

**New Education Act  
for General Education in  
Sri Lanka**

CONTEXT, ISSUES AND  
**PROPOSALS**

FINAL REPORT

**National Committee for Formulating  
A New Education Act for General Education**

**National Committee for Formulation a  
New Education Act for  
General Education**

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## Preface

We have great pleasure in submitting our proposals for a New Education Act on the basis of representations of those concerned with the improvement of education reflecting the country's political options, its traditional values, priorities and its vision of the future.

The National Committee was appointed by Hon. Susil Premajayantha, the Minister of Education, to prepare a draft that can be the foundation of a new Act for General Education in Sri Lanka.

From the beginning, we were conscious of the immensity of the task assigned as it involved all aspects of general education. At the first meeting of the National Committee we found that the consideration of the Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939 which is the core law today does not serve any purpose as it is outdated and obsolete. The National Committee decided to develop a new framework. The Committee decided to seek assistance from experts in the field of education who formed into six sub-committees, according to the major sections of the new framework.

In response to our call by way of newspaper advertisements and the media, 246 written submissions were received and oral submissions were recorded at more than 35 meetings with organizations and institutions which requested us to visit them. We met representatives from all the nine provinces and had discussions at meetings organized by Provincial Departments of Education. Many other meetings were conducted with departments and units of the Ministry of Education, Faculties and Departments of Education in the Universities, political parties, teacher trade unions, institutions such as the National Institute of Education, Institute of Policy Studies, Colleges of Education, Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Education, the Chamber of Commerce, representatives and heads of international schools, representatives from more than 45 civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and several individual scholars.

A convention was held from 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and the first draft of proposals were discussed extensively by a representative group from those who made submissions and comments. Revisions and new proposals presented were considered after another series of meetings with those who reacted to the proposals in the first draft submitted to the convention.

I take this opportunity on behalf of the National Committee to extend my deep appreciation to all those who contributed to formulate proposals towards a New Education Act for General Education.

Dr. G. B. Gunawardena  
Chairman

National Committee for the Formulation of a New Education Act for General Education

## Preamble

### A National Education Act - Concerns and Challenges

Education in Sri Lanka appears to have moved on without the guidance of a holistic and coherently enunciated long term educational policy for the last few decades and the resultant lack of direction has brought on uncertainty in the minds of people who are highly prone to undue influence which could create a situation where the vested and parochial interest could exert pressure at the expense of the needs of the nation. Education stands at the crossroads today and the present structure of education, pace and nature of improvement cannot meet the needs of the present situation. Social life is passing through a phase which predicts a multifaceted crisis and the danger of erosion of long accepted values and the goal of democracy and professional ethics are being subjected to increasing strain. The future is likely to bring new tensions together with unprecedented opportunities with a demand for commitment to human values and social justice.

In the face of the present multi-faceted crisis, the faith in education as the best investment for development and as the one field that affects the whole generation, the future of an entire nation for both individual and social progress or for both private and public good, still has many adherents. People continue to believe that education is the solution to the problems that confront Sri Lankan society in building a dynamic, vibrant and a cohesive nation.

The need for a fundamental law of education since independence and more particularly in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka has been long recognized, it has failed to be formulated so far. The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, in the Chapter on Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties states that the government is pledged to achieve the objective of "complete eradication of illiteracy and the assurance to all persons of the right to universal and equal access to education at all levels". The principle of universal and compulsory education is therefore built into the Constitution. Thus if the pace of national development is to be accelerated, there is a need for a well defined, bold and imaginative, development-oriented, broad-based new law. The present tempo of events in education also demands a new direction in process with a comprehensive and coherent policy to regulate education. History and context are critically germane to the policy process.

The principal legislative enactment today, the Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939, has completed 69 years and its provisions are outdated. A number of other Acts bearing on general education were passed since independence. The national education policy in the post-independence era attempted to democratize education and also improve relevance and quality in education within a context of multifarious, political, social and economic changes. These policies emerged as a reaction to the consequences of colonial educational policies and forces generated by the changing socio-economic environment and also were determined by the ideology of the political power structure. Education also became a major component of a massive social welfare programme. Since independence, the thrust of the national policy has been the reduction of socio-cultural and socio-economic inequalities and education was seen as the agent of social mobility.

The policies followed have a number of notable achievements in the effort toward both quantitative and qualitative improvement. Perhaps the most significant were free education from Kindergarten to University, the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction and a unified national system of schools. Reforms for improving the quality and relevance of the curriculum were undertaken in 1970s and late 1990s. But reforms at all levels in the school did not bring about the expected transformation. The dominance of the examinations, Grade 5, OL and AL on the behaviour of all involved, students, teachers and parents whose ultimate goal is to achieve high marks at examinations has prevented institutionalization of changes introduced to improve the quality and relevance of the curriculum.

## **Concerns and Challenges**

### **Education a Right or Privilege**

Every child has the right to education and other fundamental human rights are dependent upon the realization of the right to education. Though we have achieved a high level of enrolment and participation, yet a policy adjustment will need to consider the removal of disparities and provide equality of educational opportunities by meeting the needs of those who have been denied an opportunity so far. The participation in school education is characterized by a great imbalance with the privileged enjoying the best while the disadvantaged are unable to either to enrol or stay in the system. Non participation is the combined effect of deficiencies in the school system and socio-economic discrimination in favour of backward poor, disadvantaged schools and an allocation of resources on a need-based scheme has to be made a pre-requisite. This demands a deliberate policy of greater attention to disadvantaged,

vulnerable groups of children, to remote rural schools, providing basic and essential infrastructural needs of the schools which have so far remained deprived.

The State, the major agent, providing the opportunity for the right to education should translate the international commitments to legislation and action, fulfilling the state obligation with respect to the right to education by ensuring availability through promoting free and compulsory education with political and financial commitment, accessibility by providing equality of opportunity within safer physical distance and a policy of non discrimination, acceptability by allowing the parents and children to choose the type of education culturally appropriate in pupil friendly learning environment and adaptability by providing an education determined by the child's future needs and giving prominence to the best interests of the child.

### **Equity, Quality and Relevance**

Equity, Quality and Relevance are inter-related. Even if equity is assured at a particular level in education, if there are disparities in quality, equity is affected. Similarly, lack of relevance often leads to inequity.

Equity can be assessed at four levels: access, participation, achievement or output and outcomes. Societies attempt to achieve equity in access to education through legislative measures, which strive to ensure that all children gain entry to a school or to remove barriers to entry. Sri Lanka has approved Compulsory Education Regulations, and took several steps to increase access. That these measures have borne fruit is indicated when the enrolment figures at primary level for both boys and girls are considered. Yet studies have shown that certain groups of disadvantaged children such those who are in employment, child beggars, disabled children, and children in conflict either may have never enrolled in school or dropped out of school during compulsory education years.

Ensuring equity at the participation level has proved to be more difficult. Here participation means participating in teaching and learning so that a child's potential could be realized, not only in terms of academic achievement but also in areas such as drama, music and sports in which children could possess innate talents. It is at this level that equity and quality overlap. Concepts like child-friendly schools, interactive teaching-learning, use of multi-media, a uniform national curriculum, diverse methods of assessment without limiting assessment to paper-pencil tests become relevant here. While a considerable percentage of children succeed in progressing to secondary education, the extent to which they enjoy schooling, whether they get the chance of developing unique abilities they possess is open to question. These shortcomings stem from several causes:

unequal facilities among schools, problems of teacher education and teacher deployment, especially for subjects considered as the core subjects, mathematics, English and Science, and distorted perceptions of society including of parents on what a good education is. Children of deprived groups (e.g poor, those residing in remote areas, plantation schools) suffer these inequities more than their more privileged counterparts.

If equity in participation is not achieved fully equity in output or achievement also becomes elusive. Innumerable studies have documented that regional disparities as well as disparities by type of school still continue.

At the level of outcomes, what comes into play is relevance. Relevance is mostly interpreted as related to employment, developing students to be responsible citizens in society respecting accepted norms, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. In spite of attempts at curricular reform, relevance appears to be the weakest link in the education system as is evident from responses of employers and society at large. The major criticisms target examination domination which creates warped minds in the young, lack of general transferable skills which could help students to innovate, create, experiment, adapt, take risks and show entrepreneurial abilities rather than depend on the state for providing employment.

### **Teacher Development and Professionalism**

The effectiveness of schools depends on the quality of teachers more than any other factor. It is necessary to create conditions that will allow teachers to perform the desired role. Recruitment, deployment, transfers, performance evaluation, promotions and professional development should be given consideration and norms of accountability also need to be laid down with a reward system that would result in effective teaching and improved performance in implementing the teaching programmes.

Teachers have enjoyed a position of great respect in our country. However the status of teachers has deteriorated during the last few decades. The changes in the value system in society, deterioration in service conditions, standards of teacher development and recruitment procedures adopted considering teaching as a job and not a service are some reasons that are observed. The conventional notion of professionalism is one 'which is grounded in notions of esoteric knowledge, specialist expertise and public status' but current moves towards competence or standards-based training for teachers reduce the amount of control and discretion open to teachers, both individually and collectively, undermines the dominant role of liberal humanism by replacing it with one of technical rationality turning them into technicians rather than reflective

professionals. This has led to a low trust hierarchical system rather than to a high trust collegial one. This demands a policy that would recognize the recruitment of teachers using a method that would ensure objectivity, merit and conformity with functional requirements, improve the service conditions, create an effective machinery to remove grievances, involve them in planning and management, get trade unions to uphold dignity and professional integrity of teachers, prepare a code of professional ethics and create a climate to promote innovativeness in performing the expected role.

Teacher development should be recognized on the basis that it be treated as a continuous process to ensure that initial and in-service continuous development would be components of a single process. It is necessary at the outset to make a distinction between training, education and development to ascertain where the focus in programmes should lie and also in determining the precise objectives, institutions, courses and programmes. A major issue is coordination, lack of coordination between various bodies and institutions that has led to unnecessary duplication and waste of scarce resources. This can be averted by introducing an appropriate organizational structure to embrace all programmes of teacher development. Policy needs to consider curriculum, modes of development, evaluation and role and status of teacher educators. Finally as those who are joining today as teachers, will teach till 2050, teacher development needs to have a futuristic perspective and develop them to the status of a professional in society.

### **Management and Leadership in Education**

In management of education decentralisation of educational administration was attempted to improve efficiency in practice and participation in decision making in the areas where authority is transferred. It was believed that through decentralisation, regional disparities in education can be better looked after as there will be a closer supervision of the programmes. If decentralisation is to be effectively implemented, the policy should recognize delegation of administration and financial powers, evolution of new patterns of administrative behaviour, reorientation of relationships, establishment of participatory structures and continuous professional development of personnel. A development oriented administration in place of law and order administration that we have inherited, needs to be the future direction of policy as we are concerned about changing and reforming administration so that it can cope effectively with development policies. This would call for a model which would have the flexibility to meet the challenges encountered in the context of universalization of education, equalization of educational opportunity and reorienting the content and process of education.

The leadership capacity at different levels of administration is inadequate to meet the challenges of achieving the objectives and goals of development programmes. A radical re-conceptualization of preparation of educational administration is required. There is a crisis of confidence in management knowledge and the curriculum offered. Mastering a body of knowledge derived from an objectivist epistemology and supported by technical rationality has not helped the administrators to function in 'indeterminate zones of practice' characterized by uncertainty, uniqueness and value conflict. In improving the motivational level of the personnel in administration, it is necessary to review the selection, placement, promotion, transfer, performance appraisal and evaluation procedures to build up an efficient leadership in education.

### **Resource Management and Financing Education**

Adequate resources, human, financial and material are necessary for successful implementation of development programmes. With an emphasis on quality improvement, increased funding and resource mobilization it is imperative but budgetary concerns have not allowed for such resources. The available resources need to be appropriately mobilized and managed with timing in such a way that they interact dynamically with a desired time framework. Allocation and utilization procedures and practices need to be reviewed to facilitate the developmental and innovative changes introduced to the system. The fiscal policy now in practice, more suited to maintenance administration needs to be revised adequately to meet the demands of development administration when greater initiative and innovation are expected from those who will manage the system at different levels.

In the face of budgetary pressures, cost recovery and cost sharing programmes must be explored as a conscious policy of the government. The rigid procedures of audit and supervision practices which have deterred developmental activity and behaviour need to be reviewed in the context of new processes and practices introduced to the system. Foreign aid given at different times and used mainly for launching new projects and also expanding existing ones need review as they do not always take cognizance of the behaviour of recurrent expenditure. In general, what demands the attention of the policy makers are (1) the infrastructure deficiencies in facilities (2) quality improvement of the system and (3) decentralization of the financial set up.

### **Consumer Rights or Citizen Rights**

Some view the education system as inefficient where administrators are complacent, unresponsive to changing needs and wasteful and irresponsible in using public funds. They also consider that schools transmit irrelevant, outdated

knowledge to students who leave school with skills ill-suited to the needs of society. In this context a shift from state to market is advocated. They also claim that the adoption of market practices will not only promote efficiency and accountability but will also advance the democratic principle of free choice.

Given the incompatibility between education and marketization, should it be adopted simply because they have become world trends? Education is a public service and it is the obligation of the state to make education available, accessible and acceptable to people. But increasingly education is being treated as a private good rather than a public responsibility. Market mechanisms and economic values of marketization should not be permitted to overshadow the human values which have been the essence of education. Thus it is necessary to strike a balance between consumer rights and citizen rights in

### **Challenges**

In the context of the present effort towards development in a situation of crisis, there are challenges before those who will formulate a new policy for education. In achieving the goal of equality of educational opportunity, it becomes essential to improve the capabilities of the disadvantaged to participate in education. To ensure equality and social justice in education, a continuing challenge is posed by the mobilization of resources which should place more emphasis on the needs of the underprivileged. The need to bring a fit between the values and belief systems embedded in the culture and modernity generated by the science and technology is well recognized. The challenge here is to critically appraise tradition and modernity to draw out what is best and relevant in both for growth and development. Yet another need is to develop a genuine indigenous base for education through endogeneity in conceptualisation without depending on foreign models. The challenge here is to develop the capacity to perform the desired task. A final challenge is posed by a recognition of the need for a development-oriented leadership style. Alternate styles have to be developed in place of the bureaucratic styles that have persisted without being sensitive to the changes in the educational process.

Considering the concerns given, the policy formulated should gain the status of an Education Act so that it will get legal recognition and power to regulate the process of education. The policy accepted needs to be re-examined in the light of the experience of its implementation at least every five years as it is well known that changes introduced in education take time for institutionalisation. The new policy should ensure that innovations and new ideas put into practice get tested for a sufficient period of time to permit an understanding of its relevance.

## **GENERAL EDUCATION**

•	General Education Policy Background
•	Legislation Governing General Education
•	Socio Economic Context



## General Education Policy Background

Sri Lanka has inherited a long tradition of education with religious institutions as the early centres of learning. The village temples and Pirivenas were the traditional educational institutions for the Buddhists while Hindus who nurtured Brahmin Guru tradition had their education at Hindu temples. Though religion and morality were the fundamental concerns, this traditional system of education didn't overlook the secular needs as testified by the monumental creations of architecture, irrigation and art.

With the conquest of the maritime belt of the island by the Portuguese followed by the Dutch, this traditional system of education was stifled with simultaneous advent of their elite institutions, seminaries and parish schools with proselytisation as the foremost aim. It was the Dutch, however who introduced the concept of compulsory education albeit with negligible results.

The British who succeeded the Dutch brought the entire country under their rule in 1815. They had a lasting impact on the education system of the island and laid the foundation of the present education system. In spite of the expansion of the school system across a wider range and broadening of the school curriculum, the British too failed to uphold the principle of equity in education. The dual system of education of elite, English schools and minimal mass education in the local languages, and the advantaged status of the south-west and northern sectors of the country were components of the legacy transferred to local policy makers in the nineteen thirties.

The decade starting from 1930 marks a transitional period in education. Universal franchise introduced in 1931 created momentum for social change. The Executive Committee of Education of the State Council channeled this impetus towards radical change in education. The colonial power structure in educational administration was diluted with the introduction of the Education Ordinance of 1939.

The emergence of a middle class and increase of local representation in the legislature led to a series of progressive steps towards both equity and quality of education in the 1940s. The Central Schools established island-wide promoted equitable distribution of secondary education facilities. The scholarship scheme offered access to secondary and higher education to low income group. The free education, deservingly known as Kannangara reforms was a significant milestone in the history of education in the country that ensured free education from the primary level to the university.

The educational scene changed significantly with the resurgence of nationalism and cultural revivalism in 1950s. With the introduction of mother tongue as the medium of instruction and the provision of a network of schools throughout the island, there was a rapid quantitative growth in the enrolment and participation rates. The takeover of schools in 1960 is an important step forward towards the establishment of a national school system. Language and religion ceased to be barriers to educational opportunity and welfare measures such as midday meals and subsidized transport helped attract the poor to the formal school. The results of these measures were reflected in the dramatic increase in the rates of participation, and literacy and decline of gender disparities over the years.

However, this quantitative explosion didn't accompany as improvement in quality and relevance in education. As a result, the products of education could not be effectively absorbed into the world of work for economic development resulting in unemployment. The educated youth staged insurrections in seventies and eighties. In spite of such unwholesome outcomes, remarkable effort was taken to augment the relevance of education by reforms in seventies which introduced a common balanced curriculum for the secondary level.

Decentralization of education brought about by the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution (1987) attempted to restructure the administrative framework of education to match the local requirements and legislature. Since thought was given that decentralization would increase efficiency, attempts have already been taken to hand over the financial management to schools and to carry out assessment on classroom basis (School Based Assessment). The SBA is believed to combine both formative and summative evaluations leading to a better judgment about the child. Meanwhile, the establishment of Sri Lanka Teachers Service, Sri Lanka Principals Service, Sri Lanka Teacher Educators Service and Sri Lanka Education Administrators Service helped streamline the roles of personnel in the education sector and promote their service conditions.

The National Education Commission presented proposals aiming at achieving a consensus with regard to education policy in 1992 based on options of various organizations as well as the general public. The proposals envisaged extension of educational opportunities, quality improvement in education in schools, and promotion of teacher service. The implementation of recommendations received government support with subsequent establishment of the Presidential Task Force on General Education.

The curriculum reforms launched on pilot basis in 1997 and island-wide in 1999, took several progressive steps to improve quality and relevance in education. The reforms made several structural changes in primary and secondary

curricula, recommended activity based learning and proposed the identification of essential learning competencies. The reform proposals attached importance to the promotion of English in the school system in a context of increasing globalization and technological advancement, an expanding private sector and consequent demand for English proficiency in the labour market. These reforms were followed by the presentation of a comprehensive set of proposals for a national policy framework on general education (2003) by the National Education Commission.

In spite of the said achievements, one cannot be totally complacent of the condition of education in the country. It has been revealed that 17% of the compulsory school going age children are out of the schools. This number is even more in the senior secondary level. High disparities in the school system compel parents to vie for better schools. Many schools lack essential resources, amenities and high order spaces. The recruitment, deployment and professional development of personnel in the system is malaised by the lack of coherent policies and procedures. Undue emphasis on summative examinations has led to an 'examination syndrome" among the children. Majority of the disabled children do not have access to inclusive education. The percentage seeking tertiary education is meagerly small.

Over the years, the Sri Lankan education system has evolved and undergone multitudes of changes in different social, administrative cultural and economic backgrounds. In current society which is dominated by market forces and global trends, the policy makers in education confront challenges posed by dilemmas created by state and private monopoly, central and peripheral ownership, global and local demands and individual and social freedom. The core elements of education are centered on the human being and human development. The role of education is not one of merely following and reacting to trends.

### **Legislation Governing General Education**

The provisions of the Education Ordinance No.31 of 1939 as amended by Ordinance Nos. 61 of 1939, 21 of 1945, 3 of 1946, 26 of 1947, Act No 5 of 1951, 43 of 1943, 37 of 1958 and law of No 35 of 1973 govern general education today. Several other laws/Acts bearing on general education were passed by Parliament since Independence and they are (1) Assisted Schools and Training Colleges Act No.5 of 1960, No.8 of 1961 and No.65 of 1981, Public Examinations Act No. 25 of 1968, Pirivena Education Act No. 64 of 1979, National Institute of Education Act No.28 of 1985, Colleges of Education Act of 1986 and National Education Commission Act of 1991. We have also ratified international, global

declarations: (1) the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, (2) Convention against Discrimination in Education in 1960, (3) Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966, (4) Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, (5) World Declaration on Education for All, 1990, (6) Dakar Framework for Action - EFA, 2000 and (7) Millennium Development Goals, 2000.

The Education Ordinance of 1939 which is 69 years old is outdated and obsolete. The other Acts passed by Parliament need revision and amendment to meet the demands of effective implementation of reforms and changes introduced to the system and we are bound to respect, protect and fulfil the international conventions and agreements for which we are signatories. In this context of a weak legal base for general education, the National Education Commission (2003) recommended "the formulation and enactment of a development-oriented simple and broad-based new Education Act incorporating all relevant aspects of existing Ordinances, Acts, Laws and Regulations relating to general education and introducing new features where necessary". In this task there is a need to consider the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution (1987) which has devolved the subject of education to the provincial authorities.

In analysing the above current legal base for general education, the 1939 Ordinance and its sections on central authority, advisory bodies, urban and rural education authorities, religion in schools and managing estate schools are all out of date and is beyond revision and amendment. In formulating a new legal framework, since the Education Ordinance, 1939 is not applicable in the current context, provision contained in the other acts and laws on education need to be revised and incorporated in the new Education Act.

Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act No. 5 of 1960, applies to assisted schools other than the schools which the proprietors have elected to administer as unaided schools and these schools were placed under the management of the Director of Education. The unaided schools could not levy fees other than the facilities fees and had to follow the general education policy of the government. The Minister was given the power to convert unaided schools to Director-managed schools, and if he were to find that the school was being administered in contravention of the provisions of the Act or any regulation, the Minister had the power to convert unaided schools to Director-managed schools. Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Supplementary Provisions) Act No.8 of 1961 provided for vesting in the Crown without compensation the property of Assisted Schools which were Director-managed and property vested could be used for conducting and maintaining the school. Further this Act prohibited any person establishing schools for the education of children who are between the ages of five years and fourteen (both ages

inclusive). This Act was further amended by Act No. 65 of 1981 to state that the government could give financial assistance by way of grants from state funds to any unaided school and the aid given would be subject to regulations made by the Minister.

Public Examinations Act No. 25 of 1968 was enacted to make more effective provisions for the proper conduct of public examinations for the punishment of offences committed in connection with such public examinations and the Commissioner was entrusted with the power to issue certificates or awards to candidates who are successful at any examination. This Act includes examination law related to impersonation, divulging of information or making fraudulent alterations, theft or disposal or tampering of secret documents, use of faked documents and finally the powers of the Commissioner with regard to disciplinary control.

Pirivena Education Act No.64 of 1979 provided for the reorganization of Pirivena Education, the establishment of a Pirivena Education Board, the registration, maintenance and administration of Pirivenas and the establishment of Pirivena Training Institute. The objects of this Act was to provide education facilities to Bhikkhus and male lay pupils over fourteen years of age who are desirous of following a course of studies and who wish to receive that education in a Buddhist environment.

National Institute of Education Act No. 28 of 1985 established the National Institute of Education. Its objects were to promote the development of education in general and in particular to advise the Minister regarding plans and programmes, provide and promote studies on education, initiate and promote innovative practices in education including adaptation of technology, provide for the development of professional and managerial competence of personnel in the education system, make available specialist services in education and to coordinate with other institutions having similar objectives in education. The administration and management of the affairs of the Institute were vested in the Council of the Institute, to exercise the powers assigned by the Act. The Council prepared the annual plan and budget for approval by the Minister and an Academic Affairs Board was made responsible for all academic affairs of the Institute. The Director-General was to be the principal executive and academic officer of the Institute and the Council was given the power to appoint the staff of the Institute. The composition and conduct of the affairs of the Council and the Academic Affairs Board are determined by regulations issued by the Minister.

The Colleges of Education Act No. 30 of 1986 provided for the establishment of Colleges of Education by the Minister of Education for the purpose of conducting courses of study leading to the award of degrees, diplomas of the National Institute of Education which are recognized as teaching qualifications. All Colleges established under this Act are deemed to have been registered as colleges affiliated to the National Institute of Education. A College of Education Board under the direction of the Minister is the managing authority of the Colleges. A Chief Commissioner of the Board was to be the chief administrative officer of the Board and the Superintendent of Colleges. Under the academic powers entrusted, the Colleges are to provide courses leading to award of degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions of the National Institute of Education and with the concurrence and under the supervision of the NIE to hold examinations for the above awards.

National Education Commission Act No. 19 of 1991 empowers the President subject to the provisions of the Constitution to declare from time to time the National Education policy which was to be conformed to by all authorities and institutions responsible for education, on the recommendations by the NEC on all aspects of education, ensuring continuity, responding to changing needs. NEC is expected to renew and analyse periodically the policy and programmes and advise the President. Under the powers given by this Act, the Commission was to carry out studies and research as necessary, conduct public and private hearings with a view to ascertaining the proposals of experts, professionals and general public, prepare plans, liaise with other organizations and arrange for the conduct of educational research and appoint expert groups, advisory bodies as may be necessary for the proper discharge of its functions. The chief executive of the Commission is the Chairman appointed by the President.

Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution (1987) makes education a devolved subject as set out in Appendix III. In the Reserved list, education does not appear and the Central government can only lay down the national policy in education. The range of powers given to the Provincial Councils is in Appendix III List 1. The powers given are related to, provision of resources to all state schools (except National Schools), supervision and management of pre-schools and state schools, transfer and disciplinary control of educational personnel, recruitment to teaching service, appointment of principals to school other than 1AB and 1C, appointment of Provincial Boards of Education, preparation and implementation of annual plans, appraisal of performance of principals, teachers and other educational personnel, conducting in-service training with NIE approval, conducting local examinations approved by Commissioner of Examinations, implementation of non-formal education, registration and supervision of pre-

schools, construction and maintenance of education buildings, libraries and playgrounds, procuring and distribution of teaching materials and textbooks.

The current legislation presented above governing education, does not provide the necessary direction as many of the provisions are outdated and are not applicable in the current context. While repealing those which are not applicable, it has become necessary to include new legislations to meet the current challenges resulting from change introduced and further development demanded by pressures from globalization and the local environment which influence education.

## Socio Economic Context

Sri Lanka in the post independence period has achieved a significant level of socio-economic transformation, and the emerging trends in our population, economy and social system do influence the system of education.

The population of Sri Lanka is estimated to be 19.5 million and is increasing moderately at 1.2 per cent per annum. During the last fifty years life expectancy has increased from 42.7 to 72.01 years. Infant mortality has dropped from 141 to 12 per thousand and the death rate from 20 to 6 per thousand. The percentage of urban population has been static and remains at 22 percent and the urban migration has been insignificant mainly due to the improvements taken place in the infrastructure facilities in recent years. Communication has improved with fixed telephone facilities for 17 per 100, cellular phones 71 per 100 and internet/email with 11 per thousand. Eighty three percent of the households have electricity.

The national literacy level has increased from 40 percent in 1940 to 93 percent by 2007 and the younger population shows a high literacy level. The school going children has increased from 32 percent in 1940 to 92 percent in 2007 and the percentage of children attending secondary education has also significantly increased showing a 50-50 gender parity.

Sri Lanka has moved from a low income economy to a middle income economy and has a growth rate of 6.8% in GDP in 2007 and the per capita Gross National Product (GNP) has reached US\$ 1355 in 2006. Sri Lanka also has assumed a HDI figure of 0.74 which is the 104<sup>th</sup> position out of 179 countries. In spite of economic growth, the distribution of economy has shown wide disparities. The income of the highest 30 percent has increased to 65.6 percent while the poorest 50 percent get only 17.64 percent.

Education policy needs to take cognizance of the economic changes and the need to enhance the educational facilities to the relatively poor children further. This is because, the children of affluent parents get better assistance from parents as well as a bigger share of public funds making education conforming to the social class structure rather than providing social mobility through education.

Sri Lanka is a multi ethnic, multi religious and multicultural society. The conflict between the terrorist group LTTE and the government which ruined the country during the last 30 years is over and the opportunity for children of all ethnic groups to socialize together and build one nation has dawned. Education will be the best investment to build up unity in diversity.

General Education Indicators		
1.	Number of Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government Schools</li> <li>• Private</li> <li>• Pirivena</li> </ul>	9,662 94 658
2.	Students	4,100,000
3.	New Admissions	332,000
4.	Teachers	224,000
5.	Student Teacher Ratio	19
6.	Total Govt Expenditure	Rs.92.5 billion
7.	Examination results	
	Grade V Scholarship Exam	
	above cut off mark	11.8%
	above 35 marks in both paper	58.83%
	GCE (O/L)	
	qualify for AL	56.81%
	GCE (A/L)	
	qualify to apply for University Education	61.9%

Socio Economic Indicators	
Population	19.5 million
Literacy Rate	93%
Life Expectancy	72 years
Infant Mortality per 000	12
Death Ratio per 000	6
Population growth	1.2%
GNP per capita (2006)	US\$ 1355

# CHAPTER 1

<b>GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES</b>	
<b>1.1.</b>	<b>National Goals</b>
<b>1.2.</b>	<b>Guiding Principles</b>



# GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## 1.1 National Goals

A national system of education should assist individuals and groups to achieve major national goals that are relevant to the individual and society. Hence, it should bring into focus the need to orient education in the context of national development.

The concept of development is not a unidirectional phenomenon but is multidimensional and encompasses physical, intellectual, emotional and ethical components.

Therefore, the prime concern of general education should be the integrated development of an individual whereby he/she can effectively contribute culturally, socially, politically and economically. The basic education should enable the individual to participate in productive activities, achieve the stability of self and society, view overall structures objectively in broad perspectives and evolve a sensitivity towards a shared regional, national and international outlook.

In this context, the following goals for a national system of education are suggested.

### **1.1.1. Developing a Sri Lankan citizen with love and dedication to Motherland through fostering national cohesion, national integrity and national unity**

The rapid advancement of science, technology and communication has made the world smaller with the passage of time and the world citizen in a global village has become a pervasive concept. Paradoxically, the realization of this in reality is being distanced due to various divisive forces that compartmentalize humankind. Hence, in the present critically important phase of national growth, there should be a reawakening of a functioning sense of national cohesion, national integrity and national unity.

**1.1.2. Respecting human dignity recognizing pluralistic nature and cultural diversity in Sri Lanka upholding tolerance and reconciliation**

Sri Lanka is a multiethnic, multi religious and multi linguistic society. Hence, the unity, harmony and peace which have been threatened in the recent past have to be restored and consolidated not by conniving at the ideologies of supremacism and dominance but by realizing the beauty of unity within diversity and mutual respect. For this, bigotry should be avoided, welcoming consultation, compromise and consensus. Every individual ought to be ensured of his/her due and dignified position, by virtue of being a Sri Lankan.

Religious and cultural values inculcate concern and consideration for others in society but the danger of same becoming the forces for division and discrimination should be dispelled through tolerance and reconciliation. Education must bring about the consciousness that no one can be an island unto himself and that all will have to live as a single nation. People must be able to appreciate cultural heterogeneity and enjoy the multiplicity of the social mosaic.

**1.1.3. Recognizing and conserving the worthy elements of the nation's heritage while responding to the challenges of a changing world**

Heritage reserves the wealth of knowledge bequeathed over generations of a nation so the cultural traditions that we are heir to will be an asset. Education should enable a nation to critically evaluate the knowledge and preserve and utilize the best in the light of modernity. Investigation into the causes of empirical notions will not only provide avenues to expand it for the benefit of mankind but also to reject the unfounded beliefs and superstitions.

**1.1.4. Creating and supporting an environment imbued with the values of social justice and a democratic way of life**

The emergence of a stable and enduring sense of national integrity demands that pervasive pattern of social justice should be progressively and effectively put in place. It should emancipate people from all sorts of social discriminations and promote respect for human rights, awareness of duties and obligations, and a deep and abiding concern for one another. The democratic way of life should be supported by fostering a temperament whereby a democratic verdict is respected.

Part of this will relate to formal laws and the judiciary. But a large component of social justice will only emerge from a recognition of the duties and the rights by all responsible informed citizens. This informal pattern of pervasive social justice must depend on genuine goodwill and harmony among all groups.

**1.1.5. Promoting a life style based on respect for human values and sustainable development**

The question of values has been of deep concern in Asia over centuries. It has had its roots in religion and culture. The great civilizations that flourished displayed these values in diverse forms. Love and compassion towards fellow human beings, truth and fair play, justice and virtue, morality and munificence pervaded all actions and all activities. Moral and spiritual values can primarily be derived from one's own religion and culture but should take into account the fact that 'values are more caught rather than taught'.

There is value content in each of the 'disciplines' in the curriculum at all levels. A subject in the classroom becomes a discipline in view of the value it adds to the total development of the human being. A curriculum is a totality of exposures and consequent experience widening one's outlook and broadening one's vision. Leading a simple life with contentment, dispelling greed for self-aggrandizement, living within one's means and finding satisfaction in it, using resources economically giving an opportunity for future generations to use them and protection of environment are values that must be enriched and deepened to serve the future.

**1.1.6 Promoting the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals**

The security and stability of an individual is ensured by his/her physical and mental health. On the physical side, one must develop a healthy body with the necessary strength to resist not only disease and ill health, but also stress, strain and trauma. On the mental side, the capacity to think clearly, think analytically as well as holistically, and to arrive at viable conclusions are key factors.

**1.1.7. Cultivating the attributes of a well - integrated and balanced personality**

From a human development perspective an individual has many facets other than academic excellence. The personality attributes such as critical and analytical thinking, problem solving, decision making, interpersonal relations and team work, responsibility and human values that are essential to ensure effective performance in the work place as well as a multifaceted quality of life have to be promoted through education.

**1.1.8. Developing human resources for productive work that enhances the quality of life of the individual and the nation to contribute to economic development**

Education does not exist in a vacuum but is intertwined with economy, the political and cultural milieu, social mentality and many other factors. Economic status has become the most powerful driving force of a nation and its improvement is considered one of its main goals. Thus, education is bound to have an effect and responsibility on the upliftment of a country's economy and preparation of a contented work force that is effectively absorbed into it. Education assumes a wider meaning when placed against the background of economic development. It simply doesn't mean vocationalisation of education yet aspires to produce a work force equipped with aptitude, skills and ethics for the job market. Thus, expenditure in human resource development has to be considered as an investment in the development process itself. While blooming the full potential of an individual is the principal responsibility of education, readying people for employment is its invariable offshoot.

**1.1.9. Empowering individuals to adapt to and manage change, and to develop capacity to cope with rapid change, complexities and unforeseen situations**

Cultivating element of resilience and adaptability to change is essential. The world is changing so fast that one's survival could depend on sound reasoning and informed insight will prevent one from being left behind.

One must also simultaneously develop the capacity to manage information, events and changes. The competence to understand the nature of change will enable an extent of control. The rate of change such as is seen today, will almost certainly increase in the decades ahead.

**1.1.10. Fostering a liberated world view in keeping with modern knowledge to secure a respectable place in global community**

Education should enable a nation to secure an esteemed place in the international community. In its achievement, the inevitable competition in the international arena has to be recognized but dealing with it with a sense of international cooperation is momentous. Acquisition of modern knowledge stemming from different sources is a part of this exercise, but if done with a non-critical and captive mind, may lead to a dependency syndrome. It is by developing a capacity to critically evaluate both indigenous and exogenous knowledge that one becomes capable of fostering a world outlook.

## 1.2 Guiding Principles

The Act envisages to set new directions for change with an overall vision in Education Governance and build future images to commit the State to a forward looking development - oriented education system from which a better socio - economic and moral order will be ensured in harmony with the emerging technological culture and best of the Sri Lankan heritage.

In the New Education Act 2009, the following guiding principles are enshrined.

### 1.2.1. Rights, Duties, Privileges and Equal opportunities

**Education being a fundamental right of every child, the State should take responsibility of making education available for all ensuring equity and giving leadership to all providers of school education**

Every child should have the right for education. The State should make available facilities to protect the right of every child to receive an education. The Constitution of Sri Lanka has categorically stated that the right every child has to receive an education should be protected.

Since education is a fundamental right, on the part of the State, it is obligatory to make a quality education available to the child while ensuring equal opportunities by the provision of resource on an equitable basis.

### 1.2.2. Total Development of the Child in All Aspects

**Education should ensure total and integrated development of the child in a balanced and harmonious way enhancing his/her potential across a range of different dimensions including physical, emotional, linguistic, social, intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual**

The education provided from initial schooling to the end of the Secondary grades should be geared for the total development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent. The education given should consider the development of academic abilities and competencies required for a knowledgeable citizen (cognitive aspect) and inculcate good manners, habits, attitudes and values required to become a considerate social member (affective

aspect). Through education one should be able to develop skills and competencies necessary “to do” (psycho-motor aspect).

These aspects need to be given due place in the curriculum and the learning-teaching process. Children of the compulsory education period (5-16 yrs) should be taught a common and balanced curriculum that integrates national heritage and salient features of Sri Lanka in conformity with the National Goals.

### **1.2.3. Free and Compulsory Education**

**State should ensure free education from kindergarten to university and compulsory education to all children aged 5-16 years making it available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable for them**

Education should be free and compulsory for all Sri Lankan children of the age cohort 5 -16 years. Compulsory education provided by the State should be free. Steps should be taken to improve the retention rate of children during the compulsory education years.

Education from grade one to the first degree at the Universities should be free of charge. This noble principle should be adopted firmly and it should be allowed to continue without any limitation.

State should also realize the importance of promoting accessibility through provision of resources while making it acceptable to all by raising its quality. Education should also be adaptable to match the changing needs of society as well as the demands of those at the receiving end.

### **1.2.4. Education and World of Work**

**Education should develop the potential of an individual to the fullest possible extent to make him/her productively employable in the world of work**

As the notions of ‘learning to do’ and ‘learning to be’ accentuate, the education and the world of work are interlinked. In spite of this relationship, the purpose of general education is different from that of ‘vocational education’ which aims at preparing an individual for a particular job or an occupation that requires distinctive knowledge and specific set of skills. Also, it is difficult to see a direct interconnection between the content of any general education curriculum and job

requirements especially in a society of rapidly changing technology and market forces.

Education aims at total development of the individual. It aspires to develop one's aptitude so that he becomes knowledgeable, refined and dexterous making him a better fit for any position in the world of work. The school leaver should be a person equipped with a minimum package of knowledge, skills and attitudes so that he can face challenges, solve problems, enjoy work and respect work ethics.

Thus, what is required is a proper mode of transfer of training whereby the turn out of education are profitably absorbed into the world of work.

### **1.2.5. Medium of Instruction**

**Mother Tongue (Sinhala/Tamil) should continue to be the medium of instruction at Primary and Secondary levels. Bilingual or English medium is an option at the secondary level**

Learning in mother tongue helps develop creative thinking and problem solving ability. Therefore mother tongue (Sinhala or Tamil) should be the medium of instruction in the Primary School.

In the grades above Primary Level too, the medium of instruction should be either Sinhala or Tamil. However, option may be given to the students (with the consent of parents) to study in the English medium if they so desire, yet this should not result in elitism and alienation from the cultural milieu.

Learning other languages apart from one's own helps enhance the communication, so it can be considered to make provision for learning English, the main second language in the country. Therefore, in order to cater to the need prevailing in society for English education, facilities should be made for bilingual education (some subjects taught in the mother tongue and some subjects in English medium).

### **1.2.6. National Languages**

**Provision should be made for Sinhala speaking children to learn Tamil and Tamil speaking children to learn Sinhala**

As given in the section on languages in the Constitution the National Languages are Sinhala and Tamil. In order to enhance social cohesion and social harmony in society, the languages of the major two communities in the country, i.e. Sinhala and Tamil should be taught to every child.

### **1.2.7. Religious Education**

**All children should learn their religion which also should aim at producing an individual committed to ethical values**

Every religion has its own beliefs as well as ethical and moral components. Majority hold the view that values, morality and spirituality are successfully instilled into minds through religious education. Respecting this view, it is advisable to make religion a core subject for compulsory period of education.

Religion is not a subject like any other but is a discipline by itself. Being cognizant of this, teaching religion should be more formative than informative and carried out with an affective dimension. Being in a multi-religions society, common value components of other religions may also be introduced.

### **1.2.8. National Cohesion**

**Education should promote national cohesion, national integrity and national unity through the curriculum**

Nation building and the establishment of a Sri Lankan identity through the promotion of national cohesion, national integrity, national unity, is the first of the National Goals and the entire education process should be directed towards this objective.

Each community must learn to appreciate and consider cultural differences not as a threat but as an asset. Thus, the idea of Sri Lankanness must permeate the whole curriculum and students must learn to perceive issues in different perspectives.

### **1.2.9. Unity in Policy and Diversity in Decentralization**

**Education should realize unity in diversity through consistency in national policy and decentralization in implementation**

All schools have to conform to the National Education Policy of the State. However, the supervision of schools, disciplinary control, recruitment of teachers, pre schools, teacher education (within the purview of the NIE), teacher appraisal and facilitation, construction of buildings, textbook production (approved by the EPD), and development of libraries will be delegated to the provinces as provided by the Constitution.

Yet, to bring about better understanding and collaboration among the decentralized bodies, regional variations in social and cultural needs and values have to be mediated by the Centre.

#### **1.2.10. Human Resource Development**

**Human Resource Development in Education should foster competencies for the benefit of self, society and nation**

A highly educated person has become the central resource of today's society for no country is better than its people. Without education it is impossible to increase the productivity of people. A range of useful skills and appropriate social attitudes are necessary to mobilize the resources available in the country to improve the quality of life.

School has to instill creativity, adaptability, objectivity, ingenuity. All minds, all hearts must pledge to develop multi - competencies if our student population is to leap-frog to future national development.

#### **1.2.11. Professional Standards of Teachers and other Education Personnel**

**Professionalism of teachers and other educational personnel should be promoted to deliver a competent service to achieve goals of education.**

It is almost a truism to state that no education system is better than the commitment of teacher community. Good education requires a contented community of teachers. It is axiomatic to say that good teachers also must be good learners. Teaching is the mother of all professions and there is a strong moral dimension in it.

More verve and vigour is essential to energize the teachers to develop professionalism. This can be effected with the concurrence of teachers' unions.

### 1.2.12. Involvement of Non Governmental Organizations in Education

**Public-Private partnership should be supportive of the State enterprise in education and private educational institutions be subject to guidance and monitoring by the State**

There are different types of NGOs and INGOs involved in providing assistance for education. They provide financial assistance and technical support to areas of their choice and interest as well as to those that have been identified by the domestic authorities as areas that need to be strengthened.

To streamline the channeling of resources and avoid duplication and improper interferences, a regulatory mechanism has to be evolved by mutual agreement to decide upon the form of partnership between the MOE and the NGOs for a productive outcome. Monitoring and supervision of activities undertaken by them and disbursement of financial resources through a central pool at national level are endorsed to this effect.

### 1.2.13. Community and School Education

**The link between the school and community should be strengthened to enable the school to grow in symbiosis with its milieu**

Healthy school – community relations benefit education of children. If innovative practices are evolved both school and community can mutually support each other. School could make use of the resources available in the community and bring into school, worthwhile experiences of the community.

