

Report No. 61

South Asia Human Development Sector

Transforming Primary Education in Sri Lanka:

From a 'Subject' of Education to a 'Stage' of Education

July 2013



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1. Current Context

Sri Lanka is a lower-middle income country with a per capita income of approximately US\$ 2,400, and a population of around 20 million people. Basic human development levels are high, with a literacy rate of 93 percent, and life expectancy of 75 years. The country has approximately 4 million children of school age, about 215,000 teachers, and around 10,000 schools. Policy makers are seeking to accelerate economic growth and enable Sri Lanka to become a high-middle income country. In principle the education system is also expected to make a significant contribution to social cohesion and peace on the one hand and social equity on the other.

Sri Lanka's high rate of literacy is due to its sustained growth through the twentieth century. In the early twentieth century the adult literacy rate in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) was 26 percent. By 1950 this had more doubled to 65 percent, had reached 87 percent by 1981 and was 93 percent by the early twenty first century¹ (Little, 2000, 2010, Aturupane, 2009). Between 1970 and 1990 Sri Lanka's achievements in education, especially its universalisation of primary education, were celebrated in development circles, as were her achievements on other human development indicators such life expectancy, infant mortality and fertility which in turn are correlated with increases in literacy (World Bank, 2011).

1.1 Current Structure of Primary Education

The current structure of general education is divided into five stages 5 + 4 + 2 + 2. Primary education spans the first five grades of schooling, Grades 1-5. Students progress automatically to lower secondary education for four years of education in Grades 6 - 9 and then on to upper secondary education in Grades 10-11 for a two year course that culminates in the General Certificate of Education Ordinary level examination (GCE O-L). Subject to performance in the GCE O level exam they proceed to Advanced secondary education in Grades 12-13 and the GCE Advanced Level examination. At the end of Grade 5 there is an examination sat by the majority of children. This is used by the high status National schools to allocate places and modest financial bursaries for poor children.

The vast majority of all school children, some 3.9 million, or 93 percent, attend government schools. Private schools registered with the Ministry of Education account for 117, 362 children in 2010, *Pirivenas* (religious schools) a further 62, 091 students and an estimated 100,000 attend 'International' schools not registered with the Ministry (MOE 2010, MOE 2011). The vast majority follow their primary education in one of the vernacular languages, either Sinhala or Tamil, and boys and girls are schooled together.

Table 1 shows the numbers of students enrolled in government schools in 2010. Of the total enrolled across Grades 1-13, 42 percent are enrolled in the primary stage.

¹ Adult literacy 93 percent in 2006.

Table 1 Student Enrolment by Stage of Education 2010

Stage	2010		
	Male	Female	Total
Grades 1-5	825,998	796,579	1,622,577 (42%)
Grades 6-9	607,529	600,032	1,207,661 (31%)
Grades 10-11	303,455	312,420	615,875 (16%)
Grades 12-13	177,961	240,750	418,711 (11%)
Grades 1-13 (Total)	1,918,010	1,952,065	3,870,075

Source: MOE, 2010.

The 5 + 4 + 2 + 2 stage structure of schooling belies its institutional organisation. Unusually, by international standards, the stage of primary education is offered by almost every school in the country. Table 2 shows the number of government schools by grade span for 1997, 2007 and 2010.

About a quarter of schools in 1997, 2007 and 2011 offered *only* primary education. In 2010, 70 percent of schools offering secondary education also offered primary education. Less than 4 percent of schools offered only secondary education. In other words primary education is offered in over 96 percent of all schools and the majority of primary education is provided in ‘all through’ schools from Grades 1-11 or 1-13.

Table 2 Government Schools by Grade Span, 1997, 2007, 2010

Grade span	Total		
	1997	2007	2010
Grade 1-5	2809 (28%)	2449 (25%)	2508 (26%)
Grade 1-8	1191	461	362
Grade 1-11	3799	4178	4069
Grade 1-13	1954	2268	2375
Grade 6-11	31	26	22
Grade 6-13	336	296	349
Total	10120	9678	9685
% schools offering Grade 1-5	96.3%	96.7%	96.1%

Sources: MOE School Census 1997, 2007, 2010.

2. The Legacy of Overgrown Elementary Schools

The reasons for this unusual way of organising primary education are historical. Box 1 presents a brief historical overview of the structure of primary and secondary and the emergence of what the Macleod Committee, reporting a hundred years ago in 1912, termed ‘overgrown’ elementary schools.

Box 1 The Historical Legacy of Overgrown Elementary Schools

In the early nineteenth century the British rehabilitated the Dutch network of parish primary schools offering Sinhala or Tamil medium education to Grade 5 or 6. They also established a high status network of schools offering schooling in the English medium to high caste Sinhala, Tamil and Dutch Burgher boys. The network comprised preparatory feeder schools and one post primary institution, the Academy. By the mid nineteenth century the religious missions and private bodies entered the education arena, encouraged by the colonial government to establish schools with a ‘grant-in-aid’..The level of grant was determined by student performance and by the type of school. By 1870 there were three types of primary school - ‘English’ schools teaching through the medium of English, ‘Anglo-Vernacular’ schools, teaching most subjects through the vernacular with English reading and writing, and ‘Vernacular’ schools, teaching all subjects in either Sinhala or Tamil. The grant-in-aid contributed to the expansion of education in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and in particular to the expansion of vernacular primary schools.

By the early twentieth century a number of the English-medium schools were extending their grades to enable promising students to sit the prestigious Cambridge examinations. In the words of the Macleod Committee, reporting in 1912, they had become ‘overgrown’ elementary schools. The committee recommended a division of schools into four types (i) the purely elementary (or primary) school; (ii) the elementary school with a secondary department to junior standard (iii) the elementary school with a secondary department to senior standard; and (iv) the fully organised secondary school. In 1929 there was a recommendation that schools be divided into primary, junior secondary and senior secondary schools. Curiously the definition of each reflected the exit rather than the entry grade. Primary terminated at Standard 5, junior secondary at Standard 8 and senior secondary at a Standard higher than 8. Then as now, many senior secondary schools contained Standards 1-5. By the 1940s the Central Schools, offering high quality English-medium fully organised secondary education, were established with selection to them based on performance in the Grade 5 examination. With their establishment it was hoped that the expense of running small secondary classes in nearly every school would be eliminated. This did not happen since access to the Central schools was selective and the social demand for post primary education was strong (Jayasuriya. 1979, 256-7, 439)

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s attempts to separate the primary and post primary grades failed. In 1962 the National Education Commission recommended that primary schools be replaced by elementary schools spanning 5 -14 years. But still the upgrading did not stop. Elementary schools sought to upgrade themselves to schools offering 10, 11, 12 and 13 years of education. In the mid 1970s the primary school curriculum was revised and a small number of ‘model’

primary schools were established in Colombo. For a few years these offered primary education of high quality. But as children approached the end of the primary stage, parents exerted pressure to have these schools upgraded, obviating the necessity for their children to sit the competitive Grade 5 scholarship examination for entry to other schools. By the 1990s all these model primary schools had become large and flourishing schools offering education from Grades 1 to 13. Today the primary stage of education is offered by almost every school on the island.

The tradition of describing schools in terms of the student exit point rather than student entry *and* exit points continues to the present day. Currently, schools are classified into four types as follows:

- 1AB: Senior Secondary Schools with classes to Grade 13 offering GCE (OL) and (AL) subjects in the Arts, Commerce and Science streams
- 1C: Senior Secondary Schools with Grades 13 offering GCE (OL) and GCE (AL) subjects in the Arts and Commerce streams
- Type 2: Secondary schools with classes from Grade 11 offering GCE (OL)
- Type 3: Primary schools to Grade 5 (and sometimes to Grade 8)

Type 1AB and 1C schools offer education to Grade 13, in all streams and arts and commerce streams respectively. Type 2 schools offer education to Grade 11 while Type 3 schools offer education to Grade 5. However, Grade 1-5 primary education is offered in all four types. Schools are further classified in terms of their controlling authority. National schools fall under the purview of the National Ministry of Education. Provincial schools fall under the purview of the Provincial Ministries and the Provincial Departments of Education. National schools are generally of higher status than provincial schools. In principle entry to Grade 1 is determined by place of residence. Students can enter at Grade 6 based on place of residence or on performance in the Grade 5 scholarship examination.

3. Characteristics of Schools that Offer Primary Education

Table 3 shows the distribution of schools by national and provincial control in each province and their types. The majority of schools, 96.4 percent, fall under the purview of the nine provinces and 3.6 percent fall under the National Ministry of Education. The Western, Southern and Uva provinces have the highest proportion of national schools and those of the North and North-Central the lowest.

Type 3 schools are self-contained primary schools. To progress to Grade 6 students must transfer to another school. The greatest concentration of Type 3 schools is found in the rural provinces of Central, Northern, Eastern, North Central and Sabaragamuwa.

Because they offer only Grades 1-5 Type 3 schools are also small. However some Type 2 schools also have very small enrolments. Table 4 shows the distribution across the country of student populations by school type. Almost one third (31.4%) of all schools have enrolments of less than 100 students, of which more than half (52.2%) enrol less than 50 students. The majority of schools with enrolments of less than 50, some 83.4 percent, are Type 3 schools. About equal numbers of Type 2 and Type 3 schools have enrolments of 51-100.

