.37	16.84	14.80
	Other schools	31.94	39.06	34.36	41.45
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Sinhala schools	32.66	40.40	34.44	42.18
	Tamil schools	26.42	26.51	32.05	30.44
	Muslim schools	26.21	34.15	29.37	39.59

Source: DoE

It is noteworthy that the performance of females at the examinations is slightly better than that of males.



Sri Lanka has exhibited a unique performance in the education system. At intake level, the female and male participation is 48% and 52% respectively which is more or less equal to the female and male proportion in the population. However, when the student population reaches grade 10, the female and male proportion is reversed as 52% females and 48% males. This phenomenon is the result

of higher dropping out among male students. The performance of females surpasses that of males at central examinations as evidenced by Figures 3.8, and 3.9. In the GCE A/L classes too, female enrolment is higher in all streams except Science. This is because few girls still opt to take up engineering. However, more girls than boys study Bio Science subjects.

### 3.5 Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 3.5.1 Conclusions

The intentions of the government, which are in league with the internationally accepted principles on the right to education of the child are appreciable and they are reflected in the national policy and objectives on education. However, weaknesses, shortcomings, gaps and lapses are evident in translating these policies and objectives into actions and strategies. For example, although education has been made compulsory by law, weaknesses surface in the enforcement of the regulations. Action cannot be taken against a parent or a guardian for not complying with the law. Attendance committees have been established at various levels, yet they are non-functional.

The government funds have been allocated - although not sufficiently. Free instruction, free text books, free uniforms, free mid-day meal and subsidised transport are provided to the school going children. In addition, bursaries are awarded to at least some needy children. In spite of all these steps Sri Lanka has still not achieved UBE. Although the non-formal education branch of the MoE is making a valiant effort to cope up with the problems of non-participation and dropping out, the priority given to such activities is not sufficient. Though plans and strategies are prepared to get the non-school-going children into the school system no concrete action is taken. A head count of non-participants has still not been undertaken to identify their locations. Plans have been made several times over to establish a fund to provide financial assistance to poor children who are out of school but it has not materialised so far.

Above all there are serious disparities in the provision of resources to schools. There is no strict policy or procedure to ensure that every school receives an adequate quota of teachers. There are excess teachers in urban popular schools while the rural and remote schools are starved of staff. Some strict policy need to be implemented to solve this problem.

The provision of infrastructure facilities and furniture is not equitably executed. There are shortages in some schools while there are surpluses in some. These shortcomings have seriously affected the quality of education and achievement levels of students in less fortunate schools. Therefore, the authorities need to become concerned with these serious gaps and take urgent action to address the situation.

#### Major challenges

- Extreme poverty of parents of excluded children. Children are employed to supplement the family income. The opportunity cost for education is very high in these families
- Failure of the education system to provide social mobility in disadvantaged pockets
- Dominance of anti social elements that offer more attraction to children and parents. Majority of schools in these vulnerable pockets is not attractive and the community does not perceive them to be of any use
- Schools in the distant and disadvantaged areas are understaffed
- Parents in above locations, who could afford it, send their children to urban schools and rural schools have become very small. No attempts have been made to carry out probing studies in the catchments areas of these schools that cater to the children of marginalised population.
- Upgrading of classrooms and provision of toilets and safe drinking water has not been adequately implemented.
- Teachers have not been appropriately trained to make them competent in adopting the curriculum to the local needs in order that learning by children in schools is perceived to be relevant by the community.
- Teaching learning methods adopted in those schools are mostly traditional and outdated.
- Supervision and support from the educational authorities is very minimal in most places.

- Lack of an adequate number of teachers with training to identify the needs of disabled children and teach them.
- Special measures to encourage and enable the disabled children to participate in activities outside the classrooms are not adopted.
- Reliable information is not available to ascertain the number of disabled children who are out of schools in the country. Though it is reported that there is a significant number of children with disability out of schools in the Northern & Eastern provinces owing to the effects of war, these children have not been enrolled in schools.

### **3.5.2 Recommendations**

#### **I. Identifying and locating the un-served and underserved**

Education subsidy allocation is not sufficiently directed to the deserving children of lower income groups. One of the main reasons for the continued existence of underserved groups is the problem of identification of these groups in order to provide the specific services or subsidies. Hence, these programmes had been for all. The difficulty of locating the proportion of the needy children to award bursaries is a problem in reaching the universal status of compulsory education. Compilation of data bases of the underserved groups will have to be undertaken by the relevant institutions.

Enrolling the non-participants of school going age in the school system should be a priority.

For this, data on non-participants, their locations and the reasons for non-enrolment need to be collected. This may be accomplished through the Attendance Committees if they are properly activated.

Rehabilitation programmes in the conflict affected areas should be given high priority.

#### **II. Enforce regulations on the rights of underserved/disadvantaged children**

Formulate appropriate legal provisions to ensure the right to education of vulnerable

groups of children and formulate policy to promote inclusive education, especially in school admissions.

#### **III. Restructure the resource allocation mechanism**

Schools in disadvantaged locations where most are poor are also adversely affected by the inequitable distribution of resources. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that disadvantaged schools receive adequate resources. It is an urgent necessity to implement a policy of positive discrimination towards these disadvantaged schools to bring them up to the national standards until these inequalities are eradicated.

#### **IV. Doubling the number of scholarships and increasing the bursaries**

To include a reasonable proportion it is recommended that the threshold income level and the number of scholarships should be doubled. However, adequacy of the stipend is also questionable considering the rate of inflation in the country.

The ESDFP report (MoE, 2006) highlights the absence of a strategy in identification of children with special education needs in order to provide the right services. This needs to be addressed without delay.

Education subsidy allocation is not sufficiently directed to the deserving children of lower income groups. The difficulty of locating the proportion of the needy children to award bursaries is a problem in reaching the universal status of compulsory education. Hence it is necessary to adopt a more efficient system to identify children for award of bursaries.

#### **V. Set up a rational school network**

As a solution for minimising polarisation and closure of schools it is proposed to set up a rational school network through organisation of school families of 5-10 schools in each family. Each school family should provide schooling facilities for primary and secondary education to all pupils living within defined geographical areas.

## **VI. Effective deployment of teachers**

Effective teacher deployment continues to be a challenge in the system. Recommendations can be made to establish a teacher deployment and transfer scheme and enforce incentive scheme which is already in place to meet the need of disadvantaged schools.

It is proposed that funds for teachers' salaries be allocated to each school so that a teacher serving in one school cannot be paid out of an allocation to another school. This way, excess teachers will be forced to take up duties in a school where there are vacancies.

## **VII. Developing quality of teaching in small schools**

Developing small schools in disadvantaged locations as model primary schools has been identified as a necessity.

These schools could operate as fully or partially multigrade schools because within a multigrade setting, a single teacher can be responsible for a class formed of children from two or more grades. Multigrade schools, multigrade teachers and children who learn in multigrade settings operate at the margins of these systems and are largely invisible. Little (2001) highlights 'in contexts where the choice for students is between attending a multigrade school or not at all' based on a literature review from many countries including Sri Lanka. Vithanapathirana (2006) recommends policy recognition of multigrade teaching as an option based on tested evidence from a curriculum innovation through a collaborative action research in Sabaragamuwa province where the prevalence of multigrade schools are high. For multigrade teaching to be successful it is necessary to train the relevant teachers adequately.

## **VIII. Implementing remedial teaching interventions**

Remediation is the process of reviewing and reinforcing learning of learners that did not successfully master with the normal initiative. A national level institutionalized remedial teaching

intervention needs to be in place within the school system. Towards this initiative a research project was planned with the aim of diagnosing the learning difficulties at grade 4, and to work remedially with failing pupils in order to ensure further learning in the normal classroom setting. The research was a collaborative action research with faculties and departments of Education of two universities, all NCOEs, all Teacher Colleges, National Institute of Education (Vithanapathirana, 2007) towards the National Programme for Remedial Teaching.

The following steps need to be taken:

- A national level intervention for capacity building in Diagnostic Testing and Remedial Teaching.
- Developing a complete kit for Diagnostic testing
- Develop training packages/ a course module on Diagnostic testing and Remedial Teaching to be incorporated into the teacher education programmes
- Develop resource material for remedial teaching for Mother Tongue and Mathematics.

## **IX. Establish standards for development of teacher competency**

It is very necessary that either the MoE or the NIE develop a set of guidelines identifying the factors that should comprise the criteria for standards of teacher competency such as:

- Clear vision about their instructional objectives.
- Broad knowledge of the subjects they teach and the methodologies of teaching.
- Sound understanding of the students and their individual needs.

Schools will be able to improve the competency of the teachers and the principal using the standards mentioned above. This should be implemented within the framework of self-evaluations.

## **X. Upgrading of teacher education programmes**

The need assessment of teachers is most important before starting the upgrading of the training programmes. Training programmers, both pre-service and distance mode, and in-service training, need to be upgraded: this should involve revising curricula, updating teaching materials, consolidating training programs, and increasing the content relationship between the school curriculum and teacher education curriculum.

## **XI. Utilising teachers centers**

The MoE has established 100 teacher-training centres and teacher educators are being trained. These training centres need to be properly utilised and managed. These centres need to provide continuous training programmes for teachers from the schools of the locality, serve as resource centres for teachers, as well as be a meeting place for teachers with advisors of the area for sharing their experiences for the betterment of education of the area.

### **Upgrading Master Teachers (ISAs)**

Since Master Teachers (or In service Advisors as they are called now) play an important role in the teaching/learning process and development of teaching skills and competencies in teachers it is vital to give them a proper and high level training to equip them as trainers/guides. Hence a comprehensive and systematic training programme need to be implemented to upgrade the knowledge, skills and capabilities of Master Teachers.

### **Self-evaluation system of schools**

A system whereby schools evaluate themselves should be introduced. This should be aimed at having school principals and teachers assessing their performance vis a vis targets that they would have set for themselves and help them eliminate their weaknesses by themselves with assistance from parents and community. For continuing strengthening of this school self-evaluation system, a set of quality indicators needs to be developed by educational

authorities with assistance of schools as well as communities. It provides an opportunity to continue the partnership at all levels of the education system that is central to quality initiatives at school level.

### **Improve the regular school supervision from within as well as from outside** *School based supervision*

Beyond the system of school self evaluation mentioned above, every school needs an established internal scheme of supervision. The management committee (principal, deputy principal and sectional heads) should carry out this task. It should be impartial and fair. Teachers will also be encouraged to self-evaluate in order to improve their performances. Teachers and sectional heads need to meet weekly in subject groups to prepare their lesson plans for the following week. This should be an in-house exercise. The sectional heads should occasionally observe teachers in the classroom. Any weakness in the teaching learning process would then be discussed directly with the teacher. It should be a friendly encounter. A qualified teacher needs to be appointed as the sectional head if this scheme is to be successful.

### **Criteria for recruitment & training of School principals**

It's important that professionally and educationally qualified persons are appointed as school principals. Hence clearly defined criteria for recruitment of principals is very necessary. New recruits should be given a minimum of 6 months training before being deployed to schools. This training should be designed to improve academic as well as managerial capacity and upgrade knowledge about contemporary trends in education and recent curriculum-changes. Principals must be equipped to guide and evaluate teachers in order to provide a quality education to the children. Hence a continuous training programme to keep the principals fully equipped is a necessity in the education system.

### **Preparation and implementation of school development plans**

A properly designed school development plan can shed light on the shortcomings and problems that affect internal efficiency of the schools and also targets to steer the functions of the school along a development path. It will give the principal as the head of the institution a clear idea of the status of the school its problems and possible solutions and also show the steps needed to be taken for the development of the school.

If the plan is prepared with the active participation of all stakeholders such as students, parents and teachers it will give the principal ability to obtain the active participation and cooperation in the management of his functions. Therefore a concerted effort need to be taken to motivate schools to prepare development plans and monitor their implementation.

### **External supervision of schools**

At present different levels in the administrative structure of the education system are supposed to carry out supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the teaching learning process in schools. However the present supervision, monitoring activities seem to be unplanned irregular and ad-hoc often without any follow up action. Therefore it is recommended that emphasis should be placed on the following factors in carrying out supervision/monitoring/evaluation activities by different persons.

- School supervision should be planned and carried out regularly and effectively
- There should be closer coordination and communication among different groups who carry out supervision, monitoring work.
- A network needs to be created among different bodies/ institutions/ groups involved in this work, to share their experiences and decide upon consented actions.

- Supervision/monitoring programme should focus on the total teaching learning process. Supervision should highlight not only weaknesses but strengths, of the evaluated institutions and also possible solutions to overcome the weaknesses.
- A feed back program is essential after supervision/monitoring exercise.
- Criteria for quality assurance and standards should be developed to guide the supervision monitoring teams.

### **Restructuring the administrative structure**

The present administrative structure of the education system from the Ministry level down to divisional office level does not conform to accepted management norms. Hence there is duplication, wastage, and neglect of functions at all levels.

This situation adversely affect the efficiency of the system. Therefore restructuring a system into an efficient and cost effective machinery is an urgent need.

The following factors need attention in such an exercise:

- Assess the workload of each level/ institution and prepare the structure to fit the workload.
- Identify the functions of each unit/person and delegate responsibilities and authorities accordingly.
- Identify the skills/competencies needed to perform roles and functions of different positions and prepare a detailed human resource development plan to train and upgrade the management capacity of officers so that they will fit into the structure.
- Set up linkages and communication channels among different levelsof administration from bottom to so that lower levels also will contribute to national level decision making.
- Develop a comprehensive efficient and up-to-date education management information system which can serve all the administrative levels and satisfy the data need of all administrators.





## Chapter 4: Promoting Life Skills and Life Long Learning

### 4.1 Introduction

EFA Goal 3 defined life skills as “*essential learning tools and basic learning content required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities...to improve the quality of their lives...*” A decade after, the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action revisited the definition, expanding the life skills approach to include the acquisition of knowledge, values, attitudes and skills through the Four Pillars of Learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and with others, and learning to be. Goal 3 envisages the development of **basic skills** such as literacy and numeracy which enables a person to acquire the skill of learning to learn; **Psycho-social skills** that help to develop one’s personality to successfully face problems and challenges confronted in day to day living and **practical & technical skills** which equip a person to earn a living. Based on this definition, life skills are broken down by typology of skills into **basic skills, psycho-social skills and practical/contextual skills** for this assessment purpose. However, it is difficult to measure progress towards this EFA goal because of lack of nationally accepted definitions, concepts, clarity, models and frameworks at the national level.

### 4.2 Life Skills in Sri Lankan Context

The strategies adopted to reach the objectives of the Goal 3 are the designing of a curriculum appropriate for imparting **basic skills, psycho-social skills and technical and vocational skills (Lifelong skills)** in the schools and ensuring the delivery of that curriculum by competent teachers with the required quality inputs in order to maintain the standard of quality.

The school curriculum is designed by the National Institute of Education to achieve the National Goals identified by the National Education Commission in its report of 1992 and subsequently modified by the report of 2003. The NEC has also formulated a set of basic competencies to be integrated in the national curriculum, which lead to the realisation of the national goals.

Acquisition of skills in the learning process takes place through the total school curricula comprising the academic subjects as well as the co-curricular activities or the hidden curriculum. However, there are a few subjects which have been introduced into the curriculum especially to cater to three areas of skills that have been identified above.

#### 4.2.1 Basic Skills

Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are mainly imparted through language and mathematics. These subjects are compulsory for all children up to the 11 years of school education. At the primary stage of education there is an integrated curriculum implemented through child centred activity based methodologies. Pupils are expected to learn by doing and there are many opportunities to develop their practical skills suited to the age group.

#### 4.2.2 Psychosocial Skills

Life skills have been defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as *the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life*. According to WHO life skills are set of psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills. Life skills-based education is integral to ensuring that every child and adolescent is able to reach to his or her full potential, and

contribute positively to the development of self, family, community and society. The following 10 generic skills are considered as core competencies to achieve these objectives:

1. Problem solving
2. Decision making
3. Critical Thinking
4. Creative Thinking
5. Effective Communication
6. Interpersonal relationships
7. Self Awareness
8. Empathy
9. Coping with Emotions
10. Coping with Stresses

Life Skills Based Education generally applied in various aspects of life such as in the context of health and social events like human relationships, learning about social influences on behaviour and learning about rights and responsibilities, as well as being thought in the context of health problems. It can be utilized in many content areas, issues topics and subjects such as in prevention of drug abuse, sexual violence, teenage pregnancy, STD, HIV/ AIDS, suicide etc. This can be extended further in to consumer education, environmental education, livelihood education and income generation. In short, it empowers young people to take positive actions to protect themselves and to promote health and positive relationships.

Usually life skills are exercised in combination, and hence, cannot be measured in isolation. National Education Commission Report (1997) has pointed out that developing a whole person who is physically, mentally and socially well balanced is one of the main objectives of education. But, many educationists are of the opinion that the prevailed education system has failed to provide the competencies needed to produce

such well balanced personalities. With a view to fulfilling this psycho social requirement, the NIE decided to introduce a new subject to the school curriculum. The National Policy Framework on General Education in Sri Lanka in 2003 has given directions for the development of life skills and lifelong learning opportunities but there are no clear policy statements on this.

In Sri Lanka the term life competencies is used instead of life skills because it is already being used to name technical/ vocational skills in the school system. With the introduction of psycho social skills into the school curriculum as life competencies, the teachers, In-Service Advisors (ISAs) as well as education administrators are confused on the term “competency” which is used to explain different educational outcomes.

#### **4.2.3 Technical and vocational skills**

The educational policymakers of Sri Lanka have recognised the need to provide a good general education including an orientation to the world of work which could fit the output from the school system to the work opportunities that are available. What is expected from the schools is not vocational training, but a good all-round education.

### **4.3 Life Skills at School**

#### **4.3.1 Primary level**

Under the 1998 reforms, it is expected that, in the primary school years, the child will acquire certain basic competencies. These are:

- Competencies in communication
- Competencies relating to the natural, social and artificial environment
- Competencies in ethics and religion

- Competencies relating to the use of leisure, enjoyment and recreation
- Competencies in learning: learning how to learn

Primary Education will consist of three key stages.

Key Stage 1	Grades 1 and 2
Key Stage 2	Grades 3 and 4
Key Stage 3	Grade 5

Three elements; guided play, activity, desk work will go into each of the stages. There will be a stage wise transition in the proportions of the three elements used in the teaching/ learning process.

At Key Stage 1, a greater part of the time will be spent on guided play learning through activities and components of activity and lesser amount of deskwork. At Key Stage 2 the three approaches will be given equal prominence, while at Key Stage 3, deskwork will dominate. Concepts relating to stabilisation of morals, inculcation of values, development of tolerance, appreciation of other social groups and cultures, and living in harmony will run as unifying threads through all three Key Stages.

Class-based assessment frameworks have been developed, and materials and training provided for assessment of competency levels, throughout the learning-teaching process. The main objective of this programme is to provide

basic and essential education for all children irrespective of their learning difficulties.

Provision has been made to train teachers to conduct teacher-made tests and achievement tests.

- Forty learning competencies in key stage one
- Fifty two learning competencies in key stage two; and
- Fifty five learning competencies in key stage three have been identified.

#### 4.3.2 Secondary level

National Education Commission Report (1997) has pointed out that developing a whole person who is physically, mentally and socially well balanced is one of the main objectives of education. Acquisition of skills in the learning process takes place through the total school curricula comprising the academic subjects as well as the co-curricular activities or the hidden curriculum. There are a few subjects which have been introduced into the curriculum especially to cater to three areas of skills that have been identified above.

Life Competencies, and Health & Physical Education at junior secondary level are the two subjects which directly take care of the psycho-social skills. These two subjects are compulsorily taught to pupils in grades six to nine and Health and physical education is continued for two more years in grades 10 and 11 as an optional subject for GCE O/L examination.

**Table 4.1: Subjects related to life skills at secondary level**

Subject	Basic skills	Psycho-social skills	Technical and Vocational Skills	Junior Secondary level	Senior Secondary level	Comments
Religion		✓		C	C	
First National Language and Literature	✓	✓		C	C	Sinhala or Tamil
Mathematics	✓			C	C	
English	✓			C	C	
Science	✓			C	C	
History	✓			C	C	
Geography	✓			C	G1	
Life Competences and Civic Education	✓	✓	✓	C		
Aesthetic subject		✓		C	G2	One out of 13 choices
Practical and Technical skills		✓	✓	C		
Health and Physical Education		✓		C	G3	Not compulsory for senior secondary level
Second National Language	✓	✓		C	G1	Tamil or Sinhala Not compulsory for senior secondary level
Civic and Governance	✓	✓	✓		G1	Replaces Life Competences and Civic Education of junior level; not compulsory
Entrepreneurship			✓		G1	
Classical or Modern Language		✓			G1	
Business and Accounting			✓		G1	
Information and Communication Technology	✓		✓		G3	
Agro and food Technology	✓		✓		G3	
Fisheries and food Technology	✓		✓		G3	
Design and Technology	✓	✓	✓		G3	
Arts and Crafts		✓	✓		G3	
Home Economics	✓				G3	
Electronic typing and shorthand	✓		✓		G3	
Communication and media education	✓	✓	✓		G3	

Source: Circulars of the MoE

Secondary level Science and a practical subject have been made compulsory for all students. At the Junior Secondary level Practical and Technical skills has been made

compulsory. A broad range of practical skills are imparted under this subject covering five areas, namely:

- agriculture,
- food technology
- basic technology
- graphics
- business

It is expected that a student who successfully study this subjects will have a broad idea of the work opportunities available and the basic skills required to undergo further training in the field that one would wish to pursue in the future.

After the completion of this course the student is given the opportunity to select one technical subject from on array of subjects depending on one's aptitudes and interests. This subject is followed for a period of two years leading to the GCE O/L examination after which 50% of the students leave the school system either looking for work or further training in technical/vocational areas.

#### 4.3.3 Senior Secondary level

Considering the fact that only 15% of this number have places available in the local universities and proceed to pursue higher education and another 10% obtaining places at professional colleges such as teaching and nursing more than 75% have to look for other areas such as technical education. Therefore, the government has introduced technology subjects comprising

- Agro Based Technology
- Bio Technology
- Textile Technology
- Electronic Technology
- Mechanical Technology

The students could select up to three subjects from this list if they wish.

In 2004 the MoE changed the theme for life competency subject and it was integrated with the Civic subject. Availability of trained ISAs and teachers and teaching learning materials

like teacher guides, training modules and student reading materials are amongst other strengths in life skills education in the school system.

Life skills is the term used elsewhere in the world to explain psycho-social competencies but in Sri Lanka the term life competencies is used instead of life skills because it is already being used to name technical/vocational skills in the school system.

There should be clear-cut definitions and clarifications for the terms, basic competencies, psychosocial skills-(life competencies/life skills) and practical/functional/technical /manual skills used in the education system of Sri Lanka to solve this issue.

#### 4.3.4 Challenges at school level:

- No proper teacher training
- Reluctance on teacher's part to change
- Prejudice on, of students and parents, regarding physical work
- Lack of awareness of the principals
- Insufficient funds for quality inputs
- No proper coordination between NIE, Zonal and School level, which are responsible for designing, monitoring and implementation respectively.
- Deficiencies in staff and resources
- Non trained teachers forced to teach the subjects

#### 4.4 Poverty, Education and Unemployment

Poverty in Sri Lanka is an observable reality faced by most students leaving school after secondary education. In 2002, 21% of the rural population was classified as poor, compared with 6% of urban population.

**Table 4.2: Incomes, Education, and Unemployment by Province (Year 2002)**

Item	Province							
	Western	Southern	Sabaragamuwa	Central	Uva	North Western	North Central	Average
Percentage below poverty line	9.20%	23.60%	28.90%	20.80%	31.80%	22.30%	18.10%	19.20%
Average income (SLR)	4,187	2,598	2,036	2,623	2,528	2,717	2,437	3,056
Unemployment for GCE A/L qualified	11.30%	19.70%	21.00%	19.20%	20.70%	17.00%	24.00%	16.50%
Tertiary education enrolment rate	16.00%	10.00%	9.00%	8.00 %	7.00%	7.00%	6.00%	11.00%

Northern & Eastern provinces not included  
 Source: Department of Census and Statistics

The Table 4.2 summarises income, education, and employment indicators in seven provinces. There is a positive correlation between the average income and tertiary education enrolment rate and a negative correlation between the average income and the unemployment rate for the population with A/L qualifications. Since many of the non-poor can obtain postsecondary education at fee-paying private institutions and secure white-collar jobs afterwards, a large percentage of the unemployed population with A/L qualifications and those who cannot pursue further education at the postsecondary level are likely to belong to poorer households. The government programs are expected to enrol students from the poorer households, who would not otherwise be able to pursue postsecondary level education, and to equip them with income-earning skills upon program completion.

#### 4.5 Technical and Vocational Skill Development in the youth

Despite significant social achievements and having an educated and well trainable population, the unemployment rate among those educated to GCE O/L is 13% and to GCE A/L 17%, which are greater than the national

average of 8.5%. Most Sri Lankans (85%) live in rural areas. As of 2002, poverty was more prevalent in rural areas (25%) and in the estates (30%) than in urban areas (8%).