On the other hand the school can be a ‘beacon’ to the community for the teaching staff has the know – how in many a range of activities for the improvement of the quality of life of the people. They may be in such areas as health, nutrition, family welfare, agriculture and vocational skills. Once properly managed, the infrastructure facilities of the school can be effectively utilized by the community.

To turn this rhetoric to reality, some change of attitude is necessary (a catalytic approach) and such bridge – building is essential to enliven both fronts.

**1.2.14. Change and adaptability**

**Education should empower the people to meet the challenges of complexity of change in society and adapt to beneficial changes**

We are living in a period of uncertainty and unforeseen change. The only thing that is permanent in modern society is change in all aspects of life. In this scenario, education has a part to play in modeling students to face the tensions and challenges which they have to face at present and in the future. Thus, taking risks, coping with change, working under stress and difficult circumstances, taking initiative and skill of entrepreneurship are competencies and attitudes that have to be inculcated through a future - oriented education.

**1.2.15. Provision of Education for All**

**Education for All should aim at realizing the ideals of a knowledge society**

Provision of education for all (EFA) is an agreement made among majority of countries in the world in 1990 at the Jomtien Convention held in Thailand. It was reaffirmed at the world summit held in the City Dacca, in Senegal in 2000.

EFA initiatives from Jomtien to Dhakar has given the peoples of the world a new working philosophy - a powerful motto (Education for All) to mobilize the resources of the states for education - a collective conscience of the humanity. Provision of education for all encompasses a multifaceted set of actions. This policy should cover the provision of education to all including children in socio-economically backward groups, with gifted talents, with physical and mental disabilities and displaced due to natural and man made disasters.

**1.2.16. Resources and Utilization**

**Provision of resources should be need-based, equitable, adequate and should ensure effective utilization**

It is the prime duty of the State to maintain equal standards in education by school and region. Therefore the State should provide each school with human and physical facilities while the parents, old students, and well wishers can play a supportive role in this regard.

It is also required to reassess the existing resources and need to use them more efficiently in a sustainable manner for education has to compete for scarce resources. However, positive discrimination is necessary to reduce regional imbalances in the allocation of resources to the under - privileged. In this context 'Total School Development Projects' could be launched addressing nutrition, hygiene, environmental conservation and values.

### **1.2.17. Differently abled Children**

#### **Inclusiveness in the provision of education should be ensured**

State should ensure special care to facilitate the realization of the full potential of children with disabilities.

A disabled child has the right to special care education and training to help him or her enjoy a full and descent life in dignity and achieve the greatest degree of self-reliance and social integration possible.

This is effected by widening facilities for inclusive education within its limitations and providing special requirements and a type of education for those with severe disabilities as well as for the gifted.

### **1.2.18. Parents Role in Education**

#### **Parents have a major role in ensuring the total development of the child and also providing care and protection in the child's upbringing**

Sri Lanka's age-old traditions consider parents as primary caregivers and educators of their off-spring. It is necessary to make understand the public that provision of education to children is not the duty or responsibility of the State alone. The State provides resources and facilities, yet the modeling of the character and looking after the physical and mental growth of the child mainly lies with the parents. Respecting the rights and duties set out in the Parents Charter is vital in this regard.

The duties of parents are mainly two fold. One is to give support to the school to achieve its targets. This support can be physical as well as moral. The other is to provide a conducive home environment which enables students to engage in educational activities effectively.

The role, of the parents should be a supportive one that assists the school to develop students' personalities.

### **1.2.19. Role of the Private Sector in General Education**

**State should retain the overarching responsibility of education.  
Private sector can be a supportive partner in education**

Private sector participation in education at national level has come to stay with a popular demand due to many complexities in providing education with the 'rising revolution of expectations' of the lower and upper middle class segments of society. This private partnership in general education should be recognized, subject to legal and regulatory measures appropriate to the national system of education in the area of achieving national Goals, core curriculum and maintaining national standards.

It is also high time that we should be 'officially' aware of the existence of the tuition industry - a second education system of 'love and hate'.

The tendency observed at present of private institutions and organizations participating in providing general education needs to be considered seriously. A dilemma has arisen due to the establishment of private education institutions which is prohibited under one legal provision but allowed by another. As it is difficult to go back and ban them or take over, steps should be taken to legalize them and allow them to continue their activities subject to the condition that they follow State regulations. The MOE should take strict regulatory measures to assure that they fall in line with the regulations and conditions laid down by the MOE with regard to General Education.

### **1.2.20. The Learning-Teaching Process**

**The learning- teaching- evaluation process should conform to  
quality standards as prescribed at the national/ international level**

The learning-teaching process should be organized maintaining democratic principles. A learner centered learning-teaching process should maintain a democratic environment in the classroom and also in the school. The classroom as well as the school should be converted into a child friendly environment where the prominence is given to the rights of the child. Teaching approaches

need to be changed from the teacher - centred to the child - centered. The transmitter role of the teacher should be changed to that of a transformer.

It is incumbent upon all schools to develop a school culture to provide a child-friendly, democratic, social climate to realize the full potential of children. From this perspective all learning - teaching process should create in children a desire to go on learning throughout life with a thirst for knowledge and enquiry leading to self - directed learning.

#### **1.2.21. Emergency Education**

##### **Children's right to education should be ensured even in emergency situations**

Children of the victims of armed conflicts, displacement and natural disasters should receive the same education provided at the national level - a non - discriminatory education with health care, nutrition, protection and other facilities to foster their dignity and self - respect.

Provision must be made for them to join the mainstream once the normalcy is resumed.

Government officials and other benefactors have to be sensitized to consider that such children have rights like any other children in society.

#### **1.2.22. Curriculum**

##### **Design and development of the National Curriculum, evaluation and certification in Primary and Secondary education should be a State function**

The curriculum in the broader sense of its meaning connotes all the organized activities undertaken by the school for overall development of the child. The curriculum is the medium by which a nation's ultimate goals of education are realized by instilling a common set of values. In this regard, the State reserves the ownership of the curriculum along with the responsibility of shaping its components in the best interest of a nation.

**1.2.23. Evaluation**

**Evaluation and certification of students' achievement should be based on both formative and summative modes**

In order to assess the total development of the child, both formative and summative modes should be combined in the evaluation process. Hence, a paradigm shift in assessment and evaluation is necessary to introduce a new mode of evaluation for qualitative assessment of learning and teaching.

# CHAPTER 2

<b>EDUCATION SYSTEM – STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>2.1.</b>	<b>Central Authority</b>
<b>2.2.</b>	<b>Provincial Education Authorities</b>
<b>2.3.</b>	<b>Statutory Bodies</b>
<b>2.4.</b>	<b>Schools System</b>
<b>2.5.</b>	<b>Compulsory Education</b>
<b>2.6.</b>	<b>Pre School Education</b>
<b>2.7.</b>	<b>Inclusive Education: Education of the Disadvantaged</b>
<b>2.8.</b>	<b>Non Formal Education</b>



## EDUCATION SYSTEM – STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

### 2.1 The Central Authority

#### Policy Context

The Central Authority consists of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Departments and Institutions coming under it, namely, the Educational Publications Department (EPD), National Colleges of Education, Teacher Colleges, Teacher Centres and the National Schools. The Department of Examinations (DOE) functions as a separate Department governed by an Act of Parliament but under the supervision of the Secretary.

#### The Ministry of Education

At the Central level the Minister in charge of the subject of Education is responsible for the direction and effective execution of the provisions of the Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939 with the subsequent amendments, the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act of No. 5 of 1960, the (Supplementary Provisions) Act No. 8 of 1961, the Amending Act No. 65 of 1981, the Examinations Act No. 25 of 1968, the Pirivena Education Act 64 of 1979, the National Institute of Education Act No. 28 of 1985, the Colleges of Education Act No.30 of 1986 and the National Education Commission Act No. 19 of 1991 and the regulations made under these and is responsible to the President, the Cabinet of Ministers and the Parliament.

The Ministry of Education and the Department of Education were amalgamated in 1966 and all functions related to general education came under the Ministry of Education. The Secretary of the Ministry was also designated Director General of Education and the Directors in the regions exercised powers delegated to them by the Secretary.

With the appointment of the Education Service Committee of the Public Service Commission, the functions to deal with recruitment, deployment, transfer and disciplinary control of education personnel were delegated.

In 1985, by the National Institute of Education Act, the professional areas, curriculum development, professional development of teachers, and managerial staff and research were given over to the NIE.

The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution in 1987 brought about a further reduction of functions with devolution of considerable powers in education to the Provincial Councils. In 1991 by the National Education Commission Act, the policy making functions were entrusted to the National Education Commission (NEC). By 1991, the central functions had got dispersed with less clarity leading to several issues in their relationship and coordination.

The Secretary to the Ministry of Education (MOE) under the direction and guidance of the Minister is responsible for the effective implementation of the provisions of the legal enactments and the regulations made there under and to exercise supervision over all activities and functions of the Ministry, the Departments and agencies coming under it. He is the Chief Accounting Officer of the MOE.

### **Organizational Structure of the Ministry of Education**

The MOE is organized under five Divisions each under an Additional Secretary.

- (i). Policy Planning and Review Division:
- (ii). Educational Quality Development Division
- (iii). Educational Services Division,
- (iv). Administration and Finance Division
- (v). Supplies Division

The internal Audit Branch functions directly under the Secretary.

The Additional Secretaries are assisted by Directors of Education, Deputy Directors of Education, Assistant Directors of Education belonging to the Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service, Senior Assistant Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries from the Sri Lanka Administrative Service, the Chief Accountant and Accountants from the Sri Lanka Accountants Service and the Director of School Works and Engineers from the Sri Lanka Engineering Service who belong to executive level grades. There is a contingent of support staff to assist the executive staff in carrying out their work as Management assistants, Documentation assistants, Technical officers and other grades at lower levels.

Over the years the functions of the MOE has been transferred to other agencies. The first major reduction in the functions of the Ministry came about in 1979 with the establishment of the Education Service Committee (ESC) under the Public Service Commission (PSC) to deal with recruitment, deployment, transfer and disciplinary control of educational personnel. In 1985 the NIE was established to handle matters relating to curriculum development, professional development of educational personnel and to carry out research in areas relevant to education. The devolution of powers under the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution in 1987 brought about a major reduction in the powers of the Ministry. The establishment of the NEC in 1991 brought about a further reduction of the functions of the MOE as policy formulation was entrusted to the National Education Commission.

However, many of the functions delegated to the provinces and the statutory bodies, NIE and NEC, continue to be performed by the MOE resulting in overlapping and duplication. The unnecessary wastage of resources under this confusion of service delivery makes it ineffective and inefficient.

The role of the MOE as the Central Authority at present should be planning and programming, implementation of programmes in areas allocated to the centre, coordination at national level, providing the services required for the agencies coming under the MOE and quality assurance. Under these broad areas the functions of the MOE can be identified as:

- (a) preparation of plans for the implementation of National Education Policy;
- (b) implementation and monitoring of the National Education Plan, formulated by the Ministry, in collaboration with the Provincial Education Authorities;
- (c) management of specified schools designated as National Schools, specified schools for service personnel and schools in specified development schemes;
- (d) inspection and supervision of all schools in order to ensure standards;
- (e) laying down the criteria for the selection of principals and the appointment of principals of 1AB and 1C schools;
- (f) providing services required for the agencies coming under the MOE; and
- (g) coordination of school activities at national level.

In this context it is necessary to clearly identify positions required to perform the functions that should actually be carried out by the MOE. There are Directors of Education for every subject in the curriculum. As the formulation of National Policy is with NEC, the designing of the curriculum and professional development of educational personnel are subjects entrusted to NIE and the management of the vast majority of schools is with the provincial authorities. The function of subject directors at the MOE, is only to coordinate national level activities. A branch for each subject is a waste of human resources. It is proposed that there should be the following Divisions under Additional Secretaries.

- (a) Planning and Performance Review Division
- (b) Education Development Division
- (c) Educational Services Division
- (d) Administration Division

The Supplies Division can be under the Administration Division as it was in the past. However there should be a separate entity directly under the Secretary for Quality Assurance. It should function independently like the Internal Audit Unit. Adequate staff comprising SLEAS officers should be assigned to this organization. Elsewhere, there is a recommendation to institute a Quality Assurance Council to provide guidance in this regard.

The main functions of the Secretary to the Ministry are to decide matters arising in relation to the implementation of policies and monitor the progress of the implementation of such policies. Over the years with the increase of the work of the Ministry the Secretary has been overloaded with daily routine matters of micro management. Decisions regarding school management, teacher education, deployment of teachers, curriculum implementation, evaluation and testing etc., can best be taken by a professional educational administrator. The institutional memory of an educational administrator will greatly facilitate decision making on technical matters.

Another option to reduce the work load of the Secretary is to upgrade certain branches as full-fledged departments and delegate the functions to the Heads of those departments. Examples are the Department of Teacher Education and the Quality Assurance Unit. The heads of these departments could be entrusted with the function of implementation of activities vested in those departments and Secretary could exercise a supervisory role as in the case of the DOE and the EPD.

## **The Department of Examinations**

The Department of Examinations (DOE) is under the Commissioner General of Examinations and there are Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners appointed for carrying out the functions of the department. They are all officers belonging to the Sri-Lanka Educational Administrative Service.

The DOE is responsible for the conduct of public examinations which includes school examinations as well as examinations of other government agencies for recruitment and promotion of officers. As fees are charged from examinations conducted for other departments a proposal has been made that the DOE be converted to an authority in order to provide the necessary flexibility to function as a business organization which would facilitate its role as a National Testing Service. This department has enjoyed the confidence of the public and it has to be maintained. An authority may be more efficient in decision making but would not be able to resist pressures which ultimately will lead to loss of public confidence.

Under the Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939 as well as the Public Examinations Act No. 25 of 1968, there is provision to establish a School Examinations Advisory Council to advise the Commissioner on all such matters relating to the control, organization and conduct of school examinations. This body has not been set up and it is proposed that an Advisory Council be established to advise the Commissioner General in all matters relating to the DOE.

## **The Educational Publications Department**

The Educational Publications Department (EPD) began as a Branch of the Department of Education at the time the medium of instruction was changed to national languages in order to write or translate books required for the upper classes. With the implementation of the policy of providing text books free to school children the work load of this branch became very heavy and it was converted to a department under the Commissioner of Educational Publications. Subsequently the designation was changed to Commissioner General. At present the Department is responsible for the publication of all text books from Grade 1 to Grade 11 given free to all students in Sinhala and Tamil media and where relevant in English as well. EPD is also responsible for the production and publication of reference books, glossaries, dictionaries and supplementary readers in Sinhala, Tamil and English necessary for the school system.

The curriculum for school education is designed by the NIE and it is necessary to have a close coordination between the officers of the EPD and the NIE in writing books. The books are written by Boards comprising officials of the EPD, NIE, practicing teachers and subject specialists selected from the universities. However there have been occasions where mistakes have crept into text books and a chief editor should be entrusted with the task of editing the final copy so that there would be no mistakes. An Advisory Council should be established to provide guidance to the Commissioner General on technical matters relating to the work of the Department.

According to the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution the Provinces have the authority for production and distribution of school text books after approval by the Ministry. However, since there is a common curriculum for all schools and a common public examination system for all students, it has become necessary to produce the textbooks at the central level. It is best that the writing of Text Books is undertaken by the EPD with the collaboration of the NIE. The distribution can be handled by the provincial authorities.

### **The Teacher Education Institutions**

The institutions dealing with Teacher Education are the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Colleges of Education, the Colleges of Education Board, National Colleges of Education (NCOE), Teacher Colleges and Teacher Centres. According to the Colleges of Education Act No. 30 of 1986 the NCOEs are affiliated to the NIE and the degrees, diplomas awarded are by the NIE and NIE is responsible for the formulation of the curriculum, staff development and the conduct of examinations. The Chief Commissioner of Teacher Education (CCTE) is responsible for the general management, providing finances and other services to the NCOEs under the guidance of the Colleges of Education Board. The National Authority on Teacher Education (NATE) which was set up to coordinate teacher education at national level has been discontinued.

As the NATE has been abolished, the need for a national level coordinating body is recognized while amending the Colleges of Education Act, No. 30 of 1986 to have a Board of Teacher Education on the lines suggested in the NEC Report of 2003.

The Office of the Chief Commissioner of Colleges of Education may be upgraded to the status of a Department and CCTE shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Board and s/he will be responsible for the implementation of the decisions of the Board.

## **The National Colleges of Education**

The NCOEs established under the Colleges of Education Act No. 30 of 1986 at present conduct pre-service teaching diploma course of three years duration of which two years are spent in the institution and another year of internship in a school. According to the Act, NCOEs are established for the purpose of conducting courses of study leading to the award of degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions of the NIE which are recognized as teaching qualifications under the NIE Act. Every College established so shall be deemed to have been registered as a College affiliated to the NIE. So far only Diploma in Teaching Courses have been conducted and the examinations are conducted under the supervision of NIE.

It is time that MOE should work towards an all graduate teacher service and the NCOEs producing diploma holders will further lengthen the target of achieving that goal. Those admitted to NCOEs have equivalent qualifications as for candidates seeking admission to universities. While undergoing the NCOE course, some of them study for their degree without approval. If NCOEs prepare students for B Ed. Degrees of NIE the students need not waste further three years to earn a degree. After a careful scrutiny of the facilities available in the NCOEs those with adequate facilities may be recognized as suitable to be recognized for award of degrees as affiliated institutions of the NIE. All 17 NCOEs may not be able to offer degree level programmes at present. A plan should be drawn up to provide the required facilities to those Colleges which have the potential for development to upgrade them while the others will remain as institutions providing continuing teacher education. As they are only affiliated Colleges of NIE, the present practice of giving degrees and diplomas of the NIE also may be continued. However, as the NCOEs are affiliated to NIE these degrees and diplomas will be awarded by the NIE.

The Teacher Colleges which provide a two year training programme for untrained teachers in the system will become superfluous once the present backlog of nearly 10,000 untrained teachers are trained. It has been proposed that these be converted to Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) for providing continuing education for teachers in service.

There are nearly 100 Teachers Centres put up for providing in service training for teachers. A few of these have residential facilities and these could be upgraded to the level of TEIs, while the others could be handed to the Zones for them to conduct short term in service training programmes.

## Issues

- Establishment of the Statutory Bodies NIE and NEC and the enactment of 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution devolving powers and functions to provinces reduced powers and changed functions at the Central Authority, the MOE. This has resulted in lack of clarity and duplication of functions, so there is a need to delineate them clearly.
- The delay in transfer of powers and functions to other agencies and resulting overlapping and duplication of the functions between the MOE and other agencies have largely contributed to inefficiency and hence the functions of the Central Authority, the MOE, needs to be made clear.
- With the discontinuation of the National Authority for Teacher Education, establishment of a Board of Teacher Education on the lines suggested by the NEC Report 2003 is necessary for the management of institutions, programmes and personnel.
- An effective coordination among the institutions and agencies in charge of teacher education is lacking.
- Department of Examination created for proper conduct of public examination and issue of certificates and awards needs to be reformed in the context of changing ideology regarding assessment and evaluation in education continuing to enjoy a greater independent status.
- Education Publications Department while performing the major role of implementing the free textbook scheme needs to expand its activities to the production and distribution of supplementary publications and materials in collaboration with the NIE and Provincial Departments of Education (PDE).

## Proposals

- 2.1.1. Policy formulation for all aspects of General Education should be the function of the National Education Commission (NEC Act 1991).**
- 2.1.2. The design and development of the programmes (e.g. School Curriculum) and the professional development of all personnel (teachers, principals, administrators) should be the function of the**

- National Institute of Education (NIE Act 1985) and other accredited/recognized institutions.
- 2.1.3. Planning, Implementation, Monitoring, Supervision, Performance Appraisal, Quality Assurance, Evaluation of all programmes and management of all personnel at national level should be the functions of the Central Authority, the Ministry of Education (MOE).
- 2.1.4. The Teacher Education and Development, Educational Publications and Quality Assurance Agencies of the Ministry of Education should be upgraded to fully fledged Departments and the Heads of those Departments should be vested with the authority and hold them accountable for managing the Departments.
- 2.1.5. Department of Examinations should continue as a full-fledged Department under the aegis of the Ministry of Education with assured authority and independence.
- 2.1.6. Department of Examinations should modernize the examinations and the assessment system reflecting the high order transferable skills required by the new curriculum demands and combine examinations with School Based Assessment (SBA) so that the advantages of the certification function of the national examinations which enjoy public confidence are combined with the potential benefits of SBA.
- 2.1.7. The Commissioner General of Examination should be responsible for the administration of the Department and have the power to organize and conduct General Education examinations and also have the power to issue certificates to candidates who are successful at any examination in general education.
- 2.1.8. An Advisory Council for the Department of Examination should be established to advise the Commissioner General of Examinations on matters relating to the conduct of public examinations.
- 2.1.9. Writing and production of textbooks based on the syllabuses developed by the National Institute of Education (NIE) should be undertaken by the Education Publications Department (EPD) with the collaboration of the NIE under the responsibility of the Commissioner General of Publications to ensure the accuracy of subject content in the textbooks.

- 2.1.10. Commissioner General of Educational Publications should be responsible for the Administration of the Department of Educational Publications and writing, production and distribution of textbooks and other publications relevant to education.**
- 2.1.11. An Advisory Council to advise the Commissioner General of Educational Publications should be established to deal with matters relating to educational publications.**
- 2.1.12. National Colleges of Education should be upgraded as institutions that will conduct degree and diploma programmes in affiliation with NIE.**
- 2.1.13. State through its Central Authority, the Ministry of Education should fulfill its obligation of making education available, accessible acceptable and adaptable.**

## 2.2 Provincial Education Authorities

### Policy Context

Under the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution certain powers enjoyed by the central government have been devolved to the Provincial Councils. As far as education is concerned the functions that are devolved to the provincial authorities are specified in the Appendix III in LIST 1 of the NINTH SCHEDULE. viz.

- Provision of facilities to all State schools other than specified schools
- Transfer and disciplinary control of all educational personnel
- Recruitment into the Teaching Service
- Appointment of principals to Type 2 and Type 3 schools
- Establishment and supervision of School Boards
- Preparation and implementation of educational plans
- Performance appraisal of principals, teachers and education officers
- Conducting in-service training programmes (under prior approval of the NIE) and indicating training needs to the NIE
- Conducting local examinations (under the approval of the Commissioner General of Examinations)
- Implementation of non-formal education programmes
- Registration, supervision and management of pre-schools
- Making local variations in the primary curriculum and selected subjects in the secondary curriculum (under the approval of the NIE)
- Construction and maintenance of educational buildings, libraries and playgrounds
- Procuring and distribution of educational material and equipment
- Production and distribution of school textbooks after approval by the Ministry
- Organization and development of school libraries on guidelines given by National Library Services Board (NLSB)

In order to dispose responsibilities of the provincial authorities, the provinces have a complex structure replicating the structure that existed in the country at national level before the implementation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Accordingly, there is a Provincial Ministry of Education under a Minister and in most provinces the portfolio of education is retained with the Chief Minister himself. Under the Ministerial position are held an Office of the Secretary to the Minister of Education, a Provincial Department of Education under a Provincial Director

of Education, Zonal Education Offices under Zonal Directors of Education, Divisional Education Offices under Divisional Directors of Education and the schools. Whether all these tiers are necessary is a relevant question. However, once the positions are created it is very difficult to abolish them. The transaction of education takes place in the classroom within the school and the current thinking is to empower the schools through the concept of school based management. But very little has been done to empower the school.

In this structure two clusters are necessary for the management of schools. The first is the provincial level players comprising the Minister in charge of the subject of education, the Chief Secretary who wields overall supervision, the Education Secretary heading the Provincial Ministry of Education and the Provincial Director heading the Provincial Department under whom the technical team functions. All these officers should concentrate on policy formulation, planning of programmes, provision of resources, staffing and monitoring and evaluation. At the local level, there is the educational zone in charge of 100 to 150 schools, the division with 30 to 40 schools and finally the school with its own organizational structure.

Although there is a top heavy hierarchy at the provincial level, no action has been taken to define the role of the Zonal and Divisional level officers, and obtain approval for the creation of the required cadre of officers. As a result, many positions are manned by acting officers. Lack of clear role definitions of officers at different layers often results in duplication of functions and lack of clarity as to who is doing what.

The concept of School Based Management (SBM) is a technique used to empower schools and has been implemented in many countries to improve the effectiveness of schools. Sri Lanka has been trying to implement this idea for some time and the School Development Boards Act was passed in 1993. However, no concrete action has been taken to implement this proposal. On the advice of the donor agencies, a balanced control model of SBM is tried out as an experiment in selected Zones under the School Improvement Programme. Provinces are required to try and develop a model of SBM suitable to the schools taking into consideration the environment of the schools and their strengths and weaknesses.

The Provincial Councils are empowered to enact legislation by way of statutes to facilitate the implementation of Council policies. Most of the provinces have enacted their statutes on education, but subsidiary legislation consisting of guidelines and rules of implementation are not in place.

## Issues

- Owing to the lack of clarity as regards the role definitions, the system has failed to make many officers permanent in their posts
- Consequent to the departure from the concept of School Based Management that is accepted as an effective technique of empowering schools, there is a need to develop a model suited to the school environment and its stakeholders
- The Provincial Councils have enacted legislations by way of Statutes on education but lack of guidelines and rules in place hinder their smooth implementation

## Proposals

- 2.2.1. The Provincial Councils should enact comprehensive Education Statutes covering all areas devolved to the provinces with subsidiary legislation to facilitate implementation.**
- 2.2.2. Provincial Ministry of Education and the Provincial Department of Education should be merged and be responsible for the management of all aspects of education devolved to the province.**
- 2.2.3. Subject to general direction and control of the Provincial Ministry, the Secretary to the Ministry shall be responsible for the effective implementation of education policies within the province with the concurrence of the Provincial Director of Education.**
- 2.2.4. The organizational structure for provision of education in the province shall be determined by the Provincial Authority, subject to the National Policy Guidelines laid down by the Central Ministry of Education.**
- 2.2.5. Zonal Education Offices should be continued and will be entrusted with functions related to administration and finance.**
- 2.2.6. Divisional Education Offices should be continued to be co-terminus with the electorates and should concentrate on education development activities.**

- 2.2.7. The cadre of officers required for the Provincial, Zonal and Divisional Offices should be computed and the positions should be filled, based on requirement with their roles clearly defined.**
- 2.2.8. Provincial Boards of Education which will have advisory functions should be appointed by the Minister of Education with the concurrence of the Chief Minister of the Provincial Authority**
- 2.2.9. The concept of School Based Management should be implemented taking into consideration the lessons learned from the School Improvement Programme.**

## 2.3 Statutory Bodies

### **The National Institute of Education**

The National Institute of Education has been established by Act No. 28 of 1985. Its main functions are to:

- (a) advise the minister regarding plans, programmes and activities for the development of education in Sri Lanka;
- (b) provide and promote post-graduate education in the several specialties of education;
- (c) conduct and promote studies on the education system including its performance, goals, structures, content and methodology and on the social, economic and other aspects of education;
- (d) initiate and promote innovative practices in the education system including adaptation of technology for educational purposes;
- (e) provide for the development and managerial competence of personnel in the education system;
- (f) make available to the Government and other organizations, specialist services in education;
- (g) carry out education development programmes approved by the Minister; and
- (h) co-ordinate with other institutions having similar objectives.

The 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution in Appendix 11 of LIST 1 of the Ninth Schedule under education (section 8) states that the training of teachers and other educational personnel will come within the purview of the National Institute of Education. Provincial authorities will indicate their needs to the National Institute of Education. Under section 15, provinces can conduct in-service training programmes for which the prior approval of the National Institute of Education has been obtained. Section 18 stipulates that provinces have to obtain the approval of the National Institute of Education to variations of the primary curriculum and selected subjects in the secondary curriculum.

A general criticism is that the NIE Act does not adequately provide for meeting the needs of the school system. In fact it does not include the designing of the school curriculum specifically as one of its tasks although it is one of its main functions. The Act stresses more on the aspect of higher education rather than providing continuing education opportunities for teachers in service.

It has also been pointed out that although the Act provides for a substantial degree of independence for NIE to be exercised by the Council, in actual fact there are constraints such as lack of financial independence. However it is a matter that has to be sorted out with the MOE and the Treasury as the Act provides for financial authority similar to other such statutory bodies.

### **National Education Commission**

The NEC was established by Act No.19 of 1991to:

- (a) make recommendations to the President on educational policy in all its aspects, with a view to ensuring continuity in educational policy and enabling the education system to respond to changing needs in society, including an immediate review of educational policy and plan or plans and the making of recommendations to the President, on a comprehensive education policy;
- (b) review and analyze periodically, the National Education Policy and plan or plans in operation and where necessary, to recommend to the President, changes in such policy, Plan or Plans;
- (c) advise the President on any other matter relating to education which may be referred to it by the President for advice.

One of the objectives of the establishment of the NEC was to insulate the process of education policy making from party politics, so that the recommendations of the Commission would be the result of bi-partisan consensus in order to ensure continuity of policy. In the early stages, the spirit of this concept was prevalent and even the appointment of the Commission was done through a consultative process. Even in 1994 with the change of government the Commission continued to complete its statutory period. However, later the membership of the Commission changed with the change of government even before completing its statutory period. Hence it is recommended that the Commission be appointed by the Constitutional Council in order to ensure its continuity. Further the

recommendations of the Commission should be presented to Parliament as a Sessional Paper so that matters relating to educational policy would receive wide publicity and acceptance.

### **Issue**

- Curriculum development for General Education which is a major function of the National Institute of Education is not clearly and specifically stated in the NIE Act 1985.

### **Proposal**

- 2.3.1. The functions of National Institute of Education should be clearly defined to include the development of national curricula, production of resource materials for the general education system, initial and continuing professional development of teachers, managerial and other personnel, conducting graduate and post-graduate level programmes and research in education. It should also be vested with powers to conduct development programmes on Pre-School education and Non-formal Education.**

**NIE Act No. 1985 should be amended to make the functions of NIE more clear and specific.**

## 2.4 Schools System

### Policy Context

The modern school system of Sri-Lanka has its beginnings during the British colonial administration. Schools were started by the denominational bodies for the purpose of proselytization. Later the government also established schools for the education of the children. The government schools provided instruction in the national languages and there were also bi-lingual schools (vernacular school) where English was also used. This created a dual system of schools, government schools and denominational schools. There was also another kind of duality in that some of the denominational schools imparted English medium education charging fees from students which created an elitist group of schools as against the vernacular schools providing free education. As a result of the government, denominational bodies, private organizations and individuals establishing schools there was no planning in the location of schools.

The grant of free education with the implementation of Special Committee recommendations under the stewardship of Dr. C.W.W. Kannangara in 1945 and the take over of schools in 1960 reduced some of the inequities that existed in the school system. During the last 50 years some degree of rationalization has been achieved. But still there are wide differences and lack of uniformity in the school system.

### School Types and Service Delivery

At present Sri- Lanka has a 13 year span of schooling. Schools are classified on the basis of the educational stages available in the school and also taking into consideration the course streams offered at senior secondary level. The schools are classified by type as follows:

- (a) Type 111 Schools :- Primary schools having classes from Grade 1 to Grade 5
- (b) Type 11 Schools :- Junior schools having classes from Grade 1 to Grade 11
- (c) 1C Schools :- Senior Secondary schools having classes from Grade 1 to Grade 13 or Grade 6 to 13 with only Arts and Commerce streams at G.C.E. A.L

- (d) 1AB Schools :- Senior Secondary schools having classes from Grade 1 to Grade 13  
or Grade 6 to Grade 13 with all 4 streams at G.C.E.A.L

In determining the structure of the school system, one has to consider the economics of educational provision. With the demographic transition, migration to urban areas and the growth of private schools, the enrolment of students in government schools is declining and the number of small schools has increased. The following table gives the distribution of government schools by size.

**Table - Government Schools by Type and Size of Student Population**

Type Size	1AB	1C	2	3	Total
< 50	-	01	198	1334	1533
51- 100	-	05	611	787	1403
101 - 200	-	66	1419	459	1934
201 - 500	08	660	1620	183	2439
501 - 1000	106	826	295	112	1339
1001- 1500	162	256	45	28	491
1501 - 2000	142	49	08	06	205
> 2000	263	20	08	01	292
Total	681	1883	4204	2910	9678

*Source: School Census 2007*

Nearly one third of the schools have an enrolment of less than 100 pupils on roll while there are 292 schools with over 2000 pupils. The small schools are disadvantaged in many aspects. Dearth of physical and human resources, poor home background of pupils, lack of community support, inaccessibility to modern influences such as the media are factors which compromise the principle of equity enshrined in the Constitution.

Equity in education starts with equitable access to schooling. The Education Sector Development Framework and Programme of the Ministry of Education emphasizes, ensuring equity by enabling all children to have access, to participate in and complete basic and secondary education. In order to ensure equitable access to primary education, the government has established a widely scattered network of schools throughout to country.

**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 2 km to every child of the age range 5 to 9 years and a secondary school within 4 km to 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.

**Number of Government Schools by Size of Student Population, 2006**

Number / Percentage of School 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*

The definition of a small school at present is based on the sole criterion of enrolment of students. According to this criterion a school having less than 100 students is considered to be a small school.

Under the programme “Rationalization of School Network”, in 1996, 356 small schools were reported to have been closed, as they were presumed to be uneconomical. The two main criteria for closing schools were:

- (i) Minimum enrolment; and
- (ii) Availability of alternative educational facilities within a prescribed distance.

Low student enrolment was a feature of around 80% of the schools that were closed. The research studies have discovered some major reasons for the decline in student enrolment in these schools. They are:

- (i) The availability of ‘better’ schools in the local environment and the aspirations of parents to send their children to these schools, if their family resources permitted it
- (ii) (a) the poor management of these small schools by Principals and the poor quality teaching

- (b) the indifference of education officials, Principals and community leaders towards the welfare and advancement of the children in small schools and the consequent deterioration of the quality of education provided in them

The small schools are found tucked away in remote rural pockets, among the hills in the plantations, in new settlement areas along the coast and in the midst of overcrowded urban dwellings, sometimes in the shadow of popular schools. These schools add up to about 3000 which is nearly one third of the total number of schools catering to primary school children.

These schools cater mainly to children of the poorest of the poor. They have been neglected and forgotten and the parents of these schools are less demanding and prone to accept their lot. Inadequate resources portray the neglect and lack of concern.

The isolated nature of the small schools, inadequate appreciation of any good work done and lack of supervisory and advisory help are issues in developing these schools.

Small schools have to be reviewed in the context of their settings and totality of the problem. The multifaceted nature of the problem calls for a multifaceted approach.

While recognizing the need to continue with small schools where there is a real need and assuming that rationalization may lead to the dropout of pupils, at least in areas where schooling facilities are available within a reasonable distance, some degree of rationalization can be accomplished. Education Sector Development Framework and Programme (MOE, 2006) analyses the wastage incurred by small schools. According to School Census, there are 258 schools with less than 15 pupils with a teacher pupil ratio of 1: 04, 717 schools with less than 25 pupils with a ratio of 1: 07 and 1525 schools with less than 50 pupils with a ratio of 1: 11. It has to be noted that when the number of pupils is less, the quality of education imparted in such schools is also poor. In order to meet this situation a scheme of grouping schools in a geographical area as a school family should be explored.

There is also the issue of National Schools which are managed by the Central Ministry of Education. There are no accepted criteria for upgrading a school to a level of a National School. Of the 329 national schools at present, very few conform to the standards laid down originally for identifying national schools. The criteria that would justify a school to be a National School should be the fact

that children from all over the country are admitted to that school, that it is an all island school. Admission to such schools should solely be on merit. There cannot be a primary section in a National School as admissions to primary classes are done on the basis of the proximity of the parent's residence to the school. An additional criterion would be the multiethnic composition of the school where children of all communities are admitted and all three media are available which would promote national cohesion.

Considering the need for promoting national unity in the present context and the role education can play in promoting national harmony, much thought should be given for the possibility of organizing multi-ethnic schools in areas where the communities are multi-ethnic. In such schools all three languages can be used as media of instruction and children will grow up together as Sri -Lankans, while understanding their heritage and respecting the culture of other communities.

Another issue is whether the government should have a monopoly of education or in addition to State provision of education whether private-public partnerships should be encouraged. When the schools were taken over in 1960 only a few grade 1 schools remained as private and non fee-levying schools. There was a category of schools that were fee-levying and private, i.e. those who opted to keep away from the free education scheme in 1951.

Since 1980s, another category of private schools have sprung up and are known as "International Schools." These schools are registered as business organizations with the Registrar of Companies and contravenes the provisions of the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Supplementary Provisions) Act No. 8 of 1961 which stipulates that no person other than the Director of Education can establish a school for children between the ages of five and fourteen years. Further, there is a violation of the Education Amendment Act of 1945 which stipulates that the primary education of children should be provided in the mother tongue (Sinhala or Tamil). To get over these problems, these schools have been registered as business organizations with the Registrar of Companies. Earlier these schools prepared children for foreign examinations and instruction was provided in the English medium. Now some of these schools are providing courses based on the local curricula and the students sit the local GCE (O/L) and (A/L) examinations as private candidates.

Some International Schools appear to provide education commencing from Early Childhood Care and Development Stage (ECCD) up to Advanced Level and Degree level examinations. From the Primary Level the medium of instruction is in English.

The demand for popular schools is ever increasing and the parents with moderate levels of income, who fail to admit their children to such schools are compelled to admit their children to International Schools considering the advantage of learning English as well.

One of the main objectives of education is to produce a Sri Lankan citizen with a common set of values. The NEC has proposed Common National Objectives for General Education. The schools established by private organizations with profit making objectives cannot be expected to fulfill the common objectives proposed by the National Education Commission. Further, the lack of encouragement to learn history and national cultures in the curriculum lead to the production of individuals who do not value and respect national heritage and culture.

These schools appear to be popular among certain segments of society as indicated from the rapid growth of the number of schools. Accurate statistics of this category of schools are not available but approximate number may be around 300. The main attraction to these schools is the teaching in English medium.

However, most of these schools do not have even the basic facilities required for a school. Most classes are housed in residential premises and there is insufficient space for children in the classrooms and adequate ventilation. Other facilities for sports and extra curricular activities are minimal. Hence, there is a growing demand that these schools be regulated by the government.

Another category of schools functioning with government assistance are the schools providing education for children with special needs. There are 25 Assisted Schools run for children with special needs. The prevalent philosophy of special education is inclusion. As these children have to be integrated to normal society, MOE has started integrating students with special needs in normal classes. In order to orient these children to the normal school special education units have been established in nearly 1000 schools. However, special schools are necessary for children with severe handicaps.

### **Issues**

- The duality of schools at the time of independence was reduced by free education, shift to national languages as the medium of instruction and the central school system, but the blatant disparity continues making the policy of equal education opportunity a travesty.

- The location of schools, particularly the secondary schools is not well distributed as it has been done in an unplanned way and almost all non government schools were located in urban areas.
- The overlapping of the nomenclature of the ‘types’ of schools and the resultant confusion in implementation of policies and programmes.
- The marginalization and the neglect of small schools which are the main avenues of educational opportunity to children of disadvantaged families, to fulfill their right to education.
- The present classification of schools lacks clarity as a consequence of ad-hoc changes over the years, selecting few schools and resourcing them while the poor schools were further neglected compelling the students rush to urban schools, making the poor schools poorer and small schools smaller.
- The increasing pressure on large popular schools in urban centres which are undergoing uncontrolled expansion to meet the demand resulting in overcrowded classes where learning and teaching may not be effective.
- Schools that have started with ethnic or religious background wish to maintain the same status and identity without changing to a multiethnic and multi religious schools.
- International schools which are not legal and run as business organizations do not conform to the educational law and do not fulfill the common objectives determined by the National Education Commission.

### **Proposals**

- 2.4.1. The school should be an institution that fulfils the right of every child to quality education that aims at developing a common set of values that identifies him/her as a Sri Lankan with dedication to Motherland while respecting one’s own identity.**
- 2.4.2. The government should establish a structure with two types of schools, namely, primary schools having Grades 1 to 5 and secondary schools with Grades 6 to 11 or 6 to 13.**
- 2.4.3. Management, facilitation and evaluation of all public schools should be the responsibility of the Provincial Department of Education.**

Categorization of schools by different names (National, Navodya etc.) should be discontinued.

- 2.4.4. Education Division should be the unit to organize the network of primary and secondary schools. Each secondary school should have at least 5 primary feeder schools. The number of schools in a division should be determined by the number of school going age children in the Division.
- 2.4.5. In areas where schools are far apart and student numbers are low, primary schools may conduct classes up to Grade 9 for a fixed period of time.
- 2.4.6. In order to ensure continuity of education, a child who is completing the primary level should be assured of a secondary school.
- 2.4.7. Small Schools, which serve the village community needs, should be encouraged to continue by providing them with necessary support to develop as educationally viable institutions.
- 2.4.8. All very difficult and difficult schools should be upgraded with both human and physical resources to provide a quality education to reach the target of educating all children alike.
- 2.4.9. Mechanisms should be developed to supervise and monitor small schools in order to ensure standards and to take prompt remedial actions when necessary.
- 2.4.10. Primary section (Grades 1-5) of all existing 1AB and 1C schools should be delinked by 2015 and function as primary schools.
- 2.4.11. State should make available a primary school within a radius of 2km and a secondary school within a radius of 5km. All primary and secondary schools should provide adequate resources to ensure parity and equality of the quality of education provided by them.
- 2.4.12. All unregistered Private schools including International schools should be registered with the Provincial Departments of Education. They should be regulated with norms for appropriate physical environment, necessary qualifications of teachers, medium of instruction and a curriculum component related to National Heritage and child's religion issued by the Central Ministry of Education.

- 2.4.13. All Private and International Schools should be subject to supervision by the Ministry of Education and Provincial Ministries of Education.**
- 2.4.14. All Private and International Schools should run as non-profit organizations and all profits obtained should be ploughed back to the development of the school.**
- 2.4.15. All schools should follow a process of inclusive education for children with special education needs. However ‘Special Schools’ may continue for severely handicapped children who require special treatment.**
- 2.4.16. Section 25 of the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges Act No. 8 of 1961 should be amended to allow the registration of private and international schools.**

### **School Calendar and School Hours**

The school calendar for the year is determined by the MOE and is uniform for all schools. This is necessary because of the national holidays and the need to coincide school holidays with the examinations calendar. Suggestions have made that schools should have vacations taking into consideration the farming patterns of the area as older school children take part in agricultural activities of the household. The provincial authorities may be given the discretion to amend the school calendar to suit local needs without disturbing the school holidays and public examinations.

The number of school days at present is around 200 a year. School hours are 5 hours for the primary and 6 hours for the secondary. In the past secondary schools had two sessions morning and afternoon with a lunch break. This is desirable as students can take part in extra-curricular activities without taking time from academic sessions. However due to problems in transport, providing a mid day meal and long distance that children have to travel double sessions are not feasible.