Table 3 Distribution of Schools by Type, Control, Province, Students and Teachers

Province	National Provincial	School Type					No. of students	No. of teachers
		1AB	1C	2	3	Total		
Western	National	68	1		1	70	213,786	8,203
	Provincial	96	264	594	314	1,268	702,086	32,256
Subtotal: WP		164	265	594	315	1,338	915,872	40,459
Central	National	42	12			54	94,698	4,326
	Provincial	54	324	534	500	1,412	427,595	26,300
Subtotal: CP		96	336	534	500	1,466	522,293	30,626
Southern	National	61	4			65	162,045	6,398
	Provincial	46	251	525	212	1,034	342,126	22,942
Subtotal: SP		107	255	525	212	1,099	504,171	29,340
Northern	National	10	2			12	22,251	1,072
	Provincial	55	114	284	375	828	217,382	12,330
Subtotal: NP		65	116	284	375	840	239,633	13,402
Eastern	National	28	1		1	30	55,191	2,294
	Provincial	34	180	378	381	973	330,315	17,999
Subtotal: EP		62	181	378	382	1,003	385,506	20,293
North West	National	29	6			35	77,940	3,554
	Provincial	46	280	603	254	1,183	394,896	23,660
Subtotal: NWP		75	286	603	254	1,218	472,836	27,214
North Central	National	10				10	28,470	1,077
	Provincial	22	161	330	257	770	225,994	13,643
Subtotal: NCP		32	161	330	257	780	254,464	14,720
Uva	National	29	7			36	58,290	2,659
	Provincial	25	192	359	227	803	218,826	15,581
Subtotal: UP		54	199	359	227	839	277,116	18,240
Sabaragamuwa	National	28				28	70,751	3,073
	Provincial	33	206	487	348	1,074	297,430	18,651
Subtotal: SaP		61	206	487	348	1,102	368,181	21,724
Sri Lanka	National	305	33	0	2	340	783,422	32,656
	Provincial	411	1,972	4,094	2,868	9,345	3,156,650	183,362
Total		716	2,005	4,094	2,870	9,685	3,940,072	216,018

Source: ESDFP, 2011 based on MoE, 2010 school census.

At the opposite extreme of size of student population, 322 schools (3.3%) enrol more than 2000 students. Eight of these are Type 2 and Type 3 schools, while the majority, 313, are of Type 1AB.

Nationally, the cohort of children aged 5+ is declining and in many of the smallest schools, the numbers admitted annually to Grade 1 are few. The total number of children entering government schools in 2010 was 331,992. There were no new admissions to Grade 1 in 2010 in 306 schools. In a further 1,054 schools the number of new admissions was between one and five. Given that the average student-teacher ratio (STR) at primary is 25:1 it is of note that just over half of all schools (53%) with provision for Grade 1 admitted fewer than 20 students (MOE, 2010). This means that there is a wide variation in the class STRs in the earliest years of primary students. There are self-contained Grade 1 classes of varying sizes, some very small and some large.

Table 4 Distribution of Schools by Type and by Size of Student Population

School Type	Student population																Total
	1-50		51-100		101-200		201-500		501-1000		1001-2000		2001-3000		>3000		
	Nat.	Prov.	Nat.	Prov.	Nat.	Prov.	Nat.	Prov.	Nat.	Prov.	Nat.	Prov.	Nat.	Prov.	Nat.	Prov.	
1AB			1		1		3	13	20	103	92	190	105	83	84	21	716
1C		4		10		97	2	804	14	763	16	275	1	18		1	2,005
Type 2		260		722		1,431		1,411		221		41		6		2	4,094
Type 3	1	1,325		723		446		203	1	124		46		1			2,870
Total	1	1,589	1	1,455	1	1,974	5	2,431	35	1,211	108	552	106	108	84	24	9,685

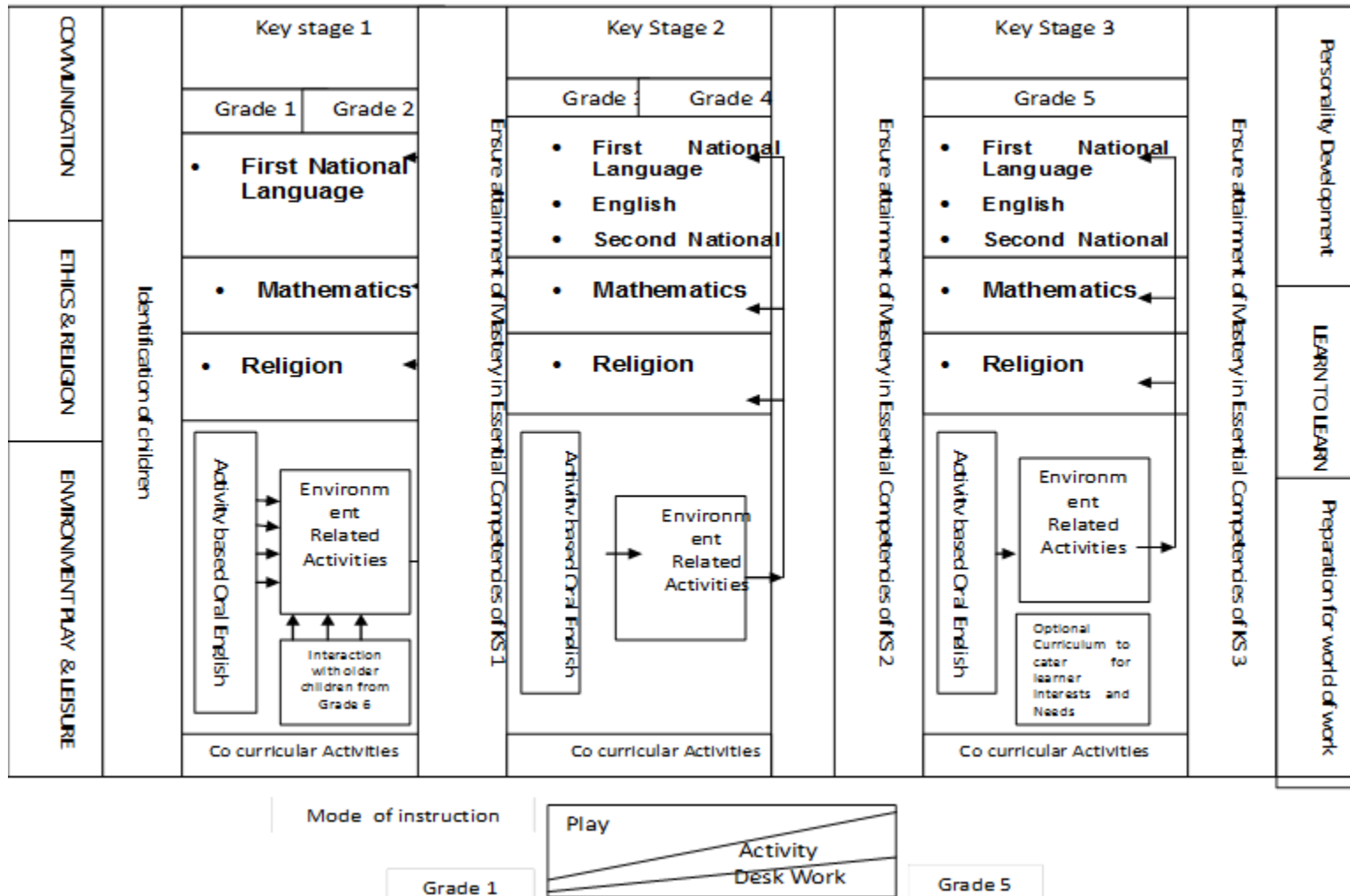
Source: ESDFP, 2011 and MoE, 2010.

4. The Primary Education Curriculum

The curriculum for primary education is designed separately from those for subsequent stages of education. The primary education curriculum stage is encapsulated in a primary curriculum framework that derives from extensive debate during the 1990s in connection with the recommendations in 1997 of the National Education Commission, the work of the technical committee on primary education appointed by the Presidential Task Force and detailed implementation work by the Primary Education Unit of the National Institute of Education. The current primary education framework substantially follows that developed in 1997 (Figure 1).

In 1997 the framework was based on five basic sets of competencies - of communication, ethics and religion, environment, play and the use of leisure, and learning to learn. In 2007 two more competencies were added - preparation for the world of work and personality development. All are derived from the National Goals for education set out in the 1992 report of the National Education Commission - which included national cohesion, social justice, sustainable living, dignified work, learning to learn and adapting to change. The competencies are broken down further. For example, communication includes literacy, numeracy and graphics, while Environment embraces the social, biological and physical environment (Peiris and Nanayakkara, 2000). Competencies are linked with and cross cut the 'subjects' of primary education. The number of subjects in the curriculum is six - first language, second language, English (from Grade 3), mathematics, religion and environment-related activities. As we shall later, although the primary curriculum comprises six subjects, the primary 'stage' of education is frequently treated, administratively, as though it were a single subject. The curriculum is divided into three Key Stages - Key Stage 1 (Grades 1 and 2), Key Stage 2 (Grades 3 and 4) and Key Stage 3 (Grade 5). English is introduced orally and based on activity from Grade 1 and as a subject from Grade 3. The second national language (Sinhala for Tamil medium students and Tamil for Sinhala medium students) is introduced from Grade 3. Oral Tamil & oral Sinhala, in Sinhala-medium and Tamil-medium schools respectively, are introduced from Grade 1 onwards and as a subject from Grade 3. The recommended teaching method in the primary stage is a blend of play, activities and desk work, with the proportion of play decreasing and of activities and desk work increasing from Grade 1 to 5. Students are provided with free textbooks and workbooks while their families provide exercise books, pens and pencils. At the end of each key stage students are expected to have 'mastered' a set of key stage specific competencies. Competencies are classified into two groups: 'essential' and 'desirable'.

Figure 1 Primary Curriculum Framework



5. Student Achievement in the Primary Stage of Education

The assessment of key stage competencies is undertaken by class teachers, working under the supervision of in service advisors (ISA). Additionally teachers administer tests after each curriculum unit and end of term tests. At the end of the primary cycle students sit the Grade 5 scholarship exam which is used by some students to seek admission to a national school or to the high status provincial school offering GCE O and A level classes. A financial bursary is available for those who perform well and whose families are poor. For many years the Grade 5 test was optional and many students in low achieving schools did not sit the test. Nowadays, most children sit the test. In 2008 10.9 percent of all children who sat the exam scored higher than the ‘cut-off’ mark required for the award of the scholarship.