Over 300,000 GCE O/L and GCE A/L students annually are not able to continue their education because of limited places in colleges and universities. Grade-11 and -13 school leavers lack the skills to get jobs or be self-employed. Students who are unable to continue to grade 12 can directly apply for admission into technical education and vocational training (TEVT) programs, such as craft courses, where the entry requirement is GCE O/L pass. Those with GCE A/L passes in the required subjects can apply to programs leading to national diplomas or a degree in technological education. However, those who have GCE A/L, are less likely to acquire technical skills as their goal is to acquire traditional university education qualifications, while those with GCE O/L are more likely to go into trades and technical training.

From negative growth in 2001, Sri Lanka posted an annual average of 5.1% real economic growth rate in 2002 – 2004. The four largest economic sectors, by contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP), are trade and hotels, manufacturing, agriculture, and transport

and communications. Over the past 6 years, the share of agriculture has decreased while that of transport and communications has trended up. Trade and services has remained steady at 25.7% and manufacturing at 17.4%, and grew faster than the general economy in 2003–2004. About 1 million Sri Lankans, or 15% of the employed, are abroad, most of who are working as unskilled and semiskilled workers, particularly as housemaids. Sri Lanka receives significant income in the form of remittances from them - 7.5% of GDP in 2004.

As the share of agriculture shrinks, available jobs are declining and pressure is growing to create jobs in other domestic sectors, which require higher skills. However, labour market data and projections point to short supply of technicians and associate professionals.

Projections for 2006–2007 indicate a total shortfall of over 14,000 positions in manufacturing, construction, transport and communications, and other sectors. Sri Lanka is unable to fill job orders for mid-level and highly skilled (and higher-wage) worker categories, whose share of the job orders is increasing. In 2003 alone, of the job orders for 20,980 skilled positions, only 8,987 were filled.

In the short term, the government is exploring the possibility of expanding skilled and semi-skilled foreign employment while, over the medium term, according high priority to manufacturing-based growth with increased foreign investment. This strategy requires highly trained labour, including technicians and technologists, who are in short supply.

#### **4.5.1 Technical Education and Vocational Training System**

The postsecondary courses of the technical education and vocational training (TEVT) system encompass various forms and levels of

training, which generally start after completion of the senior secondary level of schooling (grade 11, age 16 years) and go up to the diploma level. The first tier of training programs consists of certificate courses, which are designed to produce semi-skilled to crafts-level workers. These courses range in duration from 6 months to 4 years. The next tier of courses consists of diploma programs, which currently cater to students who passed their GCE advanced level (A/L) examination with relatively good marks in mathematics, physics, and chemistry. The objective of these programs is to prepare the students to become versatile technicians capable of performing a broad spectrum of work between that of an engineer and a skilled worker. These programs vary in duration from 3 to 4 years.

Certificate programs are offered by major public providers under the purview of the Ministry of Vocational and Technical Training (MVTTC). These major public providers

- National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA),
- Vocational Training Authority (VTA),
- Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET), and
- Ceylon-German Technical Training Institute.

The National Youth Services Council (NYSC) and other ministries also offer craft-level and certificate courses. DTET is the lead agency for technical education programs. About 320 public TEVT institutions throughout the country are operated by these major public TEVT providers. A number of ministries are involved in TEVT, either as part of their mandated functions or as part of serving their respective sectors. The distribution of other public TEVT providers and operators is as follows: 379 statutory bodies, 209 government



institutions, and 21 special institutions. The National Certificate in Engineering (Craft Courses) is the main technical education program. The full-time program is 2 years long. The curriculum has 60–70% practical content and 30–40% theoretical content, with credits given for each subject every semester. Diploma programs are offered by at least four recognised public sector institutions:

- Technician Training Institute (TTI) under NAITA,
- Mattakkuliya Advanced Technical Institute with the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technical Education (SLIATE),
- Institute of Technology -Moratuwa University (ITUM), and
- Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL).

Each of these institutions has its own curriculum. Generally, the curriculum is about 60% practical

content and 40% theoretical. After completing the program, students are awarded a diploma such as a Higher National Diploma in Engineering (HNDE), a National Diploma of Technology (NDT), a National Diploma in Engineering Sciences (NDES), or a Diploma in Technology (DTech).

#### 4.5.2 International Involvement

There are a considerable number of International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs), Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and UN agencies operating in the country, only 128 of which are registered with TVEC. These organisations mainly support farming, micro-enterprise development, or basic craft skills. On occasion, these organisations ask public providers to recognise their training programs.

**Table 4.3: Education and Training System in Sri Lanka**

Age	Year of Schooling	General Education Institute	General Edu Levels	Vocational Training and Technical Education Courses							
22	17	University	Degree					NAITA (NDES) 4 yrs	OUSL (DTech/ BTech) 4 yrs	SLIATE (HNDE) 3 1/2 yrs	ITUM (NDT) 3 yrs
21	16										
20	15										
19	14										
18	13	Senior Secondary School	GCE A/L	VTA (6m – 2 yrs)	NAITA Apprentice Training (1-3 yrs)	DTET (1-2 yrs)	CGTTI (1-4yrs)				
17	12		GCE O/L	Craft Level courses							
16	11										
15	10	Junior Secondary School	Secondary Education								
14	9										
13	8										
12	7										
11	6	Primary School	Primary Education								
10	5										
9	4										
8	3										
7	2										
6	1										

Source: TVEC

### 4.5.3 A National Multi-Sectoral Technical and Vocational Education and Training Policy

The Government is reducing unemployment and responding to the changing labour market by combining short- and medium-term strategies. In the short term, the government is exploring the possibility of expanding local and foreign skilled and semiskilled employment while, over the medium term, according high priority to manufacturing-based growth with increased foreign investment. This strategy requires highly trained labour, including technicians and technologists, who are in short supply.

In this regard Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) has planned to develop a national TVET policy framework incorporating the recent reforms with the focus on following subject areas with the assistance of German Technical Cooperation, GTZ.

#### Major subject areas of the proposed TVET Policy

1. Existing legislations (acts) governing the public TVET institutions
2. Economic and financial aspects of the TVET sector
3. Partnership opportunities, career guidance and social marketing activities
4. Effectiveness and relevance of the current HR policies and staff development in the TVET sector
5. Training delivery management
6. Existing qualification framework and linkages among different educational (General & Higher) streams (Pathways).

#### Quality assurance Policy

The policy on quality assurance, with its fifteen processes, is that the TVEC shall ensure a high quality TVET sector in Sri Lanka,

responsive to the requirements of industry, learners and other stakeholders. The national vocational qualification system shall incorporate quality qualifications as accepted by industry.

### 4.5.4 Programmes implemented in the area of skill development

The Skills Development Project (SDP) (2000-2006) was designed to improve the quality and relevance of skills training by reorienting the vocational training system through the introduction of competency-based training to ensure a closer partnership between vocational training institutions and the private sector. SDP is increasing both the efficiency and the competence in the provision of skills training programs.

SDP has:

- (i) developed a policy framework for the institutionalisation of competency based training (CBT);
- (ii) established a national CBT Learning Resources Development Centre (LRDC) at the Ministry of Vocational and Technical Training (MVTT), Learning Resource Utilisation Centres (LRUC) and Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) Centres at TCs and other centres;
- (iii) upgraded VTC facilities;
- (iv) developed 20 new courses and converted 25 existing courses into CBT format;
- (v) introduced entrepreneurship and basic management skills courses;
- (vi) developed skills standards up to craftsmen level; and
- (vii) established the NVQ Framework

#### Competency Based Training (CBT)

##### Format

A Competency Based Training system ensures that training and skill assessments or recognition is based upon standards required by industry. The standards here are “*National Skill Standards*”.

### **National Vocational Qualifications Framework of Sri Lanka (NVQSL)**

National Vocational Qualifications Framework is the key element in unifying TVET. The national skill standards are prepared in consultation with the industry; National Quality Standards for Teaching and the assessment are using the competency based approach and national certification of learners & workers. The NVQSL is benchmarked with the systems of developed countries.

The main objectives of setting up of NVQ are:

1. To recognise vocational competencies locally and internationally
2. To match and cater vocational training and competencies with labour market demands
3. To recognise the certificates possessed through the NVQ system
4. To create an internationally competitive workforce in Sri Lanka

### **NVQ System and its components**

The NVQ System and its components are as follows:

1. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) Framework;
2. National Competency Standards (NCS);
3. Competency Based Training (CBT) system;
4. Compulsory Accreditation of Tertiary and Vocational Educational Programs;
5. Quality Management System(QMS);
6. National Competency Based Assessment System;
7. Labour Market Information System (LMIS) and Management Information System (MIS); and
8. Student Support Services System.

### **National Learning Resource Development Centre (LRDC), Distribution of Learning and Resource Utilisation Centres (LRUCs) and Career Guidance and Counselling Centre (CGCC)**

- National Learning Resource Development Centre, which was established under NITESL consists of three main divisions:
  - i. research & innovation
  - ii. development, production & dissemination; and
  - iii. training, monitoring & evaluation
- Services expected to be provided by LRUC include the following:

The main objective of LRUCs is to help improve the quality and standard of TVET at the district level through:

- (i) provisions of educational technology facilities and learning resources for trainers and trainees,
- (ii) dissemination of instructional materials produced or supplied by LRDC, and
- (iii) conducting training programs for trainers, trainees and clients on the use of modern training technologies and innovations to improve the quality of learning.

Altogether 50 LRUCs have been established under the project in 23 out of 25 districts covering all provinces (Refer Table in appendix).

- **Career Guidance and Counselling Centres (CGCCs)**

Career Guidance and Counselling Centres have been established to provide a range of services; career guidance, career counselling, job placement, referral system for further TV training, conduct programs, access to facilities, and provision of information materials.

Under the Project, 52 CGCCs have been established in 23 out of 25 districts covering all provinces.

CGCCs are also placing students for vocational and technical training and for jobs in industry on completion of their training programs. CGCCs are expected to send monthly progress reports about them. Almost all the Centres are satisfactorily functioning expect those few in North and Eastern provinces due to prevailing bad security situation.

#### **4.5.5 Management Information System for TVET Sector**

Management Information System (MIS) for the TVET Sector of Sri Lanka had been developed and strengthened under the Project to facilitate planning and decision-making process of the institutions. MIS Network covers 90 MIS nodes having the following institutional distribution; MVTT, TVEC, NITESL, 37 TCs of DTET, 27 VTCs of VTA, 13 VTCs of NAITA, and 10 centres of NYSC.

#### **Labour Market Information System (LMIS)**

LMIS, which was operating mostly on manual basis at TVEC, was strengthened under the Project with the objective of

- (i) advising on conduct of labour market surveys and analyzing labour market trends and
- (ii) developing a labour market monitoring system that includes human resource demand indicators and skill requirements of industry.

#### **4.5.6 IT for Rural Youth**

The main objectives of the establishment of training facilities in IT were to train GCE O/L and A/L qualified rural youth including women, in IT skills to reduce unemployment among educated youth, reduce poverty, and provide access to information systems and services in rural areas.

#### **4.5.7 Technical Education Development Project (2007 – 2011)**

TEVT at the technician and technologist levels is underdeveloped and cannot produce enough qualified skilled workers for either the domestic or foreign market. TEVT needs to expand access to training programs throughout the country while increasing the quality and market relevance of its programs; improving the qualifications and numbers of TEVT teaching-training personnel, particularly for technician and technologist programs; allocating financial resources to run the training programs and upgrading TEVT's social image.

The Technical Education Development Project (TEDP) supports the Government's strategy to close the gap between supply of and demand for technicians and technologists by

- (i) strengthening Colleges of Technology (CoTs) to offer technician education;
- (ii) strengthening the Ministry of Vocational and Technical Training (MVTT) and relevant institutions to support a market-responsive technical education and vocational training (TEVT) system; and
- (iii) establishing the University of Vocational Technology (Univotec), which will focus on technical and technological education.

Also the Project will help the Government to establish Univotec, which will address the shortage of technologists and qualified instructors for TEVT, and provide an alternative education and career pathway for students and TEVT sector personnel, leading to a degree.

#### **4.6 Financing Life Skills in Sri Lanka**

Although Life skills are recognised as an important part of education, there is no separate allocation from the MoE budget towards it. Therefore it is not possible to fix an amount to the annual spending. Though other ministries are also financing related projects, the lack of coordinated planning may lead to inefficient usage of funds.

## 4.7 Policy and System Indicators

### 4.7.1. Health and Nutrition indicators

Health and wellbeing of a child is directly influencing the educational outcome.

Malnutrition is the main health factor still affecting the educational outcome of most of the Sri Lankan children especially in rural sectors. While 21% of children suffer from under nutrition, 14% are suffering from Iron deficiency or Anaemia. 10% of school going children are overweight especially in the urban sector. It is scientifically proven that students suffering from Iron deficiency or anaemia perform weakly in mathematics. There are many communicable, non-communicable health conditions and disabilities which can affect the educational achievements of school children. The health promoting school programme is a multi-faceted programme introduced to address these issues. The MoE is implementing this programme with the collaboration of the MoH at national, provincial, district and divisional levels. The main objectives of the programme are to formulate health promotion policies, to create health promotion knowledge and skills among students, to create favourable environment within the school and to obtain students and community participation at all levels of implementation.

Provision of mid day meal, fresh milk, and many other nutrition programmes implemented with the community participation in selected schools in deprived areas have shown improvement in nutritional status and school attendance.

### National Survey among Adolescents (UNICEF 2004)

This survey is a sample survey covering adolescents between 10-19 years, jointly conducted by UNICEF and the Ministry of Health in 2004. This is the only recent study

covering these areas. No comparable study exists covering lower age groups. **The following indicators are mostly based on the findings of this survey.**

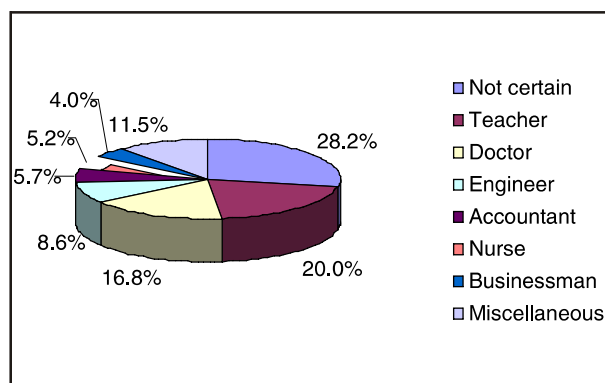
### Life Quality Indicators among Adolescents

- Adolescents (10-19 years) account for the 3.7 million (19.7%) of population.
- More than 91.4% complete primary education, 56.2% receive an education beyond secondary level.
- Adolescents depend on parents for a considerably longer period. For many, dependence extends beyond adolescence in to youth making the parent-adolescent relationship an important factor that influences the physical and mental well being of adolescents.
- Today's adolescents have more opportunities to become better informed through a wide variety of communication channels available to them as well as through improved educational opportunities. This leads to high levels of aspirations, different attitudes and value systems. Yet, very few have adequate resources necessary to fulfil these aspirations and to materialise their attitudes and values.
- Death rate from all causes among adolescents and youth (15 – 24 yrs) is 278.8/100000 population (1996).
  - Homicides and injuries purposely inflicted by others (114.4/100000) were the leading causes of death
  - other forms of violence (47.4/100000), suicides and other self inflicted injuries (42.5/100000), and accidents (19.1/100000).
- The high incidence of homicides, other purposely inflicted injuries, and suicides reflects poor levels of psycho social competence among adolescents and youths.

### Future Goals of adolescents

- About 28% of school-going adolescents were not certain of their future goals, further 36% were having aims to become traditionally popular professionals such as doctors, engineers, accountants, etc. Boys displayed more variety of choice compared to girls. Only about a quarter of respondents had considered their talents before they set their future goals<sup>3</sup>. The findings suggest that the stated ambitions are mostly governed by traditional societal norms that prevail in the country rather than decisions arrived through critical analysis by persons displaying self awareness. Lack of strong career guidance component in the school system is still a major gap in the development process<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 4.1: Future Goals of adolescents in Schools**



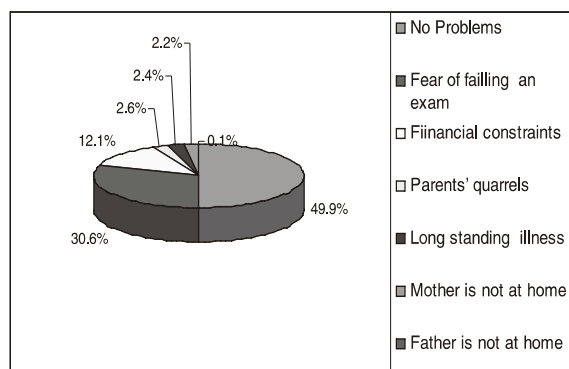
- Less than quarter (24%) chose the more realistic approach of selecting an alternative career path.
- 72% of out-of-school adolescents stated that theirs is to find an employment. 31% felt that they lacked vocational competencies for some kind of a job. 18% were unable to express a specific goal in life. Considering the current employment opportunities and the perceived lack of skills, it is likely that

there are considerable number of adolescents in society experiencing significant frustration and stress.

### Wellbeing of adolescents

- About 14% of in-school and 21% of out-of-school adolescents did not like any attribute they possessed. On the other hand about 63% of in-school and 70% of out-of-school adolescents had some attribute that they did not like about themselves. Those who felt pressurised due to parents' and teachers' persistence of improved academic performance rose from 29% among early adolescents to 46% among late adolescents and no gender difference was observed in this regard. About 40% to 60% of adolescents seemed to react positively to the academic pressure exerted on them by their parents and teachers while about one fifth demonstrated negative reactions.
- Almost half of in-school adolescents and 75% of out-of-school adolescents had some key worry that bothered them. Fear of failing exam was the most commonly cited worry among school going adolescents, reflecting the competitive academic environment prevailing in Sri Lanka. Financial constraints, parental disharmony and absence of mother at home were the other worries identified by this group. Among out-of-school adolescents financial problems was the key worry, fear of not been able to find a job, not been able to study well and parental disharmony were the other worries stated. Key worries seemed to increase with age but there were no gender differences. As expected the proportions citing key worries declined with improving socio-economic status. Only 60% of adolescents positively concluded that their life in general was happy.

**Figure 4.2: Main worries of In-school Adolescents**

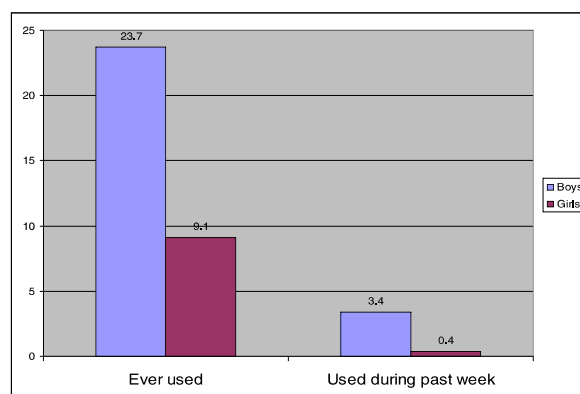


- Despite relatively unfavourable circumstances, many out-of-school adolescents said that they could confidently face problems that may occur in the future while 9% demonstrated poor coping skills.

**Use of tobacco, alcohol and other addictive substances**

- Prevalence of smoking to be 18% and 6%, respectively, among adolescent boys and girls who attend school. The prevalence increases rapidly from mid adolescence to late adolescence. Among boys, the ever use prevalence increased from 14% to 32% in the 14 – 16 year age group to in the 17 to 19 year age group.
- The ever smoking prevalence of out-of-school adolescents was 42% while the current smoking prevalence among them was 23%.
- Nearly a quarter (24%) of adolescent boys and 10% of adolescent girls have ever used alcohol. The respective proportions for current alcohol use were 6% and 1% respectively.

**Figure 4.3: Use of alcohol among adolescents in schools**



- The most common type of alcohol used was reported as beer. The prevalence of ever taking alcohol among out-of-school adolescents was 34% while the current prevalence of alcohol use was 19%.
- About 2% of in-school adolescents and 4% of out-of-school adolescents admitted trying some form of mood altering drug.

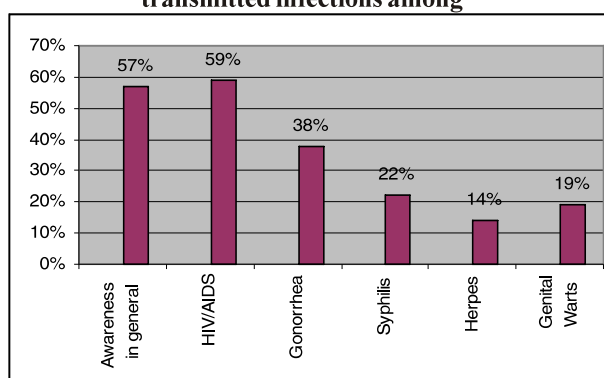
On the average, most adolescents started substance abuse behaviours such as smoking, use of alcohol and other abusive substances around 14 to 15 years of age. The most cited reason for initiation of smoking or use of alcohol was curiosity and the first smoke or drink was most frequently tried in the company of friends. It is seen that the influence of outsiders in initiation to smoking and use of alcohol has increased among the younger cohort (14-16 years) of adolescents, compared to older cohort (17 – 19 years). The attitudes towards smoking and alcohol use appear to be favourable among the majority. According to the Drug Abuse information hand book published by the National Dangerous Drug Control Board 2007 has shown that drug related arrests among 15- 29 age group has increased by 5 times during 2002-2006.

## Sexually transmitted Infections and HIV/AIDS

According to the UNAIDS global estimates Sri Lanka is still a low prevalent country for HIV. The current prevalence rate is less than 0.01%\*. But the national surveillance statistics shows slow but progressive increase in reported cases. The cumulative number of HIV Positives reported from 1983 up to September 2007 is 965. \*Majority of cases are reported from the age group between 20-39 and only about 150 HIV positives have been reported from the age group of 10-19. HIV AIDS prevention education was initiated in the education system in 1994 but still the knowledge on STD/HIV/AIDS among Sri Lankan adolescents was found to be poor. Only 57% of adolescents were aware of the existence of sexually transmitted diseases in general. The knowledge on transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS was relatively better compared to knowledge on other STDs. However, proportions of adolescent who had correctly answered the questions on HIV/AIDS never exceeded 50%. About 50% to 60% of adolescents demonstrated positive attitudes towards HIV/AIDS patients and attitudes improved with age.

The knowledge on HIV/AIDS and symptoms and signs of STDs was marginally higher among out-of school adolescents compared to those in schools reflecting a knowledge transfer through community channels. However, overall knowledge could not be considered satisfactory as the overall percentage of those with correct knowledge rarely exceeded 50%\*.

Figure 4:4 Knowledge on common sexually transmitted infections among



## Sexual Behaviour

A fair proportion of in-school adolescents appear to be sexually active. Among 14–19 years olds in school, 6% reported that they have experienced heterosexual intercourse while 10% reported having homosexual relations. As could be expected, there is a considerable gender variation in sexual experience. The prevalence of heterosexual experience was 14% among adolescent boys and that among girls was 2%. This raises the possibility of males being exposed to high risk sources such as commercial sex workers. Reports of sexual experience among out-of-school adolescents was the reverse of the pattern seen among the in-school population. Heterosexual relationships were commoner among this group (22%) while 9% reported homosexual experience. Of those who reported heterosexual experiences only 39% had used condoms. Although these percentages may appear rather small, they represent a sizable number in the population. Increasing trend in unprotected sexual relationships and poor knowledge on sexual and reproductive health has put young people at risk of having unwanted pregnancies, abortions and STIs and HIV infection.