### **Proposals**

- 2.4.17. The minimum number of school days must be 200 days a year. The provinces should be given the discretion to decide on school terms taking into consideration the local requirements.**

- 2.4.18. Classroom teaching time per day should be 5 hours for the primary and 6 hours for the secondary.**

### **Admission of Children to Schools**

Admission of children to schools is an issue that has been the subject of debate at national level. The problem is that a certain category of parents resort to all kinds of ruses to get their children admitted to the so called prestigious schools. According to the current scheme of admissions proximity of the residence of the parents play a major part in the selection process and parents resort to fraudulent practices to prove their residence. Children are trained to utter lies and addresses close to these schools fetch very high prices in the property transactions some of which are bogus transactions. Even after such intense competition the majority of the parents fail to get their children admitted to the school of their choice. As a result of influence peddling the number of children in the classes has increased to unmanageable numbers even going beyond 50 in certain instances. It is impossible to implement activity based, child centred curricula in such large classes. It is not desirable to adopt any assessment criteria at this level for selection of students. In higher classes merit as found through an assessment process can be used for selection of students.

Committees appointed to look in to this problem have come out with various recommendations. Some of these are doing away with primary sections of prestigious schools or using random selection processes. However, the very influential past pupil lobbies have vitiated all these moves.

### **Proposals**

#### **Admission of Children to Schools Admission to Grade 1**

- 2.4.19. Children who complete 5 years of age by 31<sup>st</sup> January of the year of admission should be admitted to Grade 1.**
- 2.4.20. Admission to Grade 1 should be primarily on the basis of proximity to the school from the residence of the parents.**
- 2.4.21. The maximum number of pupils admitted to a class on the above basis should be 35.**
- 2.4.22. Children should not be subjected to any sort of testing or evaluation for the purpose of admission to Grade 1.**

## 2.5 Compulsory Education

### Policy Context

Free and compulsory education is a fundamental right and it is also a constitutional right. Moreover, in the Sri Lankan context there is a popular demand for schooling. Legislation to enforce compulsory education of children was enacted by Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939 which provided for enabling regulations to enforce compulsory education for the 5-14 age group. An amendment to the 1939 Ordinance was made in 1947 in order to extend the compulsory education age to 16 years. However, no efforts were made to formulate compulsory education regulations until the 1990s. Regulations related to compulsory education came into force only in January 1998 as a result of a recommendation by the National Education Commission on provision of education for all children enforced by Gazette notification 1003/5 of 25 November 1997.

Two committees were appointed by the Minister of Education to implement the regulations to enforce compulsory attendance of 5 – 14 age group. For various reasons these committees did not function effectively and the majority have ceased virtually to function by 2000.

Progress in school attendance was the result of the effective implementation of free education policy since 1945. Net primary and junior secondary school attendance has increased to 96 % and 87 % respectively and regional variations in net primary school attendance and completion rate were almost negligible and the dropout rates were relatively high in the secondary grades.

The National Education Commission is of the view that “in the context of the expansion of education opportunities since the provision of free education from 1945 it is desirable that Sri Lanka’s goal should extend beyond universal primary education to secondary education” (NEC report 2003). According to the Commission it will be meaningful if all children could complete Grade 11. Sri Lankan public and other organizations have also indicated the preference to compulsory and free education for the age group 5-16 years. They are also of opinion that in order to make this proposal more meaningful, all schools should be given basic facilities.

## Issues

- Though the school enrolment is high (96%) around 4% of children aged 6-10 years do not attend schools and 5% of those who enroll do not complete primary education and 13% dropout before 14 years of age.
- The out of school children concentrated in poor urban neighborhood, disadvantaged and remote villages.
- Non attendance is mainly due to poverty, distance to school and lack of empathy on the part of officials, Heads of Schools and teachers.
- Failure and ineffectiveness of the Student Attendance Committees, School Attendance Monitoring Committees, Officials and School Principals to enforce the compulsory education regulations.
- Lack of accurate information system with regard to non-enrolled children and dropouts.
- Compulsory Education is not mere attendance but involves equity in quality which the poor have failed to realize due to disparities. Thus they need adequate support to enjoy the right to education.

## Proposals

- 2.5.1. Compulsory Education should be provided to all children of 5-16 years of age.**
- 2.5.2. The Provincial Council through Zonal and Divisional Offices should be responsible for implementing the Compulsory Education law and regulations pertaining to it.**
- 2.5.3. The Central Ministry and Provincial Ministries should be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the law and regulations related to compulsory school attendance of the children of the age group of 5-16.**
- 2.5.4. Divisional Director of Education with the assistance of the Grama Niladhari should identify children who are not enrolled and also not attending school, ascertain cause for non schooling and ensure that**

**every child is in school with the assistance of parents and principals of schools.**

- 2.5.5. School Attendance Committees should be reconstituted at the Grama Niladhari Division level under the Divisional Director of Education.**
- 2.5.6. Divisional Attendance Committee should be constituted at the Divisional Level and shall be responsible for monitoring school attendance.**

## 2.6 Pre School Education

### Policy Context

Children have a right to receive education as expressed in the Convention of Rights of the Child and pre school education has to be considered part of this right. Pre School Education benefits all children because it provides a sound basis for learning and develops knowledge, skills, personal competence, confidence and a sense of social responsibility. Educational research indicates that pre-school education is an important factor in the promotion of equal opportunity. It also reduces the need for expensive interventions during formal schooling and leads to successful achievements in education in later years. Pre-schools are cost effective and generate fruitful experiences at an early stage. The value of pre school education appropriate for the respective developmental stages is supported by physiological, psychological and educational research.

According to international studies, the general principles of pre- school education should aim at providing a safer stimulating environment in which children can feel happy and secure: encourage the emotional, social, physical, creative and intellectual development of children: encourage positive attitudes to self and others and develop confidence and self-esteem: encourage children to explore and respect their environment: extend children’s ability to communicate ideas and feelings in a variety of ways.

In Sri Lanka education policies have historically focused on the formal school system and the educational needs of children less than five years have been left to Non Government Organizations (NGOs). The State intervened only after the establishment of the Children’s Secretariat in 1979. The 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution devolved the responsibility to Provincial Councils which led to an increase in the activities in respect of pre school education. The first report of the NEC (1992) expressed the view that the pre schools should remain as private institutions.

The Presidential Task Force Report (1997) recommended that Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) and pre school should be taken separately and the subject of ECCD should be handled by Children’s Secretariat. The pre school meant for the age group 3 - 5 should be increased in number and legislative provisions should be made in respect of quality of staff and facilities and for their supervision by a relevant authority.

Report on National Policy on ECCD issued by the Children’s Secretariat emphasized the importance of pre school programmes and recognized the

increasing involvement of the private sector in providing pre school facilities and teacher training programmes. Under the 1997 reforms, the Provincial Councils were encouraged to maintain Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) centers. These reforms proposed that the Children's Secretariat should collaborate with the Non-formal Education Division of the Ministry of Education to promote ECCD.

The Children's Secretariat policy makers have identified that Early Childhood Development and pre schools are for two different stages of development and emphasized the setting up of pre schools mainly for the children in the age group of 3 – 5. They have proposed to provide incentives to Provincial Councils and local authorities to set up and maintain pre schools. They were also of opinion that legislative provision is necessary in respect of quality of pre school staff, facilities and their supervision.

### Issues

- Lack of clarity as to whose function is the provision of pre school education at Central Level though by the NEC Act 1991, it is entrusted with policy formulation, and by 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution in 1987, national level monitoring and supervision is entrusted to the Central Authority, the Ministry of Education. At the Provincial level, it is devolved to the Provincial Ministry and at the same time Children's Secretariat is implementing it as a part of the ECCD Programme.
- Lack of legislation to ensure the standards to be maintained with regard to physical facilities, qualifications of the staff and the curriculum.
- Lack of coordination of programmes provided by various institutions, universities and organizations and their accreditation.
- Lack of proper awareness among parents and the general public of the importance of the critical years of a child attending pre schools or staying with the family.
- Lack of professionally developed teachers in most pre schools with recognized qualifications in pre-school education.
- Lack of an accurate data base on all aspects such as physical facilities, children enrolled, the curriculum and teachers for informed decision making and policy formulation.

## Proposals

- 2.6.1. Policy pertaining to Pre School education should be formulated by the National Education Commission as mandated by the NEC Act 1991.
- 2.6.2. Development of the curriculum should be the responsibility of the National Institute of Education in collaboration with the Provincial Councils and the Children’s Secretariat.
- 2.6.3. National level monitoring and quality assurance should be the function of the Standards and Quality Assurance Council of the Central Ministry of Education.
- 2.6.4. In view of the fact that the responsibility for the implementation of pre school programmes has been devolved to Provincial Councils by the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution, the registration, monitoring and supervision should be handled by provincial administration.
- 2.6.5. At provincial level, Pre School Committees should be set up and regulations formulated in keeping with the National Policy and powers devolved by the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution to allocate financial and other resources to carry out pre school programmes.
- 2.6.6. Criteria should be stipulated for Pre School teacher recruitment with opportunities provided for initial professional teacher development.
- 2.6.7. Provision for continuing professional development should be provided to all Pre School teachers by the National Institute of Education, Universities and other organizations approved by the NIE.

## 2.7 Inclusive Education: Education of the Disadvantaged

### Policy Context

The concept of Inclusive Education refers to education of all children in main stream schools and the recent drive towards it, is above more than special educational needs. Inclusion is about the child's right to participate in schools and it is rejecting segregation or exclusion of learners for whatever reason – ability, gender, language, status, family income, disability, colour, religion or ethnic origin. Inclusive Education ensures the principle that every child has an inherent right to education on the basis of equality of opportunity and all students can learn and benefit from education.

Thus, the concept of Inclusive Education, though popularly applied in relation to the absorption of the disabled children into the normal schools, in broader perspective gives direction to the assurance of the right of education of all who are deprived and at the risk of being sidelined from the mainstream of education.

In spite of the provision of free education propped up with a good deal of welfare measures, the existence of vulnerable groups leaves the target of universal compulsory education unachieved. The following fall into this category.

1. Economically disadvantaged children
2. Disabled children
3. Displaced children
4. Children in the plantation sector
5. Street children
6. Children under institutional care

The incidence of poverty in Sri Lanka is relatively high. The percentage of population living below the national poverty line at present is 50% all island. Poverty stands out as the main reason for poor enrolment and retention as the children who fail to complete nine years of schooling are drawn from poorer homes, economically disadvantaged geographical regions of the rural hinterland, and the estate sector. High incidence of poor achievement and dropping out of children in low income communities prohibit them later, as adults from accessing decent and stable employment holding them captive in the vicious cycle of perpetual poverty.

The children who are visually impaired, impaired in hearing, physically impaired and mentally retarded and those who suffer from speech defects, behavioural problems, prolonged diseases, autism and multiple disabilities are considered as disabled. The number of these, both in and out of school is a matter of doubt as there are discrepancies in the data presented by different sources. Sri Lanka has been adopting several strategies to teach disabled children. They include residential and day-school programmes, integration and mainstreaming in regular schools and inclusive education. It is estimated that around 20% of children of school going age are with special education needs. Proposal is in place to provide Education to all deserving children of the compulsory education age by 2015.

Children may get displaced under ordinary and emergency situations and this has become a frequent phenomenon in the country. The shift from their places of residence/origin is sometimes caused by natural disasters but sometimes due to man-made causes such as development projects, armed conflicts and the threats of para military outfits. Children may also be 'educationally displaced' due to a variety of reasons such as closure of schools, non attendance due to distance and difficult terrain. Whatever the cause, the result of displacement in a majority of cases is the complete or partial disruption of the education of children.

The plantation community was considered as a disadvantaged sector but some progress can be noticed in the recent past in the education of this community in terms of literacy rates, school enrolment rates, participation of girls in the compulsory education cycle, appointment of plantation youths as teachers and establishment of a Teachers' College and a College of Education. However, the benefits of free education have not proportionately reached the plantation community as reflected by the comparatively low literacy rates, educational attainments lagging behind those of the other sectors, higher rates of non-schooling, high rate of dropout especially after grade 9 and avoidance of collegiate level education by a large proportion. The shortage of teachers, In-service advisers and SLEAS Officers is a vexed problem in this sector though it has been allayed to some extent by the recruitment of teachers in the recent past. The poor socio-economic status at homes, stunted ambitions of parents and children and avoidance of school due to meager economic gains pose potential threats to the child's education.

The "Street Children" an almost global social group springs out of the population trek from rural areas to the periphery of major cities in search of employment and has settled into an environment infused with sub cultures that are economically very feeble and morally and spiritually lax. Most of these children come from slum areas bogged in acute poverty, dissension, spiritual

vacuum, malnutrition, unsanitary living conditions and rampant disease. The children are denied many of the rights children are entitled to, including the right to education and sometimes even the basic right to identify, lacking a birth certificate. The homelessness leaves them at large often making them the victims of evil forces and anti social elements in the immediate surroundings.

The children who are in the custody of the institutions, being unable to garner the benefits of love, affection and belongingness offered by families, represent a sector that is denied parental care, family ties and in some occasions the right to play, leisure and education. Instead, some in case where the caretakers are unscrupulous, are at the risk of being abused and harshly treated. The Department of Probation and Child Care Services identifies two categories of institutionalized children, protectional and correctional. The children who are housed under the institutions may be orphans, destitute or delinquents. Some are disabled, deserted or victims of disasters. As a majority of them have undergone traumatic and problematic situations, they need special attention, care and guidance for socialization and refinement.

It is clear that poverty, low social acceptance and marginalization, and failure to raise a voice are the features common to all these categories.

### **Issues**

- Economically Disadvantaged Children
  1. Lack of economic resources prevents parents in poverty groups from enrolling their children in schools and compels them to engage children in child labour, begging and sex to earn an income.
  2. Schools in disadvantaged locations where most people are poor are adversely affected by the lack of even basic resources.
  3. Shortage of teachers in most disadvantaged schools where poor children attend.
  4. Lack of a service oriented attitude among teachers to value serving the needy and the poor.
  
- Disabled Children
  1. Lack of accurate information, is a major factor that negatively affects policy and programme development in special education.
  2. Inclusive education differs from earlier notion of integration concerned principally with disability; today it is about the child's

right to participate and school's duty to accept rejecting segregation or exclusion.

3. The importance of the concept of Inclusive Education has not been properly comprehended by the parents who are reluctant to enroll their children with disabilities.
  4. Although inclusive education is adopted, most schools do not have the basic facilities for such an inclusion. A properly built school plant, conducive physical setting and a psycho-social climate for friendly participation of disabled children are lacking in schools.
  5. A severe shortage of professionally qualified teachers makes it imperative to provide provision for professional development programmes.
  6. Training programmes conducted by the National Institute of Education do not meet the demands of special education teachers.
  7. About 2% of the children do not enroll in the formal school. This is due to severe disabilities and living in under privileged areas though it is essential that they be accommodated to achieve the target of Education for All.
  8. The level of access to special education due to lack of an institutional system in place to ensure the enrollment of all severely disabled children is not satisfactory.
- Displaced Children
    1. Lack of policy and legislation with which the authorities can respond to situations related to the education of children during natural and man made disasters particularly when they involve large numbers.
    2. Lack of professionally competent personnel to provide guidance to the staff implementing the programmes developed for children in situations of displacement.
  - Children in the Plantation Sector
    1. School avoidance due to poverty and non availability of good schools in the areas of residence of the children.
    2. Higher dropout rate in plantation schools.
    3. Dearth of personnel of supervision and managerial capacity

- Street Children
  1. Lack of reliable and usable data and information base of street children in making decisions.
  2. The fluid home environment and family conditions demand income from children for family survival.
  
- Children under Institutional Care
  1. Almost all the children under institutional care have traumatic or problematic backgrounds and their educational achievements are relatively low.
  2. The 'Children's Voluntary Homes' do not provide either favorable psycho-social care or an environment conducive for learning.
  3. The children tend to show an 'isolation complex' and many principals and teachers hold negative attitudes towards them.
  4. The Probation Officers in charge of these children hardly show an interest in their education beyond the primary level.

## Proposals

### 2.7.1. Economically Disadvantaged Children.

- All children of the parents below poverty line should be provided with a pro-poor subsidy scheme to make them capable of participation in education from the beginning of the primary schools.
- All disadvantaged and neglected schools that most poor children attend should be upgraded with adequate facilities as a priority.
- A teacher development and transfer scheme with incentives or as a service requirement to serve the disadvantaged schools for a fixed period should be implemented in a just and fair manner.
- All teacher education programmes should emphasize the development of proper attitudes of professional service to the needy.

### 2.7.2. Disabled Children.

- An accurate data/information base should be developed on special education and a regular survey should be conducted to identify children with special education needs.
- The physical setting in the school selected for accommodating disabled children should be improved to facilitate their movement and also develop a suitable psychosocial climate in the school.
- An adequate number of specialist teachers in special education should be professionally prepared and all other teacher development courses should include a component on teaching children with special needs.
- The NIE should be provided with resources to extend its programmes of developing learning materials, professional development of teachers and orienting principals and education officers to monitor programmes for disabled children.
- The Planning Unit of the MOE must take steps to estimate the number of teachers required for the school system to meet the special needs of children with disability who cannot be integrated in the regular classroom learning-teaching environment.
- Children with disability should be given preference where possible for residential accommodation in schools, and one school in at least in each division should provide facilities for such children in their hostels.
- School Attendance Committees should ensure that parents of children with disability are aware of and utilize the educational opportunities available for these children within the school system and in special institutions.

### 2.7.3. Displaced Children.

- A programme to provide continuation of education of the children who are victims of a disaster situation should be undertaken to avoid gaps in the education of children.
- Professionally competent personnel with expertise in conducting programmes and guiding staff in situations of disaster should be developed to design and implement educational programmes for children displaced.

**2.7.4. Children in the Plantation Sector.**

- In order to offer more educational opportunities at the senior secondary level, more schools with different subject streams should be provided.
- Qualified officers should be posted in the vacant supervisory and administrative positions to ensure effective monitoring and supervision.

**2.7.5. Street Children.**

- Data bases on street children should be developed to assess the magnitude of the issue.
- Parental education programmes coupled with income generation should be developed and implemented.
- School principals and teachers should be sensitized on the conditions of the street children through relevant components in professional development programmes.

**2.7.6. Children under Institutional Care.**

- Sufficient physical resources should be provided to the 'Children's Voluntary Homes'.
- Care givers should be recruited through personality and occupational diagnostic tests.
- Skills related to guidance, counseling and handling children in Voluntary Homes should be developed by Probation Officers, Care Givers and Teachers through in-service enrichment programmes.
- A collaborative framework should be developed under the leadership of the MOE and the Ministry of Social Services with other stakeholders to promote education of children kept under institutional care.

## 2.8 Non Formal Education

### Policy Context

Non formal education is an organized educational activity outside the established formal system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives. The non-formal education is usually short-term, specific and non-credential based. It is individualized, output-centered and practical by content and environment – based and community related by the system of delivery. Four characteristics have come to be associated with non-formal education.

- Relevance to the needs of the disadvantaged groups
- Concern with specific categories of person
- A focus on clearly defined purposes
- Flexibility in organization and methods

Non Formal Education (NFE) has gained recognition during the last half a century mainly because of its flexibility, adaptability to the environment, capacity to deliver quick results and the cost effectiveness. In the developing world NFE programmes have been particularly successful in the areas of literacy education and skill development.

The Non Formal Education Division of the Ministry of Education was established in the mid 1970s to meet the needs that were not met by the formal education system. In Sri – Lanka, NFE education has been utilized in the fields of literacy, agricultural extension and health education. The Ministry of Education conducted a programme of adult education through the “night schools” where adults participated in learning English. However, the present NFE programme commenced in 1976 with the establishment of the “Janatha Education Programme”. Under this programme the following activities were conducted:

- i Part-time vocational training for school leavers. Under this activity vocational training was provided in the evening in school workshops and laboratories. The duration of the course was six months.

- ii General education programmes for adults. The target groups were various interest groups such as farmers, unemployed youth, mothers and the self-employed.
- iii Literacy programmes for illiterate adults and school dropouts.
- iv English language programmes for youth.

Over the years some of these programmes have been diversified and new provisions such as Community Learning Centres (CLC), Residential Centres for street children and special programmes to get early school leavers back to school were started. The NIE also conducted NFE programmes in the past but it has been discontinued. A cadre of officers designated as Non Formal Project Assistants were appointed to promote NFE programmes at Divisional level. However their positions are not clear. This has to be rectified.

Need of diversified skills and labour specialties, expanding community needs that cannot be accommodated within the formal education system, illusory nature of the achievements in literacy in the world today and the capacity of the non formal mode to cover many concepts taught in the formal school have been cited as reasons in favour of the non formal programmes. In the present Sri Lankan context, it is said that non formal education programmes can be proposed for young people over the age of 16, disadvantaged people aged 16-24 and adults including those seeking work and wanting new skills.

Under the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, implementation of NFE programmes is a devolved subject. The MOE has a coordinating role and providing leadership to the provincial authorities.

Non formal education programmes were hardly ever supported by official commitment and material and human resources. It has been aggravated by the lack of an overarching and coherent policy to streamline the programmes under its purview. Hence more meaningful and realistic programmes are vital in this regard.

### **Issues**

- The NFE programmes from their inception have not catered to the needs of the clientele.

- The policy formulation, planning, programme development, and implementation regarding NFE have not been clearly delegated.
- Out of school children, youth and adults do not have access to resource centers and the resources available in the schools are under-utilized in this regard.
- Lack of coordination among the institutions providing NFE leads to duplication and wastage of resources.
- A comprehensive information base on NFE target groups and NFE programmes in place for them is lacking.
- Capacity development of the personnel involved in NFE is not given sufficient attention and the role of the NFE Project Assistants has not been clearly spelt out.

### Proposals

- 2.8.1. Non Formal Education (NFE) should be expanded to provide academic and practical skills and information to those over 16 years of age and those who are deprived of educational opportunities or who have dropped out of formal education.**
- 2.8.2. Personnel and programme development of NFE should be undertaken by the NIE and the national plan and guidelines should be developed by the Central Authority, the MOE.**
- 2.8.3. Implementation of NFE programmes is a function of Provincial Ministries through the Provincial Departments of Education (13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution).**
- 2.8.4. Development and distribution of curricular and learning materials on NFE should be decentralized and localized.**
- 2.8.5. Community Learning Centres (CLCs) should be developed to ensure equitable access to realize quality NFE. These can be stationed in schools so that the schools can strengthen their ties with the respective communities through the delivery of NFE services and provision of amenities and physical resources.**

- 2.8.6. The MOE should undertake the coordination of National NFE programme to avoid duplication of action and where possible to share resources.**
- 2.8.7. The Provincial Authority should play the regulatory role for the management of the NFE programmes and shall collaborate with the State Institutions and non-state organizations in implementing related activities.**
- 2.8.8. A common comprehensive information base developed through survey and research on different organizations providing NFE should be put in place and shared among the agencies which implement NFE programmes.**
- 2.8.9. The capacity of the personnel involved in NFE should be raised by professional development programmes and the role of the NFE Project Assistants should be regularized.**

# CHAPTER 3

<b>EDUCATION SYSTEM – CONTENT AND FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>3.1.</b>	<b>Curriculum Development – Primary and Secondary Education</b>
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## EDUCATION SYSTEM – CONTENT AND PROCESS

### 3.1 Curriculum Development – Primary and Secondary

#### Policy Context

Systematic curriculum development in Sri Lanka commenced in the 1960's with the establishment of the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC). Prior to this, the Ministry of Education (MoE) undertook the responsibility for curriculum development as part of its routine work. With a major education reform in 1972, the CDC was expanded and strengthened to develop the new curricula. Later with the establishment of the National Institute of Education (NIE) in 1985, the important task of developing the national curriculum became the responsibility of the NIE.

All structured learning experiences planned, organized and implemented by school and enriched by a variety of informal experiences in line with the National Education Policy comprise the school curriculum. The curriculum meant for the development of the child should tap the inherent capabilities of all types of learners for national development by providing them with ample opportunities for joyful learning.

A careful look into the curriculum development activities of Sri Lanka brings to light three different types of curricula that are closely linked to one or more levels of the education system. These are the **integrated curriculum** at the primary level (grades 1 to 5), the **common and the balanced curriculum** at the Junior Secondary Level (grades 6 to 9) and the GCE/OL (grades 10 to 11), and the **specialization curriculum** at the GCE /AL (grades 12 to 13). The common and the balanced curriculum at the GCE (OL) with core and optional subjects, however, is somewhat different from the same type of curriculum at the Junior Secondary Level that comprises only core subjects. Specialization at the GCE (AL) is also confined to a stream of study that falls under Science, Arts or Commerce. The **eight-year curriculum cycle** introduced to the system in the 1990's together with the three types of curricula mentioned above has prevailed over the years with slight modifications in the grades, and the subjects identified for different levels.

## **Curriculum Development**

### **Policy Context**

The curricula developed and introduced to schools largely determine the quality of school education. Although this function has been undertaken with great care since independence, many criticisms exist today as to the quality of the youth completing school education. Employers complain that many with academic qualifications are neither trainable nor employable. Research finds that they are not ready to take up self-employment irrespective of the many investors who come forward to support them. Even those who get into employment demonstrate deficiencies in thinking, social and personal skills, which prevent them from discharging their responsibilities to their maximum potential. With many parents persuading their children to seek for better prospects overseas, Sri Lanka also experiences high brain drain. The deteriorating national interest thus observed in different types of products of general education - the workforce, the educated and the parents - brings to light that school education needs better curricula to inculcate values in its citizenry. Given below are four main issues related to curriculum development that deals with the purpose, structure, the medium of instruction, and the process.

### **Policy Issues related to Curriculum Development**

- I. Restructuring of education levels together with the irrational selection and organization of subjects at different levels do not facilitate a balanced personality.
- II. Curricula developed for schools fail to provide a sound foundation that enables the youth to lead a successful personal and work life.
- III. Opportunities made available to develop skills in Mother Tongue, Second National Language and the International Language are inadequate and not in phase with national interests.
- IV. Rushed curriculum reforms often undertaken in an ad hoc basis pay little attention to the accumulated knowledge, local and global needs and strategies that can cater to regional variations.

### **Curriculum Development – Issue I**

#### **Policy Context**

The curriculum reform of the 1990's dealt with four levels of education - primary (grades 1 to 5), junior secondary (grades 6 to 8), senior secondary (grades 9 to 11),

and collegiate (grades 12 and 13). The first curriculum reform of the new millennium, however, has taken into consideration three levels - primary (grades 1 to 5), junior secondary (grades 6 to 8), and senior secondary (grades 9 to 11). Restructuring the levels of education likewise has created confusion requiring consensus on a long-term basis.

Any curriculum reform in general education expects citizens with a balanced personality who can contribute to sustainable development. To achieve this end, the schoolchildren need to be exposed to the total curriculum that covers a number of important areas presented either as individual subjects or subject groups. Selection of subject areas for different education levels, organization of these as relevant, and taking action to avoid outside projects from disturbing them during implementation, therefore, become important considerations.

Primary Education has an integrated curriculum common to all students. Although the great efforts of the past have enabled the primary reform of the 1990's to be well accepted, a need exists today to improve it further by aligning it with the new thinking in the new millennium.

The children at the Junior Secondary Level (JSL) have to offer 12 subjects in total out of which one is optional. Aesthetics identified as the optional subject of the JSL has put an end to the Common Aesthetics that was available previously for grade 6. Many countries of the world together with the private schools of Sri Lanka considering the interest of every child to draw, dance, act, sing, and play musical instruments have provided room for such activities in the curricula they develop for the younger students.

The additional subjects introduced by the previous reform for the GCE (OL), have also been dropped in the new reform to allow every child to select six core subjects and three optional subjects for the GCE (OL) examination. The new method recommended for the selection of optional subjects from three subject groups, however, fails to consider aesthetics as a core subject. Moreover, the tendency of many students to select English Literature from the Aesthetic Subject Group also prevents the GCE (OL) curriculum from contributing to a balanced personality.

In the past, it was the subject teachers who took every possible action to develop life competencies in school children. They allowed such competencies to be caught rather than taught while teaching their own subjects. In the drive for good results over the years, the teachers began to drop this practice gradually to give their full time to cover the subject content tested at public examinations. To overcome the negative effects resulting from this situation, the reforms of the

1990's introduced a new subject by the name of Life Competencies to grade 7, 8 and 9 of the school system. The teachers in charge of this new subject were entrusted with the responsibility of developing a set of generic skills in students. Interventions for preparing the students for a successful life meant beyond the purview of the subject teachers and poor teaching methods were associated with the Subject of Life Competencies, prevented the change in behaviour expected of students from becoming a reality.

The two arts subjects - Geography and Civics - that were originally within Social Studies are now optional subjects in Subject Group 1. Commerce Subjects classified with Technical Subjects originally are placed today in the same Subject Group with Geography, Civics and a number of additional languages. These measures have faded the importance not only of Geography and Civics but also of the new Commerce Subject - **Entrepreneurial Studies** - that was introduced to the curriculum to meet a pressing need in the job market. Assigning just two periods a week for Religion, neglecting the subject Practical and Technical Skills (PTS) that lays the foundation for technological studies at higher levels, and incorporating Health and Physical Education in Subject Group 3 with technical subjects are also problems when the emerging place of technology in the world of work, and the importance of health and physical education in a balance curriculum.

### Issue

- Restructuring of education levels together with the irrational selection and organization of subjects at different levels do not facilitate a balanced personality.

### Proposals

**3.1.1. Levels of education should be determined rationally and maintained over time to avoid confusion in curriculum development and implementation.**

- **The three education levels - Primary (grades 1 to 5), Junior Secondary (Grades 6 to 9), and Senior Secondary (grades 10 to 13) - should be considered for all activities related to curriculum development.**
- **The Senior Secondary Level (SSL) should be subdivided into two stages - Stage 1 covering grades 10 and 11 and Stage 2**

covering grades 12 and 13 - to facilitate specialization at the higher level.

**3.1.2. Curriculum reforms in primary education should be reviewed in the light of new changes taking place in secondary education to identify areas for retention and revision.**

- The competency-based, integrated curriculum that covers the four major subject areas of Mother Tongue, Mathematics, Religion and Environmental Studies should be continued at the primary level.
- To ensure relevant learning-teaching methods at different age levels, the three Stages - Key Stage 1 incorporating Grades 1 and 2, Key Stage 2 incorporating Grades 3 and 4, and Key Stage 3 incorporating Grade 5 - already adopted for primary education should be recognized as the three main divisions for curriculum development.
- Curricula at the primary level should be updated to bring them in line with the principles adopted at the secondary level in relation to specification of learning outcomes, and methods for learning, teaching and evaluation.

**3.1.3. Curricula introduced for the Junior Secondary Level (JSL) should be reviewed periodically to ensure a sound foundation for the young to be successful in any walk of life they select for their future.**

- A common and balanced curriculum should be offered at the JSL to allow children to be equipped with an integrated personality.
- Languages, Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences and Mathematics should be considered as the major areas for curriculum development
- To provide a sound foundation for studies at stage 1 of the SSL, all subjects offered at the JSL should be common to all students except for those coming under Religion, Mother Tongue and Second National Language, which are pre-determined for them.
- To allow every child to derive joy from art, music, dance and drama Common Aesthetics should be introduced at the JSL
- Children should be allowed to develop generic skills from all subjects taught at school rather than through the single subject - Life Competencies - introduced to the school curriculum in the 1990's.

- To prepare children for the emerging needs of technology, Practical and Technical Skills (PTS) should be given due priority in the JSL curriculum.

3.1.4. Subject streams and curricula at the Senior Secondary Level (SSL) should be reviewed periodically to improve their relevance to emerging situations.

- To allow children to be equipped with an integrated personality, a balanced curriculum should be offered at Stage 1 of the SSL.
- The curriculum for stage 1 of the SSL - (GCE OL) - should contain a core and an optional component, which together contribute to the development of a citizen who can function proactively in the increasingly complex and dynamic society of the future.
- Children should offer not more than ten subjects for the GCE (OL) with seven core subjects (Mother Tongue, English, Mathematics, Science, History, Religion, Health and Physical Education) and selecting one subject from the three optional subject groups.
- The optional component of the curriculum should consist of three subject groups that focus on the three areas of Additional Languages, Aesthetics and Technology.
- Considering the deteriorating standards of physical, mental, spiritual and social health of school children, Health and Physical Education should be considered a core subject of the GCE (OL).
- The First Language should include a comprehensive, compulsory Literature Component.
- There should be two optional papers for English Language with Paper 2 covering both English Language and Literature for those students who are more advanced in English.
- Technical subjects offered at the GCE (OL) should provide a broad base for the children to make a sound selection at the GCE (AL).
- In addition to Science, Arts and Commerce, a new stream for Technology should be introduced at Stage 2 of the SSL.
- Each child in Stage 2 of the SSL - GCE (AL) - should select three subjects specific to the stream of study concerned together with two other additional subjects.
- Additional subjects should be drawn from a list of subjects identified as relevant to the stream or should be selected from

a group of common subjects such as General English, General Information Technology (GIT) and Mathematics.

- General English and should be compulsory for those students who have failed in English and GIT for students who have not studied/failed in ICT at the GCE (O/L).
- School Based Evaluation should be an integral part of the learning teaching process with the marks being taken into consideration in awarding the final grade at the GCE (O/L) and GCE (A/L) examinations.

## Curriculum Development – Issue II

### Policy Context

A good general education should provide a solid foundation for the young people completing school education to be successful in any walk of life they select for their future. Yet curriculum development taking place in a system where the topmost level is strictly tied up with university entry requirements has not allowed this to be a reality in the Sri Lankan education context. The **top down approach to curriculum development** emphasized in such a set up aggravates the problem preventing the curriculum developers from improving the relevance of school curricula to real life in general and to the world of work in particular.

The curriculum developed with a focus on a small percentage of students capable of gaining admission to the universities, makes it too heavy for the majority of students in schools. The overloaded curricula make learning dull and boring for the children. Teachers find it difficult to cover the syllabi on time. The difficulty of pushing most of the content introduced at the top to the lower levels also generates a considerable gap between the curricula developed for the GCE (OL) and the GCE (AL). Moreover, the learning outcomes specified by these curricula do not go beyond lower order mental skills that can be measured at paper and pencil tests. The learning-teaching process geared towards passing public examinations also does not encourage activity-based learning where the children get the opportunity to use the knowledge they gain in school to develop relevant attitudes and skills, which ultimately lead them towards the much needed competencies.

To facilitate the learning of the young, the topics identified for the lower grades needs to be repeated over time going into detail over the years. The approaches adopted for curriculum development, however, do not pay much heed to this

important principle. Learning is also compartmentalized by different subjects offered at one particular grade, and by the same subject offered at different grades of one education level or different education levels. Mechanical and superficial learning thus facilitated in a highly examination oriented system fails to bring about a person with an integrated personality, who possesses thinking skills, social skills, and personal skills that are a must for a successful personal and work life.

### **Issue**

- Curricula developed for schools fail to provide a sound foundation that enables the youth to lead a successful personal and work life.

### **Proposals**

- 3.1.5. To avoid delays in exposing some students to the new reforms a bottom up approach with two entry points at grades 6 and 10 should be adopted.
- 3.1.6. The models and methods adopted for curriculum development should focus on productive citizens who can be successful in both personal and work life.
- The competency-based approach to curriculum development should be popularized to avoid mere acquisition of knowledge that fails to integrate relevant attitudes, skills and important personality traits that contribute to sound practices.
  - To bring about proactive youth who can contribute competently to self, national and global development, the curriculum development process should focus on developing generic skills along with subject competencies.
  - The spiral approach to curriculum development should be adopted up to grade 11 to enable students to reflect on their prior learning and go into depth gradually.
  - Compartmentalization of content by subject, grade, and level of education should be minimized by strengthening horizontal and vertical integration within the school curriculum.

## Curriculum Development - Issue III

### Policy Context

The inequalities created by the dual language policy of the colonial era caused many frustrations and led to agitation for reforms in education. A recommendation made by a special committee to introduce Sinhala / Tamil as the medium of instruction at the primary level was accepted by the British and enforced in 1940's. With the independence gained in 1948, this decision was extended to the secondary level in the 1950's and later to the universities. Thus the country experienced two extreme language policies – “English only” in the colonial era and “Sinhala / Tamil only” during the post independence era.

The official language policy introduced in 1956 improved the standard of both Sinhala and Tamil Language to such an extent enabling each of them to provide a sound medium of instruction for teaching of any subject at any level. In spite of this marvellous achievement, a vast decline began to take place in the standard of English that was used in both general and higher education. Some considering the many opportunities of learning English in a global economy began to pressurize the governments that came into power in the new millennium to teach as many subjects as possible in the English medium. Amidst such demands, the interest for uplifting the standard of the two National Languages fell drastically bringing the curricula developed for the First Language and the International Language almost on par with one another.

A decision was made in year 2000 to introduce the English medium for GCE (AL) Science students. The competitive nature of the GCE (AL) examination, however, did not allow this initiative to be successful and a second decision was made in year 2002 to introduce English medium instruction at the junior secondary level. This decision first adopted for Science and Mathematics at grade 6 was extended later to Social Studies and Health and Physical Education. The original decision to confine the English medium to the JSL was relaxed and the initiative was extended to the SSL in year 2006 enabling the students to sit the GCE (OL) 2007 examination in the English medium. With more and more pressure to allow English medium instruction for more and more subjects of the curriculum, Bilingual Education became the policy of the government in year 2008 with a considerable number of subjects of the GCE (OL) and the (AL) selected to be taught in English.

The scarcity of English teachers in the system and the difficulties of distributing the available few on a rational basis to provide equal opportunity to each and every child, over long years of the past did not allow a marked improvement to

be made in learning and teaching of English. The teachers of English also opting to be teachers of other subjects taught in the English medium, for the mere sake of remaining in prestigious schools, aggravated the problem. The resulting downfall in the learning and teaching of the English Language has made English medium to be considered today as a better option for improving English Language standards of the country. This type of thinking has a high likelihood of downgrading the standards of the two national languages further.

Tamil for Sinhala students and Sinhala for Tamil students have also come to the fore as an important option. Taking this situation into consideration, the reforms of the 1990's introduced the Second National Language as a subject of the primary, junior secondary and the GCE (OL) curricula. The Second National Language is offered today as an optional subject in Subject Group 2 of the GCE (OL). This subject introduced together with a number of other important subjects and the unavailability of qualified teachers to teach the subject has prohibited many interested parties from opting for the second national language.

### Issue

- Opportunities made available to develop skills in Mother Tongue, Second National Language and the International Language are inadequate and not in phase with national interests.

### Proposals

- 3.1.7. The place to be given to the learning of national languages, the second national language and the international language at different levels of the school system should be rationally determined.**
- **Mother Tongue should be the medium of instruction for all children at the primary level.**
  - **For the purposes of national integration, unity and harmony, and social coherence the Second National Language should be offered as a compulsory subject from Grade 3 to 9.**
  - **To provide a better opportunity for those interested to select the Second National Language as a subject of the GCE (OL), Subject Group 1 of the GCE (OL) should be devoted to Additional Languages.**

- To enable citizens to function in a global society and to have access to universal knowledge and skills in technology, English should be a compulsory subject from Grade 3 to 11.
- 3.1.8. Bilingual education should be clearly defined and equitably adopted to improve English language standards of school children
- To provide an additional opportunity to improve English language standards, all children in secondary education should study two subjects that are not cognitively demanding with complex concepts in English with support provided in the mother tongue to minimize learning difficulties.
- 3.1.9. A variety of steps should be taken to create a suitable environment for language learning.
- To improve standards of the other Second National Languages and the International Language, a variety of self-learning opportunities should be created for children who are deprived in terms of language teachers and language-rich learning environments.
  - All types of media (printed, audio, video and electronic) should be channelled for improving standards of language learning.
  - To allow students to demonstrate mastery in all three languages by the time they complete their compulsory education period, tests should be conducted annually to identify the extent to which the children have reached the required proficiency level.

## Curriculum Development - Issue IV

### Policy Context

The curricula developed for schools are very important when their contribution towards grooming of the future generation is considered. Amidst the multitude of changes that are taking place in the global economy, the curriculum developers have to clarify their philosophy by paying attention to changing student needs, fading cultural beliefs and the paradigm shifts that are taking place around them. The current issues in education also have to be analysed to develop a new vision for curriculum development.

In a rapidly changing world, the curricula developed for school children should focus on producing young people who are capable of facing the emerging challenges of the future. This condition requires the curriculum developers to initiate the curriculum development process by identifying current problems that hinder national development. Any learning situation also has different types of learners – auditory, visual and tactile - who demonstrate differences in terms of intelligence and the preferred learning style. Irrespective of all this, undue attention has been paid over the past to auditory learners and those with logical thinking skills, preventing the inherent capabilities of the visual and the tactile to be tapped adequately for national development.

In view of better curricula, the curriculum developers also have to search for educational concepts and practices that are rooted in our culture. When compared to unfamiliar ideas borrowed from outside these, related to local needs, have a better chance of improving our education. The paradigm shifts that are taking place in education also need consideration to bring our education in line with the needs of a global economy. Moreover, new thinking emerging in terms of Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK) and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) has to be matched with local research findings and individual experiences to adapt them as suitable for the task at hand.

Curricula thus developed cautiously with attention paid to essential factors have to be pre tested before they are introduced to the school system. Standards set at the national level may not always be in line with the local needs. Considering such situations, strategies need to be developed to facilitate regional variations. Adequate time is also needed to prepare the relevant learning-teaching material mainly in the form of textbooks for students, and instructional guides for teachers. Moreover to facilitate implementation, all types of stakeholders have to be well informed of the rationale underlying the reform to bring them in line with the new thinking. Many major reforms have been drowned by ad hoc projects that emerge shortly after implementation. To make optimum use of the scarce resources expended on a curriculum reform, such projects have to be identified early for necessary action. All this requires nearly a period of two years to plan a new curriculum.

Irrespective of all these needs to be met, the curricula in our country have often been developed in a rush. The pressure to put forth a new curriculum on time has prevented many reforms of the past to go beyond mere plastering of the existing content. Limited opportunities for undisturbed implementation at least during the introductory period, have also prohibited the intended learning outcomes to be reaped or institutionalisation to be achieved. Past experience reveals that drastic changes have taken place in school curricula during reform periods themselves. The multiple book option (MBO) introduced in year 2004

disturbed the eight-year curriculum cycle initiated in 1999 on the basis of nine national goals and five basic competencies. Such actions prevent systematic planning of the next reform, give a different orientation to the curricula already in implementation, and alter the reform process totally to end up with a whole lot of undesirable consequences.

### **Issue**

- Rushed curriculum reforms often undertaken in an ad hoc basis pay little attention to the accumulated knowledge, local and global needs and strategies that can cater to regional variations.

### **Proposals**

**3.1.10. Adequate time should be set aside to identify and plan the multitude of aspects that contributes to the success of any curriculum reform.**

- **A minimum period of 18 months should be set aside for the process of curriculum change to be effectively planned.**

**3.1.11. Standards set at the national level should be checked to confirm their accuracy and congruence with local situations.**

- **Curricula developed at the national level should be pre tested and finalized prior to island-wide implementation.**
- **With the prior approval of the NIE, the provinces should have the freedom to interpret the curricula to suit local and regional needs.**
- **The eight-year curriculum cycle followed for curricular revision should be continued with room for essential minor refinements identified on the basis of feedback received.**

## 3.2 Learning-Teaching Process

### Policy Context

In the ancient past where the societies were simple and static the teacher was looked upon as a person who had all the knowledge that the children would need to be successful in life. The teachers gaining a lot of authority in this context could play the **transmission** role where they imparted the knowledge available to them to their students considering the student as a passive listener. In the mid era of industrialization the societies grew in complexity and began to turn dynamic. The teachers were compelled to move away from the previous jug and mug method to take up a new role of **transaction**. This second role enabled the teacher to prepare the children to react to problems that cropped up on a day-to-day basis. In the new era of globalisation, the teachers have to change their role once again from transaction to **transformation**. With the societies turning even more complex and more dynamic in the new era, the teachers are compelled to prepare their students not only to be proactive but also to learn co-operatively from peers considering them as the main asset available for learning.