Since 2003 the National Educational Research Centre (NEREC) based at the University of Colombo has administered tests in First language, Mathematics and English to Grade 4 children in a sample of schools country-wide. Table 5 presents the results of national assessments of achievement in Grade 4 in 2003, 2007 and 2009 and indicates the increasing proportions over time of students achieving at least 50 percent in first language (Sinhala or Tamil), mathematics and English assessments.

Table 5 National Assessments of Learning Outcomes, Grade 4, by Province

Province	Grade 4 Proportion of students scoring over 50 %								
	First Language			Mathematics			English		
	2003	2007	2009	2003	2007	2009	2003	2007	2009
WP	81.7	88.2	86.3	80.5	88.8	86.5	53.1	68.0	74.1
CP	67.0	79.4	78.5	63.5	79.0	76.8	31.6	44.6	55.9
SP	72.0	83.3	86.1	71.5	84.5	85.2	36.0	54.8	62.4
NP	61.0	78.7	83.7	53.3	76.5	79.5	22.9	39.9	54.8
EP	57.7	72.7	73.7	52.3	74.6	70.2	21.9	44.3	41.9
NWP	75.1	85.5	87.1	74.0	85.7	86.4	32.0	54.9	64.8
NCP	70.7	83.4	83.1	72.1	84.5	81.8	29.3	43.3	50.6
UP	64.2	77.4	79.8	62.5	78.1	80.8	27.3	40.3	51.9
SaP	70.8	81.4	86.5	68.5	82.6	87.1	33.4	46.7	64.2
Sri Lanka	68.9	81.1	82.9	66.5	81.5	81.8	31.9	48.5	58.4

Source: NEREC, 2009.

Note: WP Western Province; CP Central Province; SP Southern Province; NP Northern province; EP Eastern province; NWP North Western province; NCP North Central province; UP Uva province; SaP Sabaragamuwa province.

The learning competencies on which these tests are based are viewed as necessary achievements on the part of every child as preparation for progression to subsequent grades and stages of the curriculum. However, competency ‘mastery’ is defined by the National Institute of Education as successful performance in 80 percent of the competencies, not 50 percent. The proportions of students achieving mastery by this definition are much lower. In the 2009 assessments a cut-off percentage of 80 percent rather than 50 percent were 48 percent in First Language, 53 percent in

Mathematics and just 19 percent in English. Compared with the expectations of the national curriculum authority, the National Institute of Education, performance among large proportions of the Grade 4 student population therefore remains low (NEREC, 2009) and provides a shaky foundation for future schooling. Competencies not mastered in the primary stage of education compromise teaching and learning in the secondary stages.

As Table 5 shows, there are wide disparities in student performance in the national assessments in maths, first language and English. More developed provinces, such as the Western province, perform better than the Northern, Eastern and Uva provinces. Within provinces, there are disparities in performance between zones and divisions. Students in urban schools perform better in achievement tests than students in rural and estate schools. Students in Tamil medium schools perform worse than students studying in the Sinhala medium. Indeed, in contrast with increasing performance of Sinhala medium students over time, performance of Tamil medium students stagnated or declined between 2007 and 2009. Girls perform better than boys on average. Students in urban areas typically perform better than students in rural areas. It should also be noted that the distributions of scores vary by subject. In first language and mathematics scores are negatively skewed: more children are achieving high scores than low scores. In English the distribution is bi-modal, indicating distinct groups of high and low performers. Children in Type 1AB schools perform better than children in other types of schools. Primary school-age children in Type 2 schools perform worse than those in Type 1AB, 1C and 3 (NEREC, 2009).

The lower performance of Grade 4 students studying in Type 2 schools compared with Type 3 schools is curious. On average both Type 2 and Type 3 comprise the more disadvantaged schools. Type 2 schools embed the five primary grades within Grades 1-11. Type 3 schools are 'self contained' primary schools offering only Grades 1-5.

The low performance by primary students in Type 2 schools is not a new finding. In the 1980s and 1990s, Kariyawasam (1985), Ekanayake and Sedere (1989) and Navaratne (1995) reported similar findings. Despite its longstanding nature the 'finding' has attracted little or no policy discussion over the years. One hypothesis points to the self-contained nature of the Type 3 schools. We might hypothesise that, other things being equal, including the background characteristics of students and teachers, the attention of the principals and the teachers and all resource utilisation is focused entirely on the children in the primary grades. In Type 2 schools, by contrast there is competition for resources within the school from the upper grades, especially Grades 10 and 11, where students prepare for the high stakes GCE O level grades which provide a measure of the school's esteem. We may speculate that in these schools students in the primary grades may benefit from fewer resources per capita than students in the primary grades of Type 3 schools. In other words, in schools in which there are primary and secondary grades there may be a 'resource creep' to the post primary grades.

6. Primary Education Teachers

In 2010 there a total of 214,562 teachers were employed by government, of whom 31,675 were teaching in the National schools. At the primary stage of education there were 68,310 teachers of whom 5,474 were teaching in the National schools. STRs in Sri Lanka are favourable by international standards. Nationally, the STR across Grades 1-13 is 18:1. At primary it is 25:1 and in the primary grades in the National Schools 36:1. The higher ratio in national schools reflects the intense social demand for school places in these popular schools and the preparedness of school principals to admit students to Grade 1.

Teachers at the primary stage generally have lower educational qualifications and lower status professional qualifications than teachers in the secondary grades (Table 6). In 2011 219,886 persons employed by government were classified as teachers. Of these, 16,873 worked as in-service advisors, or in administration or were seconded to an education office for various duties. Of the 203,013 who worked as teachers in Grades 1-13, 71,453 (35.2%) taught in Grades 1-5, 107,414 (52.9%) in Grades 6-11 and 24,146 (11.9%) in Grades 12-13. Nearly 77 percent of teachers in Grades 1-5 have GCE O or A Level general education qualifications, and 23 percent are graduates or post graduates. Among those who teach in Grades 6-11 60 percent are GCE O or A level qualified. The proportions who have reached only GCE O level qualification are relatively small but larger in the primary grades - 8.8 percent vs. 5.7 percent.

Table 7 indicates that the majority of teachers are professionally qualified in education. Among all teachers in Grades 1-13 just over 80 percent are professionally qualified, while just under twenty percent (19.3%) hold no professional qualification in education. The percentage of those with no professional qualification in education is 16.4 percent in primary education, 19.5 percent in Grades 6-11 and 27.4 percent in Grades 12-13. The level of professional qualification among primary teachers is more likely to be at certificate or diploma level (74%) than degree or post graduate degree level (9.4%). Among teachers teaching in Grades 6-11 the comparable percentages are 59.5 percent and 20.9 percent.

Despite the fact that the majority of teachers in primary of professionally qualified large numbers are not qualified to teach at the primary level. The primary education branch of the Ministry has calculated that in 2010 35 percent of teachers teaching at the primary stage of education did not hold qualifications in primary education. The majority of these were Arts or Commerce graduates who had no training in primary education or had been trained to teach in secondary and were awaiting transfers from primary to secondary classes (personal communication with the Director of Primary Education).

There are four main routes of professional training, two of which are pre-service and two of which are for teachers already serving in the system.

6.1 Initial Training for Serving Teachers

At the time of independence in 1948 there were 22 teacher training institutions, eleven run by government and eleven assisted training schools run by the various denominational bodies that

controlled denominational schools. A total of 1,236 students were enrolled in pre-service courses offered in three media (English, Sinhala, and Tamil). These training schools were linked with a primary school, a practical school and a senior or secondary school in close proximity (Jayasuriya, 1979). The denominational schools and teacher training colleges were taken over by government in 1961 and the system of training changed. The practice of training teachers prior to appointment gradually disappeared and most teachers were recruited with G.C.E. O L qualifications to teach for a minimum period of two years before enrolling on a certificate course at a teacher training college. It was about this time that the education sector was becoming more politicised with ‘chits and recommendations from politicians being considered to be an important criterion for teacher recruitment’ (Sivagnanam, 2011).

Currently, six teacher training colleges (TTCs)², out of a total of eight, offer certificated courses in primary education to serving non graduate teachers who are not professionally qualified. The teacher training colleges remain an important route to training and certification. In 2010, 524 out of a total number of 2,326 serving teachers obtained their trained teacher certificates in primary education, of whom 172 were Sinhala medium and 352 Tamil medium (Sivagnanam, 2011). Among the current teaching force serving in primary education 26 percent have been trained through this route and no higher³.

A second route for serving teachers is part time study through training ‘at a distance’, supplemented by face to face contact sessions. The distance training mode became a dominant route to professional training during the 1980s. The National Institute of Education (NIE), supported by the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) enrolled 19,052 trainees between 1984 and 1990. A massive recruitment of GCE O/L qualified teachers in 1989 and 1990 led to a rapid expansion of this programme and the enrolment of 46,203 serving teachers between 1991 and 1993, of whom 24,642 were enrolled on primary education courses (Sivagnanam, 2011). Table 7 indicates that among the current teaching force around 30 percent of teachers serving in primary education have been trained through this route and no higher. Although the programme stopped in 1999 the NIE continues to run a variation of the programme through weekend contact courses as the need arises.

² Balapitya TTC (Sinhala Medium), Unawattuna TTC (Sinhala Medium), Kopay TTC (Tamil Medium), Batticaloa TTC (Tamil Medium), Addalaichenai TTC (Tamil Medium) and Kotagala TTC (Tamil Medium)

³ A teacher trained through this route may have upgraded their professional qualifications subsequently. Table 7 classifies teachers by their current highest level of professional education achieved.

Table 6 Teachers in Government Schools by Stage of Teaching and Highest Level of Educational Qualification

	O/L	A/L	BA, BSc, BEd	MA, MSc, MEd	MPhil	Administration	Total
Primary	5,734	49,033	16,355	301	24	6	71,453
Secondary 6-11	6,093	58,241	41,769	12,471	52	12	107,414
Secondary 12-13	33	1,487	21,573	999	48	6	24,146
Total	11,860	108,761	79,697	2,547	124	24	203,013

Source: MOE, School Census 2011.