**Sexual Abuse**

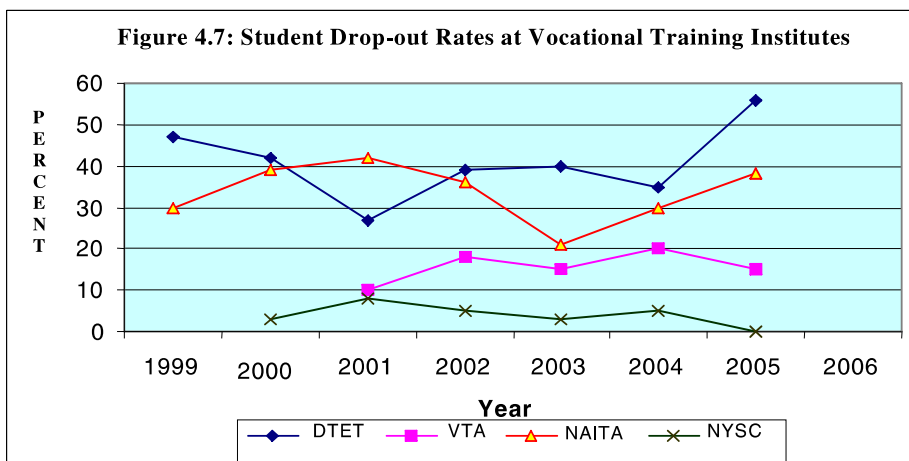
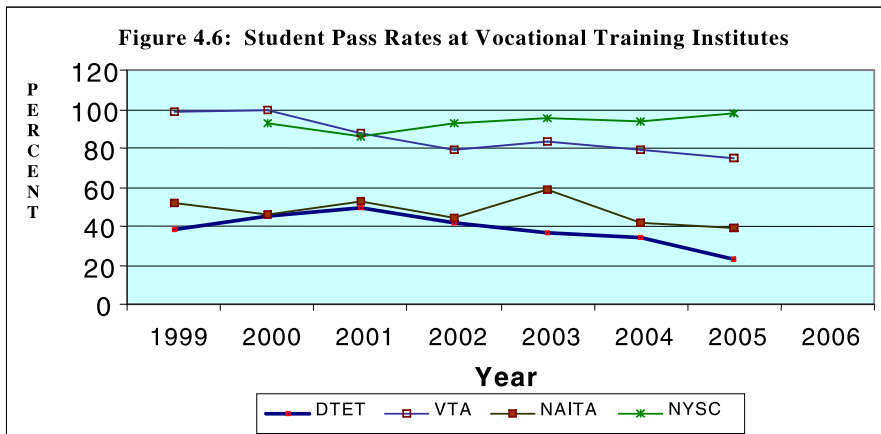
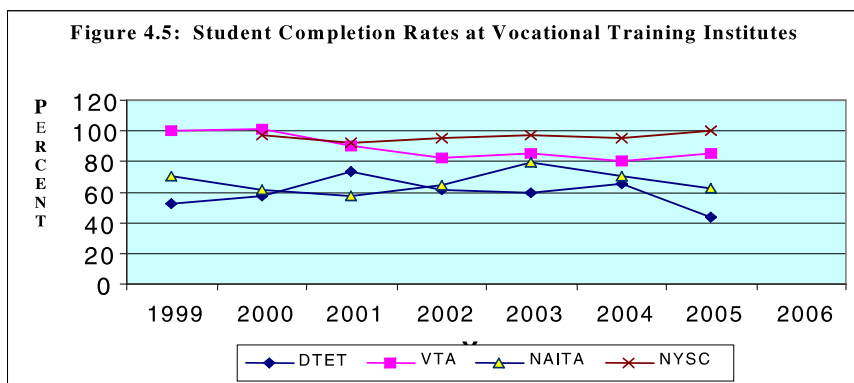
About 10% of early adolescents and 14% of mid and late adolescents in school admitted to have been sexually abused sometime in their lives. More boys (14%) than girls (8%) were abused during early adolescence while there was no gender difference seen in the proportions been abused during mid and late adolescence. Abuse seemed to be lowest in middle socio-economic quintiles. About 10%

of out-of-school adolescents reported being abused. In 92% of cases the perpetrator of abuse is a known person like a family member or a relative. Little more than quarter of early adolescents was aware of sexual abuse and awareness increased with age. The overall findings of the survey has highlighted the need of well planned evidence base psycho-social skills development intervention in the school system as well as for out of school youth.

**4.7.2 Technical and Vocational**

**Education Indicators**

**Internal efficiency indicators**



Source: TVEC

## 4.8 Gaps, inequalities and Recommendations

### 4.8.1 Implementation Gaps

- Poor understanding of the subject matter and misinterpretation between technical skills, psychosocial skills and basic educational competencies are the main weaknesses in the school system.
- The time allocated for this subject is not adequate and it has affected the effective teaching by using participatory methods. Most of teachers are still using traditional lecture methods for teaching purposes.
- Outcome or impact of Life Skills education is not tested in routine assessment process due to the lack of proper evaluation method or tools for this subject.
- Lack of proper coordination mechanism within the Ministry of Education or National Institute of Education, and between MoE, NIE, UN agencies and bilateral organisations has caused waste of resources barriers for development of the subject.
- Unavailability of a separate directorate and lack of systematic supervision and monitoring mechanism in place for this subject at all administrative levels are still observed as major gaps in the education system.
- There is no strong psycho-social competencies development program for out-of-school youth. National Youth Services Council and Plantation Human Development Trust are having Life skills development programmes with a limited coverage. Sri Lanka Red Cross Society and few NGOs are conducting Life competency development programmes in the conflict affected areas but the coverage is not adequate to reach all affected children and young people.

### 4.8.2 TVET System Gaps

- Postsecondary higher technical education is relatively underdeveloped. Only a limited number of mandated public providers and a few enterprising private technical institutions with foreign affiliations are engaged in higher technical skills development. This is one of the major problems in responding to labour market demands.
- In addition, there is a need to provide vertical mobility to the holders of Higher National Diplomas in Science and Technology in order for them to aspire to higher education and enhance their productivity, and to ensure their life-long employability and self-fulfilment. So far, only one institution of higher learning in the country has addressed this need, the Open University of Sri Lanka, which offers distance-learning programs. Developments of Psycho social competencies are not included in most of the vocational training programmes.
- The Government is the main financier and provider of TEVT in Sri Lanka. As the TEVT system has expanded, activities are being duplicated and the system is facing operational and financial constraints. These affect the efficiency, relevance, and quality of TEVT.
- There is a shortage of qualified teachers and conditions of facilities are poor. Most of the TEVT institutions are not motivated to improve or to broaden their financial base because of the lack of a facilitating policy environment. Public-private partnership in TEVT is yet to be fully realised and the private sector could play a greater role.
- There are a growing number of private providers of TEVT courses, but these mostly focus on information technology. They award an assortment of certificates and diplomas with no assurance of quality or national recognition. From consultations,

there appears to be tremendous variation in their training quality, from outstanding to very poor. This may compound the unemployment situation and discourage youth from pursuing TEVT programs. By law, the provision of TEVT by the private sector and by non-government organisations requires registration, accreditation and approval by the government through the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC). About 350 private TEVT institutions are registered with the TVEC. There are wide gaps in the enforcement of the present system, which need to be filled before consistent training quality becomes a reality.

- There are no professional associations such as private accrediting bodies and no peer or professional evaluation of institutions and programs. It is very difficult to determine the supply capacity of the private sector.
- The developments which have been initiated by the Skills Development Project need to be strengthened by establishing relevant committees to report to the ministry. Few committees have been already established in this regard with the participation of related institutes of the ministry, NGOs and private sector.

#### **4.8.3 Recommendations and Conclusion Psycho-social Competencies/skills Recommendations**

- Revisit and revise the terminology used for development of different competencies by the education institutions in Sri Lanka in order to develop clear definitions
- Develop policy guidelines, directions and strategies to strengthen and mainstream Life Competency in to other subjects.
- Develop an appropriate system for Life Competency education in the national education system including appointing of a

separate directorate at the MoE and in the provinces and streamline and strengthen the LC ISA network and develop coordination mechanism at all levels.

- Curricular materials should be revised using simple and clear language paying special attention to presentations of objectives, concepts, methodologies and instructions
- Develop and supply training modules and supplementary materials on LC to teachers and students
- Incorporate a suitable assessment scheme capable of monitoring the progress of pupils in developing the expected competencies
- Integrate Life Skills –LC into the basic and in-service teacher training programmes
- Allocate adequate funds for LC in-service training programmes
- Advocacy for teachers school principals and school administrators
- Strengthen the supervision and monitoring mechanisms at all administrative levels
- Integrate Life Competencies in the out of school youth development programmes
- Develop strategies for targeted interventions and to reach most at-risk youth and un-reached

#### **Technical and Vocational Skills Recommendations**

Revise general education curriculum to link other competencies and employability competencies in TVET sector. According to the proposed policies, TVET sector has selected following skills to be included in the training standards:

- ICT,
- Health & Safety,
- Problem solving & decision making
- Entrepreneurship,
- Quality management,
- Innovation and invention,
- Environment & sustainable development,
- Leadership,

- Interpersonal skills,
- Financial management etc.
- Include possible basic skill areas within school education system, which could be further strengthened in the TVET sector.
- Introduce career guidance programs jointly with school system in selected areas, which show high dropout rate.
- Introduce Career Interest Test to create awareness on the usefulness of it among school leavers, applicants to VT courses and the public through appropriate means such as print and electronic media.
- Strengthen research and development to accommodate innovations of emerging technologies along with developments in particular technology areas locally and internationally.
- Conduct a comprehensive impact evaluation of the new developments and provide recommendations to the Ministry, different committees functioning on specialised areas and relevant institutes for improvement of effectiveness and strengthening of sustainability of the new developments.

#### 4.9 Conclusion

Competencies relating to the area of life skills and lifelong learning as enshrined in goal three of the Dakar framework are imparted through the formal education system, consisting of the general education in schools and technical and vocational education for youth, and through non-formal education programmes, conducted by various governmental and Non-governmental agencies.

As for basic skills of literacy and numeracy, Sri Lanka has fared creditably due to its enlightened social development policies in providing free education irrespective of any differences. The development of psycho social skills has received its due emphasis only recently. A new subject life competency has been introduced to the curriculum with the last curricular revision. It is also incorporated through the subjects such as civic and health & physical education. There is also emphasis on peace and conflict resolution implemented through the academic curricular as well as the co-curricular activities. However, much has still to be done in this area to make the development of life competencies among the youth. Training of teachers in life competency education should receive greater attention. A concerted effort is needed to create awareness of the importance of developing Life Competencies in students among teachers, principals and education officials. One concern is that very little research has been done to study the impact of these initiatives. The opportunities are available in the TVET sector for the development of vocational/ technical skills are described in detail in this chapter. However, quality improvement yet remains an area of concern. Statistics relating to the programmes conducted by the private sector are not available. The need for coordination of programmes within the state sector as well as the private sector is an imperative. A mechanism to monitor and quality control the TVET training offered by private institutions is also an urgent need.



## Chapter 5: Improving Adult Literacy

### 5.1 Introduction

Literacy is accepted as an educational tool of crucial importance to life in a literate society and an indispensable instrument for access to further learning and training opportunities. The statement of the UNESCO that “A person is functionally illiterate who cannot engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the country’s development” (Lestage, 1981) underscores the importance of literacy for life. Literacy contributes economic prosperity, to good health, to cultural identity, civic participation and tolerance and to individuals’ ability to realise their potential (UNESCO, 2006).

Moreover, illiteracy is more likely to affect the underprivileged than the privileged: the poor, the female, ethnic, cultural or linguistic minorities and the disabled are particularly at risk. “Illiteracy is not merely an inability to read and write but a complete, socio-economic phenomenon rooted in poverty and deprivation and requiring a comprehensive approach” (Ryan, 1985). As Roberts (1995) points out “Given the value placed on literacy in the contemporary social world, the stigma attached to ‘illiteracy’ can be devastating. Illiteracy is treated as a stigma which strongly devaluates the person, an attitude which is revealed in such statements as “A person who can’t read may as well be blind because he doesn’t know half the world around him and has to ask others.” Literacy here serves mostly a face-saving function (Carragher, 1984). Even when illiteracy exists on a limited scale, in small pockets of economic or social deprivation, it cannot be disregarded as of minor consequence, for in

the life of the illiterate individual it extends beyond education: it affects his/her social status, economic possibilities and access to many forms of culture (Gunawardena, 1997).

The UN Millennium Development Goals (UNDP, 2003) include Achieve universal primary education as Goal 2. Literacy of 15-24 year olds has been identified as Indicator 8 under Target 3 under this goal and the ratio of women to men, 15-24 year olds is given as Indicator 10 under Goal 3. Yet the UN uses the Human Development Index as a summary measure of human development among its member countries. It measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development:

- Long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth,
- Knowledge as measured by adult literacy rate (with two-thirds weight) and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (with one-third weight) and
- A decent standard of living, as measured by GDP per capita.

The above description of the calculation of the HDI clearly indicates the relative emphasis placed by UN on adult literacy.

### EFA Goal

The basic learning needs spelt out in the Declaration of Education for All in 1990 as given in Article 1 are reproduced below. “*Every person, child, youth and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. These needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to*

*survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning”.*

Here literacy and numeracy are categorised as essential learning tools.

The EFA Goals were further developed in 2000, at the Dakar World Education Forum. They constitute a considerable strengthening and revision of the earlier EFA goals (developed in Jomtien, 1990). Goal 4 was specified as “Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults”. The EFA goals do not contradict the education-related MDGs, but considerably expanded on them. Dakar Framework for Action clearly explains the action needed to ensure improvement in the rate of literacy thus:

*“Adult and continuing education must be greatly expanded and diversified and integrated into the mainstream of national education and poverty reduction strategies. The vital role literacy plays in lifelong learning, sustainable livelihoods, good health, active citizenship and the improved quality of life for individuals, communities and societies must be more widely recognised. Literacy and continuing education are essential for women’s empowerment and gender equality. Closer linkages among formal, non-formal and non-formal approaches to learning must be fostered to respond to the diverse needs and circumstances of adults.*

*Sufficient resources, well-targeted literacy programs, better trained teachers, and the innovative use of technologies are essential in promoting these activities. The scaling up of practical, participatory learning methodologies developed by non-governmental organisations, which link*

*literacy with empowerment and local development, is especially important”.*  
(UNESCO, 2006)

## **5.2 Literacy in Sri Lankan Context**

### **5.2.1 National Action Plan/Education Reform Programme**

The Constitution of Sri Lanka has among its goals, “the complete eradication of illiteracy and assurance to all persons of the right to universal and equal access to education at all levels” (Article 27(2)h), and “to promote with special care the interests of children and youth so as to ensure their full development, physical, mental, religious, social and to protect them from exploitation and discrimination” (Article 23(13)). Literacy represents the core of the development spelled out in the above two articles. The enactment of Compulsory Education Regulations in 1997 to be implemented from January 1998 was measure identified to achieve the above goals. While compulsory education was conceptualised as a strategy to ensure universal education of all children aged between 5 and 14, it does not take cognisance of the full spectrum of the issue of literacy. On the one hand, Compulsory Education Regulations have not been implemented with the same level of understanding that prompted its enactment (Perera, 2003). Secondly mere enrolment in education does not guarantee learning achievement or even basic literacy. Literacy in Sri Lanka is defined as the ability to read and write in the first language and the procedure used to assess literacy is to ask the respondents whether they can read and write. Thus due to the lack of a standardised procedure being used to assess literacy as no actual literacy assessment is being carried out, the validity of these rates are open to question. From 1945, the medium of instruction at primary school level in Sri Lanka has been

mother tongue. From 1950, gradually and sequentially, switchover to the mother tongue was effected at secondary school level also and from 1960, even at university level, the medium of instruction is mother tongue. This means that every child, be he or she Sinhala, Tamil or Muslim has the opportunity to study in his or her own mother tongue. As a result, the majority children would either study in Sinhala or English, while the Tamil and Muslim, who both use Tamil as their mother tongue, study in Tamil or English. However, as the last Census, 2001 had not been conducted in seven districts all of which are in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, where a substantial percentage of the Tamil-speaking residents live, no comprehensive data on literacy by medium is available. While a substantial proportion of the population in the country would be literate in more than one language due to the language policy adopted by Sri Lanka which accepts English as the Second Language and which teaches a Third Language (Sinhala for Tamil students and Tamil for Sinhala students) there is no accurate estimate of the percentage which is declared literate in more than one language.

### **5.2.2 Description of the EFA Goal and Specific National Targets**

The Ministry of Education (1999), the EFA Assessment Country Report for 2000 has included “providing functional literacy programmes to meet the needs of all males and females who failed to receive a basic education” as one of the goals to be achieved under non-formal education. The goal does not specify a clear target nor does it take into account that reality that even after going through a period of basic education, certain proportion of children may not acquire literacy.

It is noteworthy that in the Three Year Action Plan for Education for All (2002-2004) the

fourth dimension of Adult Literacy which included two indicators (Adult Literacy and Gender parity in literacy) has been included in the fourth segment of Non-formal education. Under this segment, Improving the adult literacy programmes, is one of the four specific goals identified.

Thus while the Dakar Forum had a specific target of 50% improvement which for Sri Lanka could have been interpreted as 100% literacy (considering that already the achieved rate was 91%) Ministry had given a general expectation rather than a specific goal.

The Action Plan for 2004-2008, on the other hand, is more specific and detailed, keeping Goal 4 of the Dakar Forum in focus. The objective for the period from 2004-2008 is to ensure that out of school youth in the compulsory education age group receive functional literacy. This objective, once again does not take care of the needs of illiterate adults who are above 18 even though in the long run, catering to out of school youth would ensure that they gain literacy.

Draft Action Plan has also been developed for the period from 2007-2010. It has identified four objectives related to literacy. These are

1. Development of Basic Literacy among youth and adults from 91% to 100% in 2010
2. Development of Functional Literacy among youth and adults
3. Development of Life Skills/ Practical Skills
4. Developing both practical and technical skills required to succeed in life, through the schools system

Under each of the above objectives specific objectives also have been identified. Thus under the first objective – development of basic literacy among youth and adults, specific communities lacking literacy such as urban slum community, fishing community, rural working class, urban working class, plantation



community, rural peasant community, prison community and gypsy community have been identified for future action. It may be necessary to include displaced, refugee and conflict-affected also into these target groups.

### 5.3 Strategies to Achieve Literacy

The MoE (1999), the EFA Assessment Country Report for 2000 spells out the actions to be taken with regard to Adult Literacy from 1999-2003. They are:

1. Establishment of 1000 reading centres for adults
2. Establishment of 1500 non-formal technical units in 1AB schools
3. Provision of equipment to 1500 non-formal education units located in 1AB schools
4. Provision of perishables for 1500 non-formal training units in 1AB schools
5. Establishment of 2500 training centres for non-school going children and adults.

The emphasis here appears to be skill development rather than literacy. The Report, however, also mentions that the Non-Formal Education officers employed at divisional level by the Ministry will organise literacy and skill development programmes through their Regional Learning Centres and that the literacy and skill development projects conducted by the Ministry of Social Services would be continued without disturbance.

This goal of Improving the adult literacy programmes identified under the Three Year Action Plan for Education for All (2002-2004) was to be achieved through the establishment of 300 Community Learning Centres for adults and by establishing 90 activity schools for children.

The Action Plan on Education for All (2004-2008) specify the action to achieve the objective (stated as current activities) are

1. reorganisation of literacy centres as functional literacy centres in appropriate locations,
2. develop special centres for street children, and improve the quality of the functional literacy programmes.

The MoE was identified as the implementing agency.

The Non-formal Education Branch of the MoE (2005) had identified five activities for implementation related to Improvement of Literacy. These were:

- initiating Literacy Classes,
- Initiation of Functional Activity Learning Centres,
- Initiating Community Learning Centres for street children,
- Strengthening of Community Learning Centres and
- Providing literacy skills for women who are going abroad for jobs

The Community Learning Centres are strictly speaking not imparting Literacy but these would have some impact on functional literacy due to the engagement of participants in these activities.

The National Institute of Education established an Open School in 2004. The Open School in Sri Lanka, perhaps in consideration of the fact that the national literacy rate and the participation rates in primary education are high does not focus that much on literacy programmes or even on the provision of basic education. It appears to focus more on supporting those students whose Learning Achievement is low to enable them to complete a secondary education. The first course of the Open School, the foundation course on Open Secondary Education was launched in March 2007. It was developed with the “aim of facilitating learners to awake with strong base for a successful start to carry on their secondary education. This foundation course will also support the target group to develop their

language abilities and will strengthen their self-confidence in progressing in their studies. Further the foundation course will be a strong orientation for moving learners towards self-directed learning culture”. Even though the specific focus on literacy is absent the course could contribute to the improvement of literacy skills especially in the context of the low levels of learning achievement among students enrolled in school.

Overall, the examination of these Action Plans from 2000 to 2004-2008 indicate that the importance of ensuring universal or near universal literacy (which is a realistic goal in view of the achievements made so far by the country) has not been adequately recognised. Firstly, a specific target percentage of literacy has not been identified as expected from the Dakar Framework. Secondly, the findings from research (Gunawardena et al, 1997) which question the validity of official statistics on literacy, indicating a clear difference between claimed and actual literacy, have not been considered. Moreover, the implicit assumption in planning to improve literacy with specific targets being out of school children, appears to be that participation in basic education enables students to become literate which has been refuted by recent studies on learning achievement (NEREC, 2003). Fourthly, literacy needs to be a goal for development of not only children and youth but even for adults in the context of interest in life-long education.

The Draft National Action Plan (2007-2010) on the other hand, appears to have paid attention to the concerns implicit in the above studies. It has thus considered for each of these target groups mentioned above, common issues, specific issues to be addressed, strategies, stakeholders to be involved and monitoring and evaluation. For example, for the urban slum community strategies include:

- i. a need survey – identify the gravity of the problems and specific needs/ problems of the community,
- ii. Establishment or support for development of drop-in centres with facilities for Non-formal Education for Adults,
- iii. Introduce an awareness program for adults (Drug Abuse/HIV AIDS/Sexual abuse),
- iv. Introduce vocational training /basic literacy programmes, life skills for adults as well as parents,
- v. Support mechanism & for education, health care,
- vi. Awareness programme for teachers and principals
- vii. Improve housing of slum areas and
- viii. Introduce Incentive scheme

For the development of functional literacy among youths and adults too, strategies such as

- i. Prepare suitable courses for learning programmes,
- ii. Strengthen Monitoring of delivery and
- iii. Identify needs provide human and material resources

have been identified. The groups listed under youth and adults here include those in livestock farming, agricultural communities, fishing, and construction labour, those seeking foreign employment, tourism industry, and both rural and urban poor.

It also envisages to make use of data available at drop-in centres, Ministries of Samurdhi, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Rural Development & Small Industries, and where databases do not exist, to initiate data collection and maintenance in the Ministries of Social Welfare, Plantations and Infrastructure Development, Education in the NFE Unit and Special Unit, Youth and Sports, Agrarian Services & Farming, Agriculture, Housing and

Construction, Labour Relations and Foreign Employment, Tourism, Mass Media, Health Care and Nutrition, Local Govt. and Enterprise Development as well as in the Provincial Councils.

It is clear that the current Draft National Action Plan has conceived of literacy as a broad over-arching repertoire of competencies rather than mere ability to read and write. Literacy has been perceived as tool for empowerment of people which they could use for their own, as well as the country's development. What is noteworthy is that the Draft Action Plan has taken into consideration the findings of studies conducted in the country and without being complacent about the literacy status as portrayed by the official data and has striven to plan keeping a target in view. Realisation of the need for collaboration with other ministries and organisations is also a healthy factor. Yet the Plan is ambitious and will need to succeed in obtaining funds and commitment from various stakeholders if it is to be implemented as envisaged.

Ministry of Education (1999), the EFA Assessment Country Report for 2000 had given the timeframe for establishing 300 Community Learning Centres for adults as from March 2002 to March 2004 and establishing 90 Activity Schools for children (10-18 years) from March 2002 to December 2004. An allocation of funds for these activities has also been stated in the Action Plan. Those targets, however, do not appear to have been met as even by 2005 (Non-Formal Education report, 2005) only 136 were functioning. There is no mention of Activity Schools for Children.

The Action Plan on Education for All (2004-2008) indicates that at present existing literacy centres are being reorganised as functional literacy centres in appropriate locations. In addition, special centres are being developed for street children. The implementing agency is the MoE.

The extent to which these activities are implemented is shown in the table (Table 5.1) presented below.

### 5.3.1 Implementation Programmes

**Table 5.1: Literacy Programmes conducted by NFE Branch – 2005**

Type of Centre	No. of Centres	Types of other centres	No. of programmes	No. of participants		
				Female	Male	Total
Basic Literacy			261	2535	1640	4175
Functional Literacy			179	2148	1648	3796
Community Learning Centres	136	CLCs for Street Children (6)	530	7063	2960	10023

*Source: Ministry of Education, Non-formal Education Branch (2005)*

Table 5.2 shows the number of Basic Literacy Programmes and the number of participants from 2000 to 2005.

**Table 5.2: No. of Basic Literacy Programmes and No. of Participants– 2000-2005**

Year	No. of Programmes									No. of participants		
	WP	CP	SP	NWP	NCP	NEP	UP	Sab.P	Total	Female	Male	Total
2000	197	58	135	59	16	27	71	211	774	8894	7139	16033
2001	234	54	156	97	44	32	77	231	902	9598	8697	18295
2002	202	64	198	35	33	128	260	46	966	10142	10160	20302
2003	140	44	106	30	19	36	15	41	431	3842	3744	7586
2004	140	65	108	36	04	70	45	27	495	6003	5100	11103
2005	139	58	95	04	09	64	42	29	440	4683	3288	7971

Source: Ministry of Education, Non-formal Education Branch (2005)

Table 5.2 indicates that the number of Literacy Programmes had increased from year 2000 to 2002 but had varied from thereon. There is a rapid decrease in 2003 to 431 which had risen to 495 the following year but again decreased to 440 in 2005. Year 2003 also records the lowest number of participants decreasing from

20302 in 2002 to 7586 in 2003. In 2005 the number stood as 7971. Except in 2002, more females seem to have participated in these programmes.