To prevent students from being lost in the emerging future, the teachers all over the world are now moving towards the new role of transformation. Most of them have begun to adopt inquiry-based, experiential and constructivist approaches to learning and teaching, where the students get the opportunity to participating activities to find out for themselves. The situation in our country, however, is different. The transmission and transaction roles that were prominent in our classrooms started to fade to give way to a textbook learning teaching culture in the school system. In this context, the students memorized facts and crammed for examinations. They recalled these facts in the examination hall to get good passes. Model question papers that were in abundance, prepared the children for public examinations. Today all these has brought about a generation that is deficient in thinking skills, social skills and personal skills, which are considered as the main ingredients of an integrated personality.

A variety of reasons have not allowed the School-Based Assessments (SBA) introduced to Sri Lankan schools in 1998 to be institutionalised to date. This approach, successfully tried out in many countries of the world, was brought into Sri Lankan classrooms where the teachers talked the whole time either in the form lectures or as questions posed to students. The two terms assessment and evaluation used interchangeably furthermore did not allow the difference between them to be highlighted and their true value to be realized. Although the

Sri Lanka Department of Examinations recommended 17 modalities for SBA, the limited understanding of the teacher on the new approach coupled together with the increased workload compelled the teachers to use the written test as the main mode of evaluation. The resulting student frustration and the falling teacher morale made the validity and the reliability associated with the SBA to decrease and the stakeholders to lose faith in the practice. All this necessitates the SBA to be rethought in the new learning-teaching context created by the new transformation role of the teacher.

### **Policy Issues Related to the Learning -Teaching Process**

- I. Mechanical methods currently adopted for learning and teaching make schooling dull, boring, superficial, irrelevant and stressful for the majority of school children leading to disciplinary problems as well.
- II. Inadequate support for learning by the teacher during the learning-teaching process together with limited opportunities to know the learning progress while learning does not allow the majority of learners to reach the learning goals set out for them.
- III. Inconsistencies across subject areas in instructions issued to teachers, non-alignment of textbooks with the new thinking, and the limited attention paid to make optimum use of the available library resources or develop courseware do not facilitate learning and teaching.
- IV. Poor instructional leadership at all levels of the education hierarchy does not allow the environment at the classroom level or the supervisory practices at the school level to be aligned adequately with the new thinking in education.
- V. Predictable generic test items that are prominent in public examinations have distorted classroom practices, increased the demand for private tuition, and prevented the children from learning for life.

### **Learning-Teaching Process – Issue I**

#### **Policy Context**

Over the years the children have been directed to retain the known, learn the pre-determined and construct what is. Memorization of facts for the mere sake of passing examinations forced them to learn mechanically and superficially. Learning in this manner does not allow a learner to go beyond mere knowledge to develop relevant attitudes, skills and other personality traits that are important to be successful in life. The priority given to the needs of auditory learners in specifying learning outcomes and in selecting learning-teaching

methods has made the visual and the tactile to lose interest in learning and the girls to perform much better than boys in school tests and public examinations.

Learning individually for one's own victory also makes children selfish, isolated and unable to coexist in a multi cultural society. Excessive individualism coupled together with a lack of social responsibility highlight the **erosion of values** in the contemporary society. This problem together with the undue emphasis paid to get at the knowledge available to the teacher and the textbook has led to a society that is deficient in thinking, inter personal, and intra personnel abilities. The youth leaving our schools today demonstrate weaknesses in both critical and creative thinking. They lack social skills of working in groups, communicating with others, listening empathetically to others, caring for and sharing with others, and taking leadership and followership as necessary in group situations. Emotional balance, stress management, initiative, orientation to change, responsibility, accountability, commitment and self-discipline are some personnel skills that our youth has failed to develop while in school. To overcome the above problems a need exists today to introduce a set of new approaches to learning and teaching that would bring the learners to a different platform where they would generate their own knowledge and meaning to revise the known, explore the undetermined and construct what is, as preparation for constructing what might be.

The undue attention paid to impart the academic knowledge over the years has not allowed the teachers to enhance the coping skills and self-esteem of schoolchildren through adequate emotional support. High conflict and violent situations in the country, the increasing numbers of broken families and the resulting deterioration of family ties, coupled together with high competition within the education system has increased **anxiety and stress** in school children. To promote the well being of students through psychosocial approaches, a need exists for schoolteachers to create a child-friendly environment and function as counsellors as well.

Work today is identified as a pedagogic medium. The children engaging in activities in small groups and encouraged to learn by doing develop a number of work-related skills, which will be useful to them later in the world of work. Employment oriented subjects such as Entrepreneurial Studies now in the curriculum together with the Technical Subjects of the past, help children to construct knowledge that supports them in selecting a career path of their choice, entering it, and performing successfully in it. **Orientation to work** thus becoming part of the learning-teaching process itself minimizes the need for separate programmes on career guidance.

Learning opportunities that bring joy to students and keep them occupied are minimal in our classrooms. The children driven for learning under such circumstances demonstrate a number of behavioural problems. Many schools without realizing the instructional problems that make the students misbehave use punishment to maintain **student discipline**. Some schools, however, take a different turn to generate self discipline rather than pushing it from outside. Long lasting self-discipline developed thus enables children to differentiate the good from the bad and the right from the wrong. All this facilitates good decisions in students, relieves the school from disciplinary problems, and allows the nation to march towards peace and harmony.

### Issue

- Mechanical methods currently adopted for learning and teaching make schooling dull, boring, superficial, irrelevant and stressful for the majority of school children leading to disciplinary problems as well.

### Proposals

#### 3.2.1. **New approaches to learning and teaching should allow every child to derive real satisfaction from learning.**

- **The paradigm shifts that are taking place in the role of the teacher should be considered in selecting a suitable role that is in line with the needs of the day.**
- **Student-centred and activity-oriented approaches to learning and teaching should be introduced to let children derive joy and satisfaction from schooling.**
- **There should be opportunities within the learning-teaching process for children to construct knowledge and meaning by exploring freely and co-operatively with peers.**
- **To meet the different learner needs, the instructional process should be enriched with an eclectic approach to learning and teaching.**
- **Learners should play a variety of roles - thinking critically and creatively, observing, listening, reflecting, responding, questioning, reading, making and doing, presenting, elaborating, taking down notes and evaluating - within the learning-teaching process.**

**3.2.2.** The learning-teaching process should enable children to develop a variety of subject competencies together with life competencies, generic skills and values.

- Collaborative approaches for learning and teaching should allow children to go beyond mere knowledge to develop relevant values, attitudes, skills and personality traits that integrate into worthwhile, lifelong practices referred to as competencies.
- Teachers should allow children to develop life competencies and generic skills along with competencies derived from their own subjects.
- Considering the fact that values are caught rather than taught a cross-curricular approach should be adopted for inculcation of values as well.

**3.2.3.** Stress free situations in a child friendly environment should enhance student learning.

- Personal, family, school and societal problems that contribute to student stress should be identified in advance and managed effectively.
- Psychosocial support should be provided to schoolchildren to overcome learning difficulties resulting from emotional stress.
- Self-awareness, self-esteem and coping skills should be developed in schoolchildren to prepare them to manage their day-to-day problems.

**3.2.4.** The technical subjects in the school curriculum together with a suitable pedagogy to impart the content of every subject should orient children towards the world of work.

- All Subjects incorporated in the Technical Subject Group should carry a component on entrepreneurship.
- The compulsory Technical Subject should provide students with knowledge on the world of work.
- Learning by doing across the curriculum should equip students with skills that they need to be successful in the world of work.

**3.2.5. Proper implementation of the curriculum supported by firm and fair disciplinary procedures should inculcate self-discipline in students and prevent disciplinary problems at school level.**

- **Discipline should be mainly preventive, and punitive only when necessary.**
- **The curriculum should be the main vehicle for inculcating discipline in students.**
- **The learning-teaching process itself should allow children to differentiate the right from the wrong and the good from the bad as a means of promoting self-discipline.**

## **Learning-Teaching Process – Issue II**

### **Policy Context**

**Assessment**, a support given to the learner while learning, and **evaluation**, a judgement on learning performance communicated to the learner during the learning-teaching process, are two important tasks that contribute immensely to the success of any learning-teaching endeavour. Yet the transmission and transaction roles that were prominent in a whole class setting never allowed the teachers to pay adequate heed either to assessment or evaluation. In the transmission role, the teacher talks the whole time with no opportunity at all for assessment. In the transaction role, the teacher adopts the question and answer method with some opportunity for assessment. Evaluation, postponed to the end of the lesson under both these roles, resemble a post-mortem with no benefit whatsoever to the affected party.

Although the **School-Based Assessments (SBA)** introduced to our schools in 1998 made some attempt to correct the above situation, the teacher talk prominent in the classroom either as transmission or transaction did not allow the SBA to be fully successful in the school system. The difference between the two terms - assessment and evaluation - also not clear at the time made them to be used interchangeably in the learning-teaching process with no distinct place set aside for the two tasks. Moreover, the excessive workload associated with the SBA did not allow the teachers to move away from the poorly constructed written tests or to assign a mark in line with the performance level of the student. All these reduced the validity and the reliability of the SBA mark making the public lose faith in the practice.

The first curriculum reform of the new millennium with the new role of transformation proposed for the teacher has, however, given a different turn to assessment and evaluation. To minimize the need for remedial teaching at a later stage, three types of evaluations - continuous, formative and summative - are introduced today with assessment linked to continuous and formative evaluations. The **learning-teaching activities** planned by the teachers to facilitate the instructional process, provide opportunity for them to engage in both assessment and evaluation throughout learning and teaching. Assessment taking place when students explore in groups and evaluation when they begin to explain and elaborate their exploration findings, provide the two places where assessment and evaluation occur under **continuous evaluations**.

**Formative evaluations**, reduced in number today, are linked to a set of motivating **learning-teaching-evaluation plans** that are formulated on the basis of an activity cluster. In addition to providing a mark for the school-based evaluation, these plans help teachers to extend their teaching as well as the learning of their students beyond the timetabled sessions. To help students to gauge their success in the learning process, **summative evaluations** in the form of **term tests** are reintroduced. A compulsory question on what the children have learnt through the implementation of learning-teaching-evaluation plans is also proposed as part of summative evaluation. This question now incorporated in the term tests has motivated the teachers to produce a valid and reliable mark for school-based evaluations on the basis of the learning-teaching-evaluation plans recommended in the Teachers' Instructional Guides (TIGs). All this makes us believe that school-based assessment and evaluation referred to as formative evaluation today will gain the due recognition and acceptance of all concerned in the near future.

The schools of Sri Lanka are also in the habit of planning and implementing a number of **co-curricular activities** under different subjects of the curriculum. Such activities conducted both during and after school hours enable the students to develop a host of subject-dependent and subject-independent competencies. The tendency to consider the learning-teaching-evaluation plans formulated to facilitate the SBA separate from the plans developed for co-curricular activities may lead to problems of time management in future. In view of overcoming this situation, the co-curricular activities of the past have to be reviewed in the light of the plans now being developed to facilitate formative evaluation. Moreover, to make learning that takes place through all these means productive, proper co-ordination among all types of learning activities is also felt essential.

### Issue

- Inadequate support for learning by the teacher during the learning-teaching process together with limited opportunities to know the learning progress while learning does not allow the majority of learners to reach the learning goals set out for them.

### Proposals

**3.2.6. To minimize the need for remedial teaching, continuous assessment and evaluation should form an integral part of day-to-day learning and teaching.**

- Considering the limitations of summative evaluations conducted externally, continuous assessments and evaluations conducted by teachers throughout the learning-teaching process should be given due place.
- All plans for assessment and evaluation should closely accord with the purposes and objectives of the national curriculum.
- Assessment should be used as a developmental tool that supports the learners to achieve the pre-determined ends and evaluation as a judgemental tool that allows the learners to find out the levels they have achieved in the learning process.
- Assessment and evaluation should be made part and parcel of the learning-teaching process with distinct places assigned to them in the learning activities planned for the students.
- Regular feedback and feed forward emanating from assessments and reinforcement emanating from evaluations should minimize the need for remedial measures in learning.
- A portfolio should be maintained for every student to facilitate monitoring of his/her progress.

**3.2.7. A valid, reliable and non-burdensome formative/ school-based evaluation scheme should facilitate certification and remedial intervention.**

- Learning teaching and evaluation plans for formative evaluations should be developed on the basis of clusters of activities.
- A variety of strategies such as compulsory questions in term tests on learning achieved through learning teaching and

evaluation activities should promote formative assessment and evaluation at school level.

- Sample learning teaching evaluation plans developed at the national level should accustom schoolteachers on the tools available for formative assessment and evaluation.
- Marks of the formative evaluation should be represented in the final scores of public examinations.
- The percentage of formative evaluation marks included in the final scores of the GCE (OL) should start low to be increased gradually over a number of years.

**3.2.8. Plans developed for formative evaluations should be implemented within the broader framework of a school's co-curricular programme.**

- Learning-teaching-evaluation plans proposed for formative evaluations should form part of co-curricular programmes already available at school level.
- Relevant clubs and associations formed as per school policies and programmes should assist the implementation of above plans within the broader co-curricular programme of the school.
- To facilitate at least minimum standards for all students in sports and language, sport meets and language days should be organized as terminal events of a regular programme.

### **Learning-Teaching Process -Issue III**

#### **Policy Context**

A number of factors contribute immensely to the successful implementation of any curriculum reform. The support given to the students in the form of textbooks, workbooks and other supplementary readers is one of these. The teachers also have to be supported with instructional guides to help them understand the new thinking behind the reform. Moreover, the demand generated for courseware both by students and teachers should not be forgotten particularly at a time where rapid developments are taking place in technology. The majority of the teachers of the general education system today, although with higher educational credentials, are untrained and inexperienced in education. These characteristics of the teaching force coupled together with the falling standards of the training provided to them through the cascade highlight the need for more and more opportunities for self-learning. To help both

teachers and the students to find out on their own, a drastic need exists to upgrade the School Libraries also as Learning Resource Centres.

The **instructional guides** produced in detail at every reform also demonstrate a number of deficiencies. The rush to produce these guides has often prohibited a set of common guidelines to be followed or substantial co-ordination to be established across writing panels. Difficulties also exist in printing the guides in adequate quantity to be supplied to the users on time. The quality, ease of use and the free availability of this important resource thus disturbed has reduced its utility value as self-learning material for teachers or at least as supplementary material that can facilitate the teacher training provided through the cascade.

### Issue

- Inconsistencies across subject areas in instructions issued to teachers, non-alignment of textbooks with the new thinking, and the limited attention paid to make optimum use of the available library resources or develop courseware do not facilitate learning and teaching.

### Proposals

**3.2.9. Teachers Instructional Guides (TIGs) should be developed in adequate quantity and distributed on time to meet a multitude of needs felt by the practising teachers.**

- **Considering the fact that manuals prescribe what to do and how to do, a set of guides rather than manuals should be developed to support teachers in the instructional process.**
- **TIGs should be developed in adequate quantity to prevent them from being a privilege of a few.**
- **TIGs should be made freely available to all teachers, in time, to supplement the training imparted to school personnel through the cascade approach.**
- **TIGs should provide opportunity for the teachers to perceive the boundaries of Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK) and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as stipulated by the national curriculum.**
- **TIGs should be sufficiently comprehensive to enable teachers to plan and implement their learning-teaching activities without stifling creativity.**
- **Teachers should be assisted to move towards professionalism by carefully studying the exemplar material given in the TIGs,**

adapting them as relevant, and developing new material of their own when necessary.

- TIGs produced in detail should provide self-learning opportunities to the majority in the teaching force that have not yet reached maturity in terms of professional status.

## Learning-Teaching Process - Issue IV

### Policy Context

Managing non-prescriptive processes require monitoring, supervision and evaluation. Monitoring enables any deviations from the planned status to be detected for purposes of rectification. Supervision enables the staff to be developed to perform their duties in the expected manner. Evaluation enables a judgement on the extent to which the pre-determined objectives have been achieved. Learning and teaching being two non-prescriptive processes demand all three types of support mentioned above from the managerial staff. This support normally provided in the form of **instructional leadership** is of particular value especially at a time where the teachers are expected to move on to a new role of transformation.

For success in education, managers at all levels of the educational hierarchy should be professionals with capacity to manage change. Professionals do not remain tied up to circulars. Instead they do all what is necessary to adapt circular instructions for better performance of the tasks at hand. To realize the expected outcomes both efficiently and effectively, the managers need a degree of autonomy. The school principals, for example, need this to go for flexible scheduling. Yet undue controls imposed on them through rules and regulations often prevent some of the capable from attending to such tasks while the others remain reluctant or incapable to take the initiative.

Instructional leaders provide not only guidance to the teachers to perform better in their roles. They also identify reasons as to why they deviate from the plans and fail to achieve the pre-set objectives. Many teachers look up to their superiors to function comfortably in their new role. A number of shortcomings in the physical and the social environment of their classrooms are not allowing them to go ahead with the new reforms.

The **learning environment** in most of our schools is found unsatisfactory when the new learner-centred methods to be implemented are considered. The quality and the adequacy of facilities in the majority of schools do not allow stimulating

and effective learning-teaching methods to be used. Vast disparities exist in the provision of facilities in the school system. The school plant and the environment in most instances are not maintained properly to facilitate joyful learning for children. Haphazard extension of school buildings without a proper plan has caused congestion and over crowdedness. A number of classes squeezed into buildings that lack partitioning, gates, proper light and ventilation is seen to hinder learning. Lack of proper sanitary facilities, libraries, and play areas in certain schools and those available in other schools not properly maintained together with undue emphasis paid to central laboratories are also causing problems. Moreover, the furniture and other basic equipment provided to the classroom are not properly planned to facilitate children's learning. These have also not changed over the years to keep up with the changes that have taken place in learning and teaching. The longstanding practice of allocating the scarce resources in favour of well-to-do schools, and nothing much done to bridge the gap between the haves and the have nots, have made many reforms initiated in the country to fade away soon.

To overcome some of the above problems a quality input vote was introduced to all state schools in year 2000. Delays on the part of schoolteachers in requisitioning the needed items and certain fears on the part of school principals in purchasing, however, have not allowed this vote to be fully activated yet. Moreover, to improve the quality of group work demanded by the new transformation role of the teacher, an appropriate class size is considered a must. Very large classes do not facilitate the assessment role of the teacher while very small classes reduce the socialization opportunities available to students from deprived homes. Lack of strategies for sharing of limited resources, a school day of eight periods with isolated library periods, central laboratory structures, and large desks and chairs organized in rows are some other problems that have reduced the effectiveness of the new methods introduced for learning and teaching.

### **Issue**

- Poor instructional leadership at all levels of the education hierarchy does not allow the environment at the classroom level or the supervisory practices at the school level to be aligned adequately with the new thinking in education.

## Proposals

**3.2.10.** To facilitate institutionalisation of the curriculum reform, the instructional leadership should be strengthened at all levels of the education hierarchy.

- The supervisory staff of the education system should review the criteria available for internal and external supervision to bring them in line with the newly introduced instructional practices.
- Both external and internal supervisors of schools should be trained to judge the quality of instruction, identify deviations from the expected, and support teachers to get accustomed to the new practices.
- The supervisors should encourage the implementers to review the approaches, methods and strategies newly introduced to the school system with a view to recommending appropriate changes.
- To prevent any unhealthy distortions in the recommended instructional practices, the managerial staff at school level should be equipped with ways and means of improving parental awareness.

**3.2.11.** For smooth implementation of the new curriculum reform, the gaps that exist in human, physical, material, financial and time resources at school level should be identified and filled.

- To make student explorations productive the present school day of eight periods, the current class size, which is either too small or too large, and the cumbersome structures that constitute the physical environment of the classroom should be reviewed.
- Flexible time scheduling should be introduced to encourage school principals to make the maximum of the scarce human resources available to them.
- Very large classes should be avoided to facilitate the assessment role of the teacher and very small classes to facilitate the socialization aspect of students coming from deprived homes.
- The school plant should be attractive and school facilities adequate to facilitate joyful learning.
- The furniture, particularly the large desks and chairs, should be redesigned to facilitate activity-based learning.

- **The quality input vote should be activated in full to facilitate the new transformation role of the teacher.**
- **The concept of mobile laboratories should be promoted to facilitate learning by doing.**
- **To bring school plant and facilities in line with student-centred learning, a special unit including educationalists should be set up.**
- **The deprived schools should be encouraged to share resources with those that are privileged or better off.**

## **Learning-Teaching Process -Issue V**

### **Policy Context**

**Public examinations** over long years of the past have used paper and pencil tests to gauge the lower order mental skills acquired by students. Even the few items incorporated in the examination papers to test the higher order mental skills have taken a generic nature making it easy for an intelligent person thorough with the syllabus and the past papers to guess what is there in the forthcoming question paper. This situation has encouraged students to write answers to model questions and cram facts paying little or no attention to internalising concepts, principles and theories that form the heart of good practice. The youngsters who manage to do well at such examinations too feel frustrated soon when they realize the difficulty of facing the challenges of the future.

In the backdrop of highly competitive examinations, **private tuition** has turned out to be an important and essential ingredient of the academic life of students. The limited opportunities available in higher education together with the demand for better schools compel the pupils to compete for higher marks at public examinations. Both students and parents also dissatisfied with the quality of teaching in the formal school believe that tuition is necessary for better results at examinations. The difficulty of covering the overloaded syllabi and the tendency of students to follow the majority have made private tuition, confined to towns originally, to spread to rural areas as well. Extra school tutoring thus turning out to be a lucrative business ranges in variety from individual table tuition to mass classes that address several hundreds of students through electronic devices.

The rapid spread of private tuition has raised its status today to an alternative system of education. Children cutting school to attend tuition classes and teachers taking leave for the same purpose has brought about a number of

detrimental results. The alarming drop in attendance especially in classes catering for public examinations, coupled together with the serious restriction of pupil participation in co-curricular activities tend to affect proper implementation of the school curriculum. The schools considered as the esteemed bedrock of social reform thus unable to yield the expected result of a balanced personality, are faced with a serious threat.

Our schools today have become large-scale factories that encourage children to consider the examination as an end in itself. The children in such systems learn mechanically and superficially to get good results. The high emphasis paid on norm-referenced tests over the past has enhanced this unhealthy competition. The practice of comparing both students and schools with others in the same category to find out where each stands in the total picture has demoralized many especially those disadvantaged in some way or other. Amidst the pressure and the rush created by this type of competition to reach the desired ends, many teachers have neglected the recommended instructional practices and gone in search of shortcuts. Even the few who have followed the rules have often been blamed for doing so. Observing these problem, previous reforms introduced activities such as project work to contribute to total development of students. Yet the eagerness of the majority to tread the easiest but the unproductive track never allowed such activities to flourish adequately to yield the expected results.

### **Issue**

- Predictable generic test items that are prominent in public examinations have distorted classroom practices, increased the demand for private tuition, and prevented the children from learning for life.

### **Policy Proposals**

**3.2.12. A drastic change should take place in summative evaluations with a view to preparing children for life.**

- **Considering the limitations imposed by externally conducted summative evaluations, these should be used to indicate the achievement of children only at a few terminal stages of the learning process.**
- **The term tests that measure student achievement at the end of a term and public examinations that do the same at the end of**

a particular educational level should provide the main modes of summative evaluation.

- The knowledge-based examinations of the past should be replaced by authentic evaluations.
- For reasons of practicality authentic situations should be used to identify the preparedness of children to face real life situations.
- Term tests conducted on a provincial basis and computerized item banks providing test items at least for the public examinations should improve the validity and the reliability of summative evaluations.

**3.2.13.** The factors leading to the distortion of instructional practices at the classroom level should be identified and eliminated.

- The content of the curricula should be carefully reviewed to avoid curriculum overload.
- To minimize unhealthy competition criterion referenced testing, which informs the recipient of the progress made from the original status should be promoted.
- Public examinations should use authentic test items to identify the preparedness of candidates to face real life situations on the basis of the competencies they have acquired through schooling.
- To channel maximum participation of students in both curricular and co curricular activities conducted by schools, such activities should be systematically planned and regularly supervised.
- The resources available to the school should be optimally utilized to make learning enjoyable and productive to students.
- Possibilities of using printed matter for learning and teaching at school level should be considered.
- A code of ethics should be established to cultivate professionalism in teachers.

### 3.3 Medium of Instruction

#### Policy Context

The medium of instruction in schools seems to emerge as a controversial subject in the field of education. The complexity associated with it is attributed to the policies followed under the British colonial administration and in the immediate post independence period. Yet, intricacies have also been added by the dynamics of current society inclined to market forces and changing demands.

The fundamentals of psychology and findings of research have confirmed the fact that mother tongue is the best medium of instruction for a child in his/her early years of education. In spite of this, the British created a limited number of fee levying English medium schools for the elite class with the prime object of meeting the needs of the administration as the official language was English. Alongside these, a majority known as ‘vernacular schools’ served the less affluent social classes and were conducted in national languages, Sinhala and Tamil with a limited curriculum. The inequity of this dual system and the barriers it created to equal opportunities resulted in agitation for reforms.

In response to this, the Special Committee on Education (1943) recommended that,

- the medium of instruction in the primary school should be the mother tongue with compulsory English from the third standard; and
- the medium of instruction in the lower departments of the secondary and senior school shall be either mother tongue or bilingual whereas in higher departments it shall be English, Sinhala, Tamil or bilingual.

From 1950s, the medium of instruction in secondary schools was changed on a staggered basis starting from grade six and continued up to grade 12. University arts faculties too changed to Sinhala and Tamil media in 1960 and the developments were accelerated by the change in the official language policy in 1956. All recognized private schools had to follow the national policy pertaining to the medium of instruction. Children in the Burgher, Moor and mixed ethnic communities were permitted to follow instruction in the English medium but this provision was removed in 1970s.

According to the Constitution of Sri Lanka, Sinhala is the official language and Sinhala and Tamil are the two national languages. As regards the medium of

instruction, a person shall be entitled to be educated through the medium of either of the national languages. However, the provision does not apply to institutions of higher education where the medium of instruction is a language other than a national language.

Under the 1997 reforms, the second national language (Sinhala/Tamil) was introduced to grades 6, 7, 8, and 9 of government schools. It was subsumed into the curriculum as an optional subject for grades 10 and 11 from 2001, and an oral subject for grades 3, 4 and 5 from 2003. In 2007, it was introduced to grade one.

Though English has been a compulsory second language from grade 3 since 1940s, a vast majority of students have failed to show a satisfactory achievement in the subject. The disparity of the school system, dearth of qualified teachers to teach English and restriction of language learning only to classroom periods without being used in practical communication are the apparent reasons for this situation.

With the expansion of the market economy and the private sector, it is recognized that those who do better in English have an edge over the majority of students who cannot effectively communicate in English with the inevitable result that the latter is debarred from social mobility, again leading to social polarization. With globalization, the increasing use of English as an international language, and the expanding role of Information and Communication Technology, the need for proficiency of English has come to the foreground. The concern for English has further escalated due to the expansion of ownership and available avenues of education such as private schools and foreign university courses.

Changes have been made in the last few years, offering the option of the English medium in G.C.E.(A.L.) science subjects, in selected subjects in grade six and reportedly even in grade one.

In introducing changes in language policy in schools, while recognizing the equity in access to English, its role in a knowledge based society and changing social demands should be given due consideration.

### **Issues**

- Mother tongue is considered to be the best medium of instruction in the early years of education. But, there is a growing demand to use English as

the medium of instruction. Most of the private schools use English as the medium of instruction from the primary level.

- The present system of education has failed to develop an acceptable level of proficiency in English among the students. Hence those educated in Sinhala and Tamil have been disadvantaged in access to remunerative employment and pursuing higher studies. This can cause a social polarization.
- Several strategies are being used to remedy this situation but they are inconsistent owing to lack of a steadfast policy.
- The Constitution ensures the right of a person to be educated in national languages. Nevertheless, it does not impose a barrier for one's education in any other medium of his/her choice.

### **Proposals**

- 3.3.1. Mother tongue should be the medium of instruction at the primary level. English should be taught as a compulsory subject from grade 3 to grade 11.**
- 3.3.2. Intensive efforts should be made to promote Oral English, introduced in Key Stage 1 at Primary level.**
- 3.3.3. Mother tongue should continue to be the medium of instruction in the secondary grades. However, bilingual or English medium may be introduced at the secondary level for those who opt, provided the necessary resources are available.**

### 3.4 Assessment and Evaluation

#### Policy Context

Assessment and evaluation is an integral part of teaching and learning. It is central to the learning experience to diagnose strengths and weaknesses, provide feedback to students to improve learning, motivate students, help students develop skills of self-assessment and provide a profile of what students have learnt. Assessment and evaluation also provide certification to grade or rank a student's work, to licence to proceed and practice and to select for future courses. Summative assessment is used to sum up a student's achievement against specific learning outcomes, and results in a grade, percentage mark or certification. Formative assessment is a continuous process and may include class tests, regular class assignments and projects set by the respective teachers and progress mapping.

Assessment may be norm-referenced or criterion-referenced. Norm referencing uses the position of the child or the group which is not useful in identifying the strengths and weaknesses. Criterion-referenced assessment gauges the level of the student against a set standard and assesses the progress of the student in relation to his previous performance level. The latter is more useful for the purpose of diagnosis and remedial intervention.

Both summative and formative forms of assessments have their in-built merits and demerits. Educationists have come up with many assessments to measure students' performance in schools but the most widely practiced option seems to be the formal summative examination mode. This is because, there is a significant level of impartiality in this assessment approach and is seen as the most detached and objective means of gauging one's educational achievement. For this reason as well as the passports they offer for future choices of better schools, employment and entry into universities, parents and community in Sri Lanka have attached an extra credibility and significance to public examinations.

The present exam – dominated system which the country has continued over a century has become a subject of criticism. It is a system that drives the curriculum rather than assesses achievement. It is limited to writing and is mostly based on assessing factual knowledge instead of students' higher order skills. Thus, teachers teach for testing, rather than for learning and what is rewarded are memorization and reproduction. The severe competition this system entails makes most of the students to seek private tuition. It is a dreadful

practice for some students who are left emotionally and psychologically suppressed.

In contrast, the constructivist model sees learning as a process of 'knowledge construction' and 'meaning making' and demands the examination system to support the efforts made in the curriculum reforms to promote the acquisition of higher-order and transferable skills, defined in terms of complex processes such as understanding, comprehension, application, association, conceptualization, analysis, synthesis, problem solving and creativity. The absence of modalities in the system to assess such attributes has led to give credentials to many without qualities fitting to the world of work.

It was argued that a judicious combination of internal school formative assessment or School Based Assessment (SBA) with public examinations would help improve the system that would lead to improve teaching and learning and enhance quality of education. It would enable the advantages of the certification function of the public examinations, which enjoy strong public confidence, to be coupled with the potential benefits of the SBA, which facilitates continuous monitoring of student performance, make schools receive regular feedback and promotes the activity based approach to teaching and learning with its emphasis on project work and practical assignments.

On this rationale, SBA was introduced as a pilot project in 1994 to grades 6 to 9 and extended island wide by 1999 by the NIE. The SBA scheme for grades 10 to 13 was developed in 2001 by the DOE & NETS and SBA grades have been indicated in the GCE (O/L) certificate in 2002.

In spite of the merits of the SBA, several shortcomings in its implementation were expressed by the stakeholders such as teachers, parents and students. Increase in the work load of teachers and students, limited use of assessment tools and methods, unwieldy number of traits to be assessed, lack of confidence and negligence of some of the students were some of them. Hence, there is a need for a common and coherent SBA scheme for junior and senior secondary grades to avoid disjuncture and confusion and raise its credibility among students, teachers and parents.

### **Issues**

- The heavy examination orientation in the school system has created an unhealthy out-of-school coaching culture that has devalued the school and

education and degraded the goals and objectives of education to narrowly defined 'passing of examinations'.

- Heavy dependence on extra school tutoring compels the children to forgo co-curricular and social activities at school and disrupts his overall development.
- Prohibitive expenses for private coaching screen the poor and favour the affluent at examinations towing free education policy to an elitist orientation.
- Disparities in the school system, slow progress in the training of teachers and extra effort and time required prevent the implementation of SBA effectively and meaningfully.
- High degree of confidence and credibility reposed in the public examination system makes the parents and community to overlook the importance of formative and continuous assessment.
- Traditional summative examination system is more suited to assess the rote memorization and cognitive abilities but not to gauge the higher order generic skills.

### Proposals

- 3.4.1. In order to bring about a balanced development of the child, the external summative and internal formative modes of evaluation should be combined.**
- 3.4.2. The public examination system should be reformed to combine the centralized national examinations with SBA. The examination results should report the performance in both the 'sit in' and 'write only' component and the SBA component on a specified percent of weightage assigned to the two components.**
- 3.4.3. The internal continuous assessment scheme (SBA) should use a wide range of assessment modalities without undue reliance on written tests and they should be flexible in providing opportunities for teachers to adapt to specific school contexts.**

- 3.4.4. The assessment tools prepared for SBA should clearly and specifically indicate the assessment criteria and should have a high level of credibility and comparability.
- 3.4.5. Training programmes should be conducted to make teachers aware of the objectives of SBA, to equip them with the skills to use the assessment and maintain records to ensure both quality and credibility in the performance of assessment tasks.
- 3.4.6. Orientation programmes should be organized for principals and relevant educational personnel to make them aware of the objectives, modalities and expected outcomes of SBA and to strengthen their capacity to supervise and monitor SBA processes in schools.
- 3.4.7. Awareness programmes should be conducted for the parents with the assistance of School Development Societies so that they understand the objectives of SBA and its importance as an indispensable mode of assessment.

## **Public Examinations at Primary and Secondary Levels**

### **Policy Context**

Centrally conducted examinations are a cardinal feature of the school education system of Sri Lanka. These satisfy the strong social demand for equality as they are perceived to give every pupil an opportunity to score at the same examination. Although the school facilities are widely disparate, a common curriculum is assumed to be provided. All candidates are therefore assumed to have sat the examination under identical conditions regardless of the disparity of their opportunities for learning.

The current Grade 5 Scholarship Examination has had its origin as ‘an examination for awarding scholarships to Central Schools’. It has been an avenue of extending educational opportunity and upward mobility to economically and socially disadvantaged families while promoting social equity. However, it has got transformed in recent years into a competitive examination with the placement function in popular schools taking priority over the award of scholarships with harmful consequences on psychological and holistic development of young children. This change is a reflection of the wide disparity prevailing within the State school system. Attempts have been made particularly

from the nineties to improve the examination, but on account of its highly competitive nature, the harmful consequences remain a matter of concern.

The GCE (O/L) and the GCE (A/L) examinations, both conducted by the Department of Examinations and the National Evaluation and Testing Service (DOE & NETS) have earned high prestige and public confidence. A major positive feature resulting from the 'identical' test conditions and the high level of rectitude assured by the DOE & NETS is that those who succeed can claim the same recognition for examination performance regardless of any initial condition of disadvantage, socially or schooling-wise. The currency they assure throughout the country for employment and the acceptance by the public as a reliable and valid certificate obtained by what is thought as the only fair means of accreditation have given much rigidity to the writing and summative component.

In spite of such favourable features, the capacity of the two GCE Examinations to evaluate an individual on a broader perspective has been questioned and challenged. It is said that the GCE (O/L) examination being a written 'one shot' test does not assess many of the worthwhile and wholesome elements of the curriculum and continues to be unrewarding to the majority of school pupils. It exerts an overwhelming influence on teaching-learning system.

The negative effects are heightened in the case of the GCE (A/L) examination, because of its linkage to the intensively competitive university admission examination. From the school curriculum perspective, the A/L and O/L examinations have a serious limiting effect on extra curricular activities which develop social attributes and communication skills which are linked to employment related competencies.

The belief in the absolute objectivity of the awarding of marks and of the total fairness of the use of the aggregate of the raw marks received for a combination of subjects for university admissions is based on die-hard but fallacious perceptions. Studies have revealed how the subject combinations, with some subjects serving as soft options, had influenced the selection of students to the university. It has also been shown that, despite all the meticulous precautions taken by the DOE and NETS, inter-marker variations and different question combinations could cause inconsistencies.

The employers in their recruitment preferences and policies place high value on attributes and capabilities which are deficient in the products of the present school and university system who are coming into the labour force. Some of these are an inquiring mind; ability for analysis and reasoning; the application of

knowledge to practical problems and a problem solving ; knowledge and interest in contemporary social and economic developments in the country, capacity for leadership; team work; a work ethos with values of productivity and discipline and good communication skills both oral as well as written.

The development of such attributes is discouraged by the summative, centrally administered, written answer type public examinations system and therefore school based multi-dimensional assessment is required.

SBA being closely linked to and forming an integral component of teaching and learning, makes it a far superior assessment mechanism. SBA permits the use of a multiplicity of assessment modalities, such as oral presentations, student assignments, project work, field studies and creative productions, besides written exercises. As such SBA will be a necessary complement to a balanced curriculum.

### Issues

- The grade 5 scholarship examination has deviated from its prime objective making it psychologically harmful to children and a burdensome practice for pupils, teachers and parents.
- The examination with a single and final 'write only' and 'sit in' examination, cannot support the wide general aims of secondary schooling. This is particularly so because the provision of compulsory schooling up to the completion of 16 years has to be operationally interpreted as schooling up to the completion of Grade 11 and considering that those completing this span of schooling become eligible for employment or for further education.
- The negative effects of 'sit in', 'write in' examinations are heightened in the case of the GCE (A/L) examination, because of its linkage also as the intensively competitive university admission examination. From the school curriculum perspective, the examination has a serious limiting effect on co-curricular activities including those which develop social attributes and communication skills which are linked to employment related competencies. In this highly competitive situation, where only about 10 per cent of those sitting and about 20 per cent of those qualifying succeed in entering the universities, the selection process has to be finely discriminative and at the same time be highly objective and very fair.

## Proposals

- 3.4.8. There should be a national assessment for the purpose of assessing the achievement levels of students at the end the primary cycle and their entry competencies in respect of secondary education.
- 3.4.9. The National Assessment Examination should give a weightage of 30% for the school based formative component and the weighting should be progressively increased to 40%.
- 3.4.10. The National Assessment Examination should also be utilized for the grant of bursaries for continuing education in secondary schools.
- 3.4.11. Recognizing that the general aims of education cannot be supported by a single and final examination, the GCE (OL) examination should have a school based assessment (SBA) component covering the grades 10 and 11. The second component should be the final 'sit in', write only' examination.
- 3.4.12. This final written component of the examination should reflect its summative function by way of confining the testing to cover the broad key concepts indigenous to the subjects examined.
- 3.4.13. In view of the widely different scopes and assessment methodologies involved, these two components should be regarded as two parts of the same GCE (O/L) examination and certified as such. The certificate should include performance in the two components with assignment of equal prominence.
- 3.4.14. Performance in each of the components should be recognized as eligibility criteria for employment or for admission to A/L grades.
- 3.4.15. The GCE (AL) examination should have two school based assessment (SBA) components covering the grades 12 and 13. The first of these SBA components should be the subject related in-course assessment component assessed through a variety of modalities. The second of the SBA components should be linked to a multi-disciplinary Group Project undertaken over a period of three terms in Grades 12 and 13. It will aim at providing the competencies related to multi-disciplinary studies, reporting of outcomes, team work etc.

- 3.4.16.** The second component of the examination should be through the single, subject related, 'sit in', write only' paper of the examination. This final written component as provided through these papers of the examination should reflect its summative function by way of confining the testing to cover the broad key concepts indigenous to the subjects examined and their applications in real life situations.
- 3.4.17.** In view of the widely different scopes and assessment methodologies involved, the SBA components and the 'sit in', 'write in' final examination should be regarded as two parts of the same GCE(A/L) examination and certified as such. The certificate should include performance in the two SBA components and of the 'sit in', 'write in' final examination with assignment of equal prominence. Performance in each of the components should be recognized as eligibility criteria for employment or for admission to some tertiary courses.
- 3.4.18.** The GCE (A/L) examination will have an additional 'sit in', 'write in' final examination to serve the purpose of indicating achievement for selection purposes as required for admission to universities etc. The sitting for the set of subject related papers will be required only for those seeking admission to universities. While the first set of subject related papers will seek to examine the general levels of proficiency in these subjects, the third set of papers will seek to examine only the higher order aspects of subject learning.
- 3.4.19.** University admissions should be mainly based on z scores relating to the third paper of subjects. There should be quota of students selected on the basis of excellence in performance in the two SBA components particularly to that relating to the long term Group Project Work. This provision should to a great extent allow focusing on the broad aims of school education at this level. The students who have been selected to the University should acquire competency in English within a stipulated period through an assessment examination.

## 3.5 Textbooks

### Policy Context

Textbook refers specifically to printed curriculum materials in book format and is used as a standard work or basis of instruction in any branch of knowledge. It is a systematically designed material for the study of a particular subject at a specified level of teaching and is capable of being used as the key teaching source within the particular curriculum.

Textbooks are frequently the only reading matter students have access to and examinations are often to a considerable extent based on an ability to reproduce what is to be found in them. Without a textbook, many teachers may not be able to teach effectively. In many developing countries where teachers might be inadequately trained, the textbook is an indispensable source. It is often perceived as the sole authority for what is to be taught, whereas in developed countries where a greater variety of books and reading materials are available, it may only be a supplement to learning. Textbooks are a cost effective means of improving educational achievement and in countries like ours where reading materials are scarce, they have an important role to play. Even when not mediated by a qualified and experienced teacher, textbooks can have a significant impact on educational achievement.

A well established and improved textbook supply chain provides better value for money by reducing unit costs, and will deliver in a cost effective way, the relevant learning support materials on an equitable basis. Hence, all aspects of textbooks need to acknowledge the integrity of a textbook supply chain cycle which aspires to:

- produce educationally relevant, quality textbooks;
- ensure that they are age-appropriate, attractive, durable and reflect current regional and international perspectives and approaches;
- promote the cost effective and timely supply to all learners;
- secure for all learners in all schools an easy and equal access to them;
- review and evaluate the quality of textbooks by field testing;
- broaden access to supplementary reading materials to improve the reading culture in schools; and
- improve the efficiency of educational management and administration of the supply of textbooks.

A National Curriculum is implemented in all the schools throughout the island. The syllabuses for all the subjects in the curriculum are prepared by the National Institute of Education (NIE) and the textbooks are written as per the guidelines stipulated by the NIE. Textbooks are distributed to all students in the formal education system free of charge by the government of Sri Lanka. Under the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution, production and distribution of school text books is included under provincial functions.