Table 7 Teachers in Government Schools by Stage of Teaching and Highest Level of Professional Qualification

	PhD, MPhil MA MEd	PGD Education	Masters or PGD Education Management	B Ed	Masters, PGD, Diploma, or Certificate Library Studies	PGD or Diploma in English, Diploma in Agriculture	Teacher Trained In-Service Certificate	Teacher Trained Distance mode Certificate	NCOE Diploma	None	Total
Primary	281	4,877	175	994	85	318	18,347	21,677	12,983	11,716	71,453
Secondary 6-11	877	18,101	476	1,584	178	1,228	27,511	16,413	20,084	20,962	107,414
Secondary 12-13	676	13,650	250	326	16	264	1056	410	872	6,626	24,146
Total	1,834	36,628	901	2,904	279	1,810	46,914	38,500	33,939	39,304	203,013

Source: MOE, School Census 2011.

6.2 Pre-Service Initial Training

The main pre-service training route for primary education teachers is a three year National Diploma in Teaching. Students are recruited from among those with three GCE A level qualifications, including Sinhala or Tamil, and enrol full time at a National College of Education (NCOE). Two years are spent in College and one year is spent as a teaching intern. Currently there are 18 NCOEs, of which 11⁴ offer courses in primary education. The numbers expected to pass out with a Diploma in teaching specialised in primary education colleges in 2012 is 795, of whom 495 are qualified to teach in the Sinhala medium and 300 in the Tamil medium (MOE, 2012).

Academic standards among NCOE students are high. The top ranked students in the GCE A level list are selected for the Universities. The next batch is offered places in the NCOEs. Because competition for university entrance is so stiff (only 22,000 out of 160,000 who qualified for university entrance, were offered places) the NCOEs are able to recruit from among well qualified GCE A level students. In the current teacher force about 18 percent have qualified through the NCOE route.

While these students are well qualified in Arts stream subjects, they are not, generally, well qualified in Maths and English. Currently students are required to have achieved only a simple pass at the GCE O level examination in Maths and English when a credit pass might be more appropriate. Moreover, students who follow the Science stream at GCE A level are precluded from becoming teachers through the NCOE route because they do not follow an A level course in Sinhala or Tamil. This denies the students in primary and junior secondary education the services of young people who have achieved well in maths and the sciences and who might wish to teach at this level. Given the current emphasis in ESDFP 2012-2016 on Maths as one of the foundation subjects the restriction on GCE A level Science stream students needs to be lifted.

Many young teachers continue their studies while serving as teachers. Those who have gained valuable experience in the primary classes are unable to follow degree and post degree courses specialised in primary education. If they do upgrade their qualifications they gain qualifications which then enable them to seek transfers to the secondary classes. This represents a huge potential loss of talent from the primary stage of education.

Pre-service training is also offered via Bachelor of Education degree courses at the NIE, the Open University and the University of Colombo. A very small proportion, 1.4 percent of teachers who currently work in primary education are classified as BEd graduates (Table 7). At the University of Colombo the BEd is offered as a fulltime four year degree jointly between the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Education with an optional module in primary teaching methods. However the demand for this module is reducing since, for reasons of status, students do not wish to be restricted to teaching in the primary grades.

⁴ Sariputta (Sinhala Medium, for Buddhist monks), Pulathisipura (Sinhala Medium), Wayamba (Sinhala Medium), Ruhuna (Sinhala Medium), Hapitigama (Sinhala Medium), Sri Pada (Sinhala and Tamil Medium), Vavuniya (Tamil Medium), Batticaloa (Tamil Medium), Addalaichenai (Tamil Medium), Jaffna (Tamil Medium), Darganagar (Tamil Medium).

6.3 Continuous Professional Development

In addition to these forms of initial training there are various forms of continuous professional development (CPD). There is an extensive network of short term in-service training programmes organised by the provinces and by the NIE. Many teachers also upgrade their qualifications through part time study on degree or postgraduate courses. A network of around 100 teacher centres across the country offers continuous professional development opportunities. A new programme of School-based Teacher Development (SBTD) is currently being developed to supplement the above.

A general issue that pervades all forms of teacher education for primary education outlined above is the relative absence among the teacher educators of direct experience of teaching at this stage of education. And although some courses are designed separately for primary and secondary education teachers, pedagogy and psychology courses differentiate insufficiently between the psychology of and relevant pedagogies for younger and older students.

7. Professional Support for Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment

Support for the work of primary education teachers derives in principle from several sources - from the school principal, from the primary section head in 'all through' schools, from in-service advisors at the Divisional level, from the primary education assistant director at the zonal level and from the primary education leadership at Provincial level as well as from a range of in-service training courses and further professional development of the kind outlined above. In-service advisors (ISAs) in primary education are generally selected from among primary teachers, but in many cases it is asserted that recruitment to these positions is not always made on the grounds of merit. At higher levels officers who support primary education compete through the examinations and procedures of the Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service. Those selected may or may not have direct experience of teaching at the primary level. 'Many education officers coordinating primary education programmes lack awareness of the curricula and teaching methodology at primary level and often have to depend on ISAs' (Peiris and Nanayakkara, 2000: 40). Moreover, many of those officers who take on responsibilities for primary education within, say, a zonal office may not stay in post for long. One year they may work as an assistant director of primary education, next year as assistant director of planning and the following year assistant director of non formal education. The current career structure for teachers and officers does not encourage the conservation, development and sustainability of expertise in primary education.

8. Primary Education as a 'Subject' of Education

As we have seen already primary education is regarded as a distinct stage of the school curriculum, comprising six subjects of study. However it is not treated as a separate stage in education management and planning.

When teachers are allocated to schools, those without any training and those trained in primary education are generally appointed to the primary stage. However, teachers trained in secondary are also sometimes allocated to the primary grades. Many teachers trained in primary gain further qualifications to enable them to 'upgrade' and teach in the secondary grades. When principals are allocated to schools it is the exit rather than the entry grade of the school that will determine the grade of principal appointed. In principle the school principal is appointed to provide leadership for the teaching, learning and achievement of all students within the school. But in the vast majority of schools offering primary education the principal is the head of an 'all-through' school offering Grades 1-11 or 1-13. He/she is unlikely to have professional qualifications in primary education or to have taught at this level. In principle, all through schools above a certain size should have a primary 'head of section'. The MOE Sri Lanka Education Information 2010 data base classifies a number of teachers as supervisors of Grades 1-5, 6-11 and 12-13. It is not clear whether these include some principals or not. In any case only 1,212 teachers are listed as having supervisory responsibility for Grades 1-5 as against the 9,307 schools that offer primary education.

Beyond the school, in-service advisors are allocated to work with teachers in schools. The allocation of these staff is determined by a formula that treats primary as a *subject* of education akin to other school curriculum subjects such as mathematics, First language and science. Maths, language and science subject advisors tend to focus their energies on the subjects of the secondary school curriculum. The treatment of primary for this purpose as a 'subject' of the school curriculum rather than a 'stage of education' leads to a gross anomaly. Primary 'subject' advisors are expected to support primary education teachers in the teaching of all six subjects in the primary school curriculum in almost every school in the division or zone. Typically an in-service advisor will support all teachers in all six subjects in 25 schools, while other 'subject' advisors support the teaching of one or two subjects. An education division may employ just one subject advisor for primary and 18 for all other (secondary) subjects. The scale of work expected of those who support primary is far greater than that expected of the other 'subject' advisors. This pattern of resource allocation is repeated in the National Ministry of Education and the Provincial Departments of Education. In the Ministry of Education a small primary education 'branch' responsible for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all six subjects of primary education enjoys the same organisational status and size as a secondary school subject.

Financial allocations are made by the provincial administration to schools rather than the different sections within a school. School principals are responsible for spending and accounting for their spending in the school as a whole. Unless they are a principal of a Type 3 primary school they are not accountable for what has been spent on students in the primary grades - nor for that matter in the other stages, 6-11 and 12-13. Anecdotal evidence suggests that resources

are disproportionately allocated by principals to the secondary grades and the Advanced level, and in particular the GCE O and A level classes, even after taking into account the greater resource requirements of subjects such as science in the secondary grades. The budget of the National Ministry of Education includes a separate budget line for primary education but this money is allocated only to the primary sections of National schools. Province, zone, division and school budget do not separate allocations and expenditure for primary and secondary. There is no reason in principle why separate budget lines could not be created for most types of expenditure.

9. Challenges in Primary Education

Over ten years ago an assessment was made of the challenges facing primary education, based on the views of teachers, teacher educators and documentary and first hand evidence (Peiris and Nanayakkara, 2000, 38-42, Mallawarachchi and Sivagnanam, 2000, Aturupane and Abeygunawardene, 2000). Most recently, in its National Strategic Plan for Education, the MOE has identified many of the same and some new issues in primary education (MOE, 2011). Some of the most persistent challenges identified are highlighted below.

9.1 Pedagogy and Curriculum

- Curriculum content in some subjects is too demanding, not linked to the developmental stage of the child and insufficiently trialled prior to country wide implementation.
- Some sections and illustrations of teacher guides are of poor quality and the number of guides distributed does not reflect the number of primary school teachers and classes.
- The recommended pedagogy of active learning is often not followed, especially in the upper grades of primary where teachers believe that teachers 'provide' information and learners 'receive' it.
- The examination backwash effect of the Grade 5 scholarship examination is marked and leads to a devaluation of the overall objectives of primary education. The original purpose of the exam - to provide financial support for able but poor students - has been displaced by the use of the exam by parents to gain entry for their children to popular national schools.
- Formative assessments of pupil learning are not carried out seriously by many teachers and proper records are rarely maintained. Assessments through observation, oral questioning and listening to pupil discussions are rarely employed.
- Summative assessments are limited to paper and pencil, many designed by external bodies, are rarely subjected to analysis and rarely used to remedy the learning difficulties of children or to improve teaching methods. Teachers rarely employ criterion-referenced assessments.
- Teachers lack confidence in the teaching of maths and beginning science and some lack the skills for activity-based teaching.
- Teachers in schools where grades are combined are unfamiliar with a multigrade pedagogy; teachers of single grades are unfamiliar with multilevel pedagogies within grades.
- Untrained teachers are often assigned to the foundational lower grades.
- Teachers receive conflicting messages from various sources of support (principals, teacher guides, ISAs, education officers).
- Free and open access to primary education of good quality is compromised by the competition to gain entry to grade 1 in popular and national schools.