Table 5.3 shows the number of Basic Literacy Programmes and the number of participants in year 2005.

**Table 5.3: No. of Basic Literacy Programmes and No. of Participants – 2005**

Province	Basic Literacy Programmes (No.)	No. of Participants		
		Female	Male	Total
Western	123	833	292	1125
Central	8	74	129	203
Southern	70	921	689	1610
North Western	4	25	44	69
North Central	--	--	--	--
Uva	11	120	125	245
Sabaragamuwa	18	221	135	356
North East	27	341	226	567
Total	261	2535	1640	4175

Source: Ministry of Education, Non-formal Education Branch (2005)

The provincial breakdown of the Basic Literacy Centres showed that the highest number had been conducted in Western province (123 out of a total of 261) and that none had been conducted in the North-Central Province. The availability of these centres in Central (8), North-Western (4), Uva (11), Sabaragamuwa (18) and North-East (27) Provinces, especially in view of the fact that Uva, North-Western and Sabaragamuwa provinces have literacy rates which are lower than the national rate, were woefully inadequate.

When the number of participants was considered, in Basic Literacy Programmes the numbers varied from 1610 in Southern Province to 00 in North-central which had no programmes, to 69 in North-Western. More females seem to have participated in these programmes in four out of the seven provinces. Table 5.4 shows the number of Community Learning Centre Programmes and the number of participants for the year 2005.

**Table 5.4: No. of Community Learning Centre Programmes and No. of Participants–2005**

Province	No of Centres	CLCs for street children		Community Learning Centres		No. of Participants		
		No. of Programmes	Instructors	Programmes	Instructors	Female	Male	Total
Western	16	05	05	74	67	1064	519	1583
Central	16	03	03	62	66	821	316	1137
Southern	23	11	11	133	118	1502	851	2353
North Western	17	--	--	34	24	604	207	811
North Central	8	--	--	34	43	419	208	627
Uva	14	05	02	67	56	642	498	1140
Sabaragam.	28	05	05	100	102	1884	249	2133
North East	14	--	--	20	17	127	112	239
Total	136	26	26	530	493	7063	2960	10023

Source: Ministry of Education, Non-formal Education Branch (2005)

The Community Learning Centres were much more equitably distributed among the provinces. Here the highest number was in Southern Province (23 out of 136) with the lowest numbers being in North-East (14) and North-Central (8). Two of the Community learning centres for street children were located in Uva Province and North-Central, North-East and North-Western had no centres. All the other provinces had one each. In the Community Learning Centre Programmes the number of participants varied from 2353 in Southern Province to 239 in the conflict-affected North-East. The number of females was more in

all the provinces. While the lower number of CLCs and the participants from the North-East was probably due to the conflict situation, the low number of CLCs in the North-Central province is noteworthy. The number of instructors also differed widely with more instructors being available in the Southern and Sabaragamuwa provinces and the lowest numbers available in North-Western and North-East provinces. In 2005 179 Functional Literacy Programmes were reported as functioning in eight provinces (Table 5.5).

**Table 5.5: Functional Literacy Programmes and No. of Participants (2005)**

Province	Functional Literacy Programmes (No.)	No. of Participants		
		Female	Male	Total
Western	16	152	72	224
Central	50	700	250	950
Southern	25	381	194	575
North-Western	--	--	--	--
North-Central	9	130	59	189
Uva	53	504	832	1336
Sabaragamuwa	24	257	203	460
North-east	2	24	38	62
Total	179	2148	1648	3796

Source: Ministry of Education, Non-formal Education Branch (2005)

In the case of the above programmes, the number of participants ranged from 1336 in Uva Province to 00 in North-Western (no programmes were available) to 189 in North-Central. The largest number of participants were in Uva (53 out of 179) and Central 950) provinces. Here North-Western had no programmes and North-Central had nine and North-east only 2 programmes. Once again regional disparities in provision are striking. In all three types of activities, the worst-served appeared to be the North-Central, North-

Western and North-East provinces. This is a cause for concern as the literacy statistics for North-Central province (Polonnaruwa 88.7% and Anuradhapura 88.8%) and for North-Western (Puttalam – 90.3%) were lower than the national literacy rate. Literacy rates for districts in the conflict-affected North-eastern province are not available. The number of the students by sex, age, level of education and the type of education/training received in year 2007 through the Open School course is given below (Table 5.6).

**Table 5.6 Participation in the Open School**

Centre	Province	No. of Learners		Level of Education			Age		Vocational Training
		Female	Male	Non-schooling	Primary	Other	15≤	15>	
Negombo	WP	--	97	04	28	75	01	93	43
Matara	SP	42	28	02	02	66	--	96	70
Puttalam	NWP	21	15	-	01	34	--	36	41
Galle	SP	12	06	--	09	09	13	05	18
Ayagama	Sab.P	61	12	--	08	65	08	65	69
Hatton	CP	27	25	--	05	47	06	46	52
Kalpitiya	NWP	--	70	--	08	62	41	28	--
Matale	CP	--	60	--	14	46	10	50	--
Total		163	313	06	75	404	79	419	293

Source: National Institute of Education, 2007

The above table indicates that more males than females are enrolled in the Open School. The centres of the Open School are limited to only four provinces – Western, Central, Sabaragamuwa and North-Western provinces. The School also appears to be catering to participants who are older and who have been to school beyond primary level.

### 5.3.2 Progress in Achieving EFA Goal - Literacy

The non-identification of specific targets or performance indicators to be achieved in relation to literacy at the overall national level, regionally or gender-wise, prevents an accurate assessment of progress achieved being made. Therefore what can be reported is progress achieved without attempting to link it with the action plans. Nor had any attempt been made

to assess literacy using reliable assessment instruments and non-specification of levels of attainment creates problems in assessing progress.

Ministry of Education (1999), the EFA Assessment Country Report for 2000 points out that the literacy rate of 15-24 year olds had changed little in the past two decades (1980s and 1990s) and that it is not possible to find out whether this is due to a measurement error. It states that main issue is that at the end of 1990s 20-24 year population would remain illiterate. Here the age range is given as 20-24 and not 15-24. Of the 15-24 year olds, Sabaragamuwa and Central provinces had higher rates of illiteracy than the other provinces.

The Report showed the Literacy gender parity index to be 0.95 in 1999. In districts where overall literacy was low, such as Nuwara Eliya

and Monaragala districts, gender disparity also was shown as high. Micro-level studies of literacy (Gunawardena et al, 1995) had indicated that gender parity was low in

disadvantaged communities. The lowest was in urban slums (0.2) and the highest was in fishing and rural working class communities (0.9).

## 5.4 Policy and System Indicators

**Table 5.7 Literacy Rates of persons 10 years of age and above by District and Gender – 2001**

District	Total	Male	Female
Colombo	94.7	95.3	94.0
Gampaha	95.4	95.7	95.1
Kalutara	93.2	93.7	92.6
Kandy	90.5	92.4	88.7
Matale	88.3	90.2	86.4
Nuwara Eliya	82.6	87.6	77.7
Galle	92.3	93.2	91.5
Matara	90.3	91.9	88.9
Hambantota	88.9	90.9	87.0
Ampara	85.9	88.9	82.9
Kurunegala	92.7	93.9	91.5
Puttalam	90.7	91.2	90.3
Anuradhapura	90.5	92.1	88.8
Polonnaruwa	90.0	91.2	88.7
Badulla	85.2	88.9	81.7
Moneragala	86.0	88.1	83.8
Ratnapura	88.4	90.4	86.3
Kegalle	91.4	93.0	89.8
Sri Lanka	91.0	92.6	89.7

\* Seven districts in which the literacy data could not be completed are not included.

Source: Department of Census and Statistics, Census data – 2001

### 5.4.1 Implementation Gaps and Disparities or Variations (using disaggregated indicators to show disparities or variations)

All citizens aged above 18 years of age are defined as adults. The adult literacy rates for 1981, the census year before the Dakar Forum were 87.2 for the country and 91.1 for males and 83.2 for females (Table 5-7). By the most recent Census year (2001) the rates had improved to 91.1 for the country and 92.6 for males and 89.7 for females. Gender parity Index for Adult Literacy was 0.96. These statistics are limited by the fact that the census did not cover seven districts in the conflict-affected Northern and Eastern provinces.

The above statistics indicate that in all districts the rate of literacy is lower for females than for

males even though the disparity is low. The disparities are more pronounced district wise with the highest rate of 95.4 being in Gampaha in Western province and the rates for plantation districts of Nuwara Eliya (82.6) and Badulla (85.2), and districts with pockets of disadvantage where remote and inaccessible areas, impoverished agricultural communities and plantation labour are found such as Hambantota (88.9), Ampara (85.9), Moneragala (86.0) and Ratnapura (88.4) having lower rates of literacy.

Table 5.8 shows the literacy rate of 15-24 year olds by sector and province as estimated by the 2001 population census.

**Table 5.8: Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds by sector, province and gender - 2001**

Sector/Province/District	Total	Male	Female
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>95.6</b>	<b>95.1</b>	<b>96.0</b>
<b>Sector</b>			
Urban	95.5	94.9	96.0
Rural	96.3	95.7	96.9
Estate	85.5	87.0	84.0
<b>Province</b>			
Western	96.2	95.5	97.0
Central	94.9	95.0	94.8
Southern	96.0	95.5	94.8
North-western	93.4	95.2	96.5
North-Central	94.1	93.8	94.4
Uva	94.1	93.8	94.4
Sabaragamuwa	94.8	94.2	95.4
<b>District</b>			
Colombo	95.3	95.2	96.2
Gampaha	97.3	96.7	97.8
Kalutara	96.0	95.2	96.8
Kandy	96.4	96.4	96.5
Matale	95.1	94.3	96.0
Nuwara Eliya	91.8	92.7	91.0
Galle	96.2	95.7	96.7
Matara	95.4	94.9	96.0
Hambantota	96.6	95.9	97.3
Ampara	93.5	93.1	93.9
Kurunegala	96.7	96.1	97.3
Puttalam	94.2	93.5	94.9
Anuradhapura	96.1	95.4	96.7
Polonnaruwa	95.2	94.5	96.0
Badulla	93.9	93.8	94.0
Moneragala	94.5	93.8	95.2
Ratnapura	94.1	93.5	94.6
Kegalle	95.8	95.1	96.5

Source: Census of Population and Housing, 2001

\* Data not available the districts in the Northern and Eastern provinces other than Ampara.

The above table shows that while Sri Lanka has a very high rate of literacy among its youth (95.6) the female rate of literacy was higher than the male literacy rate in this age group. The Gender Parity Index for Youth Literacy was 1.009. Among the sectors, the estate sector had the lowest rate (85.5) while unlike in the other two sectors in this sector the female rate was lower (84.0) than the male rate (87.0).

Among the provinces the highest rate in total literacy as well as for females was in the Western province. It is interesting to note that in six out of the seven provinces for which data is available, the female rate is higher. The only province in which the female rate is lower

is the central province which has a substantial proportion of its population coming from the estate sector.

This trend of female dominance is evident in all the districts except Nuwara Eliya once again with a high percentage of estate population. This trend is possibly a reflection of more girls remaining in school than boys. The situation in the conflict-affected districts/provinces in the North-East could be quite different from the rest of the country.

The study conducted by Gunwardena et al, (1997) pointed out the discrepancy between claimed and actual rates of literacy and numeracy in disadvantaged communities (Table 5.9).



**Table 5.9: Literacy Rates: Claimed and by Test Performance**

Community Type	No. Claimed to be literate	%	No. actually literate	%	Discrepancy in rates	Total No. of respondents
Rural Peasant	372	92.5	241	60.0	32.5	402
Rural Working Class	245	80.3	197	64.5	15.8	305
Urban Slum	217	67.6	100	31.1	36.5	321
Urban Working Class	380	81.8	306	66.0	15.8	464
Fishing	420	92.0	324	71.0	21.0	457
Plantation	135	73.4	106	57.6	15.8	184
Total	1769	82.9	1274	59.7	23.2	2133

Source: Gunawardena, Chandra, W.A. de Silva and N.G. Kularatne (1997) "Interventions to Improve Literacy in Selected Deprived Communities in Sri Lanka". *Case Studies in Education Research and Policy*, Asian Development Bank Manila .

Table 5.10 shows the data related to numeracy.

**Table 5.10: Numeracy Rates: Claimed and by Test Performance**

Community Type	No. Claimed to be numerate	%	No. actually numerate	%	Discrepancy in rates	Total No. of respondents
Rural Peasant	382	95.0	269	66.9	28.1	402
Rural Working Class	250	81.9	192	62.9	19.0	305
Urban Slum	263	81.0	163	50.7	30.3	321
Urban Working Class	395	85.1	326	71.5	14.4	464
Fishing	416	91.0	327	70.2	20.8	457
Plantation	136	74.0	109	59.2	14.8	184
Total	1842	86.3	1386	64.9	21.4	2133

Source: Gunawardena, Chandra, W.A. de Silva and N.G. Kularatne (1997) "Interventions to Improve Literacy in Selected Deprived Communities in Sri Lanka". *Case Studies in Education Research and Policy*, Asian Development Bank Manila

Even though the above study was carried out in 1995, it is unlikely that a radical change in the situation would have occurred during the last ten years and the clear discrepancy between claimed and actual literacy and numeracy underscores the need for a reliable assessment.

Examples of how illiteracy is related to poverty and a probable tendency to indulge in crime exist in Sri Lanka. Thus analysis of poverty statistics and data on literacy indicates a probable relationship between these two variables (Table 5.11).

**Table 5.11: Poverty (Head Count Ratio) and Literacy Rate in Poorest DS Divisions (2002)**

Ranking by Poverty	District	DS Division	Poverty (Head Count Ratio)	Literacy Rate
1	Moneragala	Siyambalanduwa	51.80	83.3
2	Badulla	Rideemaliyadda	51.15	80.0
3	Badulla	Meegahakivula	46.50	72.7
4	Badulla	Kandaketiya	46.10	75.8
5	Puttalam	Kalpitiya	45.34	75.8
6	Puttalam	Mundel	41.08	86.6
7	Moneragala	Madulla	40.70	85.0
8	Puttalam	Vanathavilluwa	40.31	83.1
9	Ratnapura	Elapatha	40.10	86.5
10	Ratnapura	Weligopela	39.20	86.6
15	Kandy	Minipe	37.50	82.2
18	Kegalle	Aranayake	36.10	91.1
20	Hambantota	Sooriyawewa	34.80	88.9
21	Matale	Ambangangakorale	34.80	82.5
24	Nuwara Eliya	Hanguranketha	34.60	84.8
25	Anuradhapura	Padaviya	34.33	86.8
35	Galle	Neluwa	33.40	86.8
39	Kurunegala	Rideegama	32.70	89.0
45	Matara	Hakmana	32.00	91.5
49	Kalutara	Wallawita	31.40	92.0
100	Colombo	Hanwella	14.20	90.6
102	Gampaha	Mirigama	18.20	95.1
111	Polonnaruwa	Welikanda	24.72	86.6

\* Literacy figures for the other districts are not available

Source: Ministry of Education, Non-formal Education Branch (2005)

The above table gives statistics on poverty and literacy in the ten poorest DS Divisions and the poorest Divisions in different districts included in the poorest 119 DS Divisions in the country. While there is no direct correlation between the two variables, it is clear that on the whole poor divisions tend to have lower rates of literacy in relation to national literacy rate. In Kegalle, Matara, Kalutara, Colombo and Gampaha districts, the literacy rate is higher than 90 even though they are also amongst the poorest DS Divisions.

The above table indicates a clear relationship between poverty and illiteracy with the districts which have a poverty headcount ratio of more than 30 (Matale, Hambantota, Badulla and Moneragala) having a literacy rate below 90. Puttalam and Kegalle districts also have a poverty ratio higher than 30 but the literacy rate is just above 90%. Table 5.12 below presents data on poverty ranking, type of employment and the literacy rates in selected DSD divisions.

**Table 5.12: Poverty Ranking, Type of Employment and Literacy Rate in Poorest DS Divisions (2002)**

Ranking by Poverty	District	DS Division	Employment			Literacy Rate
			Govt.	Self-employed	Unpaid family worker	
1	Moneragala	Siyambalanduwa	9.9	54.6	24.1	83.3
2	Badulla	Rideemaliyadda	6.9	46.2	35.4	80.0
3	Badulla	Meegahakivula	8.2	42.7	24.0	72.7
4	Badulla	Kandaketiya	10.0	49.2	27.4	75.8
5	Puttalam	Kalpitiya	6.1	35.5	4.0	75.8
6	Puttalam	Mundel	5.9	27.8	4.0	86.6
7	Moneragala	Madulla	11.4	46.6	36.4	85.0
8	Puttalam	Vanathavilluwa	12.8	31.6	3.8	83.1
9	Ratnapura	Elapatha	8.4	23.2	3.1	86.5
10	Ratnapura	Weligopela	5.9	52.0	26.5	86.6
15	Kandy	Minipe	6.8	48.5	27.5	82.2
18	Kegalle	Aranayake	13.2	30.2	7.1	91.1
20	Hambantota	Sooriyawewa	5.1	53.7	22.0	88.9
21	Matale	Ambanganakorale	10.2	33.6	6.8	82.5
24	Nuwara Eliya	Hanguranketha	9.7	39.2	19.8	84.8
25	Anuradhapura	Padaviya	20.8	56.3	10.8	86.8
35	Galle	Neluwa	3.9	41.7	27.0	86.8
39	Kurunegala	Rideegama	11.5	35.4	10.0	89.0
45	Matara	Hakmana	16.7	34.9	9.4	91.5
49	Kalutara	Wallawita	13.0	32.6	11.2	92.0
100	Colombo	Hanwella	14.2	18.5	2.5	90.6
102	Gampaha	Mirigama	15.3	20.1	2.3	95.1
111	Polonnaruwa	Welikanda	21.7	47.9	20.0	86.6

Source: Census Department

The type of employment – whether the person is employed in a government sector job, is self-employed or is an unpaid family worker may be determined by various factors such as the location of a division including proximity to urban centres, nature of income-generation enterprises functioning or the interest of political authorities in providing employment for the residents. Yet literacy could be considered as a basic eligibility criterion for employment in the government sector.

The above table shows that in the nine divisions which rank lowest in literacy (with a literacy rate of below 85), except for three (Kandaketiya, Vanathavilluwa and Ambanganakorale) all the others have a percentage of less than 10 of their residents employed in the government sector. Table 5.13 shows the literacy rate of 15-24 year olds by sector and province as estimated by the 2001 population census.

**Table 5.13: Literacy Rate and Unemployment Rate of 15-24 year olds by Sector and Province - 2001**

Sector/Province/District	Male		Female	
	Literacy	Unemployment	Literacy	Unemployment
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>95.1</b>	23.8	<b>96.0</b>	34.3
<b>Sector</b>				
Urban	94.9	24.0	96.0	28.2
Rural	95.7	23.8	96.9	35.1
Estate	87.0	NA	84.0	NA
<b>District</b>				
Colombo	95.2	26.2	96.2	23.2
Gampaha	96.7	28.6	97.8	19.6
Kalutara	95.2	28.7	96.8	33.4
Kandy	96.4	29.9	96.5	48.8
Matale	94.3	22.7	96.0	30.5
Nuwara Eliya	92.7	12.8	91.0	20.5
Galle	95.7	33.0	96.7	41.8
Matara	94.9	26.4	96.0	49.1
Hambantota	95.9	27.7	97.3	60.7
Ampara	93.1	NA	93.9	NA
Kurunegala	96.1	20.2	97.3	38.8
Puttalam	93.5	16.9	94.9	35.6
Anuradhapura	95.4	13.9	96.7	45.3
Polonnaruwa	94.5	21.9	96.0	60.0
Badulla	93.8	14.7	94.0	24.8
Moneragala	93.8	11.5	95.2	25.8
Ratnapura	93.5	24.5	94.6	45.2
Kegalle	95.1	28.5	96.5	47.4

Source: Census of Population and Housing, 2001

\* Data not available the districts in the Northern and Eastern provinces other than Ampara.

The above table shows gender to be a determinant of unemployment with only two districts (Colombo and Gampaha) having lower rates of unemployment for females than for males. In both these districts, the rate of literacy too is higher for females. Yet in fourteen other districts which have higher rates

of female literacy have also higher rates of unemployment for females.

Statistics related to the education level of youthful offenders (offenders who are between the ages of 16 and 22 years) for the years 2001 to 2005 indicated a relationship between these two variables (Table 5.14).

**Table 5.14: Youthful Offenders by Level of Education**

Level of Education	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
No schooling	15	12	29	07	05
Grade 1-5	7	19	15	10	15
Passed Grade 5	08	16	23	06	14
Passed Grade 8	14	14	19	19	17
Passed GCE O/L	--	3	14	--	4
Passed GCE A/L	--	-	01	--	--
Total	44	64	101	42	55

Source: Department of Prisons (2006) Prison Statistics of Sri Lanka Silver Jubilee Vol. 25, Colombo

Table 5.15 presents the convicted prisoners' level of education for years 2001 -2005. In the first three years of the survey (2001-2003)

around 40 per cent of the convicted prisoners either had never been to school or had left without completing grade 5.

**Table 5.15: Convicted Prisoners by Level of Education**

Level of Education	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No schooling	1701	7.6	2083	8.3	2417	8.7	1764	5.5	4398	13.3
Grade 1-5	6742	30.3	7889	31.5	6089	22.0	5249	16.3	5449	16.5
Passed Grade 5	5346	24.0	6238	24.9	7511	27.1	5957	18.5	6160	18.6
Passed Grade 8	6222	28.0	6373	25.5	8183	29.6	9592	29.8	9808	29.7
Passed GCE O/L	1841	8.3	2066	8.3	2862	10.3	6337	19.7	6414	19.4
Passed GCE A/L	379	1.7	367	1.5	609	2.2	771	2.4	791	2.4
Graduate	8	0.03	7	0.03	10	0.04	12	0.04	14	0.04
Total	22239		25023		27681		32158		33034	

Source: Department of Prisons (2006) Prison Statistics of Sri Lanka Silver Jubilee Vol. 25, Colombo

The above table does not bring out a direct relationship between illiteracy and the proneness to engage in crime. However, there is a likelihood that those who drop out of school early, that is, without even passing Grade 5 are more likely to have a lower level of literacy. What is significant that as the level of education increases there is less

possibility of being convicted.

In fact analysis of examination data related to the two subjects of Sinhala Language and Tamil Language at GCE O/L Examination in year 2001 showed that percentage of students who obtain fail grades is quite considerable (Table 5.16).

**Table 5.16: Students receiving Fail grades at GCE (O/L) Examination (Selected Variables)**

Sector/Type of Community/District	% with failing grades (W)		Total Number Sat
	Male	Female	
<b>Sinhala Language</b>			
Most congenial schools	23.8	8.7	99735
Congenial schools	36.6	15.0	60851
Not difficult schools	41.4	19.9	31537
Difficult schools	43.9	24.0	14835
Most difficult schools	44.8	24.4	3874
<b>Sector</b>			
Urban	18.0	6.1	45799
Rural	36.7	15.6	165032
<b>Tamil Language</b>			
Most congenial schools	23.5	10.9	15336
Congenial schools	31.2	15.9	15337
No difficult schools	29.8	17.1	4506
Difficult schools	30.8	20.7	5997
Most difficult schools	22.8	26.2	4178
<b>Schools by sector</b>			
Government	27.3	13.2	40964
Estate	30.4	23.8	5013

Source: DMR/MoE

Table 5.16 indicates that boys tend to perform poorer at the GCE O/L Examination in their mother tongue, in general, except in Tamil Language in most difficult schools. In Sinhala Language, the percentage of boys failing in most difficult schools is 44.8, while in Tamil Language the corresponding percentage is 22.8 for boys and 26.2 for girls. There is also a discrepancy between urban and rural schools in Sinhala Language and between government and estate schools in Tamil Language. Here the argument is not that for literacy passing the first language at GCE O/L is necessary rather than to point out that there is a likelihood of these students who fail the subjects are likely to lack advanced literacy skills which are required for survival in today's knowledge economy. Especially in the Sri Lanka context, where the nation invested heavily in improving the level of education of its people for more than six decades, even before international conventions had been formulated,

it is necessary to target higher levels of achievement.

While remaining in school up to grade 4 or 5 is considered as tantamount to access in literacy, this too necessarily does not mean an acquisition of mastery in language or mathematical skills is shown by studies of learning achievement of children which indicate a disturbing picture. The study by the National Education Research and Evaluation Centre of the University of Colombo, (NEREC, 2003) has indicated high regional variations in average learning achievement in the primary education cycle. In the total sample of 16383 pupils, 8265 (50.4%) were boys and 8118 (49.6%) were girls. The proportion of grade 4 students attaining mastery of their first language, Sinhala or Tamil, varies from 54.5% in the Northern Province to 72.8% in the Western Province. Similarly, mastery of primary mathematics ranges from 50.3% in the Northern Province to

71.1% in the Western province, and mastery of English language competencies varies from 35.6% in the Northern and Eastern provinces to 54.3% in the Western province. The urban-rural differences in mean values in all three subjects were significant at the level of 95%. The percentage that could not reach mastery level in first language was 49.7 in urban schools and 66.8 in rural schools. In mathematics the respective percentages were 48.7 for urban schools and 65.2 in rural schools. In English Language, the percentage that could not achieve mastery was 78.4 in urban schools and 93.3 in rural schools. In four districts, the percentage of students reaching the level of mastery in the upper group of districts – Colombo, Gampaha, Matara and Kalutara (three of which are in Western province) is high. Trincomalee, Nuwara Eliya, Batticaloa, Mullativu and Kilinochchi are at the lowest level in average scores and percentages reaching mastery. In all three subjects, the maximum differences – 19.2, 20.3, and 20.1 in First language, Mathematics and English Language respectively, are between 1AB and Type 2 schools. When mastery levels were considered, in all three subjects girls had performed better.