As Sri Lanka has a national curriculum, the writing and printing of school textbooks had been a state monopoly. The uniformity imposed on textbooks by this centralization and the hasty transfer of the writing of textbooks to the NIE and the limited time assigned for writing have brought the quality of some textbooks under question. The 'multiple book option' proposed to remedy this situation did not succeed due to complicated procedures and impractical conditions in implementing the scheme.

In Sri Lanka, still there are wide disparities among the schools and there is a shortage of teachers especially for some subjects. Under such situations, the textbook is the only resort for the student and there is a need to develop it as a self-learning material. For this, a textbook guide would facilitate its usage but such materials have not been ever produced.

Irrespective of the new trends in school education that call for more and more support material of quality, the **textbooks** produced as supplementary readers for schoolchildren demonstrate a number of deficiencies. These with a large number of errors often cover content much beyond the limits prescribed by the syllabus. Non-aligned with the new thinking introduced by the reform, they continue to dictate methods for the teachers rather than provide reading material that facilitate student explorations. Moreover, the tendency of the textbooks to reproduce the static subject content at every reform has contributed to an increase in the production costs of the textbooks. The errors they contain are also giving rise to many misconceptions that may not be easy to erase later.

### Issue

- The quality of the textbooks has been questioned and it has been reported that some of the textbooks are not appropriate for the age, cognitive attributes, personality development and experiences of the students for whom the textbooks are intended.
- Quality of the technical aspects of textbooks (size, pictures, diagrams, layout etc.) needs improvement.

- Most writers involved in textbook writing are inexperienced and not professionally prepared for the task. Criteria for selecting the writers for textbook writing are lacking.
- Modalities are lacking to develop the skills specifically required to write the textbooks.
- Cases have been reported that some of the schools did not receive textbooks on time.
- Inconsistencies have been reported among the textbooks produced in different media, Sinhala, English and Tamil.
- Lack of review, piloting and revision deteriorate the quality of textbooks.
- Non-availability of textbooks in free market makes them inaccessible to those who need them.

### **Proposals**

- 3.5.1. Textbooks for schools should be written using the national curriculum and syllabuses formulated by the National Institute of Education.**
- 3.5.2. Responsibility of writing, printing and quality control of textbooks should be with the Education Publication Department with guidelines prepared by the NIE.**
- 3.5.3. A Textbook Board consisting of educationists representing all sectors should be created to provide advice and recommendation on all matters regarding textbook production, distribution and utilization.**
- 3.5.4. Education Publication Department should select qualified and experienced textbook writers for all subjects considering the recommendations made by the Advisory Board for Textbooks.**
- 3.5.5. Distribution of textbooks should be undertaken by the Provincial Ministries of Education.**
- 3.5.6. Usage of supplementary reading materials recommended by the Advisory Board should be encouraged.**

- 3.5.7. The textbooks should conform to social values and norms, cultural heritage and national goals.
- 3.5.8. Textbooks / Resource Books should be produced to suit different ability levels of students.
- 3.5.9. Textbooks should be written on an academic basis, utilizing reliable and relevant standards in accordance with the objectives of the curriculum, syllabus outline and expected learning experiences and to suit the level of development of the child.
- 3.5.10. Sinhala, Tamil and English versions of the textbooks should be developed simultaneously avoiding inaccuracies, distortions, omissions and objectionable material.
- 3.5.11. To minimize errors that can lead to future misconceptions, new textbooks /resource books should refrain from reproducing the static basic content of the subject under concern and take the form of a series of carefully edited supplements to the existing documents.
- 3.5.12. The writing and editing process should be closely monitored by subject officers in the EPD and NIE in establishing the much needed link between syllabuses and textbooks to improve the content validity.
- 3.5.13. A short term professional development programme awarding a diploma in scientific methods of writing textbooks should be developed by the NIE for primary and secondary levels.
- 3.5.14. Textbooks should also be made available in the market for those who wish to purchase them.
- 3.5.15. Cost efficient means should be established to produce and provide quality, easy to carry textbooks / resource books to school children at different levels of the school system.
- 3.5.16. In addition to the textbooks currently made available to children of grades 1 to 11, action should be taken to develop resource books with appropriate content for all subjects for students at the GCE (AL).

## 3.6 Guidance and Counseling

### Policy Context

The schools and teachers are in a position to provide academic knowledge as well as emotional support to the children enhancing their self-awareness, inter personal relationships, coping skills, social skills and self-esteem. In Sri Lanka, there is a tendency of an increasing number of broken families, loss of family ties, conflicts, violent situations, suicide and also a high rate of anxiety and stress for which the education system seems to be responsible at least partially if not fully.

According to the National Education Commission Report (2003), in an environment of rapid socio-economic changes and political and social conflicts, the school system should prepare the students to cope up with changes in the school curriculum and evaluation procedures, personal problems and emotional stress. The school and teachers must be in a position to provide psycho-social help and emotional support to children enhancing the child's self-esteem and social skills. At the same time, the school system should build awareness of changing demands of the world of work and labour market and assist pupils to understand occupational preparation needed for careers.

1997 General Education reforms pointed out that the General Education System did not provide counseling and career guidance to the children at that time. At the senior secondary level, students are expected to select their subjects and course streams and the majority of students who do not enter the universities find it difficult to choose their future career path or avenues to pursue tertiary education. Average parents in Sri Lanka who have mostly gone to school only for a period of nine years do not possess the necessary knowledge and awareness about various career paths and subject streams that are available in the education system. In other words, majority of parents are incapable of giving any career guidance to their children.

In the face of a multifaceted employment market, it is evident that noticeable changes are taking place today in the course streams and subjects offered at the senior secondary level (SSL) of the school system and the avenues opening up for tertiary education and future careers. This situation requires students in GCE (OL) and (AL) classes to select their subjects on a rational basis and others failing to gain admission to the universities to be cautious in picking up a suitable path to pursue tertiary education or prepare for a career. Considering the fact that the average parent of Sri Lanka does not possess the necessary background to guide their children in such selections, the teachers are expected to develop this

knowledge and awareness in both students and parents. Yet the majority of teachers with no exposure to career guidance in their training highlight the need for immediate action to streamline **career guidance** at school level to get our children directed to the right path from the beginning itself.

With the changing pattern of employment market and as a result of the expansion of the private sector in Sri Lanka, when leaving school the students are faced with the problem of choosing their careers. An estimated number of 2.8 million new entrants to the labour force will be faced with a multifaceted employment market annually. A substantial number of school leavers are in need of a professional career guidance service to face this challenge. Against this background, the presidential task force made a recommendation (1997) that selected teachers in schools be given training in guidance and counseling and be allocated time to function as counselors and career guidance officers.

In terms of the Circular 2001 / 16 issued by the Ministry of Education, every school with more than 300 students should have a fulltime school advisor. This circular went on to list the objectives of the counseling service in schools, duties and responsibilities of the teacher counselor and measures to be followed in the professional development of teacher counselors. It was an attempt to streamline the psychosocial programmes and integrate into the school system.

### Issues

- The inadequacy and inefficiency of the existing guidance and counseling programmes in the school system to meet the needs of the children who are facing with issues pertaining to emotional and mental stress
- The school system does not have adequate teacher counselors.
- Inadequacy of training of practicing teacher counselors in school system and shortcomings in the teacher education programmes provided by the teacher education institutes with respect to guidance and counseling
- Lack of provisions for counseling in the school timetable and interaction between teacher counselors, students and parents.
- Lack of awareness among parents for the optimum utilization of the services of teacher counselors.

- Absence of vocational information programmes in the school system and an organized system of career guidance with the assistance of employers and members of the community.
- The management and administrative structure in education is not geared to facilitate school level guidance and counseling and the principals, provincial administrators and zonal officers are less involved in monitoring and supervision to ensure support.
- A substantial fraction of children, internally displaced due to disasters such as war and tsunami are suffering from psycho-social stress and trauma.
- At senior secondary level students face problems in selecting their subject areas and majority of them are dropping out from G.C.E.(O/L). Those not entering universities after G.C.E.(A/L) find it difficult to choose their future career paths to pursue tertiary education.
- Absence of diagnostic tests to identify problem children and counseling programmes appropriate for them leading to deviant behaviours, dropping out and taking into anti-social activities.

### Proposals

- 3.6.1. Guidance and Counseling should be an essential component of school services and should embody Educational Counseling in making realistic choice of study, Personal-social Counseling to deal with interpersonal and intra-personal problems and conflicts and Career Guidance to build awareness of local occupational structures and international employment possibilities.**
- 3.6.2. All schools with primary and secondary level classes should have Guidance and Counseling units with trained teacher counselors.**
- 3.6.3. Guidance and Counseling units attached to secondary schools should provide their services to schools without such units in the neighbourhood. A mobile counseling service may be implemented till such units are established.**
- 3.6.4. Programmes should be developed to raise awareness of Guidance and Counseling in all teachers and principals with an introduction**

of diagnostic tests to identify problematic children. This awareness should be developed among the parents too.

- 3.6.5. Guidance and Counseling should be included as a compulsory course in the Post Graduate Diploma in Education and B.Ed. courses offered by the universities and the NIE and should be a core component in the professional development courses in NCOEs and Teacher Centres.
- 3.6.6. The NIE should develop courses in Guidance and Counseling for the NCOEs, for in-service training programmes and training of trainer programmes at provincial level. The NIE should establish a Unit and also draw expertise from outside for this purpose.
- 3.6.7. The MOE in collaboration with the Provincial Departments of Education should monitor and supervise the Guidance and Counseling programmes. The principals and provincial administrators should be oriented in this direction.
- 3.6.8. Provision of Career Guidance programmes should be carried out in collaboration with parents, community, vocational training institutes, employers/managers of private sector enterprises and public sector institutions.
- 3.6.9. Counseling should focus more on prevention through diagnosis rather than on remedial action.

### 3.7 Parents and their Role in Education

#### Policy Context

The concept of 'Deguru' in our tradition explains the role of parents to be teachers at home in the education of their children. Also a strong sense of responsible parenting is reflected in the Buddhist teachings and discourses. Singalovada and Maha Mangala Sutras highlight the education of children as one of parents' duties.

A host of research studies point to the fact that the child begins his education in the family and the involvement of parents in child's education improves his performance and achievements. Parent involvement is most effective when it is well planned, comprehensive, supportive and long-lasting. The benefits of parent involvements are not limited to one level of general education. It continues from the primary to the secondary. In order to synergize parents' strengths effectively, they need to be encouraged not only to support their children at homes but also to maximize their involvements in all phases of school activities. Children from low-income and culturally deprived families have the most to gain when schools involve parents. One cannot look at the school and the home in isolation from one another; families and schools need to collaborate to help children adjust to society.

The Parents' Charter promulgated in 1979 embodies the rights and duties of parents in the education of their children. Twenty articles in the Charter explain the rights and duties of parents related to their role at home and also their involvement in school activities and school governance.

Support for learning during the learning-teaching process alone is not adequate for success in learning. Parental involvement in children's education is found equally important in improving the performance and achievement of children at school. Research finds this type of involvement more effective in generating the desired learning outcomes when compared to parental education and family income. All this requires the parents to check the educational levels reached by their children regularly. This type of inquiry throughout the school career of a child contributes to the fulfillment of learner needs and allows the parents to appreciate the value of their own contribution in reaping the full benefits of the free education imparted to their children.

### **According to the Parents Charter:**

The parents have the right to;

- Obtain for their children, education conducive to the physical and mental development and social, moral and spiritual upliftment irrespective of all kinds of distinctions and ensure the benefits of free education;
- Express their views on the decisions taken by the school in determining the type of education suitable for the child;
- Meet the principal or teachers and discuss with them any problems pertaining to the child;
- Obtain membership and hold office in the School Development Society;
- Discuss at School Development Society level, the adequacy of school resources to bring any shortcomings therein to the notice of the authorities concerned;
- Examine the accounts in respect of facilities and services fees or funds collected from the children;
- Receive a progress report on the child's work at least once in six months;
- Study the achievement of children as reflected in their work of the different grades at Parents' Days held once in six months;
- Be informed of any physical or mental weakness of the child as well as to admit the handicapped and the backward to school or special institutions; and
- Participate and cooperate in the process of educational planning by understanding the government education policy and formulating proposals for reform, innovation and development.

### **Duties**

It is the duty of every parent to:

- Understand the philosophy and policy pertaining to the education of their children;
- Cooperate with teachers with a view to promoting intellectual and moral development of their children;
- Make regular inquiry about the child's educational attainments and progress by examining the child's work;
- Seek membership of the School Development Society and participate actively in its work;

- Participate in fulfilling the needs of the school not only by monetary contributions but also through labour and cooperation;
- Send the child to school regularly and respond promptly to any communication from the school;
- Fulfill the needs of the child throughout his/her educational career including therapeutic remedies wherever necessary or when intimation is made of special disabilities;
- Make available to the school one's own share of experience and expertise;
- Formulate programmes with the Principal to ensure the safety of the resources of the school; and
- Appreciate the fact that the father and the mother are paramount to the child and lead the child on the path to the full enjoyment of the benefits of a free and equal society.

A major demand in schools is the equality of education and the parents want an assurance that the schools provide a quality education to their children. Yet, parent involvement with the school, a valuable but largely untapped resource has become an issue in the recent past.

Parents' involvement includes several different forms. It ranges from provision of basic requirements to their children to tutoring them at homes and from helping school activities to serving as advocates for the school. Research evidence shows that the earlier the parent involvement begins, the more effective and powerful the effects be.

Parents differ in their willingness, ability and available time for involvement in school activities. The low-income parents are often underrepresented among the ranks of parents saluted in schools. Some hold the view that parents should not be involved in the school administration but do not overlook the importance of their role in education. Their potential to change an organization is well understood and asserted.

### **Issues**

- The parents involvement in the education of the children which had been a part of our culture (Deguru) needs to be tapped and strengthened in a context where children are exposed to a number of external forces, more negative than positive.

- Lack of an awareness of the rights and duties of parents as given in the Parents Charter and the need for a programme of parents education to make them capable of actively participating in children’s education enjoying their right and fulfilling their duties.
- Lack of a strong link with the school in responding to the school obligations serving as advocates for the school, helping school management and activities and keeping a watch on resource utilization.
- Lack of the capacity of low-income parents due to unavailability of time, lack of confidence to communicate and want of a good knowledge about their role and functions of a school.
- Lack of acceptance by teachers and principals as to the value of parents’ participation and their mentoring role and parents’ involvement in administrative matters of the school.

### Proposals

- 3.7.1. Being among the foremost stakeholders in educating children, the parents should be mandated to assume a significant role in school education. Every School should have a School Development Society (SDS) comprising parents and the teachers. Well wishers may be granted membership of the society. The principal of the school will be the ex-officio chairperson of the SDS.**
- 3.7.2. Parents should be made cognizant of the rights and duties embodied in the Parents Charter 1979 and Principals and Teachers should discuss the rights and duties listed in the Parents Charter when they conduct meetings with parents.**
- 3.7.3. Teachers need to communicate and develop an understanding in parents that their involvement and support make a great deal of difference in their children’s school performance and encourage their involvement from the time the children first enter school. The school authorities need to emphasize that parents are partners of the school and their involvement is valued.**
- 3.7.4. Teachers should make parents aware that activities such as modeling behaviour increase children’s interest in learning and help parents develop parenting skills to meet the basic obligations of family life.**

- 3.7.5. School management should make special effort to engage parents of disadvantaged children who stand to benefit most from school activities organized for parents.**
- 3.7.6. Parents should be supported to facilitate their children’s education by making the home environment conducive for learning.**
- 3.7.7. School management should take steps to raise the parents’ awareness of child rights.**
- 3.7.8. Parental involvement in children’s education should be encouraged for better performance and achievement.**
- 3.7.9. To reap maximum benefits, the parents of disadvantaged children should be closely involved in school activities organized for parents.**

## 3.8 Value Education

### Policy Context

Traditional modes of education were primarily religion-based with an objective of character building, promoting morality and inculcating values. With the competition for earning credentials by passing examinations introduced alongside the modern school system, the emphasis on promoting values in the process of education got eroded. In the present context, there is a tendency for the children to become self-centered, insensitive to others, not caring and sharing.

According to the NEC Report (1992), a sense of pseudo autonomy is inculcated which confers the person the freedom to compromise on standards, not conforming to instructions, take liberties with other people's property and to impose one's will on others.

NEC Report, on an action oriented strategy (1995) was of the view that the aim of value education was to facilitate the formation of a set of attitudes that enables the person to engage in team work and co-exist in a multicultural and multi religious society so as to achieve peace and national harmony. The report expressed the view that there should be opportunities to engage in activities which facilitate the formation of inter personal relationships and character development through extra curricular activities and by presenting with role models through the print and other media. Apparently, the notion that 'the values are caught rather than taught' is embodied here.

According to the NEC Report (2003), Sri Lankan education system has failed to promote nation building by fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and respect for the rich cultural diversity of Sri Lankan society. Education has made little contribution to ensuring social cohesion and stability. The erosion in values in contemporary society is reflected in the lack of respect for life, gender based violence, corruption, consumerism and excessive individualism and lack of civic and social responsibility.

One of the basic competencies related to values is, assimilating and internalizing values, so that individual may function in a manner consistent with the ethical, moral and religious modes of conduct in every day living, selecting what is most appropriate.

### Issues

- There is insufficient emphasis in place on promoting values, ethics, civic consciousness and social cohesion in schools.
- Attitudes that enable the youth to co-exist in a multi cultural society are not sufficiently inculcated through school education.
- Education system is partly responsible for the erosion of values and unrest among the youth. There is a growing fear that the values and ethics of our culture may drain and deteriorate unless we take corrective action.
- There is a doubt whether the teaching religion in schools meet the objectives of value education. It is said that religion is studied to fulfill examination requirements only.

### Proposals

- 3.8.1. **The psycho-social and physical environment of the school should enable pupils to internalize values.**
- 3.8.2. **Since the development of values cuts across the entire curriculum including the hidden curriculum, social, emotional and other competencies related to values should be developed through all the subjects and co-curricular activities. A common set of values that enables future citizens to live in peace and harmony in a plural society should be developed and promoted by the school curriculum.**
- 3.8.3. **In the curriculum, religion should be given a prominent place for developing values. In addition to learning one's own religion, an introduction to basic principles of other religions should also be given at the secondary level.**
- 3.8.4. **Development of co-curricular activities should take aspects of value education into consideration.**
- 3.8.5. **Awareness of the parents should be raised with regard to the importance of parents, family, immediate environment and social interactions in developing values.**

### 3.9 Education Technology and ICT

#### Policy Context

Education Technology plays an important role in the process of transforming education to cater to the needs of the emerging knowledge society. We have yet to harness the benefits of education technology to face the challenges of the new millennium. Education Technology has been greatly influenced by several aspects of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) such as the internet, multimedia technology, wireless communication and electronics.

In moving away from a teacher dominated instructional setting towards learner-centred and resource-based education, there is no doubt that opportunities have to be provided for a wider use of Information Technology (IT). This move, however, has to be undertaken with caution paying due attention to equity and sustainability. **Equity** seeks to provide adequate opportunities to the deprived with a view to bridging the gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged. **Sustainability** focuses on aspects such as affordability and maintenance to minimize user frustrations. These criteria together with the human nature of the learning-teaching process should not be neglected in the rush to introduce the latest developments of IT into Education.

Expanded use of ICT in education contributes to improve the quality of education thereby providing a strong base of human capital to a knowledge-based economy. ICT is clearly a component of curriculum enhancement and it enhances the quality of curriculum if it is used more for the delivery of learning rather than primarily as a computer literacy tool.

Subject – specific courseware in subjects such as Mathematics, Science, English and Technology subjects can help to overcome the problem of lack of qualified teachers in these subjects. The use of ICT and the ICT related content in education should be clearly, exactly and centrally defined for each subject area to promote equal opportunities and comparable countrywide results in the SBA, for instance.

Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) provides added value to curricula and allows independent learning on a programme (that has been designed to react according to desired pedagogical criteria).

All over the world, two different approaches are used today to develop links between Information Technology (IT) and Education. With a view to improving the knowledge of school children in the subject IT and also to help them expand

the subject horizons in future, steps have been taken to introduce IT as a subject at both the GCE (OL) and the GCE (AL). Emphasizing IT in Education likewise is not sufficient. IT for Education, which requires both the teacher and the students to be competent in using IT as a tool to enrich their respective roles of teaching and learning, is also considered equally important.

However, the pace of incorporating modern education technology into the teaching-learning process has slowed down due to the current socio-economic situation in the country, shortcomings in coordination, lack of connectivity and disparity in the facilities available in different schools. The introduction of ICT even as a tool for learning-teaching requires a large amount of resources mainly for hardware, maintenance, connectivity and training of teachers. Several other factors such as awareness raising, curriculum reform, financial sustainability, content, technical training and pedagogical capacity building also need to be taken into account in integrating ICT into the school curriculum. Above all the danger of creating more disadvantages has to be considered, if equality of access is not available to all children.

Over 1500 schools have been equipped with Computer Learning Centres, Computer Resource Centres or Computer Laboratories with loan funds from multilateral agencies. In addition to ICT facilities at schools, a School Computer Network (School Net) is to be set up with the objective of linking above mentioned centres and laboratories, and Provincial ICT Centres and the National Colleges of Education with both the National Institute of Education (NIE) and the Ministry of Education. Attempts have also been made to facilitate the usage of ICT for teaching and learning with Multimedia and Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) packages. These are to be used as support materials to the existing subject curricula. The emphasis here should be to make teaching and learning education-driven and not technology-driven.

Although several programmes have been launched to train teachers in the use of computers, the focus of most of these training activities has been computer literacy. They do not enable teachers to actually integrate ICT into day to day classroom instructions. Teachers need training not only in computer literacy but also in the pedagogical application of these skills to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

ICT should be predominantly understood only as a tool to support other subject areas, although it is also a separate subject. ICT should be integrated into the syllabus of each relevant subject area. The prevailing situation is that the responsibility for using ICT in education depends solely on the respective teacher. As a consequence, the quality of ICT related education varies from school to school.

Proper software and well educated and trained teachers are extremely essential for the efficient use of computers in education. Teacher development programmes in ICT should allow teachers to produce their own subject lesson plans (activity plans) on how to integrate ICT as a tool for their subject. Educational courseware produced for the local curriculum content in local languages promotes better use of ICT-based resources and materials. Schools having computer learning centres or computer laboratories should be provided with adequate funding to support ongoing operations and maintenance including telephone connections with Internet access, purchase of educational software, and adequate ventilation/ cooling for the centres.

Relatively short life span of computer hardware, lack of focus on our actual needs and inadequate attention paid to the importance of necessary human resources have contributed with varying degree for ICT to make a lesser impact within our education system.

Sri Lanka is yet to go through the initial phase of development in the process of transforming a conventional education system to a technology enhanced education system. This initial phase is characterized by the use of audio-visual equipment such as audio cassette recorders, VCRs, TVs, VCDs, low-speed dial-up connections, digital content on CDs, very high pupil to computer ratio (around 50 pupils per computer), lack of or very limited usage of computers in school administration and very limited number of teachers with necessary skills to work in computerized settings. It requires a considerable effort to propel the education system through this phase itself.

### **Issues**

- Disparities in the school system prevent the adoption of IT/ICT equally to improve the quality of education.
- Inadequate awareness among most teachers on the effective use of education technology for improving the quality of the teaching-learning process.
- Lack of proper software and hardware for efficient use of computers in enhancing the quality of the teaching-learning process.
- Needs for training teachers in the pedagogical applications of computer literacy skills to improve the quality of teaching-learning process.

## Proposals

- 3.9.1. Due recognition should be given to equity and sustainability when transforming the conventional education system of Sri Lanka into a technology enhanced system.
- 3.9.2. Introduction of technology to schools should pay due attention to equity, affordability and relevance.
- 3.9.3. For equality of educational opportunity, a central organization should clearly define the ICT-related content with respect to different subjects of the curriculum.
- 3.9.4. Technology should be linked to education in two different ways popularly known as ICT in Education and ICT for Education.
- 3.9.5. Technology should be humanized and used optimally in moving towards learner-centred and resource-based education.
- 3.9.6. Mechanical skills developed by students in using IT should not be allowed to override their cognitive skills.
- 3.9.7. The conditions necessary for effective use of ICT as a learning and teaching tool should be created first for secondary education to be extended later to primary education.
- 3.9.8. Teachers, school heads and education administrators should be trained in the use of computers and application of computer skills for improving the quality of the teaching learning process.
- 3.9.9. The teachers trained should be able to access educational software already available and integrate it appropriately into their normal learning-teaching activities.
- 3.9.10. Connectivity should be established to all schools in stages. An education Virtual Private Network (VPN) should be established to cover as many parts of the country as possible.
- 3.9.11. Schools having Computer Learning Centres should be allowed to build their own cost recovery system for ongoing operations and maintenance of CLCs by allowing schools to generate further income by providing computer learning services to the community after school hours.

### 3.10 Learning Environment and the School Facilities

#### Policy Context

School facilities constitute an essential component in the teaching learning process. The quality and the adequacy of facilities in the majority of schools are not conducive to stimulating and effective learning-teaching techniques and for organization of a wide range of programmes. Vast disparities exist in the provision of facilities in the school system. Inequalities in the distribution of facilities have been noticed all over the education system and these in turn have affected the teaching-learning process.

The “school plant” and the total environment of the school in most places have not been maintained properly to facilitate joyful learning of the child. The school buildings and the classrooms have not been constructed with proper planning and haphazard expansion of school buildings without a proper plan has caused congestion and over crowdedness. A frequent feature is an inappropriately constructed 80’x 20’ school building without partitioning or gates or without proper light and ventilation where a number of classes has been squeezed in. Thus, a considerable section of children has been denied a proper teaching learning environment.

Proper sanitary facilities, and facilities to enhance the learning process in the schools like libraries, laboratories, activity rooms and play areas are not available in some schools and not maintained properly where they are available.

Furniture and the other basic equipment provided, to the classroom have not been properly planned and designed to facilitate children’s learning. These have not changed over the years with the changes introduced in the teaching-learning context. Furniture and other equipment supplied have never been in keeping with the changes introduced in the reforms or in keeping with the demands of the future.

It is the obligation of the Ministry or the Provincial Education Authorities to plan, provide and enforce essential requirements in all schools larger or small, rural or urban.

## Issues

- The school plant has not been properly designed and constructed to implement the curriculum. Most schools are built without a plan and the physical environment of the schools is not attractive and suitable for learning.
- The classrooms have not been designed to accommodate the new reforms and technology to suit activity and child centred learning.
- Lack of minimum facilities such as properly planned buildings and amenities like toilets and water in most schools.
- Lack of furniture and equipment to suit requirements - including classroom furniture and blackboard etc.
- Non availability of special rooms such as activity rooms, science rooms and aesthetics rooms.
- Lack of security in the school premises and proper locking for special rooms, store rooms and offices.

## Proposals

- 3.10.1. Provincial Departments should prepare two models for (1) Primary Schools and (2) Secondary Schools making it suitable for the climatic conditions in the area and providing a suitable physical child friendly environment for learning.**
- 3.10.2. In fulfilling the obligation of the State in making education available and fulfilling the right to education of the child, all schools should have the essential facilities and it should be the responsibility of the Provincial Authority to strictly enforce the provision of quality education.**
- 3.10.3. School environment should be safe and secure for all children and fulfilling this should be the responsibility of the school authorities.**
- 3.10.4. The minimum physical requirements of a school should be**
  - **partitioned classrooms**

- adequate space per child in classroom to facilitate learning
- classroom furniture designed to suit the child and classroom requirements such as boards, and cupboards
- special rooms
- office room and staff room
- a library room
- playground space
- adequate provision of drinking water
- separate toilets and urinals
- store room with a secure lock

3.10.5. Quality inputs and materials for instructional and teaching aids for plant maintenance should be need based and adequate and the Head of School should be given authority to use them at his discretion.

3.10.6. Community based Civil Society Organizations and Past Pupils' Associations should be mobilized to collaborate with the School Development Societies to improve the infrastructure facilities essential for schools.

3.10.7. Resources should be disbursed to School Development Societies and a legal framework should be established for effective use of resources provided by the education authorities and the community, enhanced performance of curricular and co-curricular activities through school - community relationships, and development of individual performance of each pupil to become a useful citizen.

### 3.11 Private Tuition

#### Policy Context

Private tuition is spreading rapidly, as the demand for such tuition is on the increase and tuition has become an alternate system of education. It has also become a very lucrative commercial business. Not only rich parents but even the middle class parents also send their children for private tuition though the cost is prohibitive.

Private tuition is more prevalent in metropolitan cities and immediate surroundings. They range in variety from individual table tuition to mass classes that accommodate several hundreds and taught using electronic devices. Though private tuition is less pervasive in rural areas, seemingly the practice is gradually marching into them as well.

Most of the students who go for tuition are those in public examination classes and there are reports that students attend tuition classes during school hours and also teachers taking leave to conduct tuition classes outside the schools. It is well known that there is an alarmingly drop of attendance in grade 13 classes in many parts of the island especially in the latter part of the year. Besides, it seriously restricts the pupils' participation in co-curricular activities, an integral part developing a balanced personality through school culture. Most students spend nearly 10 hours on private tuition and find no free time for any other school activities. Yet, in this backdrop of competitive examinations, tuition is considered more or less a necessity by both students and their parents. Tuition has become an important and an essential part of the academic life of the student. Though appears reasonable from their point of view, the practice of extra school tutoring poses a serious threat to the school, the esteemed bedrock of social reform.

In a context of subsidized public schooling system, the existence of a lucrative market for extra school tutoring demands for reexamination of its efficiency and effectiveness as this parallel system poses a challenge to the established education system.

Evaluation studies and public perceptions have pointed out that the demand for private tuition is an outcome of several factors.

- The competitive ethos fostered by the importance of public examinations has compelled students to seek private tuition. Private

tuition is wholly directed towards examination success. They learn how to answer examination questions from private classes.

- Participation in private tuition is believed to have affected the students to perform better at examinations. Children wish to obtain higher marks and also they wish to follow the majority who obtain tuition.
- Parents have a strong belief that tuition is necessary for better results at examinations.
- Parents and students are dissatisfied with the quality of teaching in the formal school.
- Some syllabi are overloaded and cannot be covered within the stipulated period.

Even though the state provides free education with many other supportive welfare measures, private tuition seems to siphon off a substantial share of parents, income, teachers' efforts and above all the children's labour, play and leisure.

### Issues

- The confidence in and the demand for the private tuition question the effectiveness and usefulness of teaching in formal schools.
- The competitive ethos fostered by the importance of public examinations has compelled students to seek private tuition.
- Students find that tuition provides them with skills necessary for examinations and consider tuition more beneficial than schooling.
- The pressure imposed by private tuition tends to affect the psychological wellbeing, mental health and the very sanity of the child adversely.
- Neglect of regular teaching and promotion of tuition by some teachers and others have made them to teach for examinations undervaluing aesthetic, ethical, sport, and recreational aspects of education.
- Parents promoting tuition for children preparing for public examinations consider it as a necessity.
- Content overload in syllabuses and lack of time to cover them, direct students to seek assistance of tuition.

- Strategy used in private tuition has very narrow purpose of preparing for examinations and has affected the reformed curriculum in schools destroying all initiatives focusing on creativity and self development.
- Benefits of private tuition accrue more to the rich and those who really need extra help are not benefited leading to a perpetuation of inequity in education.

### **Proposals**

- 3.11.1. The curriculum content and methods of teaching need to be appropriate and not overloaded to avoid students seeking assistance of private tuition.**
- 3.11.2. The system of public examinations should be drastically reformed to give priority to creative and reasoning skills over recall of factual information, the latter being the skills drilled and coached by private tutors.**
- 3.11.3. Punitive action should be taken against the students in the formal school system participating in private tuition classes and teachers conducting private tuition classes during school hours.**
- 3.11.4. Teacher behaviour should be reformed through a code of ethics to improve professionalism in service delivery.**

### 3.12 Media and Child

#### Policy Context

Along with the technological advancement in the modern world, Information and Communication Technology has created a strong impact on public life in an unprecedented manner. Communication of such information is conducted at present through various methodologies. Television, print media, e-mail, internet, radio and SMS are among them. The technology of these methodologies differs from one another.

‘Knowledge Society’ which has been subjected to discussion nowadays along with the modern educational advancement is based on the massive development in Information and Communication Technology. Accordingly, when we consider this aspect it surfaces that education has a lifelong bondage with Information and Communication Technology. While Information and Communication Technology is getting broadened in this manner, it has already expanded within our country as well.

There is a responsibility entrusted to all of us and in that we should apply modern technology for the benefit and prosperity of our children and for the improvement in education. However it is found that certain opportunists are utilizing this highly developed technology to create unfavorable impacts on our children as well as on society in general.

In the present era, there is a rapid upward trend in the appropriate as well as inappropriate impacts caused on modern society by various types of mass media. Out of these the present child community has been subjected to the highest undue impacts.

Present society is very closely linked with the Television media. Hence, Television is placed in a higher position in providing wholesome and unwholesome impacts for children over and above all other media. It should be mentioned that some programmes telecast by certain Television channels are not suitable even for adults. The evil effects caused to the child community by such programs should never be ignored.

Today the print media, electronic media and internet are easily accessible to children without any censorship on them. This situation necessitates the need of a child centered media policy.

Article 17 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child recommends that guidelines be developed “for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well being” and that the mass media should ensure that the child has the “access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well – being and physical and mental health”.

### Issues

- Much scope is still left to use the potential of media – both print and electronic- as a resource to supplement cognitive development of children, promote their morality and value and appreciate culture and art.
- There are hardly any opportunities for children to participate actively in the media.
- Parents’ role in managing the media to which the children are exposed is overlooked.
- The influence of media on children today seems to be more negative than positive.
- The press and other media seem to be less sensitive to the essential function of promoting and protecting the fundamental rights of the child especially in interviewing, reporting and advertising.

### Proposals

- 3.12.1. Knowledge about the media, their impact and functioning should be imparted in schools at all levels. Students should be enabled to relate and use the media in a participatory manner as well as to learn how to decode media messages, including those in advertising.**
- 3.12.2. State should support the media for children. It should provide budgetary support to ensure the production and dissemination of children’s books, magazines, music, theatre and other artistic expressions for children as well as child oriented films and videos.**

- 3.12.3. There should be a comprehensive national plan of action to empower parents in the media market. Positive alternatives should be promoted to counter the negative tendencies in the media market, to encourage media knowledge and support parents in their role as guides to their children in relation to electronic and other media.**
- 3.12.4. Appropriate guidelines should be developed for the protection of the child from information and materials injurious to his or her wellbeing.**
- 3.12.5. The awareness of the media personnel should be raised as regards such guidelines, respecting a child's identity, dignity and integrity while reporting and use of correct language.**

### 3.13 National Service

#### Policy Context

Over the years an individual's obligation to society came to be disregarded and lost sight of. With emphasis on rights and privileges individuals have been conditioned to look out only for what they get out of family, the school, the state service and not what they can give back to these institutions. Many who spend time as passive spectators of other people doing the work for them merely develop an over-critical attitude as to how others should be doing things and expect that most things should be provided for them as a matter of right.

It is very essential that education helps young to grow up with a sense of obligation, a sense of duty to society that provides for them, in fact of the humanity with which they share their very being.

State should make clear to each student the extent of public commitment on his behalf by way of free education and other services.

#### Issues

- Absence and disregard of an individual's obligation to society, and look out only for what they can get out of state services and not what they can give back.
- Students do not grow up with a sense of obligation, a sense of duty to society and motherland.

#### Proposals

- 3.13.1. National Service should be an essential and relevant component of education particularly in the context of our development needs.**
- 3.13.2. State should recognize the need for involving all post -OL students in a programme of organized national service before they are admitted to higher education institutions or employment in State or private sector.**

- 3.13.3. Appropriate forms of national service attractive to young and easy to organize and manage should be drawn up in consultation with other ministries engaged in development programmes.**
- 3.13.4. The Provincial Director of Education and Principals of Schools should be empowered to implement the National Service programmes with co-operation of the School Development Societies.**
- 3.13.5. Each student should be required to put in minimum number of days of participation in an approved service organized under the supervision of a responsible person, institution, or government department after sitting the G.C.E. OL examination.**
- 3.13.6. Cost involved should be shared among ministries, departments, semi-government and private organizations having resources and experience for activities, oriented towards development and social service.**
- 3.13.7. The activities should be organized systematically well planned so that students can eagerly and actively participate without misusing their time and state funds. Parents should be made aware that these programmes contribute to the student’s growth into adulthood.**

# CHAPTER 4

<b>EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP</b>	
<b>4.1.</b>	<b>Management of General Education System</b>
<b>4.2.</b>	<b>Management and Leadership in Schools</b>
<b>4.3.</b>	<b>Educational Planning Process</b>
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<b>4.5.</b>	<b>School Supervision (Evaluation) and Facilitation</b>
<b>4.6.</b>	<b>Educational Research</b>
<b>4.7.</b>	<b>Performance Review and Coordination</b>
<b>4.8.</b>	<b>Managing Student Discipline (Student Behaviour)</b>



## EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

### 4.1 Management of the General Education System

#### Policy Context

Although general education is a subject mostly devolved to the Provincial Councils since the introduction of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution in 1987, the Ministry of Education performs several key functions such as setting national level guidelines for policy, macro level educational planning and performance monitoring, assessment of educational quality, human resource planning and development with regard to educational services, teacher education and development, national level examinations and assessment and evaluation, production and distribution of school textbooks, supply of school uniforms and administration of national schools and other special schools.

Education administrative powers and decision-making powers had been delegated to the district level as far back as 1961 and 1966. One major component of the management reforms introduced in 1984 was to decentralize educational planning down to sub-national and grassroots level with a view to improving quality of education. The task functions of different categories of officers in the system from school head to Regional Director of Education (that is the head of the department of education at district level) were identified. There were 24 education regions coexistent with the 24 administrative districts in the island. Each of the education regions came under a Regional Director of Education responsible to the Director - General of Education / Secretary of the Ministry of Education. The school was considered as an organizational and planning entity. The objectives of the reforms were:

- (i) Promoting equality of educational opportunity;
- (ii) Implementing structural and curriculum changes in schools;
- (iii) Increasing parental involvement in school activities, and
- (iv) Managing necessary changes in innovation with available resources.

These changes were tried out in four districts and it was found that in order to produce full results the institutions needed to be facilitated with necessary human resources, technical knowledge and skills, and a sound monitoring and evaluation programme. The four-tier structure prevalent in the general education system at the time was as follows:

- Ministry of Education
- Regional Department of Education
- Education Circuit
- School

With the setting up of the Provincial Councils, the Regional Departments of Education went out of existence. The devolved powers in education were vested in the Provincial Councils through the Provincial Ministry of Education. The Provincial Ministry of Education was responsible for issuing policy directions and guidelines on matters coming under its purview. The Provincial Director of Education was responsible for planning, implementation, management and direction of all educational programmes in the province.

With the establishment of Provincial Ministry of Education and Provincial Department of Education, Education Divisions were carved out, each covering about 100-150 schools, to function as educational administrative units responsible to the Provincial Director of Education. While the Provincial Ministry of Education and the Provincial Department of Education performed the role of the Ministry of Education at the provincial level, the Divisional Education Offices were expected to take over most of the functions of the Regional Departments of Education.

The decision to establish Education Divisions co-terminus with Pradeshiya Sabha areas resulted in pushing up the number of Divisional Offices to 268 by 1992. In view of the difficulty of finding staff and other resources for such a large number of Divisional Education Offices, Zonal Education Offices were established in 1995 to look after the quality improvement, with each zone covering 5-8 Divisions.

The present structure of the general education system is a six - tier structure as follows:

- Ministry of Education
- Provincial Ministry of Education
- Provincial Department of Education
- Zonal Education Office
- Divisional Education Office
- School

At present, there are 9 Provincial Departments of Education, 93 Zonal Education Offices and 325 Divisional Education Offices in the country. The Provincial Education Departments attempt to ensure quality of education in their schools with the assistance of Zonal and Divisional Education Offices through in -service

programmes and through monitoring and supervision of schools that come under their purview.

With the increase in the number of layers of administration from four to six the management of the general education system has become more complex. Sometimes the schools are subjected to multiple control by different layers slowing down decision making. The Divisional Education Office which is the nearest link to the school in the chain of management is not given much authority.

Despite the Zonal Education Offices having a wide range of powers on paper, to all intents and purposes the power and authority rest with the Provincial Ministry of Education or the Provincial Department of Education. All important decisions taken there cascade downwards to school through the Zonal and Divisional layers. Even matters that can be dealt with or resolved at the Zonal level are referred to the Provincial Education Department, with Zonal Education Office functioning most of the time as a channel of communication.

A managerial style which ensures that policies and plans are implemented, but at the same time permits the individual manager some latitude in the methods employed is a strong felt need. Attention must first be directed towards creating a cadre of strong managers. If the system fails to encourage and support strong managers, the decision making will continue to be unduly dominated by political influence.

The NEC (2003) identifies three major contributory factors for the overall inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the education management system i.e.

- Extreme politicization of the system at all levels
- Lack of coordination
- Inefficiency, incompetence and indifference of some officials and principals, and lack of motivation among some teachers

The politicization has a serious negative impact towards the development factor. It has debarred the continuity and implementation of policies, reversed or terminated programmes and demotivated personnel in the system. If this is not corrected, no amount of policy reform, structural and organizational changes can prevent a total breakdown of the system.

## Issues

- Too many layers of educational management have caused a long and cumbersome process leading to delays in decision making and operational activities.
- Despite devolution of administration and management to provincial level, the deconcentration has not been extended to school level.
- The present system of management and administration is discouraging initiative on role performance of school heads.
- Lack of competent managers/leaders at all levels in the system results in ineffective decision making.
- Lack of efficiency in the management of human resources by setting performance targets for personnel and programmes at all levels increasing objectivity and transparency towards good governance.
- Lack of clarity, congruence and concurrence of roles and functions at all levels and lack of effective and efficient coordination in achieving the common objectives of education.
- A major factor for overall inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the system is the politicization that has taken total command of the system.

## Proposals

- 4.1.1. The present Provincial Educational Structure should be retained and strengthened by merging the Provincial Ministry of Education and the Provincial Department of Education and also strengthening the Zonal level with administrative and financial powers and the Division level with the educational development functions.**

**Provincial Structure should be of 4 levels as follow:**

- **Provincial Ministry and Provincial Department of Education**
- **Zonal department of Education**
- **Divisional Department of Education**
- **School**

- 4.1.2. Efficiency should be enhanced by setting performance targets of all officers and programmes at all levels of education service delivery by monitoring, supervision and evaluating performance.
- 4.1.3. Creativity and abilities of personnel in performing their service, at all levels of the education system should be recognized, utilized, encouraged and rewarded.
- 4.1.4. A favourable climate of mutual trust and relations within and among organizations of the Ministry of Education and Provincial Ministries of Education should be created and developed.

Linkage, coordination and cordial relationship should be established by the Central Ministry with the Provincial Authorities. This should take place both at the ministerial and official levels. Authorities in the Central Ministry should take initiatives and special attention to develop a suitable procedure and mechanism to establish strong linkages and effective coordination with provincial and zonal and divisional authorities.

- 4.1.5. A competent cadre of strong managers/leaders should be professionally developed to facilitate informed and efficient decision making at all levels without being unduly affected by political influence.
- 4.1.6. Technical capacities of the personnel involved in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes should be developed.
- 4.1.7. There should be a political will at the higher levels of administration to eliminate politicization of education governance and all political leaders should agree to liberate education system from political interference in the best interest of the children and the nation.