9.2 Teacher Training

- 30 percent of teachers in primary education are not trained to teach at this level.
- Most teacher educators lack primary education experience or experience gained through class-based research. There are few opportunities for teacher educators to update their knowledge, professional skills and their knowledge of changes in the primary school curriculum.
- Course content emphasises classroom organisation and child development at the expense of classroom applications and types of teacher assessment. Little attention paid to basic concepts in science or maths.
- A pass at GCE A level in first language is required for admission to Colleges of Education, restricting applications from the A level science stream.
- Linkages between colleges and the primary grades are weak.
- Training for teachers offered through in-service training suffers from one way cascade transmission and ‘consequent distortion and dilution’ of message and in-service advisors often do not have competence in all the subjects of the primary curriculum.

9.3 Principals

- Many principals lack awareness of primary education curricula and pedagogy and are unable to support primary teachers in good teaching, sometimes leading to a focus on the secondary grades at the expense of primary.

9.4 School Infrastructure

- Physical conditions in some primary schools and sections of schools are not conducive to effective teaching and learning. Conditions vary but include non partitioned and noisy spaces in a single large hall, half walls, in urban areas overcrowded classrooms, shortages of furniture and equipment, poor water and sanitation facilities. National standards are not published (but some norms are being developed under the Mahindodaya 1000 secondary - 3000 ‘feeder’ primary school scheme).

9.5 Planning, Management, Finance and Administration

- As noted already the existing budgetary system allocates funds on a whole school basis with no ring fenced allocation for the primary stage (or other stages). At both the provincial and zonal level primary is allocated funds as if it were a single subject rather than a series of subjects.
- Financial planning and management at the school, zone, province and national level are weak.

- The scarcity of facilities, equipment, materials and consumables is particularly acute at the primary level in a context where government spending on education as a whole (in 2010 1.86% of GDP) is very low compared with other countries in the region and at similar stages of development (Aturupane and Abeygunawardene, 2000, World Bank, 2011).
- Primary education has never had a high priority at the National and Provincial level. Only in the late 1990s did a primary education ‘unit’ come into being in the National Ministry. Currently primary education is located as a Branch of the Education Quality Division under the additional secretary (Education Quality Development).
- Given the extremely small size of some classes and schools, necessary to ensure equitable access to primary education, teachers in some schools are underutilised. The skill utilisation of teachers in these schools could be optimised if they were supported in the multi-grade and multi-level teaching methods.
- Responsibilities of officers and ISAs who support the work of primary education teachers are not clearly defined.
- The joint and separate responsibilities of the National and Provincial Ministry and those of the National Institute of Education for primary education are not well defined.

10. The Benefits of Treating Primary Education as a Separate Stage of Education

Student experiences of learning in the secondary and tertiary stages of education depend on their experience of learning and achievement in the foundation years of education offered by primary education. Young Lives (www.younglives.org) is a unique comparative longitudinal study of student performance in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India, and in Vietnam, Ethiopia and Peru. In Ethiopia and India numeracy scores at age 8 (in 2002) were strong predictors of numeracy scores at age 11-12 which in turn were strong predictors at age 14-15. In Vietnam scores at age 11-12 (in 2006) predicted scores at 14-15. In all four countries reading and writing scores at age 8 (in 2002) were strong predictors of scores at age 11-12 (Rolleston and James, 2011).

Comparable evidence from Sri Lanka is not available. However an extensive study of learning achievement undertaken in the wake of the civil war in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka showed that the negative learning impact on student learning of displacement was greater among Grade 3-5 learners than among Grade 6-9 learners. It recommended that priority attention be given to the younger learners in order to repair ‘the damage done by displacement at a time when the basic learning skills are being developed and consolidated’ (Carroll, 2010). A new data set, based on an annual survey of all students in Grades 2, 4 and 9 in government schools in the province of Uva, offers the potential in the future to assess the predictive power of achievement scores in primary education for subsequent performance in secondary education in, as well as tracking the performance of same-grade students over time.

If the evidence to support the principle of primary as a foundation for secondary is not yet available the principle certainly is and was espoused by C. W. W. Kannangara in 1944 during the debate about free education.

We must not think of building our educational system on the state of affairs prevailing in the secondary schools. You cannot start there and build down to the bottom. An architect militates against the first principles of architecture if he starts with the pinnacle and frieze and comes down to the base of the column. If he tries to do that his structure will be upside down. But rather we must start at the bottom (quoted in Sumathipala, 1968, p.12).

The National Institute of Education (NIE) recognises the principle of foundational learning in its definition of essential and desirable learning competencies that are considered necessary before the next grade and stage of curriculum can be addressed. Its embryonic work in early childhood education recognises the importance of high quality education from the age of three years for subsequent development and achievement. It also clearly recognises the foundations offered for secondary education by primary education. At the primary level the NIE asserts all students should achieve ‘mastery’ of the essential competencies. Mastery is performance at the 80 percent level. While 80 percent may appear to be a rather high pass ‘mark’ it should be noted that the National Assessments at Grade 4 are not designed as selection tests. Unlike the Grade 5 scholarship examination which is designed to pass only around the top 10 percent of students, the National Assessments are designed to assess how well the system as a whole is performing in relation to those competencies that have been defined as essential for *all* children to have

mastered before moving to the next level of education. However, as we saw above, mastery is achieved at Grade 4 by only 48 percent of students in First Language, 53 percent in Mathematics and just 19 percent in English. Notwithstanding improvements in performance since 2003, performance remains much lower than expected. And because the curriculum of each subsequent grade of the curriculum is designed on the assumption that the competencies in previous grades have been 'mastered', the development of competencies are likely to be compromised all the way up to the tertiary level. Either one simplifies all curricula from primary to secondary to tertiary, or one strives to increase the performance of all at both the foundational stage and beyond.

11. How Do Other Countries Organize Primary Education?

In considering the benefits of thinking about primary education as a separate stage of education we might pause to reflect on how other systems in the region organise primary education. Figure 2 presents the duration, age span and age of entry to the primary stage of education in 40 countries, including Sri Lanka, in the South Asia region and in East Asia and the Pacific. The duration of primary education ranges between 4 and 7 years. Australia, Bhutan and Maldives regard the first seven years of education as primary. With four years the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) has the shortest duration. The majority of countries, including the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Malaysia and Singapore offer primary education of six years duration. Sri Lanka offers five. The age of entry to primary education varies, from 5 to 7 years. In China, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea it is seven years. In the majority of countries it is 6 years. In Sri Lanka it is five years. On average then Sri Lanka's children enter the primary stage of education earlier and stay for a shorter duration than children elsewhere in the Asia and Pacific region. None of the international data bases include information about whether primary education is delivered in separate or embedded schools. To the author's knowledge the Sri Lanka system is distinct.

As was noted in the introduction Sri Lanka's performance in participation in primary and secondary education has been strong for a long time. The figures on enrolment in primary suggest that the EFA and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on enrolment and gender equity have been close to being achieved over a long period of time, especially in relation to other countries in the South Asia region. As noted earlier these achievements are due largely to government policies over many decades oriented to equality of educational opportunity. Tuition fees are not charged in government schools and textbooks and uniforms have been issued free to every child attending a government school since the 1980s and 1990s. Sri Lanka's policy achievements in enrolment are all the more remarkable given the historically low percentage of GDP spent on education. Between 2001 and 2010 government education expenditure as a proportion of GDP ranged from a high of 2.67 percent in 2006 to a low of 1.86 percent in 2010. Figure 2 indicates how low percentage this percentage is when comparison with other countries in the region. In 2011 Sri Lanka spent 2.0 percent of GDP on education. Only Myanmar which has a low GDP spent proportionately less on education. Pakistan, Bangladesh spent 2.4 percent and 2.2 percent respectively. Singapore and Malaysia spent 3.2 percent and 5.1 percent respectively. Sri Lanka spent 24.2 percent of total education expenditure on primary education, which is low compared to other countries. Only Singapore has a lower share of education spending in primary education (20.2%).

Sri Lanka's primary enrolment ratio also compares very favourably with many of the countries in East Asia. Already by 1950 80 percent of Sri Lankan children were enrolled in primary education, compared with 88 percent in Korea and Taiwan, 77 percent in Singapore and 50 percent in Hong Kong. At secondary level 20 percent of Sri Lankan children were enrolled, compared with 16 percent in Korea, 11 percent in Taiwan, 7 percent in Singapore and 13 percent in Hong Kong. In other words, at time of independence more than sixty years ago Sri Lanka's educational performance on access rivalled that of the East Asian Tigers.

Since that time the education systems in these East Asian countries have expanded greatly, especially at upper secondary and higher education. And their economies have far surpassed the performance of the Sri Lankan economy. Indeed in the McKinsey (2007) report - *How the worlds' best-performing school systems come out on top* - Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong, along with Japan, are listed among the top ten education systems in the world as judged by performance in the PISA and TIMSS assessments. Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong have demonstrated how a school system can move from low performing to high performing within a few decades (McKinsey, 2007). In all three systems the primary stage of education is separated from subsequent stages through separate schools. The McKinsey report (2007) asserts that high performing school systems do three things well.