The above study does not indicate whether the level of mastery expected at the end of grade four is on par with or above the level of literacy. Yet the fact that after four years of schooling, the students lack mastery in three key subjects of first language, mathematics and English brings into question the official national rates of literacy.

A second study, (NIE) on performance of grade 5 students (Suranimala and Fernando, 2003) was carried out in 394 schools throughout the country and it compared the findings with those of a study carried out in 1994. They conclude (i) that the mean

percentages of student performance for Sinhala medium (no Tamil medium sample was included in 1994) in Literacy (from 61.8 to 66.7 in 2003) and Numeracy (from 45.1 in 1994 to 54.6 in 2003) as well as percentages of students who have reached mastery level had improved. Mean scores in literacy progressively decline with school type with 1AB schools having the highest score (82.0) and type 3 a score of 59.3. There was a slight difference in performance between urban and rural sectors with urban 1AB schools having a score of 82.0 and rural 1AB schools having a score of 69.9 only. Rural type 3 schools had a score higher than that of urban type 3 schools (59.3 as against 66.2). In the Tamil medium also the urban score in literacy was 62.2 and the rural score 57.8. The percentage achieving mastery level in literacy varied from 64.5% in the North-western to 29.0 in Uva province. The North-Eastern Province, (in which some of the worst districts had not been included in the sample) a conflict affected region, had a percentage of 31.1. In numeracy, the percentages ranged from 15.9 in the North-Western province to 6.8 in Uva. Among districts, Kurunegala (in North-Western Province) had the highest mean score in literacy and Monaragala in Uva Province, the lowest mean score of 52.1. In numeracy, the highest scorer was Ratnapura (58.2) and the lowest of 40.7 in Mannar (in North-East Province).

A third study by the National Education Commission (NEC, 2006) assessed the language and mathematics skills of 4054 children in the Sinhala medium and 1097 children in the Tamil medium in grade 6. First language skills were assessed in the aspects of handwriting, usage of correct words, writing words correctly, spelling and essay writing. Cumulative assessment of language skills in first language is given below.

**Table 5.17: Achievement in First Language by Medium**

Level of achievement	Sinhala Medium		Tamil Medium	
	No.	%	No.	%
Good	51	01	08	0.7
Satisfactory	1607	40	130	11.9
Poor	1650	41	259	23.6
Very Poor	746	18	700	63.8

Source: National Education Commission, (2006) Survey of Language and Mathematics Competencies of Students in Grades 6 and 10. National Education Commission, Colombo

In Mathematics, skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division were assessed. Analysis of scores is depicted in Table 5.18. It indicates that the achievement in Mathematics is higher but the low percentages gaining good or satisfactory level of achievement in the first language as well as the disparity between the

two media is a cause for concern. The message clearly is that enrolment in school does not guarantee literacy or mastery of key skills in language (even in the mother tongue) or numeracy for all children. This situation undoubtedly has repercussions on the national rates of literacy.

**Table 5.18: Satisfactory Achievement in Mathematical Skills by Medium (%)**

Medium	Addition	Subtraction	Multiplication	Division
Sinhala	84	63.8	48.8	47.5
Tamil	81	56.5	41.8	39.0

Source: National Education Commission, (2006) Survey of Language and Mathematics Competencies of Students in Grades 6 and 10. National Education Commission, Colombo

## 5.5 Successes and Remaining Gaps in Implementation of EFA Goal

### 5.5.1 Successes in Implementation of EFA Goal

Sri Lanka indicates a moderate level of success in implementation of its literacy programmes. With regard to the conduct of Literacy Programmes the Non-Formal Education Branch states that the level of attainment of the participants of these programmes (See Table 5.3) is assessed by a committee consisting of the Divisional/Zonal Directors of Education, the

Non-Formal Education Officers and the Literacy Programme instructor. Those students who attain the expected level of literacy are enrolled in formal school to the relevant grade. The number of children who were enrolled in formal school after studying in literacy classes by province is given in Table 5.19 below.



**Table 5.19: No. of Children Admitted to Formal Schools**

Province	2003		2004		2005	
	No. of programmes	No. of children	No. of programmes	No. of children	No. of programmes	No. of children
Western	140	520	140	292	139	725
Central	44	428	65	257	58	1200
Southern	106	581	108	333	95	129
North-Western	30	136	36	196	04	184
North-Central	19	80	04	40	09	06
Uva	15	207	45	284	42	421
Sabaragamuwa	41	548	27	368	29	124
North-East	36	--	70	1230	64	1757
Total	431	2500	495	3000	440	4546

Source: Ministry of Education, Non-formal Education Branch (2007) Personal communication

It is difficult to identify trends and relationships from the above table. The number of students who had been admitted to formal school does not seem to depend on the number of literacy classes. Thus the total number admitted to school had increased over the three-year period even though the number of classes had varied. Similarly, in Western, Central and Southern provinces, while the number of literacy classes had either remained the same or increased from 2003 to 2004 but the number of students admitted to school had declined. In 2005 in the Western, Central, Uva and North-east provinces, the number of literacy classes decreased but more students had been enrolled in school. Especially the case of North-central and Sabaragamuwa provinces where the number of students admitted to formal school had decreased substantially from 80 to 06 in 2003 to 124 in 2005 in the former and from 548 in 2003 to 124 in the latter causes concern. At the same time, it is necessary to bear in mind that attendance at a literacy class would not guarantee a smooth transition to formal school. The majority of these participants would either be those who had never enrolled or dropped out of school early. Previous studies have shown that the factors related to reluctance to attend school, originate mostly from the home – poverty, need to help with work, absence of

parents and lack of interest of parents. At the same time, peer attitudes, perceived discrimination by the teacher and lack of academic competency also appear to be pushing children out of school. It is also interesting to note that two children had stated ‘there are no jobs for educated people’ implying a disillusionment with education as a channel of mobility (Jayaweera and Gunawardena, 2004). It is essential that specific programmes such as those on literacy which have a specific objective – increasing the level of literacy among the participants be regularly monitored to track progress.

The Non-Formal Education report (2005) indicates that out of the 111 Community learning centres assessed, 90 had reported progress. Of the 9116 who participated in the centre activities, 5296 (58.1%) had gained employment with 3893 (42.7%) being self-employed. The percentage of the number who gained employment out of those who participated in the programmes by province was as shown in the following table (Table 5.20). It is relevant to note that while a very small number of participants (91) had participated in these programmes (that had been assessed) from the North-East province the percentage gaining employment (35.2%) was also the lowest in that province.

Table 5.20: % gaining employment after participating in CLC programmes &amp; Literacy - 2005

Province	District	No. participating in CLC programmes	% Gaining Employment	% of Literacy - 2001		
				Male	Female	Total
Western	Colombo	1292	62.2	95.3	94.0	91.0
	Gampaha			95.7	95.1	95.4
	Kalutara			93.7	92.6	93.2
Central	Kandy	2460	55.7	92.4	88.7	90.5
	Matale			90.2	86.4	88.3
	Nuwara Eliya			87.6	77.7	82.6
Southern	Galle	1614	50.1	93.2	91.5	92.3
	Matara			91.9	88.9	90.3
	Hambantota			90.9	87.0	88.9
North-Western	Kurunegala	770	60.1	93.9	91.5	92.7
	Puttalam			91.2	90.3	90.7
North-Central	Anuradhapura	667	55.9	92.1	88.8	90.5
	Polonnaruwa			91.2	88.7	90.0
Uva Province	Badulla	1114	68.7	88.9	81.7	85.2
	Moneragala			88.1	83.8	86.0
Sabaragamuwa	Ratnapura	1108	61.4	90.4	86.3	88.4
	Kegalle			93.0	89.8	91.4
North-East*	Ampara	91	35.2	88.9	82.9	85.9
Sri Lanka		9116	58.1	92.6	89.7	91.0

Source: Ministry of Education, Non-formal Education Branch (2005) & Dept of Census & Statistics Census -2001

### 5.5.2 Remaining Challenges in Implementation of Literacy

Measurement of literacy is perhaps the foremost challenge faced by a nation intending to develop its human resources optimally to ensure both individual and social development. Proxy indicators such as enrolment in formal schooling or completion of certain grade at school are no longer sufficient to estimate acquisition of literacy. While the procedure used in Sri Lanka used at present, asking the respondents whether they can read and write is totally acceptable for estimating literacy, it is necessary to understand that a literacy survey needs to test “not just whether someone can understand and transcribe letters and words but whether they are able to interpret and use written materials in situations they may

encounter in their real lives (UNESCO, 2006).

It is also necessary distinguish between low-literacy adults who can only perform basic tasks and those unable to read or write at all. Thus it is necessary to differentiate between literacy in the domains of prose literacy, document literacy, numeracy and component skills consisting of reading, writing, and numeracy skills as advocated by UNESCO.

The ultimate goal of improving literacy is not only to ensure that all people including young adults become literate but also that they have opportunity to reach higher levels of proficiency in literacy to improve the quality of their life. Thus the objective should be not only to estimate the percentage of population (adults and young adults) who gain literacy but to classify the levels of literacy that they have

mastered so that continuing improvement can be supported.

Assessment of literacy should also taken into consideration the fact that even literate persons can relapse into illiteracy if the skills gained by them are not used. Thus disaggregation of data by age levels and other variables such as employment and residence may be necessary. It is especially important to take cognizance of the trends, disparities in literacy rates by district and even by DS Divisions, by community type, gender and age when literacy classes that have emerged from existing studies, when Functional Literacy Centres and Community Learning Centres are established and reorganised. There has to be a logical order in organising these classes as the areas of need has to be identified in order to satisfy the need and to improve the levels of literacy.

Thus deciding upon the provision of literacy classes needs to be made available not only to those aged between 15-24 years but also to those aged above 24. While the youth are a valuable resource that needs to be developed optimally, in the Knowledge Society that we live in it is not possible to leave out the older people as not having a right to opportunities for enhancing their capabilities.

A further factor that needs to be taken into consideration is the level of learning achievement of children who continue to study in school.

The above analysis clearly presents a justification for a standard literacy assessment to be carried out in the country. Literacy Assessment through Household Based Literacy Module which can be incorporated in the various household surveys is relevant here. This will provide useful information about households by asking information on the literacy environment and personal behaviour on reading and writing in daily life in addition to educational background.

## **5.6 Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **5.6.1 Conclusions**

1. Review of the policies, legislation, plans and actions that have targeted the achievement of literacy in Sri Lanka, undertaken above, clearly indicate that progress made in literacy and formal education in the space of six decades, and especially in relation to the other countries in South Asia should not make us complacent. The policymakers as well as practitioners in education should identify universal literacy as a realistic goal on which it is not possible to make any compromises.
2. It is also necessary to take cognizance of the fact that in the absence of any accurate measurement of literacy being undertaken, the literacy rates about which we are proud of, can actually be an exaggeration.
3. It is clear that illiteracy exists in pockets of disadvantage such as urban slums, estate and fishing communities, in remote rural and conflict affected areas where the refugee and internally displaced populations are concentrated.
4. Even though efforts are made to improve literacy in identified locations and communities, it is possible that the success of these efforts are affected by such factors as reluctance of adults to participate in literacy classes due to shyness, unwillingness to forego participation in income-generation activities or household work, non-availability of trained and committed facilitators who can deliver literacy effectively and lack of resources that can motivate adults to participate in these programmes.
5. While success achieved in improving literacy can be mainly attributed to the democratisation of formal education to reach the unreached, declining standards in

learning achievement in formal school caution us not rely only on formal education as the means of gaining universal literacy.

6. Similarly, in an age of lifelong learning and continuing education literacy of adults cannot be considered as of lower priority.

### 5.6.2 Recommendations

1. It is necessary to identify the following as the **priority target groups** that should be given consideration in literacy programmes.
  - i. Those who lack literacy in disadvantaged communities such as urban slums, estate, fishing, remote rural and conflict-affected communities, gypsies and prisoners,
  - ii. Those who have lapsed into illiteracy as a result of non-utilisation of literacy and numeracy skills such as early drop-outs, child workers and
  - iii. Children with special needs, child workers, children in detention camps and disabled adults who have never received the opportunity of enrolling in school, and
  - iv. Children who are in school but whose learning achievement is low.
2. **Strategies** for attaining the unattained targets and reaching the unreached would be as follows:
  - i. Identification of those who lack literacy by their assessing literacy. This could be done through the Household Based Literacy Module which can be incorporated in the various household surveys where probable illiterates (those who lack formal educational qualifications, or not employed in jobs requiring literacy) are tested,
  - ii. Identification of pockets of illiteracy and organizing functional literacy programmes to motivate the participation of adults and buttressing such programmes through provision of

resources and engagement of committed and trained facilitators who are remunerated adequately for their services,

- iii. Throughout the entire course of education, from kindergarten to university, educational institutions must provide 'life skills' knowledge, integrating such knowledge into the subject matter being taught as appropriate and wherever possible.
- iv. Negotiation of collaboration of non-governmental organizations, development partners and community-based organizations to sponsor such programmes through justifying them as needing priority,
- v. Regular monitoring of these programmes to ensure that they are effectively implemented,
- vi. Implementation of compulsory education regulations, policy of inclusive education and enrolment of children who achieve required levels of learning achievement in school, to ensure full participation of all children aged 5-14 in school, and
- vii. Improvement of the quality of teaching-learning in schools through improvement of teacher quality and learning environment.

The target to be achieved could be 100 per cent literacy by the year 2010. The **milestones to be achieved** over the remaining period need to be scheduled so as to close the gap in a short period of three years. This is indeed a challenge, considering the barriers that need to be surmounted which include political, cultural and economic factors. This would necessitate a plan of action to be formulated after wide consultation, to be implemented efficiently with dedication and commitment by all stakeholders. The Draft National Action Plan to improve literacy developed by the MoE can be used as the base in this respect (Appendix ).



## Chapter 6: Achieving Gender Parity and Equality

### 6.1 Introduction

EFA Goal 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015 with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

### 6.2 Gender Parity and Equality in Sri Lankan context

Sri Lanka is strongly committed to policy of gender equality. The Constitutional provision (1978) of equal rights without discrimination on the grounds of sex, and the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as universal franchise and equal rights to contest elections in 1931, and equal access to free education and health services have all contributed to promoting gender equality in Sri Lanka.

#### 6.2.1 History and policy Framework

- Universal franchise and equal rights to contest elections in 1931
- Equal access to free education and health services in the 1940s
- The Constitutional provision (1978) of equal rights without discrimination on the grounds of sex
- The ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1981
- The ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC - 1989)

have all contributed to promoting gender equality in Sri Lanka.

In 1978 the Women's Bureau was established. In 1983 a ministry for Women's Affairs was set up together with the subject Health, for ensuring equal rights for women in policy formulation by the government. The Women's Charter, modelled on the 1981 convention, was accepted by government of Sri Lanka in 1993.

The Women's Charter details the rights of women under few categories.

#### 6.2.2 Womens' Charter - 1993

The section on Right to Education and training has five sub sections.

"The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure for men and women:

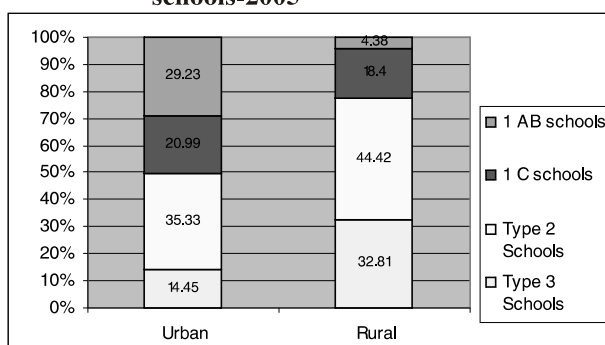
- (i) (a) access to the same educational opportunities in pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary, technical, vocational and professional education including co-educational, non-formal and continuing education, training and extension programmes.
- (b) access to 10 years of compulsory education.
- (c) access to the same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and study grants;
- (d) access to the same curricula, examinations, certification procedures, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and facilities in schools and training programmes, equipment of the same quality and the same opportunities to participate actively in physical and aesthetic education; and
- (e) access to career and vocational guidance and counselling programmes.
- (ii) recognising the primary responsibility which devolves on women in families which have disabled parents, the state shall ensure that disabled persons shall have equal access to education and training.
- (iii) In keeping with National Policy the State shall ensure to both mother and father the equal right of choice with regard to the medium of instruction in which children are to be educated taking into account the paramount interest of the children.
- (iv) The State shall take all steps to ensure the elimination of gender role-stereotypes

concepts in content and educational material in all types of education, through the revision, preparation and writing of teaching-learning material.

- (v) The state shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the reduction of early school-leavers and the organisation of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely.

In 1997 a separate cabinet ministry was set up. During this period an attempt has been made to remove gender stereotyping in school textbooks introduce gender sensitisation into the curricula at school level and in teacher education.

**Figure 6.1: Urban rural status of availability of schools-2005**



Source: School Census data, 2005

*1AB schools- provide all three streams Science, Commerce and Arts at senior secondary level, while 1C schools- schools provide only commerce and art streams at senior secondary level. Type 2 and Type 3 schools- schools do not provide senior secondary education*

**Table 6.1: Percentages of female enrolment in primary and secondary education-2005**

	Percentage of female enrolment in Primary education	Percentage of female enrolment in Secondary education
National	48	49
Sinhala medium schools	49	50
Tamil medium schools	49	50
Sinhala ethnic group	49	50
Tamil ethnic group	49	50
Muslim ethnic group	50	50
Urban schools	49	50
Rural schools	48	49
Plantation schools	49	49
Non plantation schools	48	50

Source: School Census ,2005

### 6.3 General Education

Even though economic constraints continue to be a barrier to promoting equal educational opportunities for boys and girls, free education has been a major agent of progress toward gender equality and poverty reduction.

Around 96% of the schools have been co-educational for decades girls from most socio-economic strata have had relatively extensive access to education.

But a hidden problem is revealed in data of Figure 6.1. Economic constraints and inequalities in resource allocation have, however, continued district-wise and urban rural disparities in the provision of education.

In urban sector 50% of all schools provide senior secondary education, which is the avenue to higher education. But only 22% of rural schools provide senior secondary classes. Out of these only 4% provide science education facilities at the senior secondary level, in rural areas. Girls are more likely to be disadvantaged in access to science education at this level. (See also Table 6.5)

Table 6.2: Gender Parity Index for Selected indicators

Indicator	Sector	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Gross Intake Rate	National	1.00	0.98	0.97	0.98	0.98
Net Intake Rate	National	1.01	0.99	0.98	0.99	0.98
Gross Enrolment Rate in Primary Education	National	0.99	0.98	0.98	0.95	0.95
	Sinhala ethnic group					1.00
	Tamil ethnic group					0.94
	Muslim ethnic group					0.97
	Urban sector					1.02
	Rural sector					0.99
	Plantation sector					0.91
Net Enrolment Rate in Primary Education	National	1.03	1.00	1.00	0.98	0.98
Gross Enrolment Rate in Secondary Education	National	1.01	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.03
Net Enrolment Rate in Secondary Education	National	1.03	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04
Survival Rate to Grade 5	National		1.01	1.00	1.00	
	Sinhala medium schools				1.00	
	Tamil medium schools				1.01	
	Sinhala ethnic group				1.00	
	Tamil ethnic group				1.02	
	Muslim ethnic group				0.99	
	Urban schools				1.00	
	Rural schools				1.00	
	Plantation schools				1.03	
	Non-plantation schools				1.00	
Transition Rate from Primary to Lower Secondary Schools		1.02	1.01	1.00	1.01	1.01
Transition Rate from Lower Secondary Schools to Upper Secondary Schools		1.02	1.01	1.02	1.02	1.02
Adult Literacy Rate		0.94	0.96	0.94	0.96	0.96
Youth Literacy Rate		1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	

Source: Annual School Census, MoE, Sri Lanka Labour force survey, 2005

Above statistics show that the GPI of GIR, NIR, GER and NER are all close to 1. This means that both sexes enjoy the same opportunities in access and participation in primary and secondary education. GPI of

Survival rate to grade 5 and Transition Rates are also close to 1. It says that once girls are in school they tend to progress as well as or better than boys.



### 6.3.1 Female teachers

The proportion of female teachers is a measure of gender equality. The female teacher stock in the primary exceed 80% while in the secondary cycle the percentage of female

teachers is over 55% as shown in table below.

This, in addition to showing a marked inequality, also translates into issues such as one-year maternity leave, as most of these lady-teachers are of child-bearing age.

**Table 6.3: Percentage of Female Teachers by Education Cycle 2001 - 2005**

Year	Percentage of Female Teachers in Primary Education	Percentage of Female Teachers in Secondary Education
2001	83	57
2002	84	59
2003	84	56
2004	84	57
2005	84	56

Source: School Census, MoE

### 6.3.2 Students Achievement

**Table 6.4: Gender wise performance at GCE O/L examination (1995, 2001, 2005)**

Year	No. Sat		No. Qualified for GCE A/L		Percentage qualified for GCE A/L	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1995	224,740	258,509	36,591	43,900	16.28	16.98
2001	123,344	132,427	42,083	55,756	34.12	42.10
2005	125,324	133,156	42,414	54,043	33.84	40.59

Source: Research and Development Branch, Department of Examinations

Table 6.4 compares the performance of boys and girls at the GCE O/L examination, the first public examination they sit after 11 years of general education. The statistics indicates that

girls perform better than boys at the GCE O/L examination and proceed to the next level GCE A/L.

**Table 6.5: Proportion of male and female in senior secondary level by GCE(A/L) stream 2005**

Stream	Male	Female
Science	52.9	47.1
Commerce	51.1	48.9
Arts	34.1	65.9

Source: School census, MOE

**Table 6.6: Gender wise performance at GCE A/L examination (1995-2004)**

Year	No. sat		No. qualified for GCE (A/L)		Percentage qualified for GCE (A/L)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
1995	59,128	77,596	28,129	42,004	47.57	54.13
2000	78,704	104,735	33,678	57,911	42.79	55.29
2002	98,676	118,828	34,436	57,790	34.9	48.63
2004	85,865	113,787	42,688	65,669	49.72	57.71

Source: Research & Development of Examination

The same trend can be seen at GCE A/L. More girls sit for the GCE A/L examination and qualify to enter university education.

## 6.4 Higher Education

Table 6.7 indicates the situation with regard female student admissions to university education over the years. It can be seen that women are well represented in most of the academic streams. Traditionally gender stereotypes maintain that one gender is better than the other at a certain areas of learning

such, as science and engineering are male domains. This trend can be seen from the table. Women are seen to be the majority of entrants to the arts faculties, law, dental science and agriculture. They are underrepresented in science, engineering and quantity surveying.

**Table 6.7: University admission by gender selected years**

Subject stream	1999/00		2001/02		2004/05	
	T	%F	T	%F	T	%F
Arts	3,865	69.5	4,039	73.0	4363	71.1
Management Studies	1,425	51.9	1,531	53.2	2560	48.9
Commerce	935	51.6	837	54.4	320	51.9
Law	193	78.8	200	79.5	225	75.1
Science	2,671	36.0	2,625	38.3	3087	40.2
Medicine	896	50.0	871	53.3	911	54.1
Dental Science	91	46.2	86	45.3	78	56.4
Veterinary medicine	91	56.0	87	37.9	77	57.1
Engineering	646	52.6	624	50.5	786	60.2
Agriculture	875	14.7	985	18.1	1089	18.5
Architecture	56	69.6	102	67.6	184	56.0
Quantity surveying	61	23.0	51	33.3	0	0
Computer Sc& IT			106	27.4	398	25.4
Total	11,962	50.9	12,144	53.8	25,471	29.0

Source: University Grant Commission

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Source: University Grant Commission

## 6.5 Technical and Vocational Education

**Table 6.8: Percentage of female enrolment in technical and vocational training in leading public institutions**

Institute	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Department of Technical Education and Training (DTET)	40	40	41	40	40	37
Vocational Training Authority (VTA)	49	48	43	41	41	40
National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA)	30	NA	31	24	27	24

Gender differentiation in enrolment is seen in the island-wide network of technical and vocational institutes. The percentage of girls enrolled in courses in technical trades is low. (Table 6.8). Women apprentices are chiefly in textile, garment related and clerical establishments. IT attracts women students but they are concentrated at the lower level of operations, analogous to secretarial courses. Hence the tertiary and secondary vocational education sector, which should have the closest links with the labour market, equip women with a narrow range of skills and marginalises them in a changing economy. Although the access to technical and vocational education is not limited, traditional attitudes and cultural inhibitions prevent girls from joining some technical/vocational streams.