## 4.2 Management and Leadership in Schools

### Policy Context

Although certain administrative and managerial activities have been devolved to the provincial level in terms of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution very little has been done to extend the decentralization to school level. Many school heads who wish to act as first line managers experience a great deal of frustration by the limitations that some circulars create. If the school head is the educational leader of the school, then the regulations and approval procedures should support and facilitate to maintain the school head's action to make the school more effective rather than constrain him/her.

The primary task of education management must be to create effective schools. Effective schools require effective school management assisted by an organization that provides necessary support and leadership. The school head is the key figure in the management and administration of effective school. His or her role as the educational leader, planner, catalyst, initiator and supervisor in improving the quality of education remains unchallenged. School level leadership is one of the key factors of school level learning and personality building in children.

School Based Management (SBM) is now being implemented on a pilot basis in 44 Education Zones under the name Programme for School Improvement (PSI) with the intention of giving greater managerial empowerment to schools and forging strong links with the local school communities such as parents, past pupils and community leaders.

School heads face all - encompassing challenges. Their first challenge is to reorientate headship from management to leadership. Not only do they have to assume the role of leadership, switching from implementation to initiation, focusing on outcome and taking risks, but they also need to adopt leadership strategies and styles suitable for hierarchical school organization. Their influence needs to be that of professional expertise and moral imperative rather than line authority. Empowerment has to be the central focus.

School heads fail to receive proper support, guidance and counseling. Teachers also complain that inefficiencies in the education offices result in lengthy delays on teacher establishment matters. Due to deconcentration not being extended to the school level in many ways, the school heads are as restricted in their capacity to develop their schools by the provincial councils as before devolution. The

problems unique to the school are best resolved by the principal and the staff themselves. The present system actually discourages a school head from showing initiative, taking risks and even making mistakes. The Ministry of Education and Provincial Ministries of Education need to create a greater climate of mutual trust within and among their organizations if the support of the schools is to be made the dominant goal in education administration.

School heads' activities are intertwined with ethical issues in schools. In this way they become leaders in the community. Recognizing that communities and their members flourish in caring, nurturing environments school heads must seek to employ a caring ethic to guide their decisions and actions

One of the best mechanisms in increasing transparency and also achieving the expected outcomes of education is parental and community involvement in education mainly at the school level. Recent research has confirmed that optimum pupil learning is achieved only if the school faculty, parents and pupils are effectively brought together.

### **Issues**

- Current centralized bureaucratic structure governing schools from the centre or the provincial office does not permit schools to grow with their own uniqueness and identity.
- Compliance to serve several layers of administration has created problems for the schools.
- The decision making is not taking place at the school level in conformity with the delegation of authority to lower levels envisaged by decentralization.
- Only a few decisions are taken at the Divisional Education Office which is the nearest link to the school in the chain of management. All important decisions taken at the Provincial Ministry of Education or the Provincial Department of Education cascade downwards to school through the Zonal and Divisional layers.
- Though a principal is expected to perform the role of a professional leader, his enacted role is confined to that of an administrator.

- Local community (parents, past pupils and well wishers) is not actively involved in the development of the school holding the notion that the school is an outpost of the State rather than a domesticated institution organically connected to the community.

## Proposals

- 4.2.1. **School Based Management (SBM) which devolves power and authority on decision making to a representative group of persons from among all stakeholders, and creates a sense of ownership among the beneficiaries leading to a greater commitment towards running their schools efficiently and effectively should be implemented in all schools.**
- 4.2.2. **A School Development Committee (SDC) appointed with the school head as the chairperson should be held accountable for the success of the school. SDC should consist of Teacher, Parent, Past Pupil representatives and a representative of the Education Authority. A School Management Team (SMT) should be established to assist the principal in the management of the school.**
- 4.2.3. **SDCs and SMTs should participate in the school level planning of school improvement programmes and quality improvement interventions. They should ensure full participation of pupils and parents to achieve efficiency and effectiveness through transparency.**
- 4.2.4. **Pupils should perform a participatory role in planning and implementing school activities to instill a sense of belongingness in them.**
- 4.2.5. **A principal of a school should perform the role of an instructional, transformational and a moral leader while continuing to administer the school with more autonomy and accountability.**
- 4.2.6. **School heads should be empowered to manage schools in a democratic manner by allowing them to carry out decision making related to planning, learning-teaching process, co-curricular activities, staff development and maintenance and development of school plant in consultation and collaboration with SDC.**
- 4.2.7. **Continuous teacher development should be ensured by programmes conducted at the school level.**

- 4.2.8. School heads should be given adequate autonomy with accountability to handle fiscal matters in the school while making the process transparent to all stakeholders.**
  
- 4.2.9. Mechanisms should be set up by the school heads for both internal and external evaluations under the powers and authority assigned to school heads. Internal evaluation should aim at subsequent self-appraisal for self-motivation. The school heads should act in a proactive manner for the developmental interventions unfolded by external evaluation.**
  
- 4.2.10. Schools should take the initiative to intensify school community relations so that the strengths of the community are optimally utilized for the benefit of the school.**

### 4.3 Educational Planning Process

#### Policy Context

The Ministry of Education has moved away from the project mode of planning and adopted a Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) to develop the education sector, addressing issues from the school to national level through an Education Sector Development Framework and Programme (ESDFP). Institutional planning teams were established at school, zonal and provincial levels to strengthen the planning process. The ESDFP National Technical Committee, in collaboration with the provincial planners, prepared planning guidelines for schools, zones and provinces and took action to strengthen the planning capacity at zonal and provincial level. Zonal planning teams provided guidance to school planning teams. Plans were prepared at the school, zonal, provincial and national levels. Zonal plans were developed in two components, namely,

- i. School Consolidated Plans and
- ii. Zonal Institutional Plan.

Provincial Plans were developed in three components, namely,

- i. School Consolidated Plans
- ii. Zonal (Institutional) Consolidated Plan and
- iii. Provincial Institutional Plan.

The overarching plan of the ESDFP was developed through consolidation of plans of the Ministry of Education, the National Institute of Education, Department of Examinations, Education Publications Department and Provincial Education Authorities.

The ESDFP incorporates the following four major policy themes:

1. Increasing equitable access to basic and secondary education;
2. Improving the quality of basic and secondary education;
3. Enhancing the economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation; and
4. Strengthening education governance and service delivery; and strengthening, monitoring and evaluation of educational outputs and outcomes.

The plans were consolidated to the maximum extent by classifying the planned activities of each agency under the key development operations of each of the four policy themes. The immediate output of this exercise was that every School,

Zonal Education Office, Provincial Department of Education and National Educational Agencies prepared their own medium-term plans and annual implementation plans aligned to their budgets. The over-arching education sector plan provides a better picture on sector-wide requirements, which need to be addressed through short and medium term development approaches.

In the past there have been many occasions where the development achieved through projects ended when project financing ended. No steps were taken to ensure sustainability of a project once the project funding ceased. Education budgets sometimes had deviations from the education development plans. An investment in education using a Sector-Wide Approach (SWAP) should be the most appropriate instrument to overcome the short falls and weaknesses in the project funding approach. This strategy will ensure the sustainability of development inputs by better coordination of external donor investments with government budgeting.

Public expenditure in the past has been based on ad-hoc short-term plans. A long-term, flexible, rolling development plan has not been used. Consequently, information regarding procedural efficiency and equity of resource flows in the system has been lacking. This led to an inefficient pattern of resource allocation over time.

The Ministry of Education intends that all future donor or lender projects fit within its Education Sector Development Framework and Programme (ESDFP) so that resources are concentrated on priorities and outcomes can be sustained by regular funding when the project is completed. Frame based funding allows government resources to be redirected to other priorities or built on the existing budget funding to accelerate achieving the objective of that component.

This approach also recognizes the importance of the framework as the organizational grid for the identification of projects but allows a more strategic intervention to target resources at specific priorities. It permits special support to areas that have lagged behind in development allowing them to catch up to national standard after which regular budget support will be adequate to sustain them.

### **Issues**

- Planning at different tiers in the education system has not successfully blended with a coordinated plan at the national level to realize equity, quality, efficiency and good governance in education.

- The failure in project mode planning due to lack of sustainability and duplication demands a shift from project mode to sector wide mode in planning.
- Ad hoc short term planning leads to inefficient resource allocation and donor participation.
- Planning exercises rarely use the information bases to maximize the rationality of plans.

### Proposals

- 4.3.1. Educational planning should be based on national goals of general education. It should create a balance between bottom-up and top-down approaches facilitating the participation of stakeholders at every level - school, zone, division and province - in conformity with the agreed principles of devolution while retaining the coherence as guided by national goals.**
- 4.3.2. A Sector-Wide Approach should be adopted for planning, implementing, managing, and monitoring education development. All funding for the education sector should support a single policy and expenditure programme and framework under government leadership. Common approaches should be adopted across the sector and government procedures should be employed for the allocation, use and auditing of all funds.**
- 4.3.3. For the Sector-Wide Approach to be successful, all donor agencies should shift from project mode and become active partners of the Education Sector Development Framework and Programme.**
- 4.3.4. To avoid duplication and multiple partnership, all funds provided by the donor agencies should be channeled through the Ministry of Education.**
- 4.3.5. Planning at all levels should be based on the information systems: EMIS (Education Management Information System), FMIS (Financial Management Information System), GIS (Geographical Information System) and HRIS (Human Resource Information System).**

## 4.4 An Education Management and Information System (EMIS)

### Policy Context

An information system is the basis of management, planning and evaluation of an education system. During the education management process, the information system should inform the different actors and partners on the state of the sector, its internal and external efficiency, its pedagogical and institutional operation, its performance, shortcomings and needs. Because the need for information is varied and becoming increasingly complex, a solid information system should be as complete as possible. It should cover all the needs and areas for information and not only aim to collect, store data and process information but should also help in the formulation of education policies, their management and their evaluation.

The definition of objectives, the choice of strategies and policy decisions should be based on objective data, which not only give an idea of the functioning of the education system, but also help in planning, management and evaluation. Hence, data collected through Provincial EMISs and collated by a Central Education Management Information System (CEMIS) shall be recognized as one source for planning, management, monitoring and evaluation purposes to avoid disparities and confusion. Using more reliable and valid data, sustainable indicators of progress and educational growth can be developed facilitating planning, implementation and follow-up.

Several attempts have been made in the past to design, develop and implement an Education Management and Information System in the education sector. User requirements have been developed and hardware and software have been obtained for central and provincial offices, and even introductory training programmes have been conducted. Following principles for system development and operation have been agreed upon:

- That there be a uniform and integrated EMIS for the education sector (with provision for local additions);
- That the general education system comprises a number of databases including at least three main areas:
  - Schools Data Base (including descriptive and enrolment data);
  - Staff Data Bases for teaching and non-teaching staff (including establishment data and development data - pre service and continuing education)

- School – Physical Facilities Data Base
- That school based data be entered at Zonal Level, preferably as a by – product of normal administrative processes rather than a result of special collections;
- That zonal data be processed and transmitted to provincial level;
- That the Ministry of Education has direct WAN (Wide Area Network) / telephone based access to provincial data bases for gathering and subsequently processing data into the national data base.

An initiative was taken by the Ministry of Education in the year 2000 to establish a National Education Management and Information Network with an Operation Centre at the Ministry with linkages to major institutions / organizations and provincial offices. The major components of this Network are as follows:

- (a) Education Management Information System (EMIS);
- (b) Financial Management Information System (FMIS);
- (c) Geographical Information System (GIS);
- (d) General Services, which include e-mail facility, internet and web-based services.

### **Issues**

- A host of data is collected annually through school census but it is not meaningfully processed to develop a comprehensive information base at different levels.
- Maintenance of updated data bases and information systems at different layers in relation to different items such as pupils, teachers, facilities and expenditure are often lacking and when available are incomplete and inconsistent resulting in vertical and horizontal information sharing impossible for developmental purposes.
- Attempts to design, develop and implement EMIS have resulted in isolated examples of success such as Geographic Information System (GIS) initiative and the majority of efforts and investments has been quite futile.

- Information is not promptly conveyed to policy makers and decision makers to facilitate informed decision making and insightful policy formulation.

### **Proposals**

- 4.4.1. All data collected should be checked for accuracy, processed meaningfully and maintained constantly with the National Education Management Information System (NEMIS) of the Ministry of Education.**
- 4.4.2. The NEMIS should be developed to its full capacity and linked to all Provincial Education Departments, Zonal Educational Offices and Divisional Education Offices. Through the Divisional Education Offices, links should be established to all schools.**
- 4.4.3. Steps should be taken to link data bases at different levels so that NEMIS could be updated regularly.**
- 4.4.4. The processed data at the NEMIS as well as the EMISs at provincial, zonal/divisional and school levels should be made available for immediate retrieval and disseminated to decision makers and policy formulators.**

## 4.5 School Supervision (Evaluation) and Facilitation

### Policy Context

The purpose of supervision is to facilitate, evaluate and improve the delivery of education services of the school by motivating teachers, organizing the teaching-learning process effectively, and utilizing resources- both physical and human - in an optimal manner to achieve the school's instructional goals and objectives. Administrative supervision deals with the organization of the school, supplies, equipment and other aspects of school routine. Professional supervision is concerned with ways of supporting the school heads and teachers in their daily work and improving their professional skills and abilities.

Supervisory functions are performed both internally and externally. Internal or in-school supervision is conducted through classroom observation, self-and peer-evaluation and development discussions. Education personnel in divisional, zonal and provincial offices and the Ministry of Education who make periodical visits to schools either alone or as a team for short periods are the external supervisors. One of the objectives of any system of supervision is the evaluation of both strengths and weaknesses of the school and to provide such feedback and guidance to the school heads so that they take corrective action to compensate for any shortcomings. Another objective is to ensure that education policies and programmes are effectively implemented at different levels-zonal, divisional and school levels- of the system.

At present, internal supervision is not efficiently and effectively carried out in schools. The major part of school head's time is spent on administration and very little time is left for supervision which is therefore safely ignored. A School-head should delegate his/her routine work to other administrative colleagues and concentrate more on developmental functions. To ensure effective supervision school heads should work closely with teachers in classroom, through direct observation of the learning-teaching process and supervision of teaching behaviour. They must be capable of advising the teachers to perform their functions effectively. They should conduct or arrange demonstration lessons, identify training needs of teachers, design programmes of remedial training and supervise their implementation. Self-evaluation and peer evaluation by teachers should be encouraged but are hardly taking place.

External supervision provides an opportunity to a team to evaluate all the major aspects of a school with a view to identifying its strengths and weaknesses and to provide feedback and guidance. In order to carry out supervision at divisional or

zonal level it is necessary to ensure that the supervisory staffs are trained in recent supervision techniques and conversant with emerging developments in pedagogy. In respect of major curricular areas, supervision must aim at evaluating the quality of the programmes and the learning gains (knowledge, attitudes, skills and values) the pupils have achieved as a result. It should not be confined to observation of lessons but should also evaluate the quality, suitability and adaptability of the teachers' guides, lesson plans, pupils' learning activities, pupil assessment, feedback and follow-up.

The team should also evaluate

- i. Organization and management of the school;
- ii. In - school supervision;
- iii. Management of physical resources;
- iv. Utilization of the teaching and non-teaching staff;
- v. Teaching styles, methods and procedures;
- vi. Planning, budgeting and financial management;
- vii. Pupil discipline, welfare and progress; and
- viii. School-community relations.

It is essential that feedback on the performance be made available to school heads concerned immediately after the visit. This would act as a motivating factor for the school heads to bring about the desired improvement.

Supervision often accompanies Teacher Appraisal. A Teacher Performance Appraisal System provides teachers with meaningful appraisals that encourage professional learning and growth. The process is designed to foster teacher development and identify opportunities for additional support where required. By helping teachers achieve their full potential, the performance appraisal process in the long run represents one element that brings about high levels of student performance.

### **Issues**

- Internal supervision is not carried out in most of the schools with its true spirit for providing instructional leadership to teachers with the ultimate aim of development.
- External supervisions are very superficial, ineffective, and do not provide the necessary support to the schools and teachers.

- Supervision is lacking especially in rural and remote schools.
- A teacher appraisal system necessary to work in conjunction with supervision for regular review of teacher performance and providing feedback is lacking.
- Teachers are hardly motivated and their good efforts are scarcely appreciated.

### Proposals

- 4.5.1. A school should develop and implement a school based internal supervision programme to support and facilitate curricular transaction and develop the capacity of teachers.**
- 4.5.2. External supervision of schools should be conducted by professionally competent personnel. They should facilitate successful implementation of learning teaching process and school based assessment programmes and provide feedback to overcome deficiencies and strengthen good practices.**
- 4.5.3. Priority should be given to supervise schools which are located in remote and inaccessible areas and which greatly need advice, assistance and guidance for implementing learning-teaching and assessment programmes.**
- 4.5.4. A Teacher Performance Appraisal System should be put in place to support and promote the continued growth and development of teachers.**
- 4.5.5. A rewarding system should be adopted to recognize and motivate teachers and best performing schools.**

## 4.6 Educational Research

### Policy Context

The role of educational research in the development of education and more particularly in situations of education reforms is a major concern of most countries today. Educational research has high-level potential and prospects in the present context of a learning or knowledge-based society. Research is a means to produce systematic and analytical knowledge designed and developed to understand the much complex process of education. Research is conceived as having the vigour and power to provide an information base for correct and informed decisions in educational development. It is recognized that the link among researchers and policy makers and also the practitioners needs to be strengthened.

There are several organizations conducting and/or sponsoring educational research. Among these are the Faculties and Departments of Education of Universities, the Centre for Educational Research and Development of the National Institute of Education, the National Education Research and Evaluation Centre affiliated to the Faculty of Education of the University of Colombo, the National Education Commission and other research organizations such as Marga which conduct or sponsor educational research.

The research undertaken by most of the post graduate students in universities seem to focus on subject components and aspects related to the learning teaching process such as methods, competencies and assessment procedures. Research presents authentic facts which can be based to formulate more rational policies in education. Thus, on a broader perspective, researchers are expected to produce a body of knowledge providing policy makers with information and policy option that could be used to exercise reasoned judgment in finding solutions to pressing problems.

However, policy research in education is not being encouraged and the relationship between research and policy is tenuous. Consequently, the local authorities are compelled to depend on foreign research literature in reforming and reengineering education and some of the policy initiatives have not achieved their intended objectives. A number of radical changes implemented in curriculum were adopted to a certain extent, from pedagogical innovations that were tried out in other countries. These suffered setbacks due to inadequacies in comprehending the constraints prevalent in the country. The setbacks could

have been overcome had sufficient research been done in the settings to which the changes were introduced.

Action research is a useful means of sensitizing teachers to classroom learning teaching issues and encouraging them to reflect and experiment on their teaching strategies, but this has not been emphasized or given due recognition.

Moreover, majority of research completed is rarely disseminated and published. Dissemination is not normally done properly or speedily and publication outlets are limited and circulation is extremely restricted. A mechanism to collectively publish research findings for the benefit of practitioners needs to be established.

Owing to the lack of an established research culture, absence of a mechanism to monitor and coordinate research activities, skepticism about the validity of findings, non-presentation of findings in a manner appropriate to the consumers and absence of a well defined mechanism for translating research findings into concrete action, a wealth of research findings have been left unutilized and very little research inputs have gone into the education reforms.

The irrelevance and inapplicability of research findings in the local context is partly due to the requirement of the sponsorship. Since most of the research activities are funded by foreign agencies and donors who dictate terms as regards the priority areas of research, a mismatch between the concerns of the two parties is unavoidable.

The Education Ordinance No. 26 of 1947 provided for the establishment of an Education Research Council to conduct and promote research in educational theory and practice and investigation with a view to improving methods of teaching. The Jayasuriya Commission Report (1961) proposed to give high priority to the promotion of educational research. The Educational Reforms Committee of 1979 proposed a National Convention of Education to ascertain national opinion on educational practices, plans and problems. However, none of these efforts led to the development of the research capacity to provide an information base for policy development or improving the process of education in the country in concrete terms.

### **Issues**

- Lack of a pervasive research culture in the field of education has made research more an academic exercise rather than a pragmatic tool for

development. Hence, policy formulation in education is rarely supported by research.

- Due to absence of a well defined mechanism for translating research findings into concrete action, most of the educational research findings are not utilized in decision making and for enhancing the quality of education.
- Teachers are hardly encouraged and trained to engage in Action Research in their classrooms for their professional development and for a better understanding of a teachers' role from a research and critical perspective.
- A professional apex body has not been established to coordinate, promote, review and disseminate educational research and enhance the research capacity of educational personnel.
- Lack of coordination among the institutions undertaking educational research has led to duplication as well as dearth of literature in the three major areas of research namely, Basic and Fundamental Research, Action Research and Policy Research.
- Insufficiency of state funding for research compels the researchers to seek the assistance of foreign donors who are more inclined to fund according to their vested interest rather than on domestic priorities.

### Proposals

- 4.6.1. Policy formulation should always be based on research and the National Education Commission mandated for policy making should create a Policy Research Unit to facilitate policy making.**
- 4.6.2. Decision making at all levels and educational reforms should be based on research inputs and local research should be properly utilized to enhance quality and relevance in education.**
- 4.6.3. Teachers should be encouraged to engage in Action Research in order to reflect and experiment on their teaching strategies and exemplars of good practices should be disseminated through Teacher Guides.**

- 4.6.4. A National Educational Research Council should be established with the Secretary, Ministry of Education as Chairman and a prescribed number of members appointed by the Minister. The National Research Council should be responsible for:**
- (a). coordination of all educational research organizations;**
  - (b). dissemination of local research;**
  - (c). promotion of basic, policy and action research;**
  - (d). enhancing capacity development in undertaking scientific research in education;**
  - (e). reviewing findings in educational research; and**
  - (f). forging links with international research organizations.**
  - (g). encouraging individuals with professional expertise to undertake research.**
- 4.6.5. To promote research, funding should be made available to Universities, National Institute of Education, National Colleges of Education and National Education Commission to undertake Basic, Fundamental, Action and Policy Research.**

## 4.7 Performance Review and Coordination

### Policy Context

The Ministry of Education should ensure that the systems of education including the Ministry functions are implemented effectively and efficiently. It has to assist in resolving problems faced by different agencies coming under its purview. These problems affect both the quality and 'quantity' of the services delivered to the public. Therefore the Ministry has a responsibility to conduct a continuing system-wide performance review to identify these problems.

System-wide performance should be assessed not merely in terms of achieving quantitative targets, but also in terms of the quality aspects (through selective quality checks on actual performance) for example, in the case of textbooks - timely supply as well as quality aspects; and in the case of computers - supply targets, quality and resources needed to use them.

A high level committee set up in the Ministry of Education will be able to address larger system-wide issues, identify areas where system-wide performance suffers due to lack of coordination or other reasons and agree on appropriate remedial action.

### Issue

- There is no mechanism in the Ministry of Education to address system-wide issues and ensure communication and coordination across the education sector and with other agencies.

### Proposals

**4.7.1. The Ministry of Education should set up a Performance Review and Coordination Committee (PRCC) to address system-wide issues, and strengthen inter-agency communication and coordination.**

**4.7.2. PRCC should be responsible for:**

- **Reviewing the implementation of policies and programmes, refining and where necessary, recommending amendments to the existing policies to the NEC.**

- Providing guidelines and directions for system-wide planning at the national and provincial level;
- Determining performance indicators, bench marks, and standards for system-wide monitoring;
- Monitoring the EMIS development and operation (through a Technical Committee);
- Monitoring achievement of national goals and providing feedback to key agencies; and
- Reviewing related national and international initiatives, including research and development activities, and providing advice to relevant agencies.

4.7.3. The Performance Review and Coordination Committee should be chaired by the Secretary / Ministry of Education. It should consist of heads of relevant agencies at the Centre, for example, the National Education Commission, National Institute of Education, University Grants Commission and key officials of the Ministry of Education from the point of view of overall coordination and performance review of the system. A representative each for Provincial Secretaries of Education and Provincial Directors of Education should also be appointed on a rotational basis.

## 4.8 Managing Student Discipline (Student Behaviour)

### Policy Context

Student discipline regulates the student's behaviour and maintains order in schools that students complying with the order of behaviour known as school rules. The main goals of student discipline are (1) to create an environment conducive to learning and (2) ensure the safety of both staff and students. But some consider student discipline to be administration of punishment rather than behaving within the school rules. There is a variety of discipline models and techniques but there is no single solution to student behaviour problems.

The primary determinant of effective policy on discipline is a positive and healthy relationship between school and students and this is explained by principal's leadership style and student's perception of whether or not they are fairly treated. In making the policy effective, it is expected that all groups, teachers, parents, and students participate in making the rules, be aware of the code of conduct developed from rules and the consequences of breaking the code. They should be clearly specified and communicated to all to effect fair and consistent enforcement and if students are to cooperate they should feel that they are treated fairly.

Some principals, teachers and even parents advocate more authoritarian and confrontational style of discipline and they believe that if students can be controlled they would be able to teach more efficiently. Two most punitive methods that increasingly came under severe criticism are suspension and corporal punishment and it was found that corporal punishment psychologically harms the students and presents a great potential for abuse if applied maliciously. This has led to the debate on whether the policy on discipline should emphasize punishment or prevention. Research explains the importance of administrative leadership and behaviour of principals and also teachers' competency in classroom management in managing student behaviour in schools.

### Issues

- The indigenous tradition holds a welcoming attitude towards the corporal punishments which from the psychological viewpoint is considered as humiliating and harmful to the child.

- Though punishments can be viewed as application of reasonable force when commensurate with the offence committed and meted out to prevent injury or damage, its punitive and negative side is highlighted overlooking the positive and productive aspect.
- Impediments to smooth implementation of the curriculum and non-conducive learning environment disturb the discipline in students.
- High degree of cooperation among the principals, teachers, parents and students is imperative for discipline but is often lacking in schools.
- Unilateral formulation of a code of conduct in schools and its assertive imposition on students fail to internalize discipline in children.
- Lack of properly articulated set of rules and is seen in case where such rules if any are spelt out, the failure to communicate them effectively and enforce them fairly and consistently.
- The resentment and hostility on the part of the students towards the rules stated in restrictive and prohibitive language.
- Absence of the aspect of behaviour counseling in the common career-oriented counseling programmes.
- Limitations of the school to exercise its authority to maintain a consistent pattern of discipline which is continuously impinged by a multitude of external factors such as social background of the child, cultural taboos, media and political pressure.

### Proposals

- 4.8.1. Punishments given to students by school authorities should be preventive, not punitive.**
- 4.8.2. Corporal punishments or any kind of punishment injurious to the physical, mental or emotional wellbeing of the child should not be administered to students under any circumstance.**
- 4.8.3. Punishments when administered should accompany corrective measures and should not be publicized.**

- 4.8.4. Every effort should be taken to make the school learning environment child- friendly and resourceful to minimize the incidence of disciplinary problems.
- 4.8.5. Discipline has to be inculcated through curriculum as well as co-curricular activities.
- 4.8.6. The principal should take the initiative to promote inter-personal relations and cooperation of the school personnel and parents.
- 4.8.7. Every school should have a clearly defined set of rules of its own. A participatory approach with the contribution of the principal, teachers, students and parents should be followed in the formulation of this set of rules setting out expected pattern of conduct. The set of rules ones formulated should be promptly communicated to all the teachers, students and parents and enforced fairly and consistently.
- 4.8.8. Students should be encouraged to develop self-discipline through self-management.
- 4.8.9. The conduct of the pupils should be regularly monitored at the school and reported to the parents.
- 4.8.10. The principal and teachers of the school should themselves be the role models who set examples to pupils on exemplary behaviour.
- 4.8.11. The counseling programmes should have a component of behaviour counseling.
- 4.8.12. The principal should assume a pro-active role in the formulation of a realistic and practicable code of conduct taking into consideration the socio-economic background of the students, attitudes and values of the community and expectation of parents.
- 4.8.13. The authoritarian, restrictive and prohibitive tone should be avoided in setting out rules to maintain discipline.
- 4.8.14. The disciplinary procedure should be implemented with no interference from outside.

# CHAPTER 5

<b>EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL - TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS, TEACHER EDUCATORS AND SLEAS OFFICERS</b>	
5.1.	Teacher Education/Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initial Professional Education of Teachers</li><li>• Continuing Professional Education of Teachers</li></ul>
5.2.	Code of Ethics for Teachers
5.3.	Professional Development of Teacher Educators
5.4.	Professional Development of SLEAS and SLPS Officers
5.5.	Service in the Education Sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sri Lanka Teachers Service (SLTS)</li><li>• Sri Lanka Principals Service (SLPS)</li><li>• Sri Lanka Teacher Educators Service (SLTES)</li><li>• Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS)</li></ul>



## EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL - TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS, TEACHER EDUCATORS AND SLEAS OFFICERS

### 5.1 Teacher Education / Development

#### Introduction

Policy recommendations related to teacher education, presented from time to time during the past have been for the most part fragmented and piecemeal. The only set of proposals introduced with a view to establishing a national system of teacher education by the National Authority on Teacher Education has continued to remain on paper, although it is purported to have received Cabinet approval for national level implementation. Another set of recommendations for a teacher education policy has been presented by the National Education Commission in 2002.

On the other hand, several recent studies and reports, published afterwards have revealed weaknesses and issues pertaining to the teacher education system in the country, apart from offering suggestions for reform. Besides, current reforms in general education lay strong emphasis on enhancing the efficiency of the education system through professionalisation of education personnel. Under these circumstances, formulation of a comprehensive and a coherent national teacher education policy is imperative.

Teacher education is the process by which those selected for teaching are enabled to acquire education and 'Training' relevant to teaching. Education, refers to knowledge or conceptual aspects of teaching, whereas training involves development of a repertoire of skills pertaining to teaching through practice and reflection. It is generally accepted that skill training when supported by general education enables teachers to adopt and apply these attributes to the variety of teaching learning situations they are likely to encounter.

Teacher education is also the means by which teachers acquire professionalism.

Teacher professionalism is characterized by three attributes – competence, performance and conduct. Competence comprises:

- a) Preparedness to face effectively all kinds of classroom adversities and unpredictable situations using imaginative and individualized client centred techniques

- b) A sound knowledge of the subject area, that gives the teacher more confidence during teaching
- c) Ability to apply most effective pedagogical techniques, appropriate to a given instructional situation, discovered through trial and experience

The second characteristic of professionalism is a high standard of performance, that finds expression in teachers' effective teaching of concepts of a curriculum. Conduct is the last attribute of professionalism. It is a representation of the manner in which one takes care of oneself in terms of appearance, language and behaviour and professional conduct. It also includes ability to engage in meaningful communication with all those involved in education.

Teachers are gaining more and more autonomy over their tasks. It is only teacher professionalism that can ensure, that this autonomy is exercised in the best interest of the learner.

Education and training aimed at fostering professionalism, enabling teacher to become an effective facilitator of learning are not the only concerns of teacher development. Role of the teacher has been widened from being a mere facilitator of learning. Teacher is also looked upon as an informal community leader, a nation builder, an innovator in education and a behaviour role model for the pupils. Consequently, teacher development has considerable responsibility for equipping teachers with the abilities and dispositions needed in performing these multi-faceted roles.

Moreover, a 'new profile' of the teacher for the future also calls for a new paradigm of teacher education which addresses issues and trends arising out of the new IT revolution, globalization and the emerging role of the teacher as an Agent of Change in the transformation of society in order to face the new challenges. Teachers educating children for the future should be able to assimilate a constructivist's approach to pedagogy which upholds transformation in place of transmission and transaction in the changing face of the teacher's role.

Teacher education has to be conceived as a continuous and integrated system comprising of two complementary sub systems namely,

- a) Initial professional education of teachers; and
- b) Continuing professional education of teachers.

Initial professional education refers to programmes of professional education offered to teachers for the first time in their teaching career. Ideally such education should be pre-service. Continuing teacher education refers to professional education that needs to be provided to teachers in-service, on a regular basis throughout their teaching career. Need for upgrading and broadening of knowledge arises out of continuous developments in subject disciplines, pedagogy, reforms in national system of education, information and communication technology and other related spheres.

The implementation of educational change or reform rests largely on what happens in schools and teachers play a major role in the translation of policies and programmes into action.

## **Initial Professional Education of Teachers**

### **Policy Context**

#### **A central body concerned with the National Teacher Education System**

There has never been a central body concerned with teacher education in the history of teacher education in Sri Lanka, except for a short duration when the now defunct National Authority on Teacher Education was functioning. This situation has been responsible for several weaknesses associated with the country's system of teacher education. As a result developments in teacher education initiated by the several agents or institutions of delivery have been for the most part ad hoc, and disjointed. This has prevented the emergence of a unified and coordinated national system of teacher education directly geared to meet the need for teachers in adequate numbers and quality. This has prevented planned developments in teacher education. It has not been possible to ascertain and ensure quality of programmes of teacher education provided by different institutions. Programmes conducted by different institutions indicate differences in quality and standards. There has been no mechanism for ensuring equivalence in standards, of comparable programmes. It has also not been possible to ensure that programmes leading to different levels of certification, conducted by different institutions are properly jointed or articulated in terms of their content. So, the system has failed to produce clear and well integrated pathways leading to successively higher levels of certification across the total system.

Major institutions conducting programmes of teacher education continue to function in isolation with no indications of the directions towards which they should turn in the context of national education goals and reform efforts.

### **Teacher Education Institutions – Limitations**

Institutions providing initial professional education for teachers include; National Colleges of Education, The National Institute of Education and the University Departments and Faculties of Education.

- (a) Selection to institutions, particularly when such selection amounts to recruitment as teachers, should consider aptitude for and interest in teaching apart from other relevant personality attributes. Else, the profession would be filled with unmotivated persons engaging in unimaginative mechanical teaching in the classrooms. Ad hoc recruitment to institutions as well as to schools has resulted in the appointment of a large number of untrained teachers and irrational placement.
- (b) Mismatch between supply and demand for different categories of professionally qualified teachers graduating from all Teacher Education Institutions taken together is another serious issue. While there is a surplus of certain categories of teachers, there exists a deficit in certain other categories of teachers passing out of these institutions. This has been due to a failure on the part of our Teacher Education system to make reliable predictions of future teacher needs based on valid data and to plan their availability in time by entrusting the responsibility to relevant teacher education institutions.
- (c) Differences in programmes in terms of the curriculum content and structure of comparable programmes is another concern. This is yet another result of poor and uncoordinated curriculum planning by those responsible and the failure to have a mechanism in place for ensuring equivalence in standards of comparable programmes.
- (d) Facilities and equipment required are not available in adequate quality and amount at most institutions. Resources are not allocated equitably. Level of maintenance of the available resources is also found to be poor. These differences and inadequacies adversely affect the quality of education, the student teachers receive.

- (e) Programmes conducted at different types of institutions are not rationally distributed. - Programmes conducted at different locations within each type of institutions as well as programmes conducted by different types of institutions – Universities, NIE and National Colleges of Education, are not located and distributed in a rational manner. Instead of concentrating only on programmes that an institution can effectively implement, given the resources available there has been a tendency to offer a multiplicity of programmes leading to different levels of certification. This has had adverse impact on quality and cost effectiveness of some of the programmes. Lack of coordination among different delivery agents is thus a cause for serious concern.

### **Quality and Effectiveness of Teacher Education programmes**

Most teacher education programmes are considered to be poor in terms of their quality and consequently their effectiveness, due mainly to following reasons.

- a) Inadequacies in content and structure of curriculum due to,
- Lack of proper response to developments in disciplines, pedagogy, information and communication technology and related fields and means of knowledge acquisition.
  - Lack of concern for real needs of the schools and the communities in terms of existing social realities such as the presence of a large number of children placed in special circumstances (e.g. socially, economically disadvantaged children, differently abled children)
  - Excessive concern over cognitive and skill development of children at the expense of meeting their physical and emotional development needs, the need for guidance and counseling and the development of their attitudes and values.
  - Failure to identify the new profile of teacher within the current global and national context, which assists in determining the goals of teacher education. In addition to enacting his professional role as a facilitator of learning, the teacher under present circumstances is expected to perform a multiplicity of roles for which they need to be prepared.

- b) Failure to make the essential change in the teacher education programmes to match the revisions in school curriculum brought about by the educational reforms from time to time.
- c) Absence of properly trained personnel with necessary expertise to undertake teacher education curriculum development.
- d) Non existence of the practice of regular evaluation of the effectiveness of teacher education programmes using output indicators of effectiveness, by the respective institutions of an external body.

### **Measures for quality assurance and standardization of programmes of teacher education offered by different institutions**

Absence of measures for quality assurance and standardization is one of the causes for poor quality of some programmes. There are programmes also of varying standards, but leading to the same qualification or level of certification. Since equivalence of comparable programmes is not guaranteed by a recognized central authority, some programmes do not enjoy the same level of recognition and acceptance, in society as well as in other institutions of education, causing much frustration and disappointment in those who have spent time and effort. There is no motivation for institutions to reform and improve their programmes with time in order to prevent them from becoming obsolete, because there are no measures in place for regular assessment of programmes.

Measures for ensuring that all teacher education programmes meet required standards and for ensuring equivalence in standards of comparable programmes have to be put in place. This function is not likely to be effective if undertaken separately by the University system and the Ministry of Education. It needs to be the responsibility of a single body representing both sectors, within the Ministry of Education. It could be a function of the same body responsible for overall planning and coordination of teacher education activities.

### **The goal of an all graduate teaching profession**

The desire for an all graduate teaching profession has found wide expression, but has continued to remain on paper over the last several years. The objective will never be realized as long as the practice of admission to the teaching profession through Colleges of Education leading to a diploma continues to exist.

Ad-hoc arrangements to enable non-graduates to obtain degrees may not resolve the problem as long as Colleges of Education continue to produce diplomates.

### **The structure of the Teacher Education System - Institutions conducting programmes of Teacher Education**

Institutions providing teacher education programmes consist of the Departments and Faculties of Education at the Universities, the National Institute of Education and the National Colleges of Education. In accordance with government policy they are required to be co-educational and multi- ethnic in character. They are expected to contribute towards the professional and personal growth of adequate number of teachers for teaching all subjects, by selecting those who have the aptitude and the interest for teaching, through a rational scheme of programme distribution among them. The institutions will have to be supplied with personnel and physical resources adequate in terms of both quality and number.

Development of an all graduate professionally qualified teaching force is an accepted goal of the teacher education policy. Currently entry into the profession is mainly through National Colleges of Education. If the above goal is to be realized the National Colleges of Education will have to be raised to the level of degree awarding institutions affiliated to the NIE through a phased programme of action. Non-graduate teachers who are already in the system should be offered opportunities and incentives to graduate within stipulated time frames.

### **Teacher Education Curriculum**

The essence of teacher education is the curriculum and its prime attribute, quality is to be attained by ensuring that it has relevance to real needs of the schools and communities in terms of existing social realities, enable teachers to promote balanced development of student personality, actively responds to continuing developments in subject disciplines, pedagogy and related fields of knowledge and fulfills requirements of emerging new teacher profile. Its effectiveness needs to be regularly investigated and remedial measures taken if found necessary.

### **Staff Development**

Individual Universities, the National Institute of Education and the Ministry of Education (in respect of National Colleges of Education) will be required to

develop and implement short term and long term staff development plans that would meet their institutional needs.

### **Issues**

- Lack of a national consensus on the overarching goal of teacher education and development
- The absence of a clear mechanism for policy formulation aimed at realizing the national goals
- Absence of a central body concerned with the national teacher education system
- Absence of a clear policy on the qualifications needed for selection to teacher education institutions and the ad hoc manner in which the student teachers are selected
- Lack of a well planned programme of teacher development that takes into consideration the attrition, future needs, student projections, teaching subjects, school levels and curricular changes introduced to the school system
- When selection to teacher education institutes amounts to recruitment, the persons without aptitude, interest and other relevant personality attributes essential for successful teaching may enter the profession.
- Inadequacies in the system of evaluation of student teacher learning and performance.
- Most teacher education programmes are considered to be poor in terms of their quality and consequently their effectiveness due to (a) Inadequacies in content and structure of curriculum (b) Absence of properly trained personnel with necessary expertise in curriculum development and (c) Deficiencies in the system of assessment of student teachers, within the context of learning at teacher education institutions as well as school based experience. The assessment system followed owe their deficiencies to heavy reliance on summative evaluation, failure to focus on assessment of overall performance through an array of multiple tools of assessment and inadequate emphasis on formative evaluation procedures.

- Mismatch between supply and demand for different categories of qualified teachers graduating from teacher education institutions
- Programmes conducted at different types of institutions are not rationally distributed
- A large number of teachers with a degree without any teaching qualifications and those with teaching diplomas without a degree in the subject taught need support to upgrade their position to achieve the professional status expected
- The ineffectiveness of the academic curriculum due to excessive reliance on summative assessment in most teacher development programmes and poorly conducted teaching practice or internship that do not lead to the development of a teacher who could perform the transformative change agent role expected at present
- Facilities and quality equipment required are not available in adequate quantity at most institutions. Level of maintenance of the available resources is also found to be poor. These differences and inadequacies affect the quality of education the student teachers receive
- Teacher education and development programmes have failed to keep pace with changes in school curriculum that have affected the implementation of reforms at school level
- The need to upgrade the quality of the teacher force by creating an all graduate teaching profession, though widely desired has continued to remain on paper over the last several years. This objective will not be realized as long as the practice of providing a teaching diploma for those with only GCE A/L qualifications is continued
- Lack of a clear policy related to curriculum development and evaluation process pertaining to teacher development programmes
- The graduates selected without any teacher education qualifications need to follow a post graduate teacher education programmes to make themselves competent to teach
- Teacher education programmes both initial and continuous conducted in Colleges of Education, NIE and Universities are ill conceived and unimaginatively implemented

- Absence of measures for quality assurance, standardization and programme accreditation
- Appropriately qualified staff in required numbers is not available at most institutions. There are also no measures to retain those who have followed staff development programmes within the institutions that provided them these opportunities

## **Proposals**

- 5.1.1. The overarching goal of teacher development should be to develop a corps of teachers with strong professional and ethical standards of conduct having the ability to provide an education of high quality with high levels of performance.**
- 5.1.2. Formulation of policy pertaining to teacher education is the primary responsibility of the NEC created by Act No. 9 of 1991. It should formulate policy in consultation with relevant institutions and organizations.**
- 5.1.3. A Teacher Education Board should be established in the Ministry of Education. The Board should be responsible for:**
  - (a). Overall planning and development of teacher education programmes, to meet the needs of the school system**
  - (b). Coordination of teacher education programmes conducted by the teacher education institutions**
  - (c). Making predictions of future needs for different categories of teachers and their qualifications, in collaboration with the PDEs and the Planning Unit of the MOE, and providing necessary information on the number of student teachers to be selected to different Teacher Education Institutions for professional development**
  - (d). Organization of Teacher Education Institutions, identification and distribution of programmes among them taking cost effectiveness considerations into account, and selection and distribution of students among these institutions taking into account the predicted need for different categories of teachers**
  - (e). Appointing Programme Assessment Committees of educationists representing the Universities, NIE and Colleges of Education at regular intervals to assure quality and upgrade programmes conducted by all Teacher Education Institutions**

- (f). **Overseeing the functioning of the National Colleges of Education, Teachers Colleges and Teacher Centres**
- (g). **Planning programmes for the continuing education of teachers in-service in collaboration with NIE**
- (h). **Developing and implementing professional development plans for Teacher Educators and Staff in Teacher Education Institutions**
- (i). **Setting out a programme to ensure the quality assurance of institutions engage in teacher education in collaboration with the Standards and Quality Assurance Council (SQAC)**

The Teacher Education Board should consist of DG/NIE, a representative of UGC, representatives from Education Faculties of Universities, A Provincial Director of Education, a representative of Ministry of Finance and five eminent educationists.