- 1) They get the right people to become teachers (the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers).
- 2) They develop these people into effective instructors (the only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction).
- 3) They put in place systems and targeted support to ensure that every child is able to benefit from excellent instruction (the only way for the system to reach the highest performance is to raise the standard of every student).

The top performing systems recruit their teachers from the top 30 percent of students who graduate from secondary education. In Korea it is the top 5 percent and in Singapore and Hong Kong the top 30 percent. In the recruitment of teachers Singapore places a strong emphasis on academic achievement as well as communication skills and the motivation for teaching. All teachers are university graduates. Teachers are selected for a career in teaching *before* they begin a 3 or 4 year undergraduate programme or a one year postgraduate course following an undergraduate degree in a non education subject. Selection is highly competitive and places in training programmes are limited to the numbers selected. Teacher trainees are formally employed and paid a salary while they train. In South Korea prospective primary school teachers follow a 4 year undergraduate degree at a National Education University. Places are matched with anticipated teacher requirements. Competition for places is keen with admission determined by achieving in the top 5 percent of marks in the national college entrance examination. In Sri Lanka National Colleges of Education diploma recruits, including those following courses in primary education are drawn from the top 30 percent of academic merit in Arts subjects. However, as we have seen, this is not the only training route for primary teachers and many more are trained after they secure their appointments with much lower levels of academic performance.

Figure 2 Primary Education Systems Compared

	Duration Primary (years)	Age Span	Age of entry	Education Expenditure % GDP	Education Expenditure in Primary as % of Total Education Expenditure
East Asia and Pacific					
Australia	7	5-11	5	5.1 (2009)	36.0 (2009)
Brunei Darussalam	6	6-11	6	2.0 (2010)	28.5 (2010)
Cambodia	6	6-11	6	2.6 (2010)	41.8 (2010)
China	5	7-11	7	-	-
Cook Islands	6	5-10	5	-	-
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	4	6-9	6	-	-
Fiji	6	6-11	6	4.1 (2011)	44.4 (2011)
Indonesia	6	7-12	7	2.8 (2011)	39.9 (2011)
Japan	6	6-11	6	3.8 (2010)	34.9 (2010)
Kiribati	6	6-11	6	-	-
Lao People's Democratic Republic	5	6-10	6	3.3 (2010)	62.5 (2005)
Macao, China	6	6-11	6	2.6 (2010)	-
Malaysia	6	6-11	6	5.1 (2010)	28.6 (2010)
Marshall Islands	6	6-11	6	-	-
Micronesia (Federated States of)	6	6-11	6	-	-
Myanmar	5	5-9	5	0.8 (2011)	50.5 (2011)
Nauru	6	6-11	6	-	-
New Zealand	6	5-10	5	7.2 (2010)	24.4 (2010)
Niue	6	5-10	5	-	-
Palau	5	6-10	6	-	-
Papua New Guinea	6	7-12	7	-	-
Philippines	6	6-11	6	2.7 (2009)	55.0 (2009)
Republic of South Korea (South)	6	6-11	6	5.0 (2009)	32.6 (2009)
Samoa	6	5-10	5	5.3 (2008)	-
Singapore	6	6-11	6	3.2 (2011)	20.2 (2011)
Solomon Islands	6	6-11	6	7.3 (2010)	40.0 (2010)
Thailand	6	6-11	6	5.8 (2011)	34.6 (2011)
Timor-Leste	6	6-11	6	10.1 (2011)	-
Tokelau	6	5-10	5	-	-
Tonga	6	5-10	5	-	-
Tuvalu	6	6-11	6	-	-
Vanuatu	6	6-11	6	5.2 (2009)	54.3 (2009)
Viet Nam	5	6-10	6	6.6 (2010)	33.5 (2010)
South Asia					
Bangladesh	5	6-10	6	2.2 (2009)	44.7 (2009)
Bhutan	7	6-12	6	4.7 (2011)	31.5 (2011)
India	5	6-10	6	3.3 (2010)	25.2 (2010)
Maldives	7	6-12	6	7.2 (2011)	50.4 (2008)
Nepal	5	5-9	5	4.7 (2010)	63.0 (2009)
Pakistan	5	5-9	5	2.4 (2010)	-
Sri Lanka	5	5-9	5	2.0 (2011)	24.2 (2011)

Source: UNESCO (2011) Global Monitoring Report, World Bank 2012.

Not only do Singapore and Korea recruit their teachers, including their primary teachers, from the top levels of achievement, starting salaries are high. McKinsey (2007) suggests that in all OECD countries starting salaries for teachers vary from 44 percent to 186 percent of GDP per capita while most top performing education systems pay a starting salary of between 95 percent and 99 percent of GDP per capita. Korea is an exception and pays starting salaries to teachers of 141 percent of GDP per capita, while Singapore and Hong Kong pay 97 percent and 95 percent respectively. In Sri Lanka the starting salary of a graduate teacher is USD 1335, which is around half of the per capita income.

The second strategy - the development of effective instructors - includes moving as much training as possible away from the lecture theatre to the classroom, placing 'teaching coaches; in schools to support teachers once trained, enabling teachers to learn from each other through observing each other's teaching and through curriculum development and research groups, through teacher professional development and the development of teacher leadership through the development of principals. In Singapore teachers are entitled to 100 hours of professional development per year. Principals are selected through a highly competitive and stringent process followed by intensive six month training. Principals are expected to devote the lions' share of their time to supporting and leading classroom instruction and minimising time spent on administration. Their salaries are high.

On the third strategy - high expectations of every child - high performing systems set high expectations for what every school and child should achieve, monitor performance and intervene when expectations are not met. Top performing systems appear to be better than low performing systems at compensating for social disadvantage and show lower correlations between home background and learning outcomes. In general McKinsey (2007) claims that in high performing systems the level of monitoring and intervention is inversely proportional to the capacity of teachers and schools to improve by themselves.

Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong regard primary education as forming a strong foundation for subsequent learning. Their teachers have high educational qualifications and enjoy high status and high salaries. Here and elsewhere among the top ten performing systems schooling is viewed as an instrument to mitigate rather than reinforce social disadvantage.

The majority of systems of education institutionalise the primary stage of education in separate schools. In allowing schools to gradually upgrade themselves in response to social demand Sri Lanka eschewed this approach by default rather than by design.

12. Implications

All high performing systems of education depend on strong performance of students at the primary stage of education. Strong foundations are required for successful learning at subsequent stages of education. Sri Lankan children's performance on the basic competencies set for the primary stage of education falls short of expectations. But because Sri Lanka already treats primary education as a separate stage of curriculum, not only in terms of subject and content but also in terms of pedagogy, she already has a strong curriculum foundation on which to build. The teacher education system also acknowledges that the training of primary and secondary education teachers requires common and distinct components.

12.1 The Current National Plan for Primary Education

The Ministry of Education has recently released its National Strategic Plan for General Education 2012-2016 (MOE 2011). In several parts of the plan general education has been subdivided into the primary stage and the secondary stage of education in contrast to earlier plans that had treated primary education as a subject of education, on a par with maths of language or aesthetics at secondary level. The current plan for the primary stage is set out in Figure 3.

The plan acknowledges that an integrated approach to the improvement of primary education requires action on curriculum design and implementation, teacher education and materials development. The following comments serve to underline the importance of the Ministry's plan for primary education and to highlight some additional areas for attention.

12.2 Teacher Education

The heart of primary education lies in the interactions between a student and his/her peers, teachers and learning materials in the classroom. All systems designed to strengthen the quality of these interaction and their learning outcomes must maintain attention on them. There is little point in recommending that the quality of learning materials be improved at primary if those who design them do not themselves have experience of teaching and/or the opportunity to work closely with teachers and students. There is little point in recommending that the number of teacher educators who teach primary education courses be increased if they themselves have little or no experience of working at this level. The system of teacher education for primary education requires:

- A strengthening of the numbers employed by the National Institute of Education with expertise, gained through experience and professional training, in the primary stage of education, including alternative approaches to curriculum design, teaching and learning methods, and formative and summative assessment methods.

A strengthening of numbers of those employed by the teacher education institutions with expertise, gained through experience and professional training in the primary stage of education (including alternative approaches to curriculum design, teaching and learning methods, and

formative and summative learning assessment and with specialisms in the primary maths, primary English and primary language).

Figure 3 The National Strategic Plan for Education, 2012-2016

Objectives for Primary Education

- Ensure equity in access to quality primary education.
- Ensure meaningful participation of age 5 -9 children in primary education.
- Ensure that 100 percent of the children complete primary education achieving essential learning competencies.
- Ensure that 80 percent of the children complete primary education attaining mastery level in desired learning competencies.
- Ensure an inclusive, enabling learning environment promoting child-friendly approach to learning and teaching.
- Ensure provision of infra-structure facilities for all primary schools according to the national norms.

Strategies for Primary Education

- Review existing curriculum and revise and upgrade as a standards-based curriculum. This involves child development standards for each the three key stages of primary education, syllabi and teacher instructional materials, revision of the essential learning competencies and piloting of revised curriculum.
- Improve the quality of primary education through the adoption of a 'child friendly' framework (CFF) along six dimensions, the introduction of school self-assessment (SSA) and the preparation, implementation and monitoring of school development plan with effective participation of school community, the development of a multi-level methodology of learning and teaching, the development of co-curricular activities, the development of a monitoring and evaluation system linked with CFF, professional development in CFF
- Establish a coordination and a feedback mechanism to improve communication between curriculum and teacher education authorities, between curriculum implementation at school level and curriculum authorities and between research and classroom practice
- Establish, maintain and use an effective primary education EMIS in support of M & E of the primary education.
- Provide physical infrastructure facilities to all primary schools/sections.
- Develop around 5,000 selected primary schools/primary sections to ensure that networks of attractive, efficient and well-performing primary schools are in place linking to proposed 1,000 secondary schools, this development to be guided by new standards and norms.

Source: Abridged from National Strategic Development Plan, MOE (2011).