## 6.6 Literacy

Female adult literacy levels remains slightly low during 2001-2005 as the GPI is less than 1

(Table 6.1). This is affected by the low female literacy in Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, and Ratnapura districts with their large concentrations of plantations and in Moneragala district, the most economically and socially disadvantaged district in the country. (Table 5.7, Chapter 5).

## 6.7 Unemployment and Gender

Unemployment rates declined progressively since the mid-1990s to 6.2% male unemployment and 11.5% female unemployment in 2001. After 2001 it remains stabilised for both men and women. It is seen that women have been more adversely affected than men. It is interesting to note, too, that female unemployment rates have continued to be double those of men for 3 decades, irrespective of whether unemployment increased or declined.

**Figure 6.2: Trend in unemployment by students**

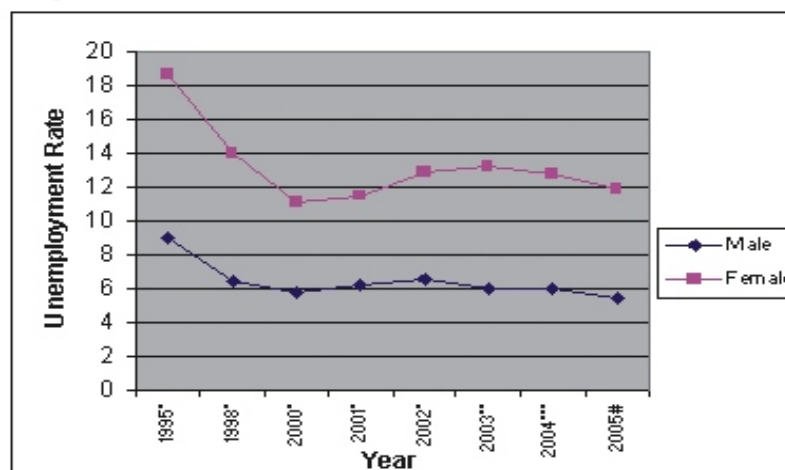
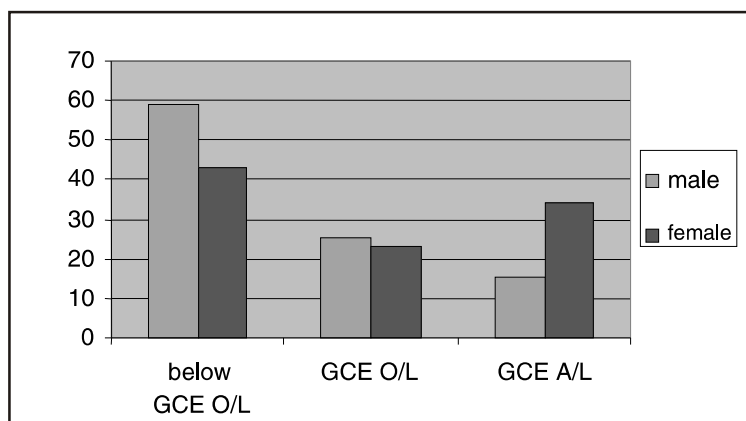


Figure 6.3 shows that male unemployment rates by educational level have decreased with increasing educational attainment, but female unemployment rate rises (Table 6.3) when it comes to GCE A/L. Nearly 70% of the educated unemployed (with a complete

secondary education or higher education) are currently women. Clearly women have equal access to education but not to employment and are unable to translate their educational gains into economic rewards.

**Figure 6.3: Composition of unemployed by level of education and gender**



Source: Special analysis of QLFD: Labour Market Information Bulletin

## 6.8 Conclusion

The goal of eliminating gender disparities in both primary and secondary education been achieved. In fact some action is needed to remove the adverse features in participation completion and transition in respect of male students, to achieve gender parity. However it

has to be noted that factors such as sexual violence, increase environment and inadequate sanitary facilities for girl need to be eliminated. Academic performances of boys and girls are converging. But fields of study and occupational orientations continue to be clustered by gender.



## Chapter 7: Enhancing Quality of the Education

### 7.1 Introduction

Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

“Quality has become a dynamic concept that has to constantly adapt to a world whose societies are undergoing profound social and economic transformation. Encouragement for future-oriented thinking and anticipation is gaining importance. Old notions of quality are no longer enough ... despite the different contexts there are many common elements in the pursuit of a quality education, which should equip all people, women and men, to be fully participating members of their own communities and also citizens of the world” (Ministerial Round Table on Quality Education, UNESCO, 2003, p.1). (EFA Mid-Decade Assessment 2005)

**Quality of Education:** *The general concept educational quality is the extent to which the products or results of the education provided (i.e. skills and values acquired by the students) meet the standards stipulated in the system’s educational objectives and the extent to which the knowledge and values acquired are relevant human and environment condition and needs.* (Grisay, A and Mahlack, L 1991)

As quality is cross-cutting across all the previous chapters, only important issues pertaining to each of them will be highlighted in this chapter, not the analysis of data and indicators.

### 7.2 Quality of ECCE

The quality of the ECCE programmes generally depends on the way the system functions on the following factors:

- Policy and Plans
- Type of programmes
- Type of services
- Professional qualifications of the services providers

- Availability of facilities of the relevant institutions

Although MCDWE adopted 11 strategies to implement the national policy, and appointed a twenty five-member national coordination committee, there seems to be no proper mechanism to get the feedback from grass-root level. Therefore it is not possible to assess the success of implementation. Although minimum standards for ECCE centres covering most aspects have been prepared by Ministry, the implementation at grass root level is not satisfactory, as it is left to the discretion of each individual controller. There is also a need for a mechanism for the improvement of quality of the centres where there are problems.

There are a lot of private institutions awarding ECCE qualifications. But there doesn’t seem to be quality control of these ECCE training centres or their programmes. The MCDWE should take steps to rectify the situation. Educationists with a background of Primary Education and Child Development also need to become involved in this process, with close collaborations with the MoE, Child Study Centre of the OUSL, and provincial education authorities.

Internationally, ECCE covers up to the age of 8 years. In Sri Lanka we talk of ECCD, which covers child’s life from conception to age five. Therefore there is no direct link with between ECCD and primary education in Sri Lanka, which adversely affects the quality of both.

### 7.3 Quality of the Basic and General Education System

Educational quality can be assessed in many ways including through the efficiency, and effectiveness of the education system. Efficiency refers to both external and internal efficiency. Internal efficiency refers to the links between quality of the educational inputs, such as teachers, textbooks, teaching condition, teaching materials, and educational achievements, completion rates, examination

results, etc. External efficiency refers to the links between schooling system and students as a whole (as an input) with the knowledge, understanding, and skills and attitudes appropriate for successful living.

In Sri Lanka, both external and internal efficiencies are low at primary and secondary levels, as seen by the dropouts, repetitions and low achievements of grade four, five and GCE O/L examinations. Though these are not ideal indicators, they are the most commonly used. External efficiency is also low, high proportion of GCE O/L graduates remaining unemployed. This is linked with the political and economic situation of the country but also lack relevance and quality of the education.

It is very clear that the existing network of government schools is unable to provide equal access to quality primary and secondary schooling for the children in all parts of the country. Adequacy has also a dimension of quality, for it implies access to a schooling service of quality, not just any school within required distance. The variations in the quality of education, from school to school, district-to-district, urban to rural etc., needs to be recognised. As discussed under (UBE)

**3.3.1.5 Input indicators**, all government schools were classified into five categories according to the physical and human recourses. When we analyse the student performance according to that classification, we can see the correlation between quality inputs and quality of the outputs. There are wide disparities among the districts, and even schools within the same district. So, improvements, or changes to the school network at specific identified locations according to individual needs would improve the quality of primary and secondary education.

#### **7.4 Quality of the life skills and lifelong learning education**

Improvement of the relevant skills for life through the education is the way to sustainable human development. Although Sri Lanka has free access and high participation at the

primary and secondary levels, these are not enough to achieve this goal. The country should either provide skill and knowledge, enabling students to move towards tertiary education, or ensure a smooth transition to the world of work for those whose basic, secondary schooling will be terminal.

Education reforms in Sri Lanka during the last three decades have mainly been concerned with the improvement in the quality and relevance of education, especially making the curriculum more relevant to the needs of the country. Although these concepts were included to the curriculum it was not adopted to the system as following reasons:

- Shortage of qualified teachers for teaching these subjects
- Lack of resources and infrastructure facilities at schools and other institutions
- Lack of mechanisms for assessing the impact of these subjects
- Lack of awareness of the parents students
- No link between general education and technical and vocational education
- Poor understanding by administrators and teachers
- Time allocation not adequate
- Adequate attention not paid to 10 core life skills in curriculum development
- The subject content not clearly presented
- Examples to illustrate methodology lacking
- Conflicting views expressed by Principals, ISAs and teachers
- Traditional methods used in delivery
- Lack of an assessment mechanism

Therefore, attempts failed in channelling students to academic, technical and vocational streams at secondary level. The proposals were not acceptable to a public who had seen in the past that academic success leads to social mobility. Now efforts are being made to provide a practical element to general education through the development of competencies.

The economic structure of the country is also needs to change with the adoption of liberalised economic policies.



## 7.5 Quality of Youth and Adult Literacy

Literacy is to essential human beings as it contributes to economic prosperity, good health, cultural identity, civic participation and tolerance as well as to realise the potential of an individual. Illiteracy is a phenomenon rooted in poverty and deprivation.

The Human Development index (HDI) of the UN measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions.

- i. Life expectancy
- ii. Adult literacy and
- iii. GDP per capita

This shows the importance of adult literacy in measuring the quality of life.

Although literacy was not a critical issue in Sri Lanka, after a decade of open market policies that was followed from 1977 onwards enlightened opinion suggested mild reversal trends and evidence of pockets in both urban and rural areas with rates of literacy far below the accepted national figures.

In spite of several measures adopted by the government of Sri Lanka over last five decades to provide free education to every child of school going age, a large number of children for various reasons do not attend school. Studies have revealed that while few are permanently kept out of schools a proportion of those who enrol dropout very early, long before the school succeeds in making any lasting changes in them, lapsing into illiteracy.

There is a need to improve the literacy levels of the above mentioned groups. They need to be provided with functional literacy and numerical skills essential for effective living.

These programmes should be focused on

1. Development of basic literacy among youth and adults
2. Development of functional literacy skills,

Therefore it is necessary to develop a mechanism for monitoring and assessment of

actual literacy among youth and adults identify the gaps for prepare a plans to overcome the challenges.

## 7.6 Recommendations and Conclusion

### Recomendations:

Prepare a general definition for education quality based on rights-based approach to all educational endeavors. Education is a human right, and therefore quality education supports all of the human rights;

Develop policy guidelines based on the four pillars of Education for All – learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together with others, and learning to be (Delors, et al., 1996);

- It views the learner as an individual, a family member, community member, and a global citizen, and educates to create individual competency in all four roles;

Develop an appropriate system for providing quality education that builds knowledge, life skills, perspectives, attitudes and values, to cover the following :

- review curriculum
- upgrade teaching methodology
- develop quality teaching standards
- establish norms and standerds for physical facilites at schools
- upgrade facilites acording to standards
- maintain class size below 30 or less, especially in the primary grades

### Conclusion

To provide a good basic education, in keeping with the broad objective of quality education, being the total development of personality of the child, the curriculum should be expanded to cover a broad area inclining early childhood care and education. Greater attention would be paid to the imparting of life competencies, Scientific, Mathematical and Technological knowledge, development of communication languages skills in the national languages as well as international languages.



## Chapter 8: Conclusion

### 8.1 Introduction

As described in previous chapters Sri Lanka has succeeded in ensuring a high level of access and a good coverage at the primary and secondary levels of education. High enrolment rates, high participation in both primary and secondary levels, high literacy rates, and social indicators are evidence for it. Today the country faces second generation problems, concerning the quality, equality and efficiency of the education system.

This concluding chapter examines education and quality issues of EFA that should be on-track to being realised by 2015. It then proposes the elements of a policy agenda for education authorities, for civil society organisations, and for international agencies and donors to accelerate these, focusing on neglected goals that are lagging behind progress towards EFA.

### 8.2 Trends and Prospects for 2015

The period from 2000 to 2005, as chapters 1 and 2 show, was one of sharp growth in enrolment in ECCE. Chapter 3 shows enrolment in primary level is near to achieving universal targets. Gender parity is almost achieved in enrolment and participation. The poor quality of education has become a major issue island-wide, and the goals pertaining to life skills of young children, youth and adults have been relatively neglected.

For the three goals that have an explicit quantitative target - goal 2 (universalisation of primary education) goal 4 (reduction by half the level of adult illiteracy) and goal 5 (elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education) relevant education indicators between 2000 and 2005 were analysed, extrapolating trends observed in each district. It is important to note that these are

extrapolations of past trends. This does not reflect the impact of education policy changes on education indicators and thus may not reflect the impact of recently implemented education policies. What they show is whether the continuation of ongoing trends is consistent with achievement of a given goal by 2015.

### 8.3 Early Childhood Care and Education

ECCE is receiving increased attention, but much remains to be done. Even without proper data it is evident on present trends that participation rates will remain relatively low to 2015.

For children under 3, there is much less provision than for those aged 3 and over, despite increases in care and pre schooling. The poor and disadvantaged stands to benefit relatively the most from ECCE programmes.

### 8.4 Achieving Universal Basic Education

The likelihood that this country will achieve universal basic education by 2015 was assessed using the total primary net enrolment ratio which takes into account children of primary school but does not reflect learning, but only enrolment.

The disaggregated data given in the chapter shows the most recent situation and prospects and challenges for the achievement of quality basic education.

### 8.5 Life skills and lifelong education

Sri Lanka has yet to seriously address the challenging tasks that EFA goal 3 entails: Meeting the diverse learning needs of young people and adults through organised programmes of education, training and the

building of basic skills, psycho-social skills and technical (livelihood) skills.

Given the understandable pressure to extend the cycle of basic education in schools and to expand secondary education, there is a clear risk of disparities between formal and non-formal education becoming further accentuated in coming years. The MoE and other relevant institutions will need to pay much stronger attention to the inclusion of youth and adults in education through literacy, equivalency, life skills and livelihood programmes, which are frequently provided outside formal education.

### **8.6 Adult Literacy**

The likelihood of achieving the adult literacy target by 2015 was assessed at the provincial level in the chapter 5. These figures on adult literacy are based on conventional measures of literacy, such as self reporting of the ability to read or write, rather than results of an actual test of literacy skills. For some pockets of disadvantaged groups, more effort is needed to provide learning opportunities to adults and to accelerate progress, to achieve ECCE and universal primary enrolment.

### **8.7 Gender Parity in primary and secondary education**

In Sri Lanka access and participation of girls in primary and secondary education is almost achieved. Gender parity has been achieved in primary and secondary levels. Boys' participation of secondary education is declining.

### **8.8 Quality**

This report monitors three dimensions of education quality: learning outcomes as measured by national assessments; enabling condition of the school facilities; and quality and quantity of teaching workforce. While it is difficult to extrapolate from existing patterns and trends into the future, the evidence suggests that

the issue of quality in education is gaining the attention of stakeholders island-wide: MoE, provincial education ministries and departments, zonal and divisional education offices, school authorities and parents. Discussions, reports and assessments of education quality have proliferated in recent years.

Despite this growing interest, the accumulated evidence points to the prevalence of weak pupil performance, widespread learning disparities in disadvantage of difficult areas, rural, urban slum and marginalised groups. Providing physical and human resources and management of schools would be a great challenge to provide quality education for all by 2015.

### **8.9 Role of Ministry of Education**

Ministry of Education must focus on the national priorities, appropriately adjusted to each province's individual circumstances. In effect, this means reaffirming the strategies in the Dakar Framework for Action:

1. *All of EFA*- Government must take full responsibility for ECCE, quality, adult literacy and the learning needs of youth and adults, as well as for universal primary education. This may not mean delivering all necessary services through the public sector but it certainly means taking public responsibility and assuring adequate financing, as envisaged at Dakar. In particular, it is important for governments to recognise, as Chapter 3 showed, that there is not necessarily a trade-off between access and quality but that the two can be mutually reinforcing.
2. *Inclusion* of the poorest and most marginalised children, youth and adults, by:
  - (a) ensuring that all children, particularly the marginalised and disadvantaged, have access to good ECCE programmes;
  - (b) expanding the physical infrastructure of the basic education system in rural and disadvantaged urban areas, providing

- mechanisms for teachers to work in these areas and improving their working conditions;
- (c) providing financial support such as scholarships, cash or in-kind transfers to disadvantaged households, appropriately targeted;
  - (d) taking measures to alleviate the need for child labour and allowing for flexible schooling, non-formal equivalency courses and bridging courses to provide for the learning needs of working children and youth;
  - (e) sustaining efforts to assure gender parity, including improving girls' retention in primary and secondary education and addressing the emerging boys' issues at secondary level;
  - (f) promoting inclusive education for the disabled, indigenous people and other disadvantaged groups;
  - (g) promoting a great diversity of youth and adult education programmers through legislation, public funding arrangements and policies, such as regulation and oversight of the government sector and bridges between non-formal and formal education;
  - (h) developing constructive partnerships between governments and the non-government sector to increase access to quality education.
3. *Literacy* – Government needs to step up its efforts on adult literacy through inclusion and quality in primary and lower secondary school and boldly expanding adequately staffed and funded literacy programmes for youth and adults that harness all the different forms of modern media. Policies should be instituted to promote media and publishing, and to encourage reading in schools, the home and the workplace.
  4. *Quality* – Government must ensure that priority is placed on pupils mastering basic skills and competences, with particular attention to:
    - (a) making sure there are enough trained teachers and deploying them appropriately throughout the country;
    - (b) enhancing the professionalism and motivation of teachers by providing ongoing professional development;
    - (c) creating safe and healthy learning environments by providing health programmes, including and nutrition;
    - (d) maximising quality school time in which teachers and pupils are actively engaged in learning activities, notably by creating administrative supports for teachers' presence in the classroom,
    - (e) ensuring that curricula are inclusive and relevant, and that they incorporate HIV/AIDS education, among other measures;
  5. *Capacity development* – In addition to training teachers, government needs to step up its effort to:
    - (a) improve and make better use of the national assessments that are being introduced in growing numbers;
    - (b) develop management capacity at all levels of educational management not just the national level – by paying attention to staff training as well as organisational and institutional structures;
    - (c) improve the timeliness and coverage of the statistics used to formulate policy and monitor progress;
    - (d) coordinate complex multisectoral and multiministry programmes such as ECCE and adult literacy, including with the NGOs that often deliver such programmes;
    - (e) Formally engage civil society in EFA policy formulation, implementation and monitoring.

6. *Finance* – National government must maintain public spending on EFA and, indeed, increase it where necessary. It is critical to ensure that pressure from other priorities does not reduce EFA spending to the minimum necessary for primary school access. Funding is essential for:

- (a) inclusion, with unit costs likely to rise for enrolling the most disadvantaged and marginalised [often in remote areas or requiring special attention such as the disabled or linguistic minorities];
- (b) the expansion of ECCE and literacy, so far neglected both financially and as policy priorities;
- (c) quality, especially as regards teachers and their training and the provision of sufficient textbooks for both teachers and students;
- (d) Capacity development, including for statistical systems and staff training, which are often underfunded.

### 8.10 Donors and International agencies

Both bilateral and multilateral agencies urgently need to increase the amount of aid and deploy it differently. Measure should be taken to:

- (a) Increase the priority given to basic education compared with other levels, particularly higher education, as soon as possible, no later than 2010.
- (b) raise to at least 10% the share of basic education in bilateral sectoral aid and further increase multilateral aid for basic education;
- (c) within aid to basic education, allocate more to early childhood programmes, literacy, other programmes for youth and adults, and capacity development;

- (d) Improve the geographic distribution of aid to more closely reflect needs, involving a particular focus on most difficult areas and disadvantage areas.

Improving the delivery of aid requires more explicit attention to aligning and harmonising aid behind country-wide Education Sector Development plan.

This requires:

- (a) further aligning all educational programmes, whatever their financing modalities, with government programmes, including through the public expenditure tracking system process and other sector wide approaches;
- (b) working with governments to improve their capacity to absorb larger amounts of aid at all levels of service delivery and improving aid in support of capacity development;
- (c) Reducing the transaction costs governments face in managing multiple aid agency partners, multiple aid missions and multiple reporting requirements. Increasing the quantity and quality of aid requires joint and integrated efforts of all international partners including major multilateral and bilateral agencies, and in particular UNESCO and the other Dakar convening agencies [UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank]. It is vital that such efforts fully involve government and civil society.

## **Education for all - *truly* ....**

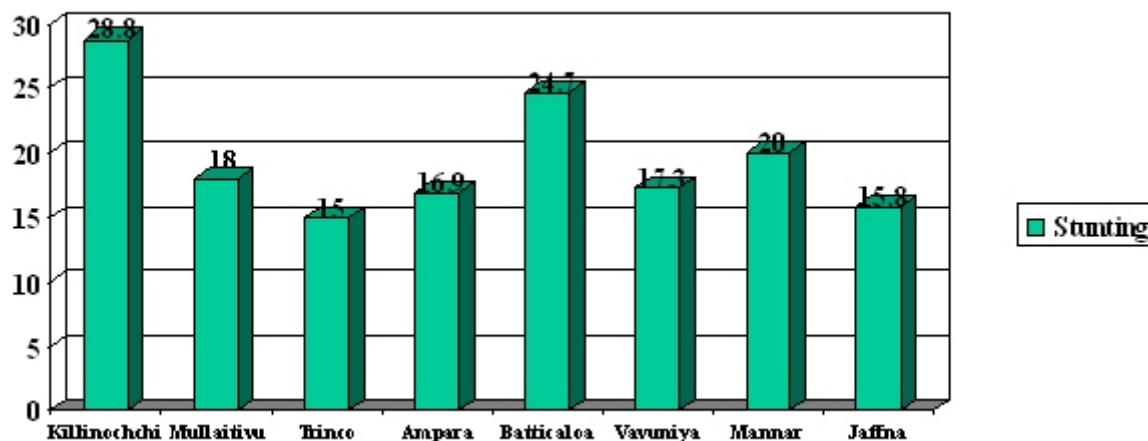
The evidence since Dakar is clear – determined Sri Lanka has made much progress in all areas, and increased aid aligned to national efforts has demonstrably worked to support this progress. We must maintain this momentum – and accelerate it if all the goals are to be met.

Time is short. Only if all stakeholders now embrace and maintain a relentless focus on EFA as a whole, rallying around the key elements of ECCE, inclusion, literacy, quality, capacity development and finance, will the right to education at every age be fulfilled.

## Appendix 1

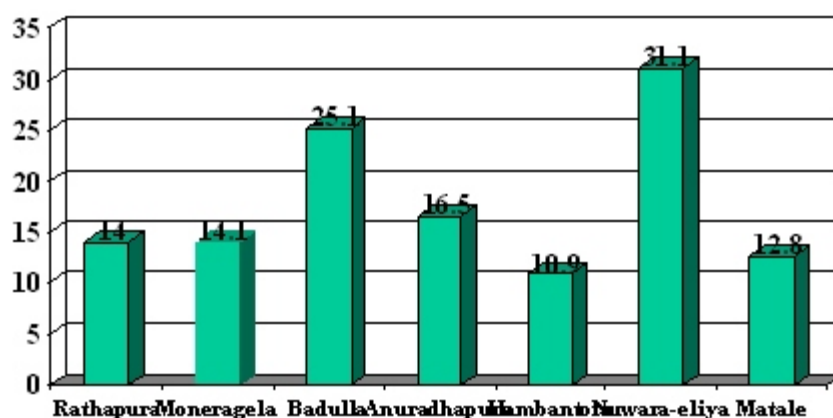
### chapter 2

**Figure 1: Prevalence of stunting by districts in North and East:**



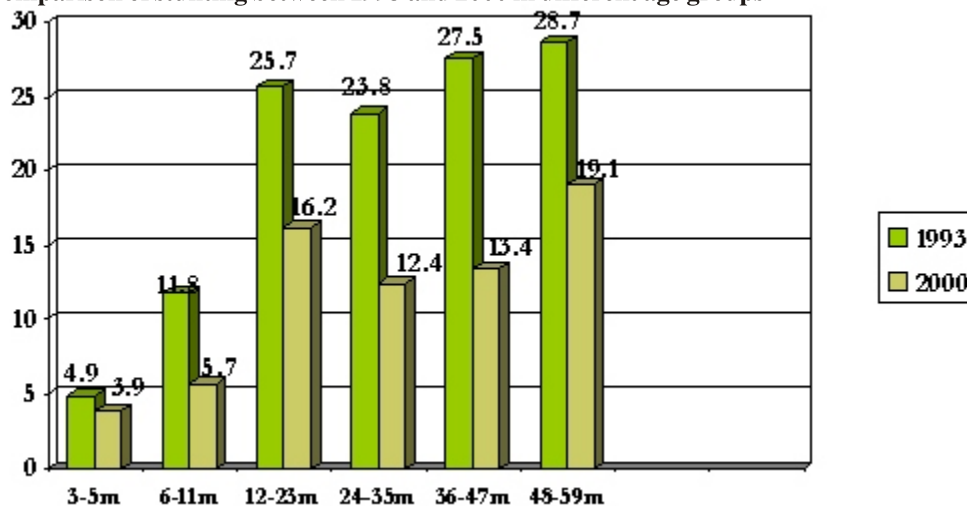
Source: Survey of Child Health and Welfare in selected districts in North and East 2004 and 2005/06

**Figure 2: Prevalence of stunting in seven vulnerable districts in Sri Lanka**



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**Figure 3: Comparison of stunting between 1993 and 2000 in different age groups**



Source: DHS 1993 and 2000



## Appendix 2

### Chapter 3

#### Attendance Committees

Approximately 8500 School Attendance Committees at the level of Grama Niladhari units and Monitoring Committees were established at Divisional Secretariat level by 1999. These committees were expected to compile lists of non-school going children, conduct inquiries, instruct parents to send their children to school, provide assistance if required to meet necessities. In cases where parents are not able to provide a birth certificate heads of schools were instructed to accept affidavits or letters from the local

government agents as proof of a child's age. Committees consist of parents, school principals, members of School Development Committees and education officials. Nevertheless attendance committees had not convened regularly and had ceased to function by 2000. The lack of active involvement by Provincial Authorities and the officials involved in non-formal education activities both at the central and provincial levels had been the main reason.