Secretary to the Ministry of Education will be the chairperson of the Board. Teacher Education Division of the Ministry of Education will be the Secretariat of the Teacher Education Board. The Minister of Education shall appoint the members of the Board.

- 5.1.4. **The Teacher Education Board should be responsible for overall planning, programme development and approval and coordination of all institutions delivering continuing teacher education programmes**
- 5.1.5. **Standards and Quality Assurance Council in collaboration with the Teacher Education Board should assume responsibility for quality assurance of all continuing teacher education programmes**
- 5.1.6. **All those who aspire to be teachers should be provided with a pre service teacher development programme, and successful completion of which will lead to a Bachelor's degree in education (B Ed.) or a Diploma in Teaching (until all National Colleges of Education become degree awarding institutions), should be a pre requisite for recruitment as teachers**
- 5.1.7. **All institutions engaged in teacher development i.e. Faculties and Departments of Education in Universities, National Institute of Education and Colleges of Education should work to a common plan in providing pre-service qualifications, necessary for entry into teaching service matching the supply and demand for different**

categories of professionally qualified teachers graduating from all Teacher Education Institutions.

- 5.1.8. A proper mechanism should be developed to test and examine the interest and relevant personality attributes of all persons who seek selection for pre service teacher development programmes prior to becoming a teacher.
- 5.1.9. Essence of teacher education and development is its curriculum and its quality and effectiveness should be continuously monitored and maintained by ensuring that teacher education:
- (a). has relevance to current needs of the schools and their communities in terms of existing social and cultural realities;
  - (b). enables teachers to promote balanced development of student personality;
  - (c). actively responds to continuing developments in subject disciplines, pedagogy and related fields of knowledge;
  - (d). components of the total curriculum and learning activities are well coordinated with a strong school-based practice component; and
  - (e). fulfills requirements of the emerging new teacher profile.
- 5.1.10. System of student teacher evaluation should,
- (a). be based on a set of well defined standards of outcomes incorporating subject knowledge, professional knowledge, teacher competencies and professional qualities
  - (b). give due weightage to formative forms of assessment in addition to summative, each form of assessment assuming responsibility for the assessment of specific student teacher learning outcomes
  - (c). employ most effective and multiple tools of measurement including student teacher portfolios
  - (d). incorporate procedures for providing regular feedback to student teachers
  - (e). embody explicitly stated assessment roles for the teacher education institution staff, school staff and the student teacher
- 5.1.11. Distribution of programmes among the institutions, and the intake to different programmes and curriculum areas will be determined on

the basis of their cost effectiveness as well as current and future demand and supply.

- 5.1.12. Teacher education institutions and the programmes provided by them should be as follows:

University Departments and Faculties of Education and the NIE should continue to offer Degree (B.ED) and Post Graduate Diploma in Education programmes to meet current and emerging needs, for initial teacher education. National Colleges of Education should continue to offer a three year programme leading to a National Diploma and should start programmes leading to a B.Ed. Degree and a Post Graduate Diploma in Education

- 5.1.13. Non graduate teachers with no professional qualifications should be provided with incentives and opportunities to upgrade their professional status
- 5.1.14. A radical reconceptualization of the design, content, process, methodology and assessment should be used to develop teacher preparation programmes with activities facilitating application of knowledge, development of appropriate skills, leadership qualities and human values
- 5.1.15. All teacher development Institutions, Faculties of Universities and Colleges of Education should provide an environment with the required staff with necessary qualification and quality and all necessary physical facilities including material and technology to allow the student teachers to construct knowledge and develop skills through self - experience and reflection
- 5.1.16. Teacher education programmes both initial and continuing should be updated in keeping with the curriculum reforms introduced to the school system for transforming the learning teaching process in schools
- 5.1.17. In pursuance of the goal of an all graduate teaching profession, National Colleges of Education will be raised to the level of B.Ed Degree awarding institutions, affiliated to the NIE offering programmes of teacher education. Non graduates in service would be offered incentives and opportunities to graduate within a stipulated time frame

- 5.1.18. Curriculum Development and Evaluation of teacher development programmes should be the responsibility of the Universities for their programmes and the National Institute of Education for its programmes and the programmes conducted by National Colleges of Education**
- 5.1.19. All graduate teachers without any professional qualifications should qualify themselves as professionally qualified teachers within a given period. The provision for them to follow a post graduate diploma in education should be made by the State**
- 5.1.20. All teacher education programmes both initial and continuing should go beyond the concepts of training and education and adopt the teacher development constructivist approach**
- 5.1.21. The Quality Assurance Council in collaboration with the Teacher Education Board should ensure equivalent standards of programmes conducted by different institutions of teacher education through a process of regular programme accreditation.**
- 5.1.22. As quality of teacher education in each institution depends on the quality of the staff, each institution shall be required to prepare and implement a staff development plan that will ensure availability of the required number of qualified staff.**

**Universities and the NIE should offer facilities for teacher educators to upgrade their qualifications, for career mobility.**

**A scheme of fellowships, scholarships and attachments should be made operative for providing higher education in fields for which facilities are not available locally. Teacher Educators who complete their training successfully should be required to work in their areas of specialization, in their institutions. Teacher Educators should be required to attain an accepted level of proficiency in English for promotion to higher grade. Teacher Education Board shall assume responsibility for preparation of comprehensive staff development plans for all categories of teacher education institutions in the country as and when need arises**

## Continuing Professional Education of Teachers

### Policy Context

Teacher education is viewed as a continuum wherein, pre – and in-service education are viewed as forming integral components of a single process. Hence, continuing education is considered as important as initial teacher education. However, continuing education has failed to receive this recognition. It has never been recognized that continuing education is a subject requiring planning, programme development, and coordination of the activities of participating agents, primarily at the national level. In the absence of a responsible body, a well coordinated and coherent national system of continuing teacher education has failed to emerge.

Recommendations contained in recent documents, on continuing teacher education are sketchy and sometimes conflicting. Need for continuing teacher education arises out of the following circumstances :

- Knowledge and skills acquired during the initial stage need to be upgraded
- Curricular and other reforms introduced from time to time make it incumbent on teachers to become familiar with them
- Global and national developments that make acquisition of new competencies indispensable
- Problems and conditions specific to certain areas, require special attention
- The need for broadening knowledge through higher education programmes should be geared to meet these needs, the number and duration of programmes to be followed and the clientele of each programme have to be determined. Responsibilities for implementing the programmes have to be clearly demarcated.

### Issues

- Absence of a national level authority responsible for continuing professional education of teachers

- Professional development gaps are not identified and curriculum development in continuing teacher education is not undertaken systematically on a regular basis
- Plans and programmes for continuing and career long upgrading and broadening of teacher competencies are not subjected to any quality assurance as no such mechanism exists
- The structure and management of the continuing teacher education system and the responsibilities of the cooperating institutions are not clearly defined and demarcated

### **Proposals**

- 5.1.23. Continuing teacher education should be provided to meet the needs of the education system and the aspirations of teachers for career development**
- 5.1.24. Curriculum for continuing teacher education should focus on different kinds of training needs of teachers in service who have received an initial teacher education. These include (a) Need for upgrading what was learnt during the initial stage (b) General learning needs that arise from time to time due to curriculum reforms and other emerging developments with a bearing on education and (c) Knowledge and abilities that would enable teachers to deal with problems specific to schools and areas they serve.**
- 5.1.25. The programmes designed to meet the needs aforesaid, should be compulsory for all teachers and should be implemented on a cyclical basis**
- 5.1.26. Curriculum development for continuing teacher education programmes should be a collaborative effort of the NIE and the provincial authorities**
- 5.1.27. The National Institute of Education, Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) and Teacher Centres (TCs) should take the responsibility for continuing teacher education. As per the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution, the TCs and TEIs should function under the Provincial Departments of Education**

- 5.1.28.** A school based teacher development system should be set up, managed and administered by Education Zones and Divisions under guidelines, norms and standards set by the Standards and Quality Assurance Council. A wide range of human resources comprising in-service advisors, teacher educators and university academics should be made available under the internal professional support of a mentor for on site school based support to teachers
- 5.1.29.** The continuing education programmes to be provided by respective institutions should be as follows:
- NIE should offer programmes for upgrading knowledge acquired by teachers during initial training through a combination of distance education modules and contact sessions
  - TEIs should provide programmes updated in response to performance appraisal and reforms introduced to the school system
  - TCs should offer programmes covering subjects of current and emerging importance as well as issues of local interest. These should be managed by Provincial Departments of Education
  - On-site School Based Support System should be managed by the Provincial Director of Education under the guidelines set by the Standards and Quality Assurance Council. The support should be a collaborative effort of the teacher advisors, teacher educators and university academics
  - Universities and NIE should provide opportunities for teachers, who are interested in broadening their knowledge to follow higher education programmes leading to diplomas and higher degrees

## 5.2 Code of Ethics for Teachers

### Policy context

Teacher education is the means by which teachers are expected to acquire professionalism, an integral component of which is a disposition on the part of teachers to regulate their own conduct in a manner that will ensure professional excellence and enhance the esteem in which they are held by the public. Immense autonomy enjoyed by teachers in decision making during the performance of their tasks, makes such standards of conduct extremely important.

However educators also believe that a commonly held public set of principles can assist in the exercise of professional judgment. A natural response to this belief has been the development of codes of ethics for teachers.

### Issue

- A code of Ethics for Teachers in Sri Lanka, woven around the core values of the teaching profession has not been developed

### Proposals

- 5.2.1. **A Code of Ethics for teachers should be developed as an outcome of a collaborative effort of Teachers, Teacher Educators, Educationists, Teacher Unions and Professional Organization representatives**
- 5.2.2. **The Code of Ethics should inspire professional excellence and it should guide teachers in their conduct. It is not intended to be used as a basis for discipline by authorities or to be interpreted as one diminishing the obligation of an authority to evaluate and discipline a teacher.**
- 5.2.3. **The Code of Ethics should be woven around the core values of teacher as**
  - (a). a person;
  - (b). an 'In Loco Parentis';
  - (c). a developer of knowledge and skills;
  - (d). a formative guide, counselor and mentor;
  - (e). an evaluator; and
  - (f). a professional.

### **5.3. Professional Development of Teacher Educators**

#### **Policy Context**

Teacher Educators are engaged in conducting teacher development programmes, both initial and continuing in University Faculties and Departments of Education, National Institute of Education, Colleges of Education, Teachers' Colleges, and Teacher Centres. At present post graduate and degree programmes are provided by Faculties and Departments (Education) in Universities, and the National Institute of Education.

A three year Diploma in Teaching which is a pre service programme in Colleges of Education, a two year certificate programme in Teachers' Colleges and a short term programme in Teacher Education Institutes and Teacher Centres are the other programmes. The Open University and National Institute of Education conduct programmes by distance mode in combination with contact sessions leading to post graduate diplomas and certificates.

Teacher Educators who are recruited with post graduate qualifications and teaching experience are left to their own devices on the assumption that they know their role.

Recruitment procedures do not ensure that they are qualified as teacher educators and as such, they set their own standards of conduct.

A role definition for teacher educators has not been developed with respect to their academic responsibilities, institutional roles and their professional status.

In the present context of educational reform and development, the teacher educators have a crucial role in preparing the teachers for schools, the major determining factor of educational development. A cursory analysis of the present professional behaviour of a teacher educator reveals that he/she is expected to teach educational theory, supervise teaching practice and provide guidance and counseling to student teachers. The teacher educator has become a model to prospective teachers in developing their outlook and behaviour as teachers and is expected to guide and help them to understand education in all its aspects, develop skills of class teaching and build up professional attitudes. In performing this role, the degree and the kind of research in which the teacher educators are engaged is limited. Also, there is a marked absence of scholarship that accounts for their failure to keep abreast with the rapidly advancing knowledge in the process of learning and teaching and preparation of teachers.

Demand for improved teacher educator quality and their professional status results from an interest in improving the teacher quality in schools. Though teacher educators are recruited with high academic qualifications, there is no standardized process of training or development for teacher educators to improve their professional competence and status. To impact the teaching profession, the teacher educators must successfully model appropriate behaviours and use research based and proven practices.

At present, there is only one programme, a Master of Arts in Teacher Education conducted by the Open University with the goal of developing among teacher educators, the competencies and practices related to teacher education.

The future demands, an informed discerning force of teacher educators that can prepare teachers who are creative, innovative, enthusiastic and professionally committed.

### **Issues**

- The role of Teacher Educator is not clearly defined with respect to their academic and professional responsibilities and institutional roles.
- Lack of a standardized process of professional development of teacher educators who are serving in both initial and continuing programmes of teacher development.
- The performance, productivity and research capabilities of teacher educators are limited, leading to a marked absence of scholarship that accounts for their failure to keep abreast with the rapidly advancing knowledge in the field of teacher development. An effective system to motivate teachers to do so is also lacking.
- Though, addressing values, attitudes and beliefs has been demonstrated to be the most efficacious in effecting real and lasting change in the behaviour of teachers, the present programmes conducted are mainly academic and examination oriented.
- Teacher Educator links with the schools in preparing teachers are limited, though greater involvement is necessary to cope with the need for onsite involvement in realistic situations, which is a major element of teacher development.

## **Policy Proposals**

- 5.3.1. The role of Teacher Educators should be defined considering the changing process of teacher preparation and the demands in developing a teacher as a professional for the future.**
- 5.3.2. A standardized process of teacher educator development should be organized in University Faculties of Education and at the National Institute of Education.**
- 5.3.3. Undertaking research on related aspects of teacher development and the process of learning and teaching should be an essential component of role functions of all teacher educators.**
- 5.3.4. Teacher Education Board should be responsible for preparation of a comprehensive Teacher Educators’ professional development plan for all categories of teacher educators in the system.**
- 5.3.5. Teacher Educators responsible for the delivery of programmes for teacher development, should build up their capacity to shift from the present transmission mode to a constructivist approach using androgogy, the art and science of helping adult learners.**
- 5.3.6. Education and development of teachers depend on the quality of teacher educators. Hence, each institution conducting teacher development programmes should prepare and implement a professional development plan keeping in line with the comprehensive teacher educators’ professional development plans prepared by the Teacher Education Board. This should ensure availability of the necessary number of qualified staff as and when required.**
- 5.3.7. Teacher Educators should develop stronger communication and collaboration links with schools in using the constructivist approach in developing teachers through practice and on-site learning.**
- 5.3.8. Faculties of Education in Universities and the National Institute of Education should design, develop and provide a post graduate degree programme at Masters’ level on Teacher Education to upgrade the level of professional status of teacher educators.**

## **5.4 Professional Development of SLEAS and SLPS Officers**

### **Policy Context**

Professional development is aimed at empowerment of the officers through capacity building and enabling them to develop their potential. The capacity developed should fit with the strategic objectives of the system. The challenging task of developing and modernizing the education system requires mobilizing human resources and building competencies to match the emerging needs.

Two services, SLEAS and SLPS manage the complex system of education with multiple tiers of management at the central, provincial, zonal, divisional and school levels. Good governance demands a wide range of administrative and leadership skills and competencies at all levels, and efficiency and effectiveness of the system will depend on the capability and the quality of the staff. The current unsatisfactory state of affairs pertaining to management and development is attributed to lack of capacity, competencies and professionalism of those responsible for managing the system.

Among a number of policy imperatives that need to be addressed are lack of a well defined and coordinated programme of professional development and career advancement of personnel in the education sector, lack of clarity and coherence in the functions allocated to each level in the decentralized system and role descriptions for each position, shortage of competent and qualified administrators and principals aggravated by long delays in promotions and appointments of officers and principals in acting capacity for long periods and the non availability of a performance appraisal of administrative personnel to identify the development needs demanded by change and reform in the system.

The decentralization of management from the center to the provinces with the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution has resulted in five tiers – central, provincial, zonal, divisional and school levels- creating a need for streamlining roles, responsibilities and accountability within the education system.

On the recommendations of the NEC, the School Based Management was introduced to empower schools and devolve considerable managerial power to schools involving local community increases school effectiveness and performance. This empowerment makes the principal the key person and the new role is emerging out of this reform at the school level.

In order to maximize the utilization of development inputs, it is important to consider the possibility of providing high quality performance development programmes using the distance mode so that a large number can be reached at a relatively low cost. It is important to look into the compatibilities between the content of training and the role functions of the officers and also to ensure the engagement of those undergoing training in positions related to the specific areas of training in this regard. Post training impact assessment exercises provide information relating to performance improvement and the initiatives taken by the officers after training.

### **Issues**

- The process in decentralization in management of education and the empowerment of local institutions would require officials in SLEAS and SLPS at the central, provincial, zonal and school levels to assume new and additional roles requiring a middle range administrative and leadership skills and competencies. This demands an overall development and implementation of a professional development programme.
- The effectiveness of School Based Management depends on the leadership role of the principal and the commitment to prepare the principals for the new role is inadequate.
- Role behaviour of most administrators and principals is bureaucratic and managerial but changes and reforms in the structure and roles of officers and principals demand a leadership role.
- Lack of adequate provisions for professional development of officers who are currently serving as officers and principals to update and develop skills to manage the changes introduced to the system.
- Lack of a well defined and coordinated effort or programme for preparation and continuous career advancement of all officers and principals in education service.
- Lack of a proper scheme to effectively use the professionally developed personnel locally and in foreign institutions to benefit the system.
- Lack of recognition of middle level administration in the school system and their professional growth.

- The need for the total review of the Center for Educational Leadership of the National Institute of Education as the provider of all professional programmes for SLEAS officers and School Principals at national level and the guiding centre for all in-service courses conducted at provincial and zonal levels.
- The training received from time to time appears to be rather ad hoc and sometimes not linked to the current duties. Some have received training not related to their role function.
- A comprehensive and continuously updated data base on administrators and principals is lacking. Hence, their development needs cannot be promptly and appropriately addressed.
- A substantial part of resources apportioned for training gets wasted as some do not return after overseas training.

## Proposals

- 5.4.1. All officers in SLEAS and SLPS who are in positions at all levels of administration that provide leadership for effective implementation of decentralization of management should be provided with professional development opportunities to make them capable of performing their expected roles.**
- 5.4.2. Principals of schools who are in service and those who aspire to be principals should be professionally developed by pre service and in-service courses on Educational Leadership to improve their capacity to meet the management and leadership tasks to perform the new role defined by School Based Management which empowers the school.**
- 5.4.3. Provision should be made available for all those who aspire to positions of leadership at all levels of administration and schools for obtaining a qualification in management and leadership as a prerequisite for all positions of administration.**
- 5.4.4. Continuous career long professional development provision should be organized for all officers at different levels of administration and schools to update knowledge and skills and to improve the capacity to manage the new demands by addressing the competency gap and system needs.**

- 5.4.5.** A radical reconceptualization of courses for preparation and continuous professional growth of educational administrators should be undertaken in design, content and method to enhance the development oriented leadership capacity of all administrators in the sector.
- 5.4.6.** A scheme of proper utilization according to system needs of professionally prepared personnel (SLEAS Officers and Principals) should be developed and followed to make education system benefit by their proper placement.
- 5.4.7.** All positions in the middle management of schools (Deputy Principals and Sectional Heads) should be recognized and provided with management and leadership training at provincial level with guidance from the Centre for Educational Leadership of the National Institute of Education.
- 5.4.8.** Centre for Educational Leadership Development of the National Institute of Education should be strengthened and expanded as the national provider in developing and conducting courses and also providing guidance for all in-service programmes in educational management conducted by provincial authorities.
- 5.4.9.** Selection of candidates for professional development needs to be done on the basis of objective criteria such as performance gaps identified during performance appraisal or specific human resource development needs and demands made by the introduction of new programmes. Training programmes selected by an officer must have direct relevance to the duties and responsibilities performed by the officer or the duties to be assigned to the officer after the training.
- 5.4.10.** The MOE at the national level and the PDEs at the provincial level should undertake performance appraisal of all officers and provide feed back to the NIE on performance gaps and training needs.
- 5.4.11.** A Human Resource Information System (HRIS) should be developed with comprehensive information on all four services and should include data related to training and development of education personnel.
- 5.4.12.** All candidates who go on training abroad for more than three months should enter into a service bond and surety equivalent to the cost of the training.

## 5.5 Services in the Education Sector

At present, there are four structured services in the education sector, viz.

- (i). Sri Lanka Teachers Service (SLTS),
- (ii). Sri Lanka Principals Service (SLPS),
- (iii). Sri Lanka Teacher Educators Service (SLTES) and
- (iv). Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS).

All permanent teachers in government schools are included in the SLTS. All Principals' grade holders belong to the SLPS. Teacher educators serving in the National Colleges of Education other than the attached lecturers are members of the SLTES. SLEAS comprises officers who are responsible for supervisory and administrative work. In principle, these four categories have separate and clearly defined duties and responsibilities. However in practice, the situation is different. There are teachers who perform the duties of school principals, teacher educators and even SLEAS personnel. In the same way, there are principals' grade holders who are serving in the other three areas. Some SLEAS officers work as teachers, sectional heads, deputy principals or principals of schools. In fact, almost all the big and prestigious schools in the country are managed by SLEAS officers. This situation has made the demarcations between different categories rather vague and complicated.

### Sri Lanka Teachers Service (SLTS)

#### Policy Context

Teachers were categorized by their educational/professional qualifications prior to 1995. They were:

- i. Un-certificated teachers
- ii. Service-certificated teachers
- iii. Certificated teachers
- iv. Trained teachers
- v. Graduate teachers
- vi. Trained graduate teachers and
- vii. Selection grade teachers

An un-certificated teacher became a service-certificated teacher after ten years of satisfactory service. But a certificated teacher had to remain in the same category unless he/she obtained a trained teacher's certificate or a degree. In the same way, a trained teacher had to obtain a degree to get into the next teacher category. This situation caused many a teacher to stagnate in the same category and was paid same salary scale until they retired.

In 1995, a Minute was prepared for a structured Teachers Service with five tiers to include all permanent teachers in government schools within a single service enabling to realize the promotional prospects to the upper levels. The five tiers are grouped into three classes as follows:

- i. Class 3 - Grade II
- ii. - Grade I
- iii. Class 2 - Grade II
- iv. - Grade I
- v. Class I

All teachers except 'trainee' teachers in government schools at the time were absorbed into relevant grades (other than Class 1) with effect from 06.10.1994.

The new SLTS provided opportunities for qualified teachers (with professional training and/or degrees) to get promotions to upper Classes/Grades (except Class 1 which required a pass at a written examination in addition to a stringent professional review) with specific number of years of satisfactory service. However, among requirements for eligibility to be considered for promotions other than the service requirement were participation in a specific number of hours of in-service seminars, retraining and comprehensive professional review. The objective was to make the stock of teachers as professionally competent and committed as possible.

The newly established Teacher's Service saw an unexpected increase in teachers' salaries. Class 1 and 2 had their salary scales equated with the salary scales of the all island services. This caused an uproar in the public service which started demanding a revision of their salaries. The government's response was the appointment of the B.C. Perera Commission which proportionately increased the salaries of all categories of government servants other than teachers.

According to the Minute of the SLTS teachers were required to complete a specific number of hours of in-service seminars or a retraining programme and obtain a satisfactory grade at professional reviews to be eligible for promotion to the next grade. Since teachers need to have facilities and opportunities to fulfill these requirements it is the responsibility of the Ministry and the Provincial

Departments of Education to organize logistical arrangements. Unfortunately, this did not happen. Hence the teachers were stagnating in the same grade without being able to get their due promotions. When pressure from Teachers' Unions started to build up against this, the Ministry, instead of providing facilities for the teachers to satisfy the requirements for promotions, suspended the provisions of the Minute that specified the requirements and promoted the teachers automatically nullifying the very objectives of establishing the Teachers Service. Action has to be taken to correct this situation which affects the quality of the teaching force.

This country produces a considerable number of graduates annually. When they pass out of the universities they start agitations for employment in the government sector. Finally the government gives in to their demands and the bulk of them end up as professionally unqualified teachers. The Ministry of Education annually admits about 3,000 AL graduates to be trained as teachers. They invariably have to be accommodated in schools when they complete their training. This dual recruitment causes an excess of teachers. Hence the logical solution would be either to admit university graduates to the colleges of education for training as teachers or upgrade the training programme at the NCOEs to award BEd. Degrees.

There are still a considerable number of professionally unqualified teachers in the system. Although facilities are available to provide professional training they are not fully utilized. There is no mechanism to monitor the professional competency of teachers and ensure that all teachers receive training. Some untrained teachers are reluctant to enter into a Teachers College to undergo institutional training because they are usually deployed to "difficult" stations at the end of the training course. It is necessary to implement an intensive programme to train all untrained within a specified period of time.

The present stock of teachers, especially in the Sinhala medium, is more than what is needed by the system. Yet serious teacher shortages exist in some schools while other schools have an excess. This is the result of unplanned deployment, lack of a firm deployment and transfer policy and intervention by interested parties. Some teachers who have been unfortunate enough to get posted to remote difficult stations serve in such schools for a long period while some serve in prestigious and congenial schools during their entire service life. There is no policy on the number of years a teacher has to serve in one station/district. Hence a transparent and fair transfer policy needs to be implemented without the interference of interested parties.

Performance appraisal of teachers is an imperative to investigate into the gaps between their enacted role and the expected role and suggest fitting measures for professional development. Attempts were made to design and implement a performance appraisal scheme for teachers but were unsuccessful.

Master teachers, who are also called In-Service Advisors (ISAs), are supposed to be practicing teachers with outstanding competencies. Their role is to provide short term in-service teacher training and advise and guide teachers in their day-to-day duties. However, a disturbing trend has emerged to use ISAs as “supervisors” in team inspections and use them for other office duties. This practice has created a wrong concept especially among the ISAs about their role.

### **Issues**

- As the SLTS Minute is not duly followed in the recruitment of teachers, the policy of the recruitment of teachers is in disarray and teachers are denied opportunities to be professionally qualified.
- As per the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution, the teacher recruitment has been devolved to the provinces. But, even at present it is continued as a central function due to lack of a clear policy for teacher recruitment.
- There are imbalances in the deployment of teachers by province as well as by school. Hence, many small schools located in rural and less congenial areas suffer a severe shortage of teachers whereas prestigious schools in urban, congenial areas have a teacher surplus leading to a perpetuating disparity.
- The allocation of teacher resources is not strictly based on the needs of the schools. Therefore, though there is an apparent completion of a staff as regards the number of teachers, there would be teacher deficits in relation to the subject specialties or the medium. This has led some schools to deploy the available teachers to teach a subject that the teacher is not qualified to teach.
- Lack of facilities in remote and rural schools make them less attractive for teachers to assume duty and continue their service in schools located in such areas. As a compensation for this, measures have been taken to motivate teachers serving in such schools but are found to be ineffective.

- Teachers' promotions are not effected according to the SLTS Minute and accordingly facilities are not provided to teachers to satisfy the requirements for promotions.
- A substantial section of teachers in service are not professionally qualified.
- The national teacher transfer policy of 2007 has not been followed and allegedly teacher transfers occur out of the way under external influence. Hence, a transparent and fair transfer policy needs to be implemented without the interference of bureaucratic and political influence.
- In order to ensure quality education, and also to motivate teachers through appropriate rewards, a performance appraisal scheme should be in place. Absence of such a system fails to inspire the teacher force.
- Teachers are not mere 'workers' but are professionals. A professional body such as a Teacher Council helps promote their professionalism. The present system lacks such an independent apex organization and the teachers fail to abide by a code of ethics.
- The present role functions assigned to the In-service Advisors (Teacher Advisors) have diverted them from their expected role of facilitating teachers and the situation has lead to confusion. Hence, their role needs to be clearly defined and carried into effect. Moreover, to perform an advisory or a mentoring role to teachers, the Teacher Advisors should have higher academic and professional qualifications along with a long experience in teaching. Since there is no policy for the recruitment of ISAs (Teacher Advisors) at present, they are selected from those who continue to be in the Teachers' Service without essentially meeting the high standards of calibre.

## Proposals

- 5.5.1. In recruiting teachers, only those with professional teaching qualifications (B.Ed, Post Graduate Diploma in Education or National Diploma in Teaching) should be selected for appointment.**
- 5.5.2. The State should provide courses in teacher education for those who aspire to be teachers to obtain a professional qualification prior to selection as a teacher.**

- 5.5.3. All teachers who are serving at present and do not have a teaching qualification should undergo a course in teacher development provided by the State or any other recognized institution or a university within a specified period of time.**
- 5.5.4. All teaching appointments should be school based and specific according to the vacancies available and allocation of teacher salaries to a school should be based on the required number of the teachers. For this purpose, a cadre for each school should be prepared. However, a teacher should be able to apply and be selected for a vacancy in another school as and when such a vacancy is advertised. Such a selected teacher can be released from the school after a suitable replacement.**
- 5.5.5. State should introduce a Teacher Licensure System to issue a license to accredited teachers and bar any person to practice as a teacher teaching children in schools without a valid professional qualification.**
- 5.5.6. General Education Council, a professional body similar to Bar Association in the legal profession or Medical Council in the medical profession should be established and the Council should act as the “Licensure Authority” that will have the authority to issue a license to all qualified teachers and other personnel in both public and private schools.**
- 5.5.7. The provision in the Sri Lanka Teachers Service Minutes with regard to the requirements for promotions should be strictly adhered to so that those who deserve, and competent and committed will be able to get promotions. A scheme for merit promotions also should be introduced based on performance appraisal.**
- 5.5.8. A Unit in the Ministry of Education and a Unit in each Provincial Department of Education should be established to oversee and monitor professional growth and development and performance appraisal of teachers to ensure their timely implementation so that teachers will have adequate opportunities to complete the requirements for promotions.**
- 5.5.9. Every teacher should sign an annual contract or work agreement with the principal of the school streamlining responsibilities and accountability. A portfolio assessment based on performance**

appraisal and self-reflected evaluation needs to be used for salary increments, promotions, incentives and rewards.

- 5.5.10. An accredited committee of professional educators representing teachers, teacher educators and educational administrators appointed by HE the President may recommend the grant of annual honorary awards to teachers of excellence who have reached eminence in the profession and maintained high standards of conduct and professional rectitude.
- 5.5.11. All transfers of teachers should be implemented strictly adhering to the National Teacher Transfer Policy given in Circular No. 2007/20 dated 13. 12. 2007 issued by the Ministry of Education without political or other external influence.
- 5.5.12. A special procedure/scheme should be developed to transfer teachers to small schools, by attaching teachers in selected subjects to two or more schools in neighboring communities and using multigrade teaching to make optimal use of the available number of teachers.
- 5.5.13. Teachers serving in difficult areas should be offered financial incentives, accommodation and the service assessed on measurable criteria should be considered for promotions, rewards and scholarships.
- 5.5.14. Planning process in the Ministry as well as the Provinces must be able to identify the number of teachers required with respect to area of specialization by each Educational Division and take adequate measures to ensure that the required teachers are selected and posted to needy schools.
- 5.5.15. The Teachers Service should comprise four classes and six tiers as follows.
- |      |             |   |          |
|------|-------------|---|----------|
| i.   | Class 3     | - | Grade II |
| ii.  |             | - | Grade I  |
| iii. | Class 2     | - | Grade II |
| iv.  |             | - | Grade I  |
| v.   | Class I     |   |          |
| vi.  | Super Class |   |          |
- 5.5.16. As the Teacher Advisers (TAs) are expected to have high academic and professional qualifications with good experience, they should be selected from Class I of SLTS and based at the Education

**Divisions to assume the role of a mentor or teacher facilitator to implement the curriculum effectively. On selection as TAs they should be promoted to Super Class SLTS.**

- 5.5.17. A professional development certificate programme (6 months, 3 months institutional and 3 months onsite) based on the role of teacher advisors should be developed and provided by NIE and made a pre-requisite for all aspiring to be teacher advisors.**

## **Sri Lanka Principals Service (SLPS)**

### **Policy Context**

During the British period heads of schools were generally identified as Head Masters and the deputy head as the Senior Teacher. Later heads and deputy heads of secondary schools were called Principals and Vice Principals.

By 1971 the seven categories of school heads were:

- Selection Grade Principals
- Special (Super) Grade Principals
- Grade I Principals
- Grade II Principals
- Grade III Principals
- Grade IV Principals
- Grade V Principals

(Grade I and Grade II Head Masters were re-named as Principals Grade IV and Grade V)

In addition there were three categories of Special Posts (Graders I, II and III) for deputy principals. Grades I and II Special Post holders were appointed as deputy principals of large secondary schools while Grade III Special Post holders were eligible to be appointed as deputy principals of other secondary schools.

When the Sri Lanka Education Service was established on 15.10.1971 the principals from Grade II and above were absorbed into it. The other three grades (principals grade III, IV and V) were reorganized into a Sri Lanka Principals Service with effect from 01.01. 1985 on recommendations of the Dayaratne Committee. This Service consisted of three tiers Class I, Class II and Class III.

At present the SLPS is made up of four tiers, i.e. three classes with Class II divided into two grades. The total cadre is 16,512.

The appointments and promotions to the respective classes and grades and deployment are made as per the Minute of the Sri Lanka Principals Service published by the Gazette Notification No. 1086/26 of 02 July 1999.

Posts of Principal, Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal of Schools will normally be held by the officers of the SLPS and the officers of the SLEAS. The Cabinet of Ministers however, reserves the right to appoint any Public Officer to any of the posts of Principal, Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal of Schools.

### **Issues**

- It is an accepted fact that the principal of a school is the most important person for the proper management and development of the school. Hence, it is important to select as principals, the persons with such qualities and skills as knowledge, leadership, proficiency, resourcefulness, foresight and commitment and adequate training in management and leadership. However, less attention is paid to these aspects by authorities in appointing principals.
- Many newly appointed principals start their work without any understanding of their roles or any training in school management. The lack of capacity of the school principals to achieve school effectiveness has been attributed to lack of competencies and professionalism of those responsible for managing schools.
- In many instances a suitable replacement is not sent when a school principal retires or is transferred. In such instances, when a suitable grade holder is not available in the school, one of the assistant teachers is entrusted with the responsibility of acting as the principal. Shortage of qualified school principals has compelled many to work in an acting capacity.
- Appointment of personnel as school principals on grounds of political or personnel favoritism
- Non availability of systems for performance measurement, appraisal and rewarding of personnel

- Selection involves choosing the right candidates as per role specification given and the criteria stipulated in the selection procedure adopted by the Minutes of the SLPS.
- The proficiency examinations relevant to SLPS are not held regularly and on time denying the target groups the opportunity to get their promotions. The officers who are responsible for organizing the examinations do not take sufficient interest to coordinate with the Commissioner General of Examinations to hold these examinations regularly.
- The competitive examinations for recruitment to and promotions in the service have not been held regularly for a number of years. In some instances results are not released even after holding interviews for promotions. These lapses have created a large number of vacancies in the SLPS cadre.
- The Principals posts in most of the 1AB schools are reserved for SLEAS personnel. Therefore the principals post holders feel that they are denied the opportunity to manage a more prestigious school thereby belittling their position at least by inference.

### Proposals

- 5.5.18. All school principal positions should be occupied by those in SLPS. However a limited number of principals' positions should be made available for a fixed period of time to fulfil the requirement of school management experience for SLEAS officers.**
- 5.5.19. All prospective candidates for position of principal in primary and secondary schools should complete a Post Graduate Diploma in School Management and Diploma in School Management or Primary School Management respectively or equivalent qualification in Educational Management and Leadership prior to selection. This will come into effect by 2015.**
- 5.5.20. The prospective candidates who have fulfilled the qualifications in 5.5.19 for principalship should be deployed to a school at least three months prior to the retirement or transfer of the incumbent principal, so that smooth transfer of responsibility can be effected.**

- 5.5.21. **If appointment of an acting principal is unavoidable under any circumstance, such an appointee selected as a principal should be a person with the necessary qualifications and the acting period should not exceed six months.**
- 5.5.22. **Procedures laid down in the SLPS Minute for the promotion of principals should be adhered to without any irregularities caused by political or other extraneous influencing forces.**
- 5.5.23. **Principals serving at present who do not have education management qualifications should be required to follow a Certificate in Educational Management or the Post Graduate Diploma in School Management.**
- 5.5.24. **Performance appraisal scheme should be implemented annually and its outcome should be considered for further professional development, salary increments, promotions and other rewards such as scholarships and study tours.**
- 5.5.25. **An Accredited Council of Professional Educators appointed by HE the President working on teacher awards, should recommend and grant annual honorary awards to principals from all provinces who have excelled in providing excellent leadership.**
- 5.5.26. **The positions of deputy principals should always be filled by a member of the SLPS. They should possess a Post Graduate Diploma in Educational Management and should be paid a reasonable allowance.**
- 5.5.27. **The recruitment of principals should be made strictly on criteria set out in the Minute of the SLPS on the provision that the Minute is amended on requirement.**
- 5.5.28. **The Competitive Examinations for appointments and Efficiency Bar Examinations should be regularly held for those who are eligible to sit them so that the appointments and promotions are not unduly delayed.**
- 5.5.29. **A pool of personnel with necessary qualifications for the posts of principals in respective classes in the SLPS should be maintained to enable the authorities to fill the vacancies promptly.**

## Sri Lanka Teacher Educators Service (SLTES)

### Policy Context

The position of Teacher Educator has changed professional status and nomenclature several times during last few decades. Before Training Colleges were taken over by the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges Act No.5 of 1960, the teaching staff of Training Colleges were designated as Training Masters. After the takeover with the change of the concept of teacher training to teacher education, the Colleges were renamed as Teachers' Colleges and Training Masters came to be known as lecturers. The two Specialist Training Colleges that functioned from beginning as government colleges used the designation 'lecturer' and they were appointed by the Public Service Commission and enjoyed a higher status than the staff of other Training Colleges. Lecturers who were serving in Teacher Colleges were absorbed into the newly formed Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS) with effect from 01.01.1985. Colleges of Education were started in 1986 by the Colleges of Education Act No.30 of 1986 and a three year pre-service initial Diploma in Teaching course was started.

To solve a number of service problems, a new service named Sri Lanka Teacher Educator Service (SLTES) was established with effect from 01.01.1995. Lecturers who had permanent position in Colleges of Education and Teachers Colleges were absorbed into SLTES and subsequently a Teacher Educator Service comprising three classes with four tiers was established as given below.

Teacher Educator Service (20.06.2009)

Class	Cadre	In service	Vacant positions
1	17	09	08
2-1	48	14	34
2-2	316	119	197
3	742	443	299
<b>Total</b>	<b>1123</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>538</b>

Source : MOE

The total number of positions in the approved cadre is 1123 and at present, the personnel in service fill less than 50% of the total cadre. The limited number of cadre positions in Class 1 and Class 2-1 are taken by administrators and the upward mobility of teacher educators is blocked. This has led to frustration and demotivation among most of the teacher educators.

The academic and professional qualifications of teacher educators in Colleges of Education as at present are as follows.

▪ Ph.D	2
▪ Degree + Diploma + Masters in Education	285
▪ Degree and Masters in Education	25
▪ Degree and Diploma	117
▪ Degree only	45
▪ Other	32
	-----
	506

The above table shows that there are many teacher educators who have no post graduate degree in education, the minimum qualification to serve as an educator of teachers. This minimum level becomes more important when Colleges of Education start providing B.Ed degree programmes in the future.

### Issues

- Continuing vacant positions amounting to nearly 50% and the non availability of prospective candidates who have the necessary level of qualifications in subjects such as Physical Education, Technical Subjects and English.
- Employment of teachers from schools on secondment basis and inadequacy of their qualifications to serve as teacher educators.
- Absence of a standard scheme of performance appraisal to identify gaps in performance and professional needs to be used as an information base for providing professional development for teacher educators.
- Upward career mobility in the service is restricted as cadre positions in Class 1 and Class 2-1 are limited and they are occupied by those holding administrative positions in Colleges of Education.
- The remuneration for teacher educators is low, compared to that of certain other professionals with comparable entry qualifications. It is not adequate and competitive to attract qualified persons to the service and to retain them in service.

## **Policy Proposals**

- 5.5.30. Teacher Educators should be selected according to the qualifications stipulated in the Sri Lanka Teacher Educators Minute, including academic qualifications, teaching competence, experience in the relevant field, professional commitment and personal qualities.**
- 5.5.31. A performance appraisal scheme as a process of identifying, measuring and developing performance, should be implemented regularly and a portfolio for every Teacher Educator should be maintained.**
- 5.5.32. A Performance Appraisal scheme should be implemented to assess the performance of teacher educators by identifying and measuring levels of performance and to be used in evaluations for promotion and selection for further professional development, local and foreign scholarships and study tours.**
- 5.5.33. Teacher Educators who complete study programmes successfully should work in the respective areas of specialization in institutions where their services are required.**
- 5.5.34. Teacher Educators should be required to attain an accepted level of proficiency in English Language for promotion to higher classes in the service.**
- 5.5.35. Research on Teacher Development and the process of learning and teaching and publications as part of their professional advancement should be given credit for salary increments, promotions, scholarships and other awards.**
- 5.5.36. A clear career path and an attractive salary scale for teacher educators should be considered for attracting competent educationists of a high caliber to the teacher educator service.**
- 5.5.37. All joining the service should be exposed to a short term (3 months) post graduate certificate programme in teacher education. This certificate programme should be designed, developed and provided by the National Institute of Education.**
- 5.5.38. Teacher Educators who have been recruited with lesser qualifications due to lack of qualified personnel, especially in subject areas such as physical education, technical subjects and**

English should be given the opportunity to follow a degree and those with a degree only to obtain a post graduate degree in education.

- 5.5.39. The cadre and class structure should be revised to increase the number of positions in Class 1 and Class 2-1 to avoid the limitations on upward mobility of teacher educators. Those who will perform in administrative positions should be given an appropriate allowance depending on the positions occupied.

## Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS)

### Policy Context

With the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction in 1869 the post of “school inspector” came into being. To begin with there were only three officers for the whole country. Gradually, with the expansion of the school system, the number as well as their categories increased. By 1966 the cadre of administrators in education had expanded to include :

- Directors of Education
- Education Officers
- District Inspectors (Education Advisors)
- School Inspectors

In 1973 regulations were brought to change designation in the education system. The new designations were;

- Director General of Education
- Deputy Director General of Education
- Director/Regional Director of Education
- Chief Education Officer
- Education Officer and
- Circuit Education Officer

Although SLEAS officers are using different designations at present still the legally valid ones are the designations mentioned above.

In 1971 a structured service called “The Sri Lanka Education Service” (SLES) was formed with effect from 15.10.1971. This service consisted of five classes. All staff officers in the Ministry of Education, Regional Departments of Education,

Education Offices, Department of Education Publications, Department of Examinations and other educational institutes under the Ministry of Education were absorbed into the new service. The Classes from III to V included two categories of officers, viz. general cadre and special cadre.