- A greater focus in the content of teacher education courses, with a particular focus on the current primary education curriculum and with specialisms in maths, English and first language. They should have opportunities throughout the course to demonstrate the subject content they are themselves expected to teach in all primary grades. They should also acquire competency in the use of a range of pedagogic and assessment practices. These points apply to all courses, whether delivered through the modality of face-to-face, distance or blended learning.
- A strengthening of the work of the Ministry, the NIE, the provinces and the zones in supporting principals and teachers in the promotion of the Child Friendly Approach. This is part of the part of the National Primary Education Plan outlined above (Figure 3) but requires considerable strengthening (e.g. of training, written guidance, sharing of best practice, monitoring and evaluation) as it is rolled out across the country in the coming years. Box 2 presents a brief overview of the approach.
- Support from the universities. To this end a review of the number of graduate and postgraduate degree courses available in primary education and of the possibilities for the training and upgrading of NCOE diplomats to degree level should be undertaken.

12.3 Separate Primary Schools

Given the foundational importance of primary education for later learning and the embedding of primary education within ‘all-through’ schools, there is a strong case to be made for the separation of the primary stage into separate schools. This would ensure that the primary education grades receive the full attention of primary qualified teachers and principals. It would also mean that a smaller number of schools would offer secondary education. These could be larger in size than many currently are, enabling all secondary schools to offer the full range of secondary subjects with teachers qualified to teach those subjects. In essence this idea lies behind current proposals, to build a new network of 1000 well-resourced secondary schools country-wide and a network of 5000 ‘feeder’ primary schools (Mahinda Chintana, 2010, MOE, 2011).

In principle this is an excellent idea. However, earlier reforms aimed at ‘rationalising’ the school system, including separating schools into those offering Grade 1-8 and 9-13, building up networks of strong secondary schools in the image of the high status Central schools of the 1940s and 1950s have largely failed. Strong political will is necessary at every stage of implementation. The 1000 well resourced secondary schools need to be resourced quickly and demonstrate their attraction if smaller feeder schools are to resist giving up their secondary classes. School transport policies may need to be reviewed to ensure that children can travel to the upgraded secondary schools at no extra cost to their households. The 5000 primary schools also need to be well resourced with principals and teachers appropriately trained to create child friendly learning environments, to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and to create vibrant primary schools with distinct identities.

The issue of the domination by the Grade 5 scholarship examination on the teaching and learning activities in primary grades is longstanding (Kotelawala et al, 1994, Gunawardene,

2012). The public and school principals use the examination as a measure of status and esteem, teachers and students teach to and learn for the Grade 5 test, parents spend considerable sums of money on private tutoring for the test, and educators bemoan the distortion it creates of the intended primary curriculum. The original intention of the examination, established in the 1940s, was to select students in rural areas for admission to English medium central schools and to award financial bursaries to students from disadvantaged households. Its original purpose has been forgotten. The exam is now used to provide able children studying in good schools to gain admission to National schools, mostly in urban areas. A small number of children continue to be awarded bursaries. Children who enrol in Grade 1 in National schools continue to Grade 6 automatically. They sit the examination needlessly. More significant is the fact that around 90 percent of the entire Grade 5 student population sit the exam with little hope of success. Indeed there is a sense in which a child's educational destiny is determined from Grade 1 and that those who fail to enter a national school at Grade 1 have restricted access to the rest of the system. While the system has the appearance of being open to all and meritocratic, the existence of two strata of schools, national and provincial, opens access and achievement in the longer term for some and restricts access and achievement in the longer term for others.

In view of the current Mahindodaya reform that promises guaranteed access to 1,000 high grade secondary schools across the country to students from feeder primary schools, a review of the need for and purpose of the Grade 5 examination is timely.

One option is to capitalise on the development of quality of these 1000 secondary schools located across the country, remove the nomenclature of 'national schools' and their special reporting arrangements to the Ministry of Education and remove the Grade 5 scholarship examination, whose main purpose currently is to mediate access from a provincial to a national school.

A second option would be to allow for a more gradual transition towards self-contained feeder primary schools as suggested in the proposal contained within the most recent National Strategic Plan for Education (MOE, 2011), to enhance the quality of 5000 feeder primary schools, and for the graduates from these to transfer, without the need to perform high marks in the Grade 5 examination, to an upgraded and proximate secondary school. Over time this should reduce the intense demand for access to schools located far away and the need for the examination.

A third option would be to transform the exam from a selection examination to a primary completion exam designed to assess mastery of the primary school curriculum. Since students would have guaranteed access to a high grade secondary school within travelling distance of their homes the need for financial bursaries should be reviewed. If financial needs remained then alternative ways of supporting all poor children in their secondary education, not simply those who perform well on the examination should be considered, through income supplement schemes.

12.4 Resource Allocation and Accountability Systems

While standards for the feeder primary schools have been set out within the National Strategic Plan and the plan also calls for monitoring and evaluation subsystems to be established for

primary education, one area that requires further attention is resource allocation and accountability. Whether primary education is delivered through a separate school or is embedded within an 'all through' school, planning and management at the school-level needs to be undertaken for the primary and subsequent stages of education separately. If quality improvement plans are developed for the whole school those who teach in the primary grades must develop their plan for Grades 1-5. School budgets should clearly separate the financial resources intended for Grades 1-5 and principals and school management committees must be accountable for that spending. Similarly, at the levels of the zone, the province and the National Ministry a separate budget is required for primary education.

At the division, zone and provincial levels primary education should no longer be treated as a 'subject' similar to other subject such as maths and language. Primary education involves the teaching of at least six subjects at a level that provides the foundation for their teaching at secondary level. In service advisors for 'primary' must be allocated to primary schools and primary sections of all through schools that are equitable in relation to expectation and work load. Where primary sections are embedded within all through schools then every effort should be made to appoint a supervisory teacher in charge of the primary section. Schools with more than five teachers qualify for a principal. Schools that have five or fewer teachers qualify for a 'teaching head'. It is vital that primary school supervisory teachers, primary school principals and teaching heads of primary schools are qualified in primary education.

12.5 Reviews and Research

A strengthening of the primary stage of education will benefit from more evidence about practices that work and reviews of current systems. Some of these studies need to be undertaken by the specialised departments of the Ministry of Education and the National Institute of Education, while others should be carried out by researchers.

A set of urgently required studies are those that plan teacher and space requirements as secondary and primary schools begin to separate. Although the 1,000 secondary and 4,000-5,000 feeder primary schools initiative has started there will be major challenges in implementation of the project during the transitional period unless steps are taken to plan for and accommodate the movement of large numbers of students between schools. As some schools close their primary grades and others close their secondary grades during the coming five years, there will be implications for teachers and classroom space. If schools open more grade 1 sections than they close grade 6 sections, there will be the need for additional classrooms in the school. Each year this will be exacerbated. The implications for teacher deployment are even greater. As the secondary grades in schools converting to primary schools are closed the number of children will be reduced, but the secondary teachers will still be required to teach all the subjects as long as some secondary grades remain. At the same time the number of children in the secondary schools will increase greatly but with an insufficient number of teachers. Since the reorganization of schools has now started, it should be possible to analyse trends and to start planning for classroom construction and teacher deployment to ensure that there are both sufficient classrooms and appropriately qualified teachers for each year of the transitional period.

A third study for the Ministry has also been outlined above and concerns the relatively poor performance of Type 2 schools compared with Type 3 schools. Through its annual census the Ministry can compare the characteristics of these schools nationwide on the basis of teacher and other characteristics. This study should be supplemented by a more detailed analysis of the NEREC studies of Grade 4 achievement in relation to child, teacher, school and community characteristics.

Other studies and reviews that could be conducted by the Ministry include a review of the teacher cadre in primary education, including the current qualification status; shortages and deficits, by qualification, province, school type and medium; the location of teachers with primary qualifications not teaching primary classes; teacher attendance among teachers teaching in the primary grades; and projections of future need.

The Statistics branch of the Ministry of Education should expand its school census data base to include data imported from the Examinations Department on academic performance (assuming that Grade 5 examinations in some form or an alternative will continue to be held). The school should be used as a unit of analysis of performance, correlated with a range of variables such as teacher qualifications, class size, school type, urban-rural location, medium of instruction, school size, monograde/multigrade classes (Vithanapathirana, 2007) and school difficulty status. National, provincial and zonal interventions should be targeted on poorly performing schools in order to reduce disparities between schools.

There is a need for the Ministry to examine the career structures and ladders available to those primary education teachers who, after some years of experience, seek advancement to posts of responsibility for primary education. Currently there are three service cadres in education - the Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS), the Sri Lanka Principal's Service (SLPS), the Sri Lanka Teacher Service (SLTS) and the Sri Lanka Teacher Educator Service. Given the need to develop and conserve expertise in primary education for the benefit of the primary stage of education there is a case for developing a separate cadre for primary education within each of these. This would open up the opportunity for young people to specialise in primary education and to develop careers in the service of primary that, in principle, could see them rise from being a primary school teacher to a Director of Primary education or Principal of a National College of Education.

There is a need for the National Institute of Education to undertake regular reviews of the implementation of primary curriculum reforms in different types of school in different parts of the country. These are essential as input to the curriculum revisions which are undertaken periodically and need to be subject specific.

More extensive and detailed studies of the process of learning and teaching in the primary grades should be undertaken by research groups from universities and research agencies in collaboration with MOE and NIE. More attention needs to be focussed on teaching and learning practices and on the use of time in class. There is increasing international evidence to suggest that the amount of time students spend learning and what they do during that time influence levels of academic achievement (e.g. Abadzi 2007, Sankar 2009). A small-scale study conducted in the mid 1990s in Grade 4 primary classes in rural Sri Lanka suggested that out of a

total of 1,008 hours officially available for formal teaching and learning only 469 hours, or less than half, were actually used for this purpose. This is equivalent to just 1.29 hours of teaching per day of a calendar year (Little, 1999, 202-203). More recent studies underline the impact of absence from school on achievement and of private tuition on performance in national examinations, controlling for income levels (Little, Indika and Rolleston, 2011). Student absence may impact on achievement because of time lost from learning or because teachers do not provide opportunities for children to ‘catch up’ on learning tasks that are essential for progression to subsequent levels/tasks of learning. Private tuition may have an impact on achievement because of additional time spent in formal teaching and learning, or the types of teaching and learning experienced during private tuition or the examination orientation of private tuition or because of the self selection of highly motivated students into private tuition.