**Table 1: Gross Enrolment Rates in Primary Cycle by District and Gender 2001 and 2005**

District	GER in 2001		GER in 2005	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
National	95*	94*	99*	94*
Colombo	104	104	100	96
Gampaha	95	96	94	93
Kalutara	103	103	103	100
Kandy	106	105	97	91
Matale	106	105	96	88
Nuwara Eliya	116	113	98	93
Galle	107	106	101	94
Matara	106	104	98	89
Hambantota	110	109	95	89
Ampara	118	114	102	95
Kurunegala	108	106	102	94
Puttalam	110	107	99	94
Anuradhapura	112	111	97	90
Polonnaruwa	104	104	96	87
Badulla	113	111	98	94
Monaragala	109	109	91	85
Ratnapura	110	106	91	87
Kegalle	107	105	104	95

Source: Annual School Census, MoE and Department of Census and Statistics

Note: Data in respect of seven administrative districts are not included in these tables as population data for them are not available.

**Table 2: Gross Enrolment Rates in Secondary Cycle by District and Gender 2001 and 2005**

District	GER in 2001		GER in 2005	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
National	96	96	92	95
Colombo	103	101	103	99
Gampaha	86	89	86	91
Kalutara	91	94	89	91
Kandy	97	98	93	95
Matale	96	99	86	90
Nuwara Eliya	91	96	90	92
Galle	94	99	91	93
Matara	95	97	89	89
Hambantota	97	104	94	95
Ampara	94	93	99	99
Kurunegala	98	100	95	96
Puttalam	91	91	92	94
Anuradhapura	98	101	98	98
Polonnaruwa	90	93	92	98
Badulla	94	99	92	94
Monaragala	97	99	96	94
Ratnapura	92	94	89	87
Kegalle	95	94	92	91

Source: Annual School Census, MoE and Department of Census and Statistics

**Table 3 Public Expenditure on Education as a Percentage of GDP and the Government Expenditure**

Year	Education Expenditure as a % of GDP	Education Expenditure as a % of Government Expenditure
1960	4.4	14.9
1970	4.1	12.7
1980	3.7	6.1
1990	3.0	10.5
2000	2.9	7.2
2002	2.9	6.8
2006	2.6	

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka

**Table 4: Net Enrolment Rates in Primary Cycle by District and Gender 2001 and 2005**

District	NER in 2001		NER in 2005	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
National	91	93	90	88
Colombo	96	99	96	94
Gampaha	87	91	89	91
Kalutara	90	93	96	96
Kandy	89	92	89	87
Matale	99	94	89	84
Nuwara Eliya	86	86	82	78
Galle	93	97	93	90
Matara	94	97	88	84
Hambantota	91	95	89	86
Ampara	78	80	88	85
Kurunegala	93	94	95	91
Puttalam	84	86	90	87
Anuradhapura	97	102	90	87
Polonnaruwa	94	98	88	83
Badulla	88	91	88	86
Monaragala	101	101	85	81
Ratnapura	91	92	82	80
Kegalle	92	93	95	91

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated mid year population data from DCS.

**Table 5: Net Enrolment Rates in Secondary Cycle by District and Gender 2001 and 2005**

District	NER in 2001		NER in 2005	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
National	88	91	88	91
Colombo	99	99	101	96
Gampaha	80	86	83	90
Kalutara	86	90	86	89
Kandy	90	92	89	91
Matale	88	93	82	87
Nuwara Eliya	80	83	83	84
Galle	89	95	89	91
Matara	88	92	84	85
Hambantota	89	99	89	92
Ampara	83	85	92	94
Kurunegala	91	95	90	93
Puttalam	82	85	87	90
Anuradhapura	90	95	92	94
Polonnaruwa	83	89	89	95
Badulla	84	90	86	89
Monaragala	87	92	91	91
Ratnapura	83	87	84	84
Kegalle	88	89	88	89

Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated mid year population data from DCS.

**Table 6: Gross Intake Rates in Primary Cycle by District and Sex 2001 and 2005**

District	GIR in 2001		GIR in 2005	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
National	102	102	95	93
Colombo	98	98	93	94
Gampaha	90	92	89	93
Kalutara	97	99	98	97
Kandy	100	98	88	85
Matale	100	976	93	93
Nuwara Eliya	103	105	98	93
Galle	101	102	99	96
Matara	98	98	96	91
Hambantota	102	103	98	93
Ampara	105	86	90	87
Kurunegala	100	101	93	91
Puttalam	101	100	104	85
Anuradhapura	99	99	84	83
Polonnaruwa	91	93	77	76
Badulla	103	102	95	92
Monaragala	100	103	77	73
Ratnapura	104	103	85	93
Kegalle	99	102	95	91

Source: Annual School Census, MoE and Department of Census and Statistics

**Table 7: Repetition Rates by Grade and Gender – 2003-2005: Sinhala Medium**

Province	Year	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Western	2003	0.15	0.11	0.22	0.14	0.21	0.13	0.19	0.12	0.55	0.18
	2004	0.10	0.12	0.23	0.16	0.18	0.11	0.26	0.10	0.38	0.16
	2005	0.09	0.08	0.18	0.13	0.19	0.11	0.34	0.15	0.52	0.23
Central	2003	0.19	0.16	0.20	0.10	0.25	0.20	0.33	0.11	0.42	0.34
	2004	0.04	0.03	0.16	0.08	0.09	0.05	0.26	0.13	0.46	0.33
	2005	0.11	0.07	0.17	0.08	0.20	0.20	0.25	0.14	0.48	0.28
Southern	2003	0.24	0.16	0.95	0.45	0.58	0.32	0.88	0.51	0.87	0.46
	2004	0.20	0.11	0.75	0.43	0.47	0.21	0.74	0.34	0.65	0.37
	2005	0.17	0.10	0.58	0.35	0.50	0.25	0.82	0.30	1.03	0.51
Nothern	2003	1.52	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.83	1.57	3.53	2.45	2.70	0.64
	2004	0.00	0.00	0.76	1.50	0.77	0.86	3.01	0.00	1.09	2.61
	2005	0.00	0.94	0.89	0.81	1.53	1.42	2.86	0.00	3.57	1.45
Eastern	2003	0.64	0.63	1.52	1.01	1.03	0.91	1.11	0.93	1.35	1.27
	2004	0.49	0.19	0.88	0.59	0.91	0.47	0.95	0.60	1.16	0.49
	2005	0.46	0.30	0.74	0.42	1.05	0.81	1.47	0.51	1.26	0.72
North Western	2003	0.53	0.46	0.90	0.45	0.49	0.30	0.83	0.40	0.70	0.29
	2004	0.39	0.28	1.00	0.65	0.63	0.48	0.82	0.55	0.89	0.39
	2005	0.34	0.21	0.80	0.62	0.58	0.38	0.74	0.46	0.91	0.45
North Central	2003	0.11	0.04	0.23	0.16	0.46	0.29	0.57	0.25	0.76	0.47
	2004	0.07	0.06	0.29	0.12	0.27	0.16	0.58	0.37	0.81	0.45
	2005	0.22	0.07	0.41	0.24	0.47	0.35	0.62	0.28	0.98	0.34
Uva	2003	0.33	0.13	0.33	0.11	0.73	0.50	0.52	0.36	1.23	0.83
	2004	0.21	0.14	0.27	0.24	0.86	0.30	0.80	0.54	0.95	0.52
	2005	0.16	0.11	0.35	0.20	0.54	0.44	0.77	0.36	0.93	0.48
Sabaraga muwa	2003	0.23	0.24	0.31	0.23	0.32	0.21	0.39	0.22	0.75	0.50
	2004	0.12	0.14	0.33	0.22	0.17	0.15	0.44	0.15	0.60	0.39
	2005	0.17	0.14	0.27	0.15	0.33	0.18	0.51	0.26	0.65	0.29

Table 8: Repetition Rates by Grade and Gender – 2003: Tamil Medium

Province	Year	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Western	2003	1.10	0.56	0.75	0.51	0.87	0.78	0.86	0.58	0.62	0.59
	2004	0.11	0.31	0.14	0.08	0.14	0.22	0.21	0.23	1.16	0.71
	2005	0.43	0.21	0.49	0.28	0.57	0.36	0.94	0.40	0.97	0.46
Central	2003	1.17	0.96	1.34	1.11	1.66	1.43	2.58	2.03	2.26	1.77
	2004	1.24	0.92	1.95	1.34	2.25	1.82	2.27	2.01	3.65	2.55
	2005	1.11	1.04	1.65	1.33	2.00	1.53	2.26	1.76	2.65	1.94
Southern	2003	0.14	0.00	3.29	1.49	1.30	1.55	2.42	0.54	3.58	1.92
	2004	0.44	0.74	3.32	2.04	2.42	1.54	5.65	5.63	5.71	3.39
	2005	0.00	0.00	1.27	1.70	1.61	2.41	3.28	1.29	2.11	1.60
Nothern	2003	0.80	0.48	1.18	0.71	1.16	0.89	1.66	1.11	1.78	1.15
	2004	0.57	0.36	1.33	0.78	1.46	1.14	1.54	1.00	1.94	1.12
	2005	0.57	0.51	1.37	0.82	2.06	1.72	2.65	1.81	2.75	1.68
Eastern	2003	1.33	1.12	2.76	2.57	3.30	2.70	3.48	3.29	3.65	2.71
	2004	0.98	0.77	2.73	2.05	3.02	2.39	3.90	3.20	4.22	2.97
	2005	0.69	0.52	2.22	1.84	2.61	1.86	3.12	2.69	4.09	3.03
North Western	2003	0.90	0.72	0.80	1.24	0.93	0.97	1.04	0.78	0.90	0.56
	2004	0.63	0.46	0.45	0.30	0.40	0.34	0.71	0.52	0.53	0.51
	2005	0.27	0.10	0.53	0.55	0.65	0.34	0.59	0.56	0.82	0.59
North Central	2003	0.16	0.35	0.76	0.61	1.14	0.94	0.90	0.64	1.53	0.90
	2004	0.16	0.24	0.32	0.44	1.09	0.87	0.69	0.71	1.61	1.16
	2005	0.25	0.25	1.04	0.73	1.20	1.06	3.38	2.17	2.65	0.72
Uva	2003	1.81	1.37	2.31	2.12	3.77	3.74	4.02	3.55	4.18	2.74
	2004	1.98	1.60	2.97	2.72	5.03	3.21	5.94	4.51	6.33	4.21
	2005	1.82	1.33	2.55	1.92	3.81	3.07	4.78	3.35	5.46	3.89
Sabaraga muwa	2003	2.51	2.25	3.35	3.04	4.29	2.81	3.19	2.65	4.68	3.23
	2004	3.35	2.75	2.96	2.56	4.03	3.19	2.47	2.01	3.61	3.09
	2005	3.41	2.55	3.91	3.06	3.46	3.20	3.07	2.60	4.28	3.23

**Table 9 : Repetition Rates in the Secondary Cycle-2003 - Sinhala Medium**

Province	Year	Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Western	2003	0.76	0.27	0.63	0.27	0.41	0.15	0.30	0.13	0.25	0.10
	2004	0.61	0.30	0.45	0.20	0.33	0.12	0.21	0.04	0.15	0.03
	2005	0.87	0.26	0.85	0.31	0.76	0.25	0.49	0.20	0.21	0.08
Central	2003	0.31	0.05	0.29	0.17	0.23	0.12	0.15	0.07	0.08	0.03
	2004	0.37	0.10	0.27	0.17	0.26	0.15	0.22	0.09	0.05	0.03
	2005	0.43	0.14	0.29	0.13	0.20	0.13	0.16	0.11	0.07	0.06
Southern	2003	1.50	0.54	1.15	0.46	0.84	0.40	0.67	0.42	0.42	0.12
	2004	1.20	0.42	0.90	0.35	0.63	0.32	0.28	0.22	0.15	0.06
	2005	1.28	0.41	1.11	0.39	0.73	0.28	0.52	0.21	0.17	0.13
Nothern	2003	0.81	1.69	1.80	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	2004	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	2005	0.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Eastern	2003	3.11	1.56	2.92	1.51	1.35	1.08	1.04	0.68	1.13	0.55
	2004	2.87	1.38	2.04	1.39	2.17	0.72	0.55	0.28	0.32	0.10
	2005	1.75	1.17	1.18	0.65	1.47	0.80	0.31	0.13	0.56	0.33
North Western	2003	0.67	0.30	0.66	0.37	0.54	0.36	0.46	0.19	0.12	0.10
	2004	1.34	0.61	0.64	0.35	0.60	0.28	0.43	0.20	0.12	0.04
	2005	0.93	0.40	0.73	0.32	0.50	0.18	0.29	0.14	0.14	0.06
North Central	2003	1.35	0.56	0.90	0.38	0.86	0.26	0.75	0.37	0.30	0.13
	2004	1.16	0.67	1.18	0.62	1.01	0.49	0.60	0.32	0.49	0.20
	2005	1.60	0.53	1.65	0.61	1.16	0.41	0.54	0.46	0.62	0.34
Uva	2003	2.19	1.09	1.67	0.86	1.33	0.84	0.90	0.72	0.44	0.36
	2004	2.41	1.09	1.51	0.80	1.11	0.52	0.44	0.26	0.41	0.32
	2005	1.72	0.83	1.41	0.78	0.80	0.48	0.59	0.40	0.36	0.12
Sabaragamuwa	2003	0.92	0.32	0.87	0.44	0.40	0.26	0.30	0.20	0.29	0.15
	2004	1.24	0.53	1.01	0.30	0.54	0.27	0.35	0.20	0.17	0.08
	2005	0.61	0.32	0.79	0.33	0.43	0.23	0.21	0.14	0.08	0.03
Sri Lanka	2003	<i>1.07</i>	<i>0.43</i>	<i>0.88</i>	<i>0.42</i>	<i>0.61</i>	<i>0.32</i>	<i>0.47</i>	<i>0.27</i>	<i>0.28</i>	<i>0.14</i>
	2004	<b>1.12</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>0.37</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>0.33</b>	<b>0.17</b>	<b>0.19</b>	<b>0.08</b>
	2005	<b>1.03</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.11</b>

Table 10: Repetition Rates in the Secondary Cycle-2003 - Tamil Medium

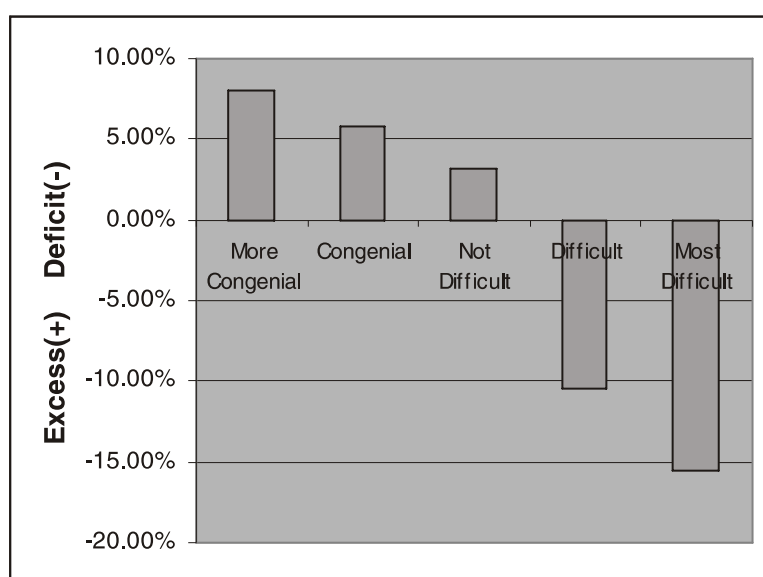
Province	Year	Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Western	2003	1.32	1.51	1.79	1.36	2.44	0.84	1.59	0.45	0.51	0.07
	2004	1.76	0.83	1.42	0.89	1.26	0.76	1.45	0.36	1.24	0.31
	2005	2.43	1.02	2.23	1.41	2.56	0.65	1.72	0.13	1.36	0.42
Central	2003	2.52	1.37	2.67	1.84	1.58	1.49	1.37	1.07	1.32	1.46
	2004	2.91	1.96	2.28	1.65	1.66	1.13	1.66	1.58	1.40	1.90
	2005	3.07	2.29	2.45	2.00	2.56	1.84	2.22	1.71	2.13	1.87
Southern	2003	4.68	1.32	3.39	1.03	4.04	1.12	3.35	1.34	2.39	0.91
	2004	5.20	7.24	7.85	3.54	7.43	1.33	7.80	0.67	2.83	0.55
	2005	1.32	1.26	2.50	0.77	0.87	0.92	0.21	0.22	0.27	0.00
Nothern	2003	1.83	1.31	1.85	0.93	1.48	0.95	1.16	0.94	1.07	0.97
	2004	2.51	1.85	1.58	1.03	1.84	1.05	1.25	0.88	0.97	0.90
	2005	3.75	2.01	3.25	1.94	3.02	1.77	2.02	1.40	2.36	1.48
Eastern	2003	3.68	2.72	3.58	2.75	3.08	2.42	2.25	1.92	2.48	1.64
	2004	3.47	2.46	3.48	2.42	2.15	1.71	1.74	1.35	3.04	1.31
	2005	3.55	2.96	3.93	2.59	3.41	2.25	2.65	2.04	2.64	1.78
North Western	2003	1.74	1.14	1.79	0.87	1.64	0.69	1.50	0.47	0.84	0.42
	2004	1.95	0.94	0.64	0.10	0.68	0.16	0.56	0.21	0.48	0.05
	2005	0.98	0.74	1.16	0.44	0.67	0.43	0.34	0.35	1.03	0.29
North Central	2003	2.45	2.69	2.80	1.96	1.94	1.15	1.73	2.07	1.79	1.47
	2004	1.25	0.58	1.75	0.63	0.88	1.51	1.38	0.89	1.29	1.28
	2005	3.96	3.24	1.19	1.33	2.00	0.77	1.15	0.87	0.82	0.35
Uva	2003	5.29	3.57	3.97	4.10	4.09	3.78	3.38	3.72	2.50	3.02
	2004	5.01	3.62	3.89	3.15	2.80	3.13	2.96	3.35	1.80	2.79
	2005	5.49	3.90	6.03	3.75	4.01	3.38	3.70	3.24	2.70	2.48
Sabaragamuwa	2003	3.04	1.84	2.65	1.97	2.85	1.86	1.48	0.57	1.37	0.89
	2004	1.83	1.74	1.77	1.15	1.38	1.05	1.17	0.49	0.00	0.08
	2005	3.05	2.44	2.95	1.68	1.87	1.07	0.58	0.33	0.24	0.08
Sri Lanka	2003	2.71	1.90	2.65	1.87	2.25	1.59	1.71	1.30	1.52	1.23
	2004	3.04	2.05	2.38	1.59	1.85	1.29	1.60	1.14	1.62	1.15
	2005	3.35	2.34	3.18	2.06	2.79	1.75	2.06	1.48	2.08	1.41

**Table 11: Transition Rates from Lower Secondary Level to Upper Secondary Level by District and Gender 2001 and 2005**

District	TR in 2001		TR in 2005	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
National	92	95	94	96
Colombo	95	97	96	96
Gampaha	93	95	94	97
Kalutara	93	95	94	95
Kandy	94	96	95	97
Matale	93	95	96	96
Nuwara Eliya	88	92	87	93
Galle	93	97	94	97
Matara	93	96	94	97
Hambantota	93	96	95	97
Jaffna	94	96	91	96
Kilinochchi	83	92	95	104
Mannar	88	96	93	102
Vavuniya	91	91	91	95
Mullativu	89	92	95	98
Batticaloa	86	89	90	92
Ampara	87	89	92	93
Trincomalee	89	88	92	90
Kurunegala	92	96	95	97
Puttalama	86	89	90	92
Anuradhapura	90	94	93	94
Polonnaruwa	93	95	92	95
Badulla	91	94	91	94
Monaragala	91	93	93	97
Rathnapura	92	96	94	97
Kegalle	95	96	96	97

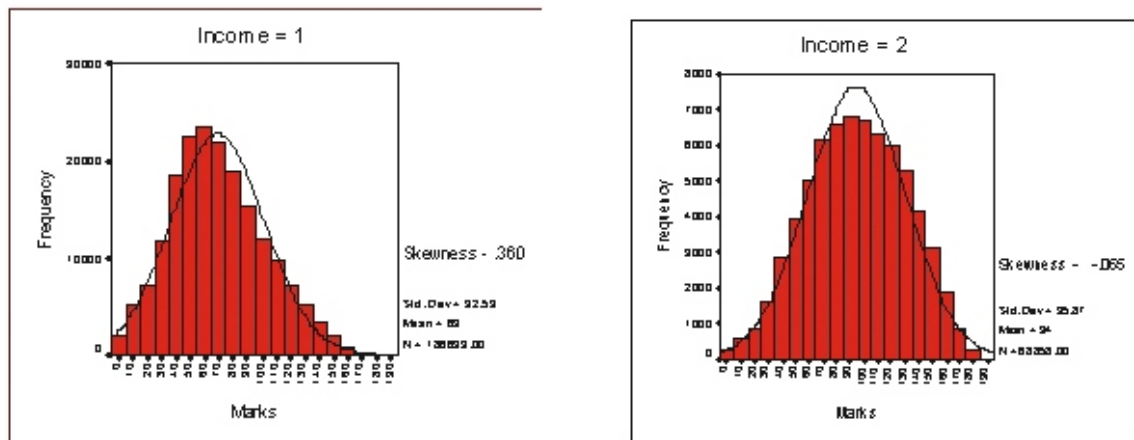
Source: Calculated with school census data from MoE and estimated mid year population data from DCS.