The five tier structure of the SLES was restructured to form the Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS) in 1986 with effect from 01.01.1985. The new service had three classes similar to the all island services and had the same salary scales. All members of SLES, Grade I Special Post holders, Planning Officers and lecturers of Teachers Colleges from Grade III and above were absorbed into SLEAS. Later, Grade II Special Post holders were also absorbed.

After the general elections of 1978 178 persons, mostly teachers were promoted to the SLEAS by Cabinet paper on the pretext that they were politically victimized. 1978 saw another tragedy. A large number of school principals were evicted from their places of work and their positions were usurped by teachers who had political patronage. Out of these, those who were serving as acting principals in secondary schools were awarded promotions to Class V of the SLEAS with effect from 21.07.1982. These moves were taken as precedents by successive governments and large numbers of politically oriented teachers have come into the SLEAS. To make the situation worse all these appointments have been backdated to 21.07.1982, as a result officers who came into the service through proper channels even prior to the Cabinet appointments had become juniors in service.

The SLEAS Minute earlier contained a provision to hold a competitive examination to promote officers from Class III to Class II. This examination was held only once in 1987. As a system of automatic promotions from Class III to Class II was made effective from 1988, the competitive examination was discontinued. It is ironical that those who passed the competitive examination became junior to those who failed as automatic promotions were made effective from date of promotions by the examination.

### **Issues**

- The lack of capacity of the education management system to achieve educational goals efficiently and effectively is attributed to poor management and leadership practices and also to lack of competencies and professionalism on the part of the management personnel. The system is suffering from a chronic apathy in respect of management failing ever

to prepare a seniority list to decide on promotions and filling the vacancies due to irregular appointments and promotions.

- Most of the officers managing vital positions at all levels do not seem to have a clear understanding of their role functions and duties. Their knowledge of administrative regulations and procedures is minimal.
- Shortage of officials with administrative and leadership competencies at higher levels of education management which has been aggravated due to long delays in promotions.
- A large number of officers who serve in acting capacity for long periods in senior administration positions at the Ministry of Education and Provincial and Institutional levels have affected the quality of management in education.
- Examinations for recruitment and promotions as given in the SLEAS Minute are not held regularly affecting timely promotions and also leading to improper promotions in the service.
- Lack of a Human Resource Information System (HRIS) providing an updated information base of SLEAS officers is a barrier for informed decision making with regard to all personnel in the service.
- Lack of a performance appraisal system for officers in the SLEAS has affected obtaining information on performance gaps and professional development needs for selection for training, proper placement and rewarding of personnel.

### Policy Proposals

- 5.5.40. Conforming to the Sri Lanka Educational Administrators Service (SLEAS) Minute, a comprehensive framework should be developed for decision making pertaining to recruitment, selection, placement, performance appraisal, promotion and professional development of SLEAS officers. It may be amended as and when necessary.**
- 5.5.41. A Human Recourse Information System (HRIS) of SLEAS officers should be developed to take informed decisions and improve management and leadership capacity of the officers of the service.**

- 5.5.42.** The principle of merit based recruitment and performance based promotion should be strictly enforced and no recruitment outside the approved cadre should be made.
- 5.5.43.** There should be role definitions and specifications for each position in the service which will clarify the duties and responsibilities, relevant performance indicators and the qualification and experience required for effective performance of tasks.
- 5.5.44.** Performance of all staff in the SLEAS service should be appraised at regular intervals. Feedback must be given and good performance must be recognized and rewarded.
- 5.5.45.** Promotions of officers in SLEAS should be linked for acquiring higher professional qualifications relevant to their roles, performance appraisal and accommodating new thinking so that promotions are earned rather than given automatically on seniority.
- 5.5.46.** Transfers of SLEAS officers should be free from external interference, political or otherwise, and be effected through the operation of a transfer policy strictly following an agreed framework.
- 5.5.47.** A clear placement procedure should be adopted preventing placing personnel in an acting capacity without conveying to the person, the placement criteria, role of the position, conditions governing the probation period, supervision authority, performance assessment and legal implications.
- 5.5.48.** Selection for Professional Development of personnel in SLEAS should be done on the basis of objective criteria such as performance gaps and specific staff development needs identified by needs of units and later reviewed by a Selection Committee. Further, the professional development programme chosen must have direct relevance to the duties and responsibilities currently performed and those that are likely to be assigned in the future.

# CHAPTER 6

<b>EDUCATION STANDARDS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE</b>	
•	Quality Assurance
•	Accountability
•	The Scope
•	Standards and Quality Assurance Council



## EDUCATION STANDARDS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

### **Policy Context**

### **Quality Assurance**

Quality assurance in the context of General Education is the systematic review of inputs, process and outputs to ensure the prescribed standards of education in achieving national goals and guiding principles formulated by the National Education Commission (NEC).

Accreditation is a fundamental mechanism of Quality Assurance. Hence, there is a need for an accreditation mechanism to identify institutions and programmes meeting quality standards. This will also help identify and remedy the institutions and programmes that do not meet such standards.

All reforms in education have had as their basic purpose the improvement of all or some aspects of education, such as the coverage of the provision of education through schooling, school curriculum, evaluation and examination system and improvement of the teaching service. The key word 'improvement' has a qualitative implication as regards standards in all aspects related to the provision. The 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment of 1987 to the Constitution of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka enshrines in it, the concept of ensuring standards as a function of the National Ministry of Education. Thus, there is a constitutional obligation of ensuring standards or more broadly Quality Assurance by the Ministry of Education on services provided from public funds.

Although the maintenance of standards to assure quality is implied in the activities of the Ministry of Education and its agencies, particularly through the school curriculum, textbooks, learning-teaching materials, and assessment and evaluation, there is no legislative basis for Quality Assurance by way of a direct provision in the current Education Ordinance.

### **Policy Framework**

The overall issue is that there has been neither a definitive attempt yet to identify the parameters of quality, nor a definitive mechanism to ensure the standard of

the quality of education provision. A policy framework in this regard should essentially consist of three components:

- Internal Evaluation in the schools and by the schools
- External Evaluation of the schools by outsiders
- National Evaluations

Evaluation is a process of determining to what extent the educational objectives are realized. It is a widely accepted fact that quality improvement cannot be steered solely from outside. It is a must to make the staff familiar with the background philosophy and practices of evaluation before any action is carried out. Self- and peer evaluations, well-structured and timed discussions and reflections are strategically important in internal evaluation. The external evaluators are critical friends and helpers who can identify both potential strengths and flaws. Their ultimate intention is to collect information that helps the evaluated institution to improve the quality of work and assist the authorities to focus their support and make decisions on relevant issues. The purpose of national evaluations is to ensure that objectives, goals, and standards of education expressed in legislation, national curricula, statutes and regulations are achieved.

The term evaluation, internal as well as external, refers to a comprehensive, continuous process to monitor the various aspects of the schools or any institution. It serves two basic purposes - accountability and development of an organization or an individual.

### **Accountability**

Based on the policy formulated by the NEC, competency based curricula are designed and developed by the National Institute of Education (NIE). The Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Provincial Ministries of Education are accountable for proper implementation of the curriculum in schools. Although education in Sri Lanka is a decentralized subject at the provincial level under the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, the accountability in ensuring standards is vested in the Central Authority. The Ministry of Education which implements the State education policy is accountable to the public at national level, while Provincial Authorities are accountable at provincial level.

Focus is drawn to four basic aspects of quality:

1. The assumptions of a basic framework relating to the provision of education

2. The definition of the goals of education from which the constituents of quality have to be derived
3. The identification of the parameters of quality at different levels of education in terms of inputs, process, outputs and outcomes and modes of provision, such as all academic and non academic personnel, curriculum, learning-teaching materials, evaluation process and all infrastructural needs
4. The institution of machinery with adequate powers for quality assurance and accreditation throughout the system of education

### **The Scope**

The number of aspects to be covered under Education Standards and Quality Assurance can vary from time to time. Under the current context the following are to be included:

1. Vision and mission based on Philosophy of Education and development needs of the country
2. Teaching and learning for expected outcomes for different levels of education
3. Curriculum content and methodology
4. Teaching and learning material including text books, teacher guides and other supplementary material
5. Academic and non academic personnel
6. Leadership and management
7. Assessment of student performance
8. Performance assessment of academic and non academic personnel of the system
9. Provision of infrastructural needs
10. Provision of facilities for sports and other co-curricular activities
11. School welfare activities
12. Community involvement
13. Internal and external evaluation

### **Standards and Quality Assurance Council**

The need of a mandated body for Quality Assurance was felt at the beginning of the present decade and as a result a Quality Assurance Unit was started at the Ministry of Education in 2001 with the approval of the Cabinet. In spite of its establishment, the Unit could not fulfil its mandate due to dearth of staff and

overlapping of functions caused by poor coordination. Thus, an authoritative body with powers and capacity to assure quality in education in a pervasive manner has emerged as a timely need.

### Issues

- Lack of a legislative basis for educational standards for quality assurance and accreditation in the current education law
- Lack of a definitive attempt to develop a framework and identify parameters of quality or a definitive mechanism to ensure standards of quality of education
- Partial conception of quality has restricted the quality assessment to assessment of outputs only by examinations overlooking the other important areas such as quality of human and physical inputs and their performance, provision and utilization of infrastructure and technology and the evolution of institutions as a whole in achieving accepted quality standards involving the institutional, external and self-evaluation
- Lack of individual and collective accountability of all stakeholders
- Absence of an authorized body to undertake evaluation, quality assurance and accreditation of educational institutions and programmes on set standards at the national level with proper coordination

### Proposals

- 6.1 **There should be total quality assurance by developing and maintaining quality standards in inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes of general education.**
- 6.2 **Quality standard of human inputs should be decided by the competencies needed to perform the assigned and intended tasks and duties efficiently and effectively. In this respect, the following points are emphasized.**
  - **Academic personnel such as teachers, principals, teacher advisors, teacher educators and all categories of education officers who are directly involved in the implementation of school curriculum should possess the essential competencies.**

- Same policy and procedure should be followed for all other non-academic personnel providing various support services in the education system in their own fields.
  - In all recruitments, competencies related to role specifications and aptitudes should be considered, in addition to academic qualifications.
  - Competency based induction and in-service education or training should be provided to all personnel in the education system in their related fields in a systematic continuous process.
- 6.3 The curriculum, syllabuses, teacher guides and other teacher instructional material, textbooks and materials such as library books, computers, maps, chemicals, science equipment and other teaching learning materials used, should conform to prescribed specifications.
- 6.4 Infrastructural needs such as all kinds of school buildings, furniture, water and sanitary services, electricity supply, communication equipment and timeliness and adequacy in the provision of funds should conform to prescribed standard specifications.
- 6.5 The process of management from the school level up to MOE level should be strengthened for the prevention of shortcomings and failures, rather than their detection with feed-forward through professional development and awareness rather than feed-back after detection.
- 6.6 Management for quality assurance should be considered as an ever revolving cycle in search of excellence, in respect of all components such as planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feed-back in the education process.
- 6.7 Evaluation of all educational institutions from school level up to the level of the Ministry of Education including other related agencies at the national level should be considered as an integral component of the management cycle. Evaluation should be continuous and should include formative, diagnostic and summative components.
- 6.8 Standards based quality indicators and appropriate evaluation instruments should be developed and used to measure the achievement of the expected objectives of the respective institutions.
- 6.9 Evaluation of learning-teaching and student performance should be considered as an important integral part of curriculum management

from classroom level up to the national level. It should also be a continuous process covering formative, diagnostic and summative components.

- 6.10 All evaluations of general education inclusive of public examinations and School Based Assessment, should be in conformity with the prescribed quality standards.
- 6.11 Performance of all categories of academic and non-academic personnel of the system from the school level up to the MOE level covering all other institutions of the system (NIE, NETS, EPD, NCOEs and TCs) should be evaluated by using quality standards based evaluation instruments.
- 6.12 Levels of performances revealed through continuous evaluations should be utilized in deciding human resource development needs, salary increments, promotions and awards.
- 6.13 Best practices of students, teachers, principals, schools, officers and institutions should be rewarded preferably at the national level and identified as benchmarks for the respective areas.
- 6.14 Evaluation approach for quality assurance in schools should be two-pronged - internal evaluation by schools, and external evaluation by relevant accredited agencies and should be considered complementary.
- 6.15 Internal evaluation at the school level should be considered as the most important, since only the school can comprehensively and continually engage in evaluation, by using evaluation guidelines of the Standard and Quality Assurance Council (SQAC) described in the sequel.
- 6.16 External evaluation conducted by the MOE and provinces up to zonal/divisional level should be relevant to the evaluation policy and guidelines introduced by the SQAC.
- 6.17 Information collected through internal evaluation by schools and external evaluations by teams of officers should be considered as complementary.
- 6.18 Outputs of the process of education should be the achievement of competencies by learners through school curricular and co-curricular activities.

- 6.19 Outcome of the process of education should be the achievement of national goals and objectives.

**Standards and Quality Assurance Council**

- 6.20 To implement standards and quality assurance functions, there shall be established a separate independent body designated as 'Standards and Quality Assurance Council' (SQAC) empowered under the purview of the Hon. Minister of Education.

Powers of the SQAC

- 6.20.1 The SQAC shall have the following powers:

- (a) to develop and maintain quality standards in all aspects of the general education system based on NEC policy
- (b) to monitor and evaluate the functions of all institutions and schools under the purview of the MOE according to Standards and Quality Assurance procedures laid down by the SQAC
- (c) to establish QA units in the Provincial Ministries, with due concurrence
- (d) to confer the status and legitimacy for programmes and institutions through accreditation
- (e) to erect, equip and maintain for the purposes of the SQAC, libraries and to provide other services necessary for research and studies in education
- (f) to enter into agreements for co-operation with educational or other institutions, whether in Sri Lanka or abroad, having objects wholly or partly similar to those of the SQAC, for the exchange of personnel and students and generally for such purposes as may be conducive to their common objects
- (g) to levy fees or charges for any service rendered by the SQAC
- (h) to make rules in respect of the management of the affairs of the SQAC
- (i) to do all such other acts or things which in the opinion of the SQAC are necessary for, or conducive or incidental to, the attainment of its objects.

- 6.20.2 Authority regarding evaluation of schools shall be delegated to the respective Provincial Departments of

Education. However, the SQAC may conduct sample and special evaluations for validation and standardization.

- 6.20.3 The Provincial Quality Assurance Units should report to the SQAC and will take directions from the SQAC channeled through the Provincial Ministries.
- 6.20.4 The parameters and their standards in respect of quality assurance should be formulated and updated from time to time by the SQAC at the request of the NEC or on its own subject to the approval of the NEC.

#### The Structure of the SQAC

- 6.20.5 The SQAC shall have as its Chairman the Secretary of the Ministry of Education, a Director General as the Chief Executive Officer and will have a total membership not exceeding 16, with ex-officio members representing the main agencies of the Ministry and other members with eminence in their fields, appointed by the Minister for a period of 5 years. The SQAC is responsible to the Minister but required to report to the Parliament through an annual report.
- 6.20.6 The responsibilities for compliance with the Quality Assurance provisions should, as in terms of administration requirements, lie with the heads of MOE, Educational Agencies, Divisions, Departments and Schools coming within the purview of the Ministry of Education.

#### Functions of the SQAC

- 6.20.7 The monitoring and enforcing of Quality Assurance (QA) provisions shall be the main function of the Standards and Quality Assurance Council (SQAC). The specific functions include:
- (a). Preparation and development of standards according to needs relating to all human resource inputs of the system
  - (b). Preparation and development of standards for curriculum content, curricular material including syllabuses, teacher instructional guides, textbooks, equipment, chemicals,

- computers, maps, library books and other equipment and materials
- (c). Preparation and development of standards for all inputs including buildings, furniture and other infrastructural facilities
  - (d). Preparation and development of specifications and criteria which consist of indicators and evaluation instruments as guidelines to decide standards and to collect information regarding prevailing strengths, weaknesses and problems of the school system and other allied agencies, through internal evaluation conducted with the school, and through external evaluation conducted by teams of officers from the Ministry, and Provincial, Zonal and Divisional Offices
  - (e). Publication of guidelines to introduce all above standards and functions stated under 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 should be utilized in internal and external evaluations
  - (f). Initiate action for provision of standards, specifications and evaluation procedures for professional development of all personnel in general education
  - (g). Preparation of and publication of an annual report for dissemination to all stakeholders
  - (h). Submission of special reports regarding common island wide issues, where remedial measures have to be taken under national education policy to NEC through the Minister
  - (i). Preparation and development of standards and specification criteria for accreditation

**Responsibilities of the Provincial Authorities**

- 6.20.8. Provincial authorities should be responsible for the implementation of all functions relating to Standards and Quality Assurance. They are:
- (a) Establishment of a Provincial Standard and Quality Assurance Unit in each province
  - (b) Establishment of a Zonal Standard and Quality Assurance Unit in each zone
  - (c) The Provincial Director by virtue of his office shall be accountable to the SQAC for all Quality Assurance matters

- (d) Zonal Director shall conduct external evaluation of schools with divisional level officers by following guidelines of the SQAC to ensure proper management. Further, according to given circular instructions schools shall submit reports to Zonal Office at the end of every six months, regarding strengths, weaknesses, applied solutions and weaknesses without solutions.
- (e) An assigned Additional Zonal Director and officers after studying six month reports of schools and external evaluation reports of the division shall prepare an annual report regarding strengths weakness and applying solutions for weakness through Zonal in service training programmes and weakness not attended within the capacity of Zones shall submit to an assigned Additional Provincial Director of Standard and Quality Assurance. A copy of this annual report shall be submitted to the Provincial Standard and Quality Assurance Director.
- (f) Additional Provincial Director of the Standards and Quality Assurance Unit after studying such reports submitted by all Zones of the province, shall prepare and submit an annual report by following circular instructions of the MOE, to the SQAC
- (g) Relevant officers of the Zonal and Provincial education offices should conduct a complete external evaluation of all schools at least once in three years, following a common strategic plan prepared by them
- (h) In addition to the general annual report submitted to SQAC, the Provincial Director of Education shall prepare a special Accreditation Report to be published by the Provincial Office, with the approval of SQAC, for the awareness of public and as an encouragement for schools. Best practices relating to students, teachers, principals, and officers should be included in this report as exemplars for encouragement
- (i) The Provincial Standard and Quality Assurance Director shall prepare a six month report to the SQAC covering the findings of zones, and monthly reports regarding his facilitation and guidance work in the district
- (j) The SQAC shall provide all guidance through instructions to provinces, zones, divisions and schools regarding maintenance of standards and quality assurance

# CHAPTER 7

## **RESOURCE PROVISION AND FUNDING EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA**

•	Sources of School Revenues
•	Disparity and Inequities in Distribution of Resources
•	Transparency in Public Spending
•	Linkage between Investment and Outcomes
•	Coordination of Finance Inputs



## RESOURCE PROVISION AND FUNDING EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA

### Policy Context

Although the country has been able to achieve significant achievements in education, the prevailing statistics show that, when compared to the other developing countries, the education expenditure is low. Table 1 depicts the education expenditure as a percentage of GDP and total government expenditure while Table 2 shows the education expenditure as distributed within the sector.

**Table 1: Education Expenditure as a percentage of GDP and Total Government Expenditure (2000-2008)**

Year	Education expenditure as a % of GDP	Education expenditure as a % of total government expenditure
2000	2.50	9.1
2001	2.20	8.20
2002	2.35	9.23
2003	2.22	9.37
2004	2.09	8.90
2005	2.60	9.20
2006	2.80	9.80
2007	2.10	7.89
2008	2.83	7.46

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka

**Table 2: Expenditure on Education : 2007-2009**

Ministry / Agency	2007 Actual Exp. Rs. Million			2008 Est. Rs. Million			2009 Est. Rs. Million		
	Rec	Cap	Total	Rec	Cap	Total	Rec	Cap	Total
Ministry of Education (including National Institute of Education)	19,263.757	7,966.619	<b>27,230.376</b>	19,285.570	5,165.090	<b>24,450.660</b>	21,166.132	4,503.550	<b>25,669.682</b>
Department of Examinations	1,026.953	39.220	<b>1,066.173</b>	1,527.597	59.300	<b>1,586.897</b>	1,450.250	65.000	<b>1,515.250</b>
Department of Education Publications	18.049	7.630	<b>25.679</b>	19.332	43.223	<b>62.555</b>	23.032	51.300	<b>74.332</b>
Provinces	45,790.000	1,205.000	<b>46,995.000</b>	57,629.140	9,041.800	<b>66,670.940</b>	59,737.760	3,492.550	<b>63,230.310</b>
Total: General Education	<b>66,098.759</b>	<b>9,218.469</b>	<b>75,317.228</b>	<b>78,461.639</b>	<b>14,309.413</b>	<b>92,771.052</b>	<b>82,377.174</b>	<b>8,112.400</b>	<b>90,489.574</b>

Source: Ministry of Finance and Planning (2009) *Budget Estimates - 2009*; Finance Commission (2009) *Financial Statements - 2009*

As **Table 1** shows, the government’s expenditure on education fluctuates and during recent years it has decreased, while as a percentage of GDP, it has increased during 2006 and 2008, compared to the previous years. In spite of the impressive achievements in the education sector, by international standards Sri Lanka has spent low amounts on education.

Assessing expenditure on primary and secondary education separately has been difficult due to the way that the school system has been organized. Until 1999, expenditure on education was not computed separately for primary and secondary education. Since 2000, the budget allocation has included separate headings for primary and secondary education (MFP, 2001). However, in 2000, recurrent public education expenditure was approximately thirty-eight per cent on primary education, fifty-three per cent on secondary education and nine per cent on higher education (MFP, 2000).

The key sources of funding for education can be identified in three main categories. They are (i) government’s consolidated funds, (ii) multi-lateral and bi-lateral development partners’ funds & INGOs/LNGOs financial assistance and (iii) household investments. Schools generate a nominal fund through school facilities fees and a significant budget through School Development Societies.

**Sources of School Revenues**

Figure 1 below illustrates Sources of School Revenues.

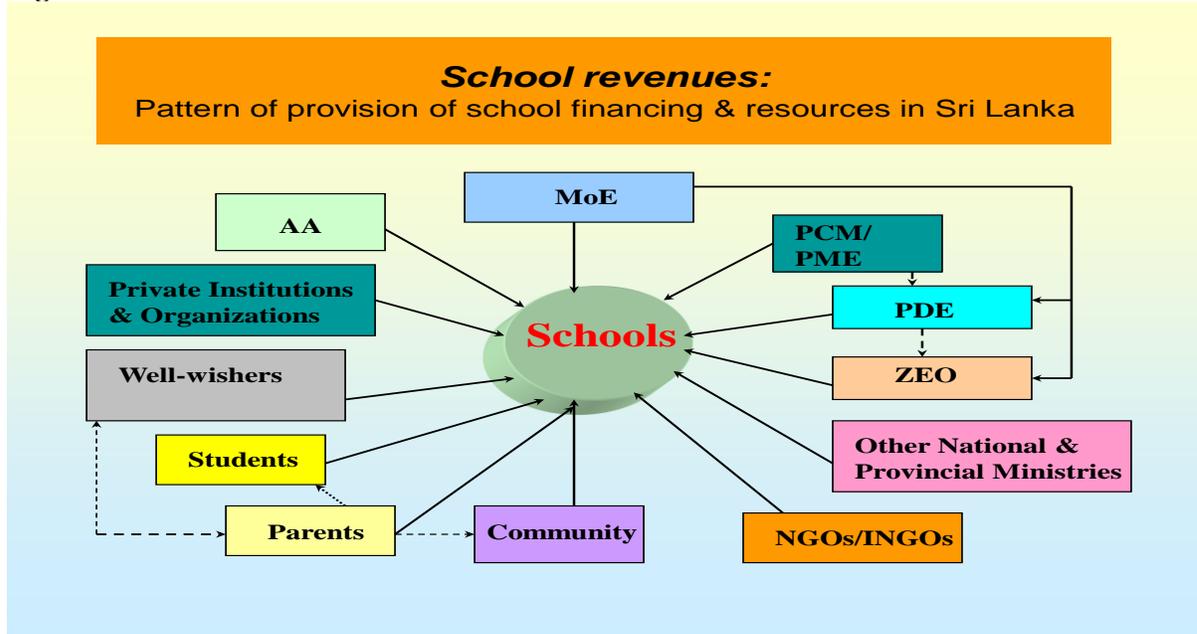


Figure 1: Sources of school revenues: pattern of provision of school financing and resources in Sri Lanka

Source: Ministry of Education, 2007

There are four main sources of financing and resourcing schools

- (i) Government (central government, provincial councils and local government institutions)
- (ii) Community (parents, well-wishers, civil society organizations)
- (iii) Development partners (international donor community, NGOs, INGOs)
- (iv) School itself (students' facilities fees, security fund, School development society funds, Past Pupils Associations, school generated revenues through computer learning resource centers, rented out halls and playgrounds, leasing out agricultural lands, exhibitions, fairs etc.).

Governments' financing system to schools are elaborated below.

Current school system is two fold: (i) National Schools which are directly managed by the Ministry of Education and (329 in number) and (ii) provincial schools which are managed by the Provincial Education Authorities (~9350 in number). Apart from these, schools run by religious / voluntary organizations which are assisted by the state also exist. The PEAs have the main responsibility for providing education for children in provincial schools, although the national schools located within the provinces receive funding directly from the central government.

The Ministry of Finance and Planning provides funding on two headings - recurrent expenditure and capital expenditure. The recurrent expenditure for the schools run by the provinces is based on the allocations agreed between the Finance Commission and the Provincial Education Authorities. The Zonal Education Authorities under the direction of Provincial Education Authorities channel the recurrent expenditure, including payment of salaries to teachers, to the respective schools. The recurrent expenditure for National Schools, however, is channeled directly through the Line Ministry. Teachers' salaries, text books and uniforms account for nearly 95% of total recurrent expenditure in the Sri Lankan school system.

Capital expenditure is allocated to the Line Ministry and provincial authorities. These Ministries allocate this capital grant among schools. The delivery of capital resources to the provincial school system is accomplished through the Provincial/Zonal Education Authorities.

The state funds for the general education sector are used to meet the needs of the state schools, the assisted schools and the organizations that administer, support and supervise the schools system such as the line Ministry, National Institute of Education, Department of Educational Publications and Department of Examinations.

The network of schools can be broadly divided to National Schools under the Line Ministry of Education and provincial schools which are under the Provincial Councils. The funding and resource provision to these two-pronged school system has established a dual system.

The MFP develops a medium term budget framework for general education based on the inputs received from the Ministry of Education, National Institute of Education, Department of Examinations and Department of Education Publications and Provincial Education Authorities (PEAs).

This framework is organized under following budget programmes and projects (Table 3).

**Table 3: Present Budget programmes and projects: General Education**

Program	Projects
1.Operational Activities	1. Minister's Office
	2. Administration and establishment services (general education)
2.Development Activities	3. Primary education
	4. Secondary education
	5. Special education
	6. Grants & assistance for education
	7. Education planning, monitoring, research & development
	8. Teacher development framework
	9. Institutional assistance for quality improvement in general education
	10. General education development projects

This framework was introduced from year 2006. The number of programs was reduced to two as a result of introduction of Medium -Term Budget Framework (MTBF) by the Ministry of Finance & Planning (MFP) and the projects were re-named and re-structured (i.e. Special education, Education planning, monitoring, research & development, Teacher development framework, General education development projects) in responding to the needs of the Education Sector Development Framework & programme (ESDFP) introduced by the MoE in 2006.

Funding through development partners is briefly elaborated below.

Foreign Funded Projects (FFPs) were included separately in the previous framework and from 2006, all FFPs were brought under a single Project (i.e. General education development projects). Some INGOs and local NGOs approach schools for direct financing through the Government wish to track all such funds along with financial assistance of various development partners through the Treasury. The financial assistance to government school system should be known to the Government. Several steps are taken to streamline this process and this is discussed in a separate paragraph.

When community supported and school generated revenues are concerned, it is very necessary to discuss about schools that do not have the capacity to generate revenues and a special provision should be made for such underprivileged schools within partnership between the government and such schools. Governments' subsidy budget may be rationalized and re-directed on a positive discrimination basis towards such schools.

Further, it is a pre-requisite to bring about necessary amendments to the existing circular guidelines, ARR and FRR to accommodate more room to generate revenues and utilize them at school level. Amendments should be in the form of improvements of principles, procedures, channels and practices. The financial decision making power and authority to manage the funds and the resources available at the school level should be delegated. Knowledge and capacity of enjoying power and authority already given to schools should be improved. Forming a School Level Central Audit Committee to audit all school revenues and expenditure will be a further step to be taken. This Committee can comprise of teachers and parents. Schools heads must declare budget and expenditure to all stakeholders in order ensuring transparency. School revenue and utilization of such revenues should be audited and monitored continuously. The Zone should be empowered to monitor/audit the implementation. Therefore the Zone should be empowered with that capacity.

Schools should develop an annual implementation plan and the resource package (financial and human) required implementing the plan. The budget approved by the zonal authority should be utilized efficiently and effectively.

If all schools should be made under provincial administration and in terms of the financial flow, the government should identify a proper mechanism to minimize issues of the dual system in financial flow.

The MFP should take initiatives to improve budget structure identifying more suitable programmes and projects, for an example an adequately funded

separate project for 'access and participation' will facilitate education of children with special educational needs, who dropped out and re-enrolled, and children of poorest percentiles.

Further, a central fund should be secured at the Treasury to look after emergency situations, based on contingency plan. But a semi budget needs to be secured at central/provincial levels for schools' day to day emergencies.

The context explained above mainly elaborates the funding and issues relating to those processes. Discussion shows how school revenues are formed and what measures should be taken further to establish a similar status among the schools across the board in terms of school revenues.

### **Disparity and Inequities in Distribution of Resources**

Under funding for education over the years and non-existence of rational basis for allocation and distribution of resources to schools. The resource allocation mechanisms and policy norms are decided at the national level. Resource provision and funding education has been a top-down approach which followed only horizontal equity principles with too much of generalization and has not looked through vertical equity principles. Therefore, children with special educational needs and socially and economically excluded groups have not been specially focused.

Even though under funding was a phenomenon, the high participation in education resulted to show better results versus low costs. Education expenditure as a percentage of GDP was declining but new methods have been introduced to channel funds directly to schools to meet quality inputs (from 2000) and higher-order processes (from 2006, as a component of ESDFP), and those might have resulted to awaken the schools towards activity-based and competency oriented education. However, the cost incurred by parents on their children's education has also risen. The education quality measured through students' achievements at the national assessments and as well as through the results of public examinations is low at rural peripheral divisions where poverty is high. With poorer percentiles, household expenditure for education is also low. Hence, the Governments' resource provision policy should be re-oriented or rationalized in order to secure education opportunities for children of such households.

At the operational level, there is a country-wide state school system but there are wide disparities among them in terms of the quality of education provided by them. Disparities exist in the financial provision to provincial schools in

comparison to the National Schools (NS). In effect the provinces with less per capita support per student have to bear the enormous problem of upgrading the school facilities and providing quality education, even in the provincial 1AB schools mainly attended by the less affluent.

There is a need to expand the current medium term education budget and planning framework on a longer term basis up to 2015 to fall in line with overall government plans, providing that the resource allocation and funding will facilitate future requirements of implementation of the modernized curriculum reducing disparities. Such a framework should focus its special attention to the inclusion of groups those have been still excluded.

As a measure to reduce disparities by assuring at least primary requirements are supplied, the existing NBUCRAM can be extended from Quality Inputs and Higher-Order Process Grants to cover basic and higher-order spaces and assets and that needs to be carefully thought out with an appropriately developed administrative power devolution and monitoring and advocacy mechanism.

### **Transparency in Public Spending**

The existing governance framework, the involvement of external organizations and the community linkages with schools have created an environment that some schools receive resources through various sources, based on various principles. Government provides a component of government funding directly to schools through NBUCRAM, while Zonal and Provincial Education Offices (Ministry and the Department) provide resources in kind. According to the regulations, the receipts of resources are recorded at schools. However, in expenditure terms, up-dated data-bases on distribution of finances and spending is lacking. Further, the available information does not show the relationship between resources and educational outputs or outcomes. Even though the education budget allocations are distinguished by primary and secondary levels, at school level, in terms of expenditure, data are not recorded under those categories. Even teacher salaries cannot be identified as primary and secondary levels or by subject specifically. This issue is partly linked with the issue of irrational teacher deployment as well.

Inadequacy of financial and budget monitoring procedures has aggravated the issue of lack of transparency in educational spending. So far, a culture within the institutions at all levels including schools disclose the annual budget provisions and expenditure details to their clients, stakeholders and beneficiaries has not been established. On the other hand, the clients or beneficiaries are not made to understand their own right of questioning on agreed services to be delivered.

This needs to be looked at further. Such systems need to be established to assure the accountability.

The policy makers need to monitor the extent to which resources intended for various activities, at different levels of the education system, actually fulfil their intended purpose, and refine resource distribution accordingly. Also, improved transparency will facilitate more equitable resource distribution among education agencies.

Within the ESDFP, the Ministry of Education has introduced a Public Expenditure and Quality of Education Tracking System (PEQETS) with a view to ensuring accountability and transparency in resource distribution by tracing the flow of expenditures to, and through, the various levels of the education system.

### **Linkage between Investment and Outcomes**

The end results of education are to ensure that the students have acquired expected learning competencies. Main stages of this educational process take place at the school level where the content of learning delivered. Therefore, the investments at school level highly influence this process.

National Education Commission (1992) proposed to introduce a new school financing mechanism and to delegate power to school level, ensuring equity and efficiency respectively. Accordingly, the government with the financial assistance of the World Bank, introduced Norm-Based Unit Cost Resource Allocation Mechanism (NBUCRAM). This led to implementation of some form of School-Based Resource Management (SBRM). This formula is concerned with the distribution of learning resources only (i.e. consumables and perishables, and capital equipment). Under the implementation of NBUCRAM, schools received significant amount of funds to acquire recurrent educational learning materials and consumable capital in the form of learning equipment compared to pre-NBUCRAM era. However, very little attention is being paid to the relationship between school resources and pupil attainment. According to the agreed policy, five per cent of the total provincial recurrent and capital allocation should be allocated to the disadvantaged schools, but this proportion was not fully released to schools, due to financial difficulties experienced by Provincial Councils.

Until recently, during past several decades education budgetary practices chiefly focused on provision of inputs (i.e. physical, human, and in-kind) as mainly concerned to establish on equity of the system. Although there were norms and criteria to provide resources among the schools, equity principles were not followed within the operational practices. In fact, this system was more input-

oriented. On the other hand, historical budgetary practices vastly deviated from the development plan. Therefore, budgeting and planning were two separate functions. As a result, many times the development plans were not realistic and most of the times such plans were failed in implementation. According to the present school census data, most of the present schools have been provided with at least basic facilities, while requirements exist rarely at some schools as yet. These data indicate that the current focus should be on improving learning outcomes of students as well as improving quality of education instead of giving priorities on provision of inputs. That means that concern is more on 'processes', outputs and outcomes. Present ESDFP initiatives have been focused to address this issue and several actions have been taken already. This has resulted in moving education budgetary practices from output-oriented approach to an outcome-oriented approach.

Further, prevailing operational issues and procedural issues also at times hinder the maximum utilization of resources and funding. Many schools have not been able to yield maximum benefit by investing the allocated budgets distinguishing the primary and secondary sections as two sections. Also, a culture of systematic resource sharing is not established within and between schools. The rigid administrative and regulatory frameworks and only nominally devolved financial decision making powers have created a poor execution of allocated or generated resources at school levels. This situation also has led the school authorities in not realizing the linkages between the investments on and outcomes of education.

However, it should be noted that under the ESDFP, several initiatives have been taken to lessen these issues and as a measure to raise awareness on linkages between education financing and results or outcomes.

### **Coordination of Finance Inputs**

Present education system is provided with resources (i.e. physical, in-kind, technical) by a large number of development partners both bi-lateral and multi-lateral. In fact, a number of INGOs and LNGOs have also contributed to education in monetary and material wise. Some times, this assistance has overlapped and duplicated. There is evidence that some activities are not compatible with the agreed objectives. Some of the programmes are not being implemented under legitimized framework. This situation may affect the formal education programmes and may lead to a wastage of education resources.

In order to realize better utilization of education resources, several actions have been taken to coordinate programmes supported by development partners. On

surface it can be seen that the coordination is limited to figure out financial inputs provided by development partners. There are occasions that financial and in-kind assistance are directly given to the schools and other operational levels at PEAs. Therefore, it has been difficult to track the total investment of all the development partners. Such assistance should be extended to the areas identified by the government. Also, it is necessary to establish a thorough coordination covering inputs, processes and evaluation of outputs and outcomes.

In the last few decades many donors supported the Government under various development projects. These projects had been able to meet the project targets most times but there are glaring instances where targets were not reached or not attained in full. When we consider the large amount of funds and efforts put in this is a sheer wastage. Although the targets are often attained in general the enthusiasm more or less ends with the end of a project. After the project period the same eagerness is not continued and sustenance of these activities suffer as the project incentives cease. Further, very often, the project activities are really what the donor imposes and these may not be the priority areas of the National Education Requirements. Also, the project mode initiatives would not establish an environment that promotes ownership.

Considering these shortcomings the Government agreed to follow the Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) for external financing and the World Bank has commenced to supplement the Government Budget in that line with the current World Bank Grant called Education Sector Development Grant (ESDG). The Grant supports the Governments ESDFP which is planned under a framework with four major policy themes. Grant is mainly used to promote higher order processes and to provide higher-order spaces and assets. Thus the funding is in line with the national plans and its priorities.

The SWAp is managed by the available education staff without any financial or other extra incentives as it is welded into the normal education budget. For it to succeed, the commitment of the personnel in the education system is essential. As indicated earlier in a project mode the involved personnel are additionally rewarded. If project mode and SWAp mode are implemented side by side managerial problems may arise. Therefore, the Government should decide whether they are allowing this dual approach or are seriously committed to The SWAp.

Further, some of the development partners finance government programmes directly.

In this context, the Government should strengthen coordination of development partners who are supporting the education system through aforesaid approaches.

### **Issues**

- Disparities in investment, inequities in the distribution of human, physical and financial resources and distortion between different levels do not provide adequate resources to the needy.
- Inadequacy of financial and budget monitoring procedures has led to a lack of transparency and accountability in public spending.
- Investment chiefly focused on inputs though concerns on equity are not operationally linked with outcomes.
- Lack of coordination of financial inputs by development partners leading to overlapping and duplication and lack of sustainability leading to budget instability and wastage.
- Rigid and outdated financial regulations do not facilitate the effective utilization and promotion of funds for development work. A gap exists between what the programmes seek to achieve and what the fiscal rules can permit.
- Welfare measures in the form of subsidies and bursaries need to be rationalized as they should benefit the needy and disadvantaged and on the contrary subsidies are also given to children of very high income groups.
- Financing general education using a dual mode by the Ministry of Education and the Finance Commission has resulted in inefficiency and ineffectiveness.
- Allocations and utilization of funds accompanied by a political rather than technical process do not lead to proper use of funds for priority issues.
- The process of allocation of resources to divisions or schools and purpose is essentially a political rather than purely technocratic one and how money actually gets spent is mostly determined during the process of budget implementation.

- There is no assurance of the flow of allocated and disbursed resources to the activity earmarked and this systemic deficiency is contributing to inefficiency and disparities.
- There is no public watch over the use of resources and particularly expenditure of funds in the system.
- Equal fund allocation does not lead to equal outcomes in a system when the schools have a high degree of disparity.
- Budgetary procedures highly adhering to administrative and financial rules and regulations leads to underutilization of a high percentage of public funds.
- Lack of coordination of financial inputs by bilateral and multilateral development partners and INGOs results in overlapping, duplication and sometimes non implementation under legitimized framework leading to wastage and corruption.
- Disparity in provision of funding to national and provincial schools.
- Allocations do not automatically translate accurately into spending and the item and purpose of spending and the spender are often determined during the process of budget execution or implementation.
- No proper relationship exists between capital and recurrent provisions and when there is considerable savings on capital funds, and a shortage of recurrent funds at most levels.

## Proposals

- 7.1. State should continue to provide free education and ensure that funds, resources, and other facilities are equitably and adequately made available for primary and secondary education throughout the country. The resources include human, physical, infrastructure and financial, required to improve the quality of education and thereby the learning outcomes of students.**
- 7.2. State should continue to provide financial assistance for education welfare in the form of subsidies and bursaries to the needy children.**

- 7.3. Children with special educational needs (SEN) and from socio-economically disadvantaged groups should be positively discriminated. State has to ensure that those children are provided with adequate facilities for access and participation in primary and secondary education.
- 7.4. State should make investments on education with clear definitions of the education system's vision, mission, goals, objectives, performance targets, outputs and outcomes for a medium or a long term period. Allocation and distribution of educational resources should strictly be based on medium and/or long term education sector development plans in consonance with rolling planning approach. Each education institution should identify best strategies, programmes and activities in line with the above.
- 7.5. Based on national priorities, a 'unified education sector budget' for the entire general education sector should be defined and established. Financing of schools should be based on a common set of principles. To maximize efficiency, planning and budgeting cycles of the national and provincial levels should follow the same time frame. The Ministry of Finance and Planning, Ministry of Education and Provincial Ministry/Department of Education should provide joint leadership to the system in this regard.
- 7.6. Budgetary approaches such as Medium Term Budgetary Approach (MTBF), Performance Based Budgeting (PBB), Formula Funding of Schools (FFS) (partly) should be followed in allocation of resources for education.
- 7.7. Mechanisms should be developed to improve accountability and transparency in execution of education budget. For example, establishment of mechanisms such as Public Expenditure and Quality of Education Tracking System (PEQETS), Citizen Report Cards and School Report Cards.
- 7.8. School principals should be given decision-making powers and authorities with special reference to planning, school based budgeting and management. School principals should be chief executive officers (CEO) cum accounting officers in concerning the school budget. The school should be upgraded to the status of spending unit and the financial powers to be decentralized to such units to the extent possible, with a clearly defined monitoring mechanism.

- 7.9. **Minister of Education should annually report to the Parliament the status of the general education system including the allocations, expenditure, educational outputs and outcomes. Special consideration should be given to what extent, each year, the general education system has been able to minimize disparities and close the achievement gap.**
- 7.10. **To maintain equity, adequacy, quality and excellence, in the provision of education, State should give high priority to education when allocating funds for national development. Considering that education is a major instrument for development, the State expenditure for education should be maintained at not less than 4% of the GDP and 12% of the total government expenditure.**
- 7.11. **Fund generation from other sources (from past pupils, wellwishers and other organizations) should be promoted in the school system whenever or wherever it is feasible and such funds internally generated in schools should be allowed to be used for development work and should not be deducted from the recurrent grants of the government.**
- 7.12. **Adequate resources and funding should be given to schools without the basic facilities on a priority basis rather than providing enhanced assistance to more privileged schools as the more affluent continue to benefit disproportionately from the available resources.**
- 7.13. **Funding of all donor agencies (bilateral, multilateral, INGOs and NGOs) should be directed to the system through the Government's Education Sector Development Programme within the guidelines for participation to perform a complementary role in the development of education.**

## NOTES