A initial series of studies of what we term here ‘learning activity analysis’ could be undertaken and comprise, inter alia (i) the development of a method to observe learning and teaching activities in classrooms, focussing on the expected teacher and learner behaviours in line with the primary education curriculum revision (ii) a study of the time is available for formal teaching and learning in classes and the total time available in the school year through school closures, teacher and student absenteeism. (iii) a study of the challenges teachers face in implementing particular aspects of the primary curriculum around themes pre-defined by the NIE (iv) an evaluation of the multi-level teaching methodology (MLTM) currently being trialled in the nine provinces (v) learning and teaching activities in private tuition classes.

13. Conclusion

This paper has suggested that the quality of secondary education depends on the quality of primary education. Primary education and secondary education are not alternative investment choices. As Sri Lanka's first Minister of Education pointed out almost seventy years ago good quality primary education is the foundation for good quality secondary education. The quality of primary education would be substantially enhanced if it began to be treated by education policymakers and planners as a comprehensive and multi-faceted stage of education rather than as a subject of education. This has implications for funding, for accountability, for training, for professional support and for research.

Education is one of Sri Lanka's gems. Free education remains 'the pearl of great price'. And primary education remains the 'many splendoured gem that we seek'. In 2011 the World Bank subtitled its comprehensive report on Transforming School Education in Sri Lanka 'from cut stones to polished jewels' to refer to the value that a transformed and upgraded stage of secondary education system could add to the 'cut stone' graduates from primary education. The transformation of primary education in Sri Lanka, from a subject of education to a valued foundational stage of education, distinctive in its right, could begin to produce not only cut stones but 'well cut' stones. The subtitle of the World Bank's project to transform school education in Sri Lanka might then justifiably be revised to read: 'from well cut stones to polished jewels'.

Appendix

The development of one year and five year plans for school development is a key strategy for the improvement of primary education. Over twelve years ago the Ministry developed a guidance manual for school principals on how to do this. The Programme for School Improvement (PSI) was introduced in phased manner to all types of school from 2006. Based on school-based plans developed through consultation with a range of stakeholders PSI aims to improve the delivery of a range of school delivery programmes. Similarly, the Child Friendly Approach (CFA), implemented with UNICEF and AusAID support since 2002 in around 1,300 schools across the country, requires schools to develop plans through a process of a School Self-Assessment (SSA) and consultation with a range of stakeholders. However, these various approaches to school planning could be more fully coordinated within the Ministry. Many staff in the Ministry and in the provinces are aware of PSI but not the approach to planning implicated by CFA. Conversely some staff in the Ministry and in the provinces are aware of the planning and other dimensions of CFA but are less aware of the PSI. But if the approaches do not converge in the minds of officials they do converge in the minds of school principals who receive circulars and guidelines from different branches of the National and Provincial Ministries. The dissemination of parallel sets of guidance can lead to diverse practices at the level of the school. A recent field exercise undertaken by the author led to the uncovering of at least three different practices by school principals. (i) the school had been part of the Child Friendly programme since 2007 and the principal uses the SSA to develop a one year plan. Since the school has only recently been included in the PSI the principal has, for the moment, put the PSI circular to one side (ii) the school principal is aware of PSI and SSA. He prepares a five year strategic and one year operational plan follows the guidance of PSI and strengthens the one year plan through SSA (iii) the school principal prepares two school plans, one following PSI and one following SSA, and submits these to different officers in the Zonal office. School level planning for primary education, indeed for all stages of education will be improved through a critical review of all planning guidance currently issued to schools and a harmonisation of best practices. Box A2 suggests one approach for a harmonisation of the PSI and CFA approaches to school level planning. Very recent developments in the Quality Assurance system for all schools suggest that these procedures too need to be harmonised with both PSI and CFA.

Box A1: The Child Friendly Approach

The Child Friendly Approach promotes child-seeking, child-centred, gender-sensitive, inclusive, community-involved, protective and healthy approaches to schooling and out-of-school education. The child-friendly framework has been applied in many settings around the world. The Approach comprises six dimensions and 29 criteria.

1. Rights Based and Proactively Inclusive.

- 1.1 Effective mechanisms for preventing dropouts and responding to out-of-school girls and boys are in place and in use.
- 1.2 All girls and boys have equal access to all activities and resources in school.
- 1.3 Corporal or psychological punishments are not practiced. Preventive measures and responses to bullying and harassment are in place.
- 1.4 The entire school community is knowledgeable on the Rights of the Child. School undertakings are based on this understanding.

2. Gender Responsive

Equal opportunities exist for girls and boys to enter Primary Education and Secondary Education

- 2.1 Girls and boys participate on an equal basis in all school activities (curricular, co-curricular).
- 2.3 Physical facilities are appropriate for both girls and boys.

3. Promoting Quality Learning Outcomes.

- 3.1 Adequate human resources and classroom facilities are available to support learning.
- 3.2 The classroom atmosphere is inclusive, stress-free, democratic and conducive to learning.
- 3.3 School curriculum is adapted to include the local environment, culture and knowledge.
- 3.4 Teachers are continually improving their capacity through opportunities given and by their own initiatives.
- 3.5 Child-centred teaching methodologies are used.
- 3.6 Essential Learning Competencies are regularly assessed and effective remedial measures are taken.

4. Child Friendly Schools are Healthy, Safe and Protective.

- 4.1 School level policies on health, safety and protection are in place.
- 4.2 School has sufficient facilities related to food, water and sanitation.
- 4.3 School environment and facilities related to food, water and sanitation are well protected.
- 4.4 Competency-based health education is effectively conducted for students.
- 4.5 Effective psychosocial support and referral services are available and utilized.
- 4.6 Children are protected from harm, abuse and injury.
- 4.7 Emergency/disaster preparedness and response plans and systems are in place and operational.

5. Child Friendly Schools are actively engaged with students, families and community.

- 5.1 Schools conduct self-assessments and develop School Development Plans with effective participation of students, families and communities.
- 5.2 Principal, teachers, students, families and the community actively participate in the implementation of the School Development Plan.
- 5.3 The Principal, teachers, students, families and the community actively participate in monitoring and evaluating the School Development Plan.
- 5.4 Schools are actively engaged in promoting and supporting the child friendly home and community environment.

6. Supported by child-friendly systems, policies and regulations

- 6.1. Government policies, regulations and their implementation support the development of the Child Friendly School.
- 6.2. Effective coordination exists between relevant government agencies at all levels.
- 6.3. Appropriate financial resources are allocated at different levels.
- 6.4. Quality technical support systems exist at all levels.
- 6.5. Child friendly principles are incorporated into the curriculum, textbooks and

Box A2. Towards a Harmonisation of Approaches to School Development Plans

The Programme of School Improvement was introduced to all schools within selected zones at a given point in time. PSI was introduced to schools of eight zones in 2006 and phased in to all other schools between 2007 and 2011. The programme focuses on the development and effective implementation of a School Development Plan (SDP). Responsibility and accountability for school improvement lie with a School Development Committee that comprises the principal and deputy principal, teachers, parents and past pupils. A parallel set of guidelines for School Development Plans generated through a process of School Self-Assessment (SSA) is contained within the guidance on the Child Friendly Approach (CFA). Despite their different origins the schemes share common features. Both PSI and CFA aim to prepare and implement strategic and operational plans for school improvement. Both schemes require the development of a five year plan and a one year operational plan. Both are designed to increase transparency in school management and the spending of school funds. Both are intended to encourage curriculum implementation in line with local needs and to utilise local resources. In both the creation of the SDP requires stakeholder consultation.

Alongside these common features are some key differences. PSI is oriented to school improvement in general. The CFA approach is oriented to school improvement within the Child Friendly Approach of six dimensions. PSI has legal force; CFA does not. In PSI the plan is developed by a School Development Committee (SDC). In CFA the plan is developed by the principal through an extensive School Self Assessment process, involving two stages (i) sensitisation and (ii) consultation and decision making. In PSI stakeholder consultations includes past pupils; in CFA/SSA current students and well wishers are included. In the PSI the SDC members are supposed to meet once a month; in the CFA/SSA regular and frequent meetings are not prescribed. The SDP developed through PSI leads to some funding through; the SDP developed through CFA/SSA has been linked with funding from UNICEF. The SDP developed through PSI is submitted to the Assistant Director of Planning in the Zonal office; the SDP developed through CFA/SSA is submitted to the Zonal officer in charge of 'child friendly' schools. It is high time that the approaches were merged to capitalise on their respective best practices, as follows:

- * Following PSI, the SDC should be retained and, dependent on the circumstances of the school (small school, large schools, primary school, secondary school etc) be developed to include relevant sub-committees.
- * Membership of the SDC should include well-wishers and, preferably, current students. Student representatives should be included in the SDC subcommittees that implement and monitor plans.
- * SSA should result in one five-year plan and one one-year plan, rather than two. Plans should be costed, indicate resource gaps, and responsibilities for action. Plan(s) should be submitted to the same officer in the zone. The purpose of sending the plans to the zone is for refinement/feedback and the provision of some funds for implementation.
- * Unless feedback and funds for implementation of the plan are received by schools, there is little point in sending them to the zone. A transparent and speedy process of granting funds to the schools under ESDFP needs to be put in place.

Sources: PSI Circular No. 2005/24 ; PSI Circular No. 2008/35; PSI Circular No. 2010/28. Chapters 6 and 8 of the Guidance Manual on the Child Friendly Approach

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