**Figure 4: Excess or Deficit of Science/Mathematics teachers in Secondary Level, 2005**

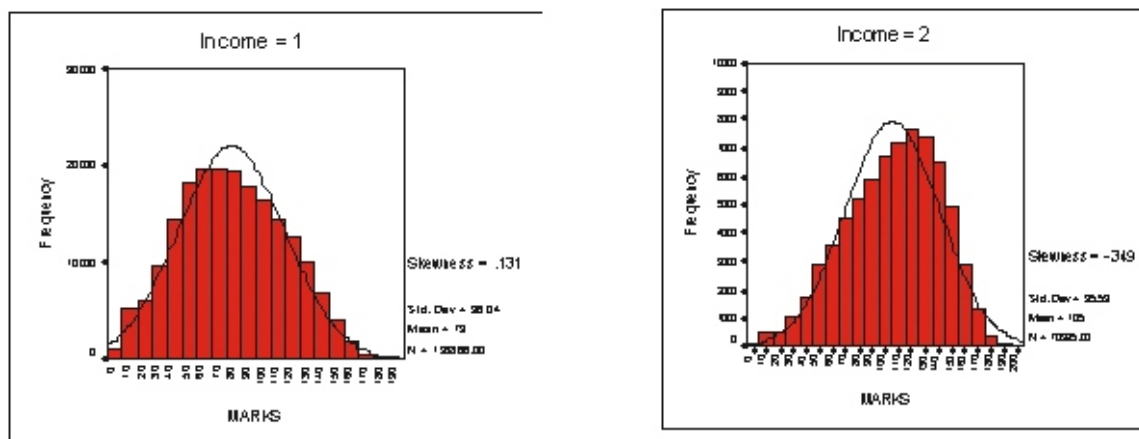




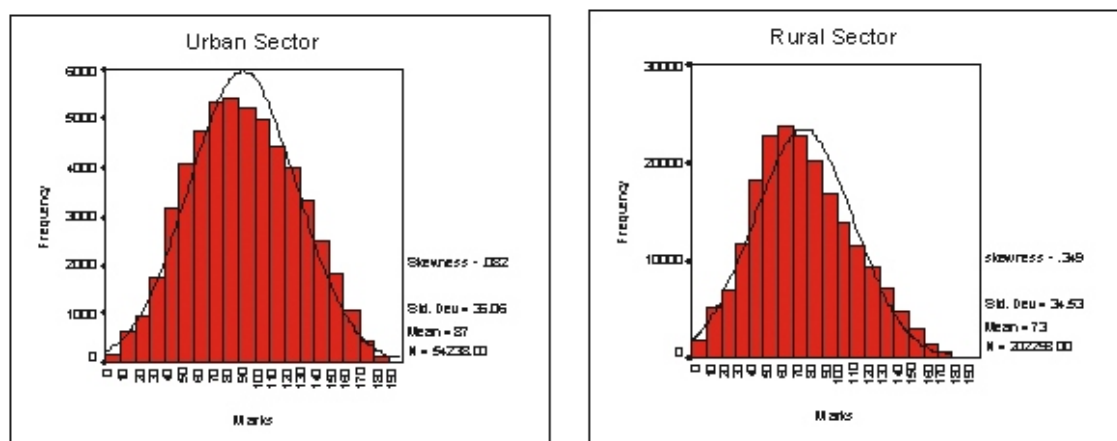
**Figure 5: Performance at Grade 5 Examinations by Income Level– 2005**  
 Low income group High income group



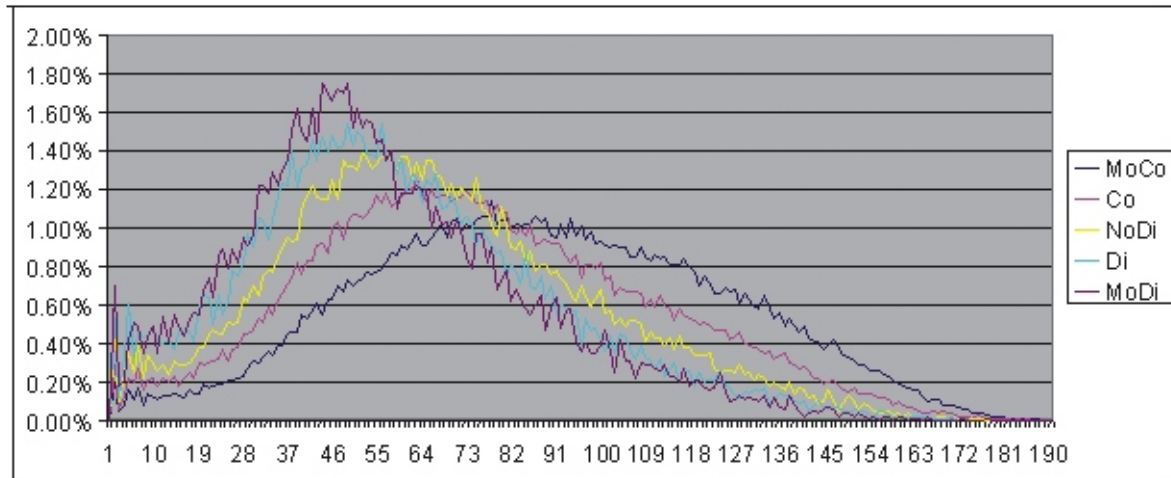
**Figure 6: Performance at Grade 5 Examination by Income Level - 2001**



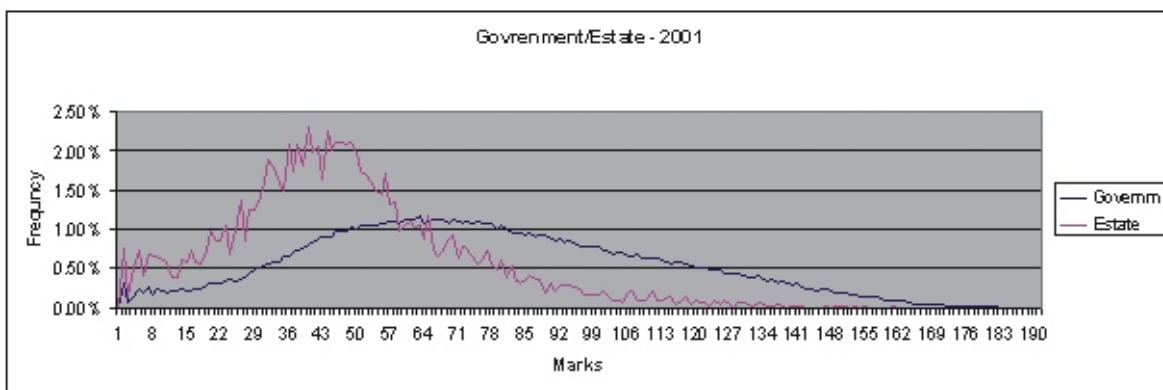
**Figure 7: Performance of Students at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2001**



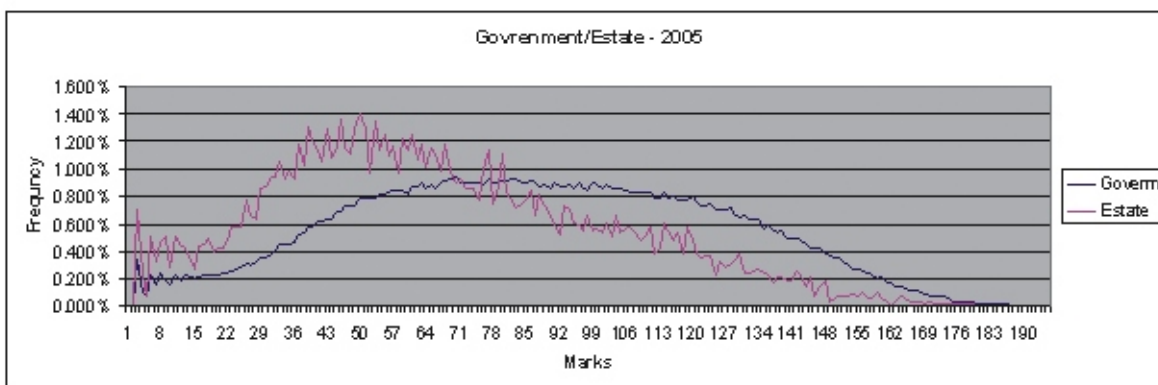
**Figure 8: Performance of Students at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2001 by category of Schools**



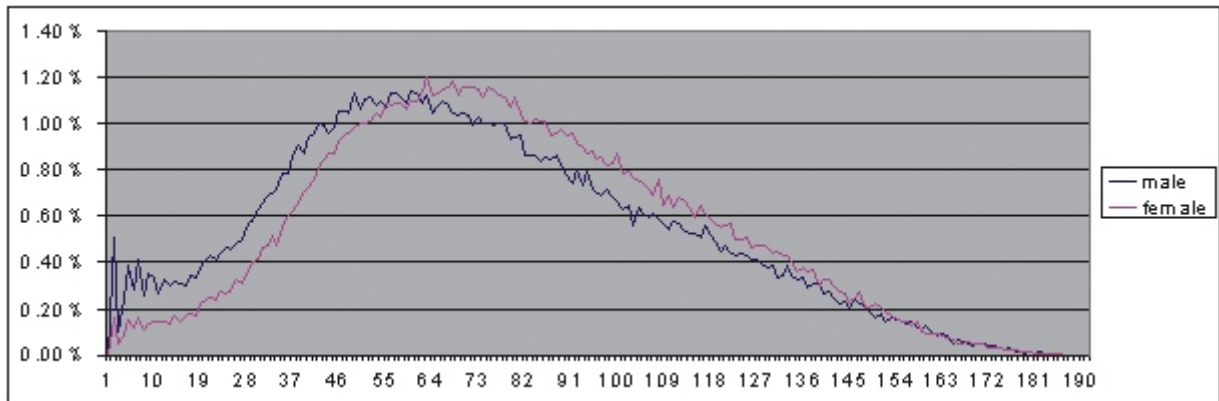
**Figure 9: Performance of Students of Estate Sector Schools and Other Schools at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2001**



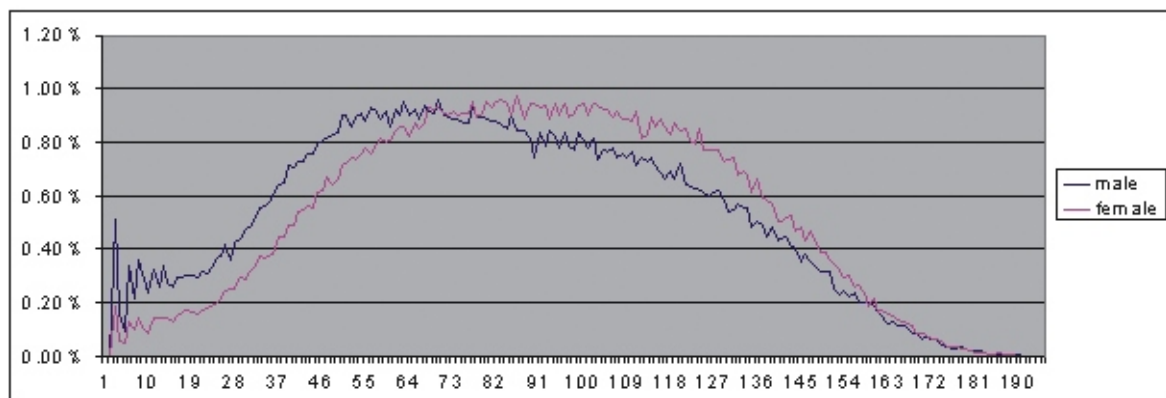
**Figure 10: Performance of Students of Estate Sector Schools and Other Schools at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2005**



**Figure 11: Performance of Male and Female Students at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2001**



**Figure 12: Performance of Male and Female Students at Grade 5 Scholarship and Placement Examination 2005**



**Figure 13: Performance of students in Science at GCE(OL) examination,2001**

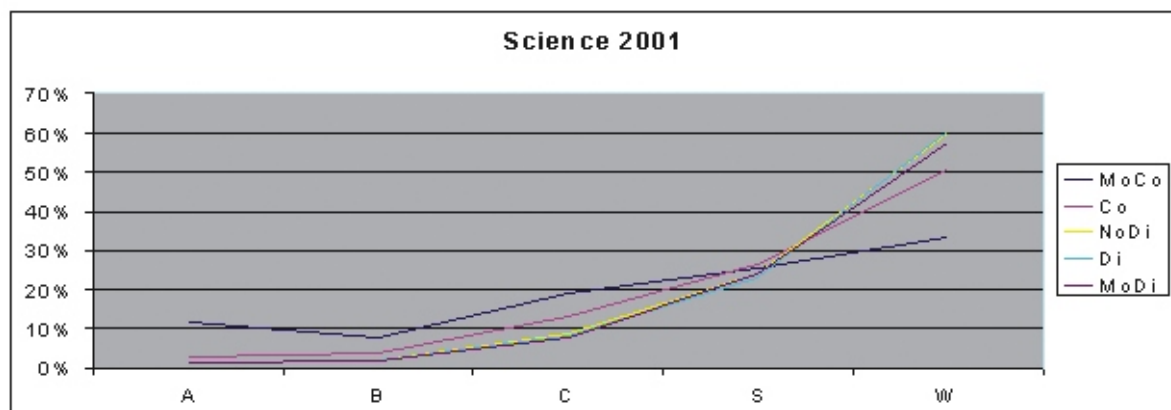


Figure 14: Performance of students in Mathematics at GCE (OL) examination,2001

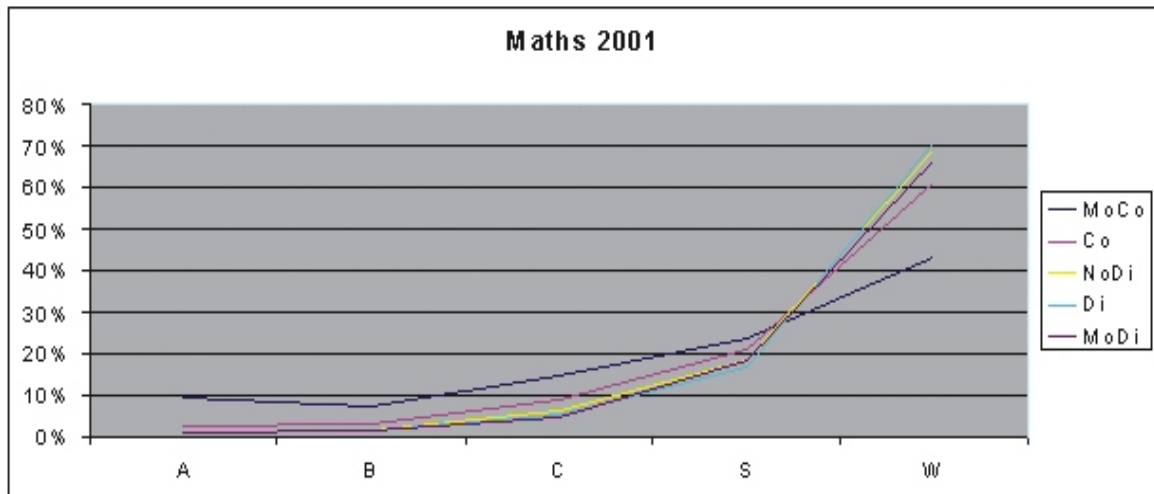


Figure 15: Performance of students in English at GCE(OL) examination,2001

Figure 16: Performance of students in Social Studies at GCE (OL) examination,2001

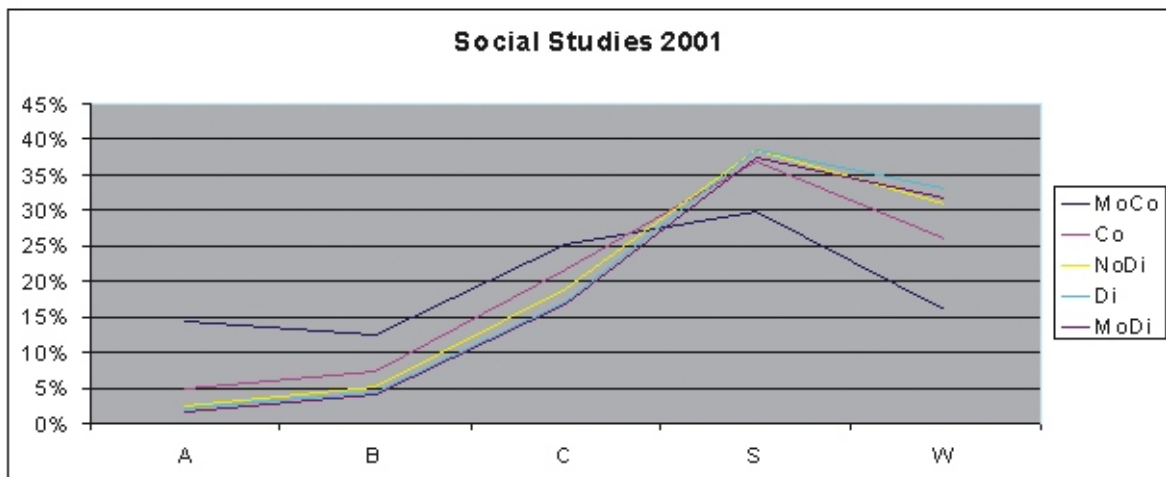


Figure 17: Performance of Students in Science at the GCE (OL) Examinations 2005 by category of Schools

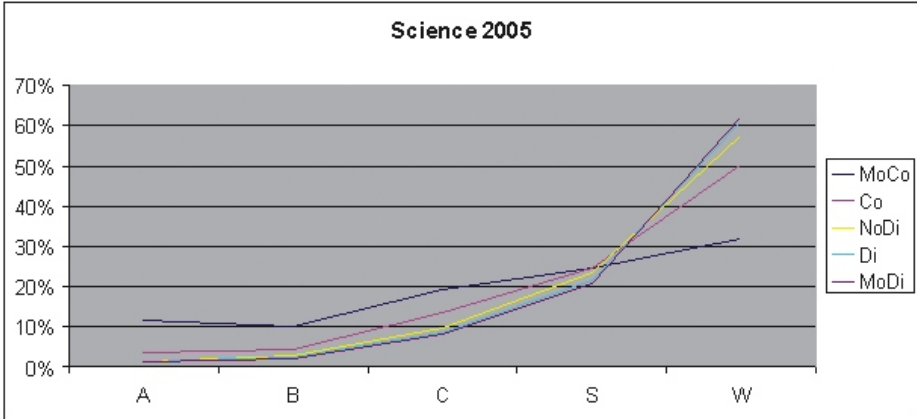


Figure 18: Performance of Students in Mathematics at the GCE (OL) Examinations 2005 by category of Schools

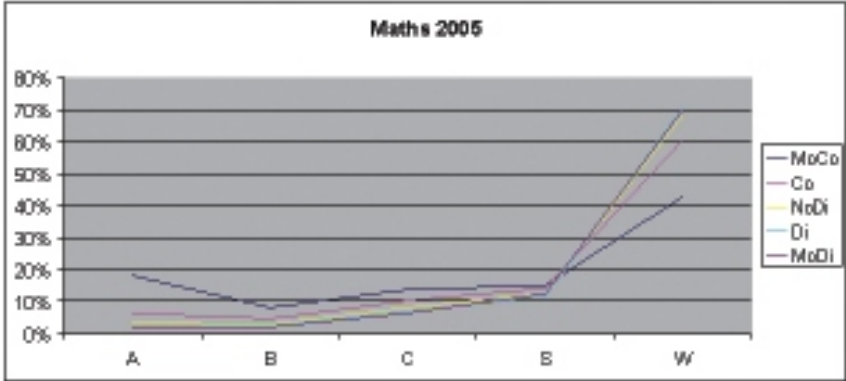
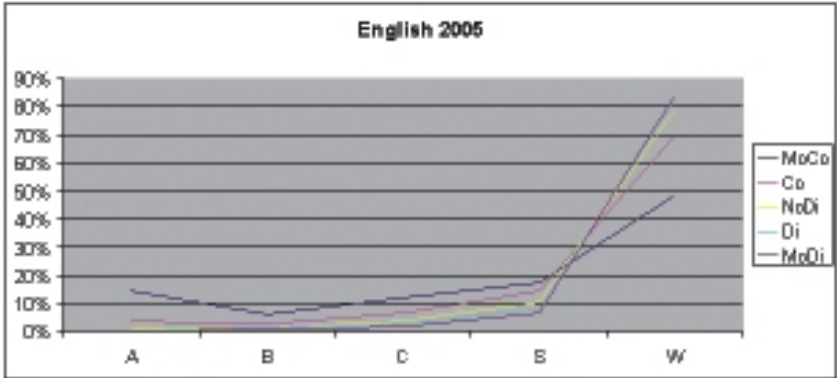
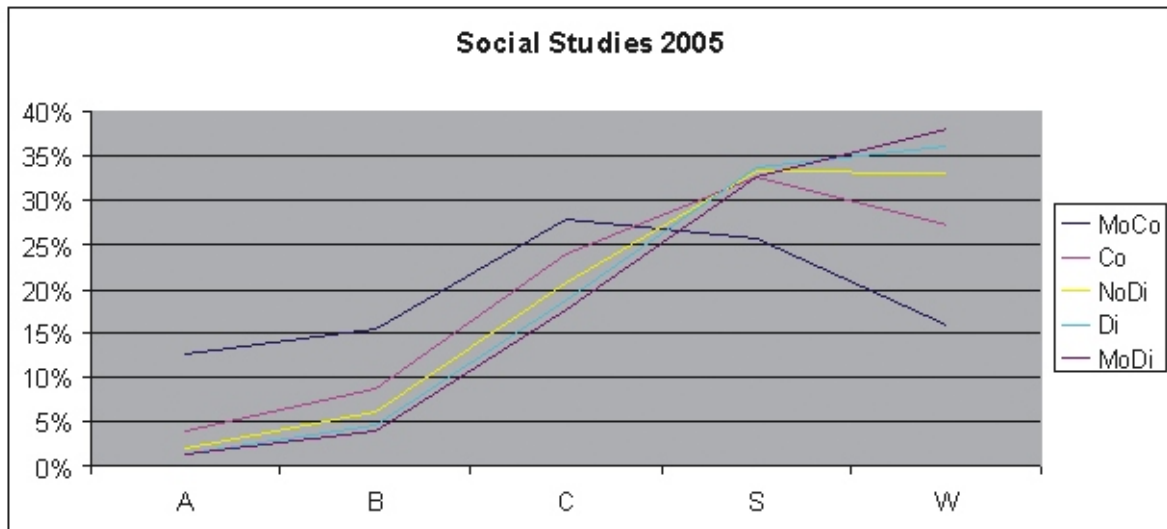


Figure 19: Performance of Students in English at the GCE (OL) Examinations 2005 by category of Schools



**Figure 20: Performance of Students in Social Studies at the GCE (OL) Examinations 2005 by category of Schools**



## Appendix 3

## Chapter 4

**Table 12** Distribution of Learning Resource Utilisation Centres (LRUCs) established under SDP by Project Institutions and District (\*)

Project	DTET	VTA	NAITA	NYSC	Total	District	DTET	VTA	NAITA	NYSC	Total
Mulambo	1	-	1	1	3	14. Mulativu	-	-	-	-	0
Mampaha	1	-	-	1	2	15. Batticaloa	-	-	-	1	1
Mulutara	1	1	-	1	3	16. Ampara	1	1	-	1	3
Mundy	2	-	-	1	3	17. Trincomalee	1	1	-	-	2
Matala	-	1	-	1	2	18. Kurunegala	1	1	1	1	4
Mawara Eliya	1	-	-	1	2	19. Puttalam	1	1	-	-	2
Mulle	1	1	-	-	2	20. Anuradhapura	1	-	-	1	2
Matarara	1	1	-	-	2	21. Polonnaruwa	1	-	-	-	1
Mumbantota	1	1	-	-	2	22. Badulla	-	2	-	1	3
Maffna	1	-	-	-	1	23. Moneragala	1	1	-	1	3
Milinochchi	-	-	-	-	0	24. Ratnapura	2	-	-	-	2
Mannar	-	1	-	-	1	25. Kegalle	1	1	-	-	2
Mawuniya	1	-	1	-	2	Total	21	14	3	12	50

Source:TVEC

**Table 13** Distribution of Career Guidance and Counselling Centres (CGCCs) by institute and district

Project	DTET	VTA	NAITA	NYSC	NGO	Total	District	DTET	VTA	NAITA	NYSC	NGO	Total
Mulambo	1	-	-	-	-	1	14. Mulativu	-	-	-	-	-	0
Mampaha	1	-	1	1	-	3	15. Batticaloa	-	-	-	1	-	1
Mulutara	1	1	-	1	-	3	16. Ampara	1	1	-	1	-	3
Mundy	2	-	-	1	-	3	17. Trincomalee	1	1	-	-	-	2
Matala	1	1	-	1	-	3	18. Kurunegala	2	1	1	1	-	5
Mawara Eliya	1	-	-	1	1	3	19. Puttalam	-	1	-	1	-	2
Mulle	1	1	-	-	-	2	20. Anuradhapura	1	-	-	1	-	2
Matarara	-	1	1	-	-	2	21. Polonnaruwa	1	-	-	-	-	1
Mumbantota	1	1	-	-	-	2	22. Badulla	-	1	1	1	-	3
Maffna	1	-	-	-	-	1	23. Moneragala	1	1	-	1	-	3
Milinochchi	-	-	1	-	-	1	24. Ratnapura	-	-	1	2	-	3
Mannar	-	-	-	-	-	0	25. Kegalle	1	1	-	-	-	2
Mawuniya	-	-	1	-	-	1	Total	18	12	7	14	1	52

Source:TVEC

**Table 14: Excess and Deficit of Teachers by District and Medium and District 2005**

District	Sinhala medium		Tamil medium	
	Excess	Deficit	Excess	Deficit
Colombo	1585	358	195	70
Gampaha	1501	302	32	76
Kalutara	1353	274	151	214
Kandy	3366	213	250	419
Matale	1032	82	82	64
Nuwara Eliya	573	308	147	912
Galle	1354	169	12	32
Matara	2184	103	25	70
Hambantota	1037	178	21	16
Jaffna	0	35	478	392
Kilinochchi	1	0	69	187
Mannar	2	0	26	239
Vavuniya	40	14	105	365
Mullativu	3	0	28	220
Batticaloa	8	15	615	745
Ampara	363	126	375	250
Trincomalee	107	67	253	460
Kurunegala	4693	104	92	225
Puttalam	360	421	36	473
Anuradhapura	1718	774	254	177
Polonnaruwa	163	550	3	140
Badulla	2195	311	117	550
Monaragala	527	284	6	101
Ratnapura	803	532	33	326
Kegalle	1872	145	128	235
Total	26840	5365	3533	6958